



For immediate release: June 1, 2022  
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## **‘Diamond of the Gem City’ Celebrates Paul Laurence Dunbar** **Exhibit honoring one of America’s greatest poets opens June 3 in Dayton**

DAYTON, Ohio – The [Ohio History Connection](#), the [National Afro-American Museum & Cultural Center](#) and the [National Park Service](#) will open a new exhibit, “Paul Laurence Dunbar: Diamond of the Gem City,” at 10 a.m. June 3 at the [Paul Laurence Dunbar House](#).

“Paul Laurence Dunbar: Diamond of the Gem City” highlights the life, work and legacy of multifaceted writer Paul Laurence Dunbar through a series of text panels, archival materials and 3D objects.

Born in Dayton on June 27, 1872, Dunbar became one of America’s greatest poets, and his work later fueled a Black literary revolution. His life was marked by personal triumph and inherited trauma, which left indelible impressions on the world around him.

“The new ‘Paul Laurence Dunbar: Diamond of the Gem City’ exhibit puts Dunbar’s life in context and positions him within a community of African American activists, including Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Hallie Quinn Brown, Frederick Douglass and Brigadier Gen. Charles Young,” said Dr. Charles Wash, director of the National Afro-American Museum & Cultural Center in Wilberforce. “It also frames him not just as a hero but also as a human whose flaws help tell a complete version of our American story.”

The exhibit will open as the Paul Laurence Dunbar House celebrates the sesquicentennial anniversary of Dunbar’s birth. The Dunbar 150 project, created by the National Park Service’s Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, is a yearlong celebration that will spotlight Dunbar’s literary contributions and share details of his life and legacy with the world.

In addition, the opening date corresponds with June 3, 1904, when the house was deeded to Dunbar’s mother, Matilda.

“Paul Laurence Dunbar: Diamond of the Gem City” will be open through Jan. 9, 2023.

The Paul Laurence Dunbar House is at 219 N. Paul Laurence Dunbar St. in Dayton. Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays through Sundays. For information, call 937-225-7705 or 800-860-0148 or go to [nps.gov/places/dunbar-house.htm](https://nps.gov/places/dunbar-house.htm) or [ohiohistory.org](http://ohiohistory.org).

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### **About the National Afro-American Museum & Cultural Center:**

Established in 1988 in Wilberforce, the National Afro-American Museum & Cultural Center shares the history, art and culture of the African American experience. The museum is a division of the Ohio History Connection. Located at 1350 Brush Row Road in Wilberforce, the National Afro-American Museum & Cultural Center is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays. For information about programs and events, call 800-752-2603, ext. 0, or go to [ohiohistory.org](http://ohiohistory.org).



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**About the Ohio History Connection:**

The Ohio History Connection, formerly the Ohio Historical Society, is a statewide history organization with the mission to spark discovery of Ohio's stories. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization chartered in 1885, the Ohio History Connection carries out history services for Ohio and its citizens focused on preserving and sharing the state's history. This includes housing the state historic preservation office, the official state archives and local history office and managing more than 50 sites and museums across Ohio. For more information, go to [ohiohistory.org](http://ohiohistory.org). The [Greater Columbus Arts Council](#) provides support for Ohio History Connection programs.

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