

PERFORMERS

LEVEL 2 in American POP

Misty Copeland

Find the Barbie® doll inspired by Misty, the first Black female principal dancer with the American Ballet Theatre.



Aretha Franklin

Aretha Franklin

Known as the Queen of Soul, Aretha was the first woman inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Check out the display on music technology to find one of her records.

The Jackson 5 and Boyz II Men

Explore albums and merchandise to discover how these best-selling groups fit into the music industry's long tradition of boy bands.



Boyz II Men

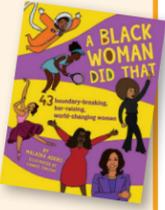
Run DMC

This groundbreaking band was the first rap group to earn a Gold album (500,000 copies sold). Find one of their albums and consider how Run DMC influenced both music and fashion.

Learn More

Check out these books to learn more about famous Black Americans:

- *28 Days: Moments in Black History that Changed the World* by Charles R. Smith Jr. and Shane W. Evans
- *A Black Woman Did That: 43 Boundary-Breaking, Bar-Raising, World-Changing Women* by Malaika Adero and Chanté Timothy
- *Have You Thanked An Inventor Today?* by Patrice McLaurin and Dian Wang



CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS

LEVEL 2 in American POP

Rosa Parks

Find the Barbie® doll inspired by Rosa, whose refusal to give up her seat to White passengers on a bus sparked the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955.

LEVEL 3 in The Power of Children: Making a Difference®

Ruby Bridges

When she was only 6 years old, Ruby Bridges became the first Black student to integrate William Frantz Elementary, an all-White school in New Orleans, Louisiana. Explore this exhibit for an in-depth look at Ruby's story and consider how you can make a difference in the world today.

The Little Rock Nine

In 1957, these nine teenagers became the first Black students to integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. Visit the "Footsoldiers for Freedom" display to learn about their courage and how they paved the way for Ruby Bridges.



Ruby Bridges

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis

CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM
INDIANAPOLIS®

BLACK HISTORY IS AMERICAN HISTORY

The contributions of Black Americans surround us every day of the year in every aspect of life—in science, the arts, technology, sports, entertainment, and so much more! For Black History Month, the museum is celebrating all of the amazing contributions that Black Americans have made to our world.

This guide highlights some of the many Black Americans featured in the museum. As you explore the exhibits, be on the lookout for information about these individuals, and discuss the following questions with your group:

- What did this Black American do?
- Why are their contributions important?
- What else would you like to know about this person or topic?

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY

Did you ride an elevator during your visit today? If so, you may have noticed that the doors opened and closed automatically. Black American Alexander Miles invented automatic elevator doors, which made elevators much safer. Thanks, Alexander!

ARTISTS

LEVEL 1

Johnson Simon and Kyng Rhodes,

featured in the *Lechleiter Indiana Visiting Artist Exhibition*

Johnson Simon and Kyng Rhodes are the museum's 2025–2026 Visiting Artists. View their paintings and check the schedule for their upcoming workshops at the display near the Concierge Desk. Kyng's artwork is also featured on Level 1 near the Ball Machine and in *Stories from Our Community: The Art of Protest* on Level 2.



Johnson Simon



Kyng Rhodes

The Eighteen Art Collective, featured in *Stories from Our Community: The Art of Protest*

In 2020, 18 Black artists came together in Indianapolis to create a public mural in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. Visit this exhibit to explore their artwork and discover how art can communicate stories, messages, and emotions that words alone cannot always express.



The Eighteen Art Collective

Evan Cooper, featured in the *Dinosphere Art Lab*

Visit the Art Lab to discover how paleo artists like Evan combine scientific knowledge with their own artistic style. Use the green artwork labels to locate Evan's work throughout the gallery.



Evan Cooper, *Family Walks*

Ava DuVernay, featured in *American POP*

Check out the Barbie® doll inspired by Ava, the first Black woman to win Best Director at the Sundance Film Festival. Ava is also the first Black woman to be nominated for the Golden Globe for Best Director and the Academy Award for Best Picture.

Israel Solomon, featured in various exhibits
Look for this Indianapolis artist's paintings in the *Dinosphere Art Lab* and in *Stories from Our Community*.



LEVEL 2

Ashley Nora

For the museum's 100th birthday, Ashley created three large paintings to honor the museum's past, present, and future. Look for these paintings near the top of the staircase by the Water Clock. Ashley's artwork is also featured in *Stories from Our Community*.

SCIENTISTS

LOWER LEVEL

Dr. Christine M. Darden, pictured in *Beyond Spaceship Earth*

Check out the *Flight Adventures* display to learn about how engineers like Dr. Darden use models to test their designs. Dr. Darden was one of the amazing “human computers” featured in the book *Hidden Figures*.

Katherine Johnson, featured in *CAPCOM Go! The Apollo Story*

Watch this 30-minute immersive video in the Schaefer Planetarium and Space Object Theater to learn about how “human computer” Katherine Johnson helped put astronauts on the moon.



Dr. Christine M. Darden

ATHLETES

LEVEL 1 in the Riley Children's Health Sports Legends Experience® (RSLE)

Tamika Catchings

Check out the bobblehead autographed by Tamika, a former star player on the Indiana Fever. During her 15-year career, Tamika won the WNBA title, numerous WNBA awards, and four Olympic gold medals. She is also featured in the Avenue of Champions in the outdoor portion of RSLE.



Reggie Miller

Famous as a “clutch” shooter, Reggie was also one of the best all-around shooters in NBA history. He is featured in the Indiana Pacers display as well as in the Avenue of Champions.

Willy T. Ribbs

Willy was the first Black American to qualify for the Indianapolis 500. Visit the back of the gallery to see a real car that Willy drove.

Wilma Rudolph

Track star Wilma was the first American woman to win three gold medals at a single Olympics. Check out the touch screen interactive called *A History of Women in Sports* to learn more about Wilma's amazing story. Wilma is also featured in the Avenue of Champions.

Don't miss these special daily activities in the Riley Sports Legends Experience:

- Jackie Robinson Boundary Breakers: Hear the story of the most influential sports legend of the 20th century.
- Sting Like a Bee: Create your own artwork inspired by the story of Muhammad Ali.

Hank Aaron, DaMarcus Beasley, Mamie “Peanut” Johnson, Toni Stone, Oscar Robertson, and Reggie Wayne

All of these amazing athletes have ties to Indiana and are featured in the Avenue of Champions. Be sure to come back to the museum after the outdoor portion of RSLE opens for the season to learn about their stories.



Reggie Wayne

LEVEL 2 in American POP

Gabby Douglas

Find the Barbie® doll inspired by Gabby, the first U.S. gymnast to win gold in both the individual all-around and team competition at the same Olympics and the first Black American to win an Olympic gold medal in gymnastics.

Ibtihaj Muhammad

Look for the Barbie® doll inspired by fencer Ibtihaj, the first American Muslim woman to win an Olympic medal and the first American woman to compete in the Olympics while wearing hijab.



Toni Stone, Hank Aaron, Mamie Johnson