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PRESS CONTACT

truman@skdknick.com

Clifton Truman Daniel, President Truman's Grandson, to Throw First Pitch at Nationals Park on 75th Anniversary of Executive Order Desegregating U.S. Armed Forces

WASHINGTON, D.C. (JULY 26, 2023) — Today Clifton Truman Daniel, grandson of President Harry S. Truman and Honorary Chair of the [Truman Library Institute](#), will throw a ceremonial first pitch at Nationals Park in advance of the Washington Nationals' game against the Colorado Rockies. Daniel's pitch is in honor of the 75th anniversary of President Truman's historic signing of Executive Order 9981, which desegregated the U.S. Armed Forces.

On July 26, 1948, President Truman changed the course of American history by signing [Executive Order 9981](#), which officially declared "there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin."

"My grandfather had a special place in his heart for baseball," said Clifton Truman Daniel. "His throwing out the first pitch at a Washington Senators game six days after Japan's formal surrender came to symbolize the world's return to peace. My throwing out of a ceremonial first pitch on July 26, 2023, 75 years to the day after my grandfather signed the order desegregating the US Armed Services, will, I hope, in some small way, help recognize the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, black and white, who fought together to bring about that peace and continue to safeguard our nation today."

"My grandmother, First Lady Bess Wallace Truman, was the baseball player. In childhood, her brothers pulled her into a game as a pinch hitter. She smacked a home run."

As part of continued recognition of this historic event, the [Truman Civil Rights Symposium](#) also began today. The three-day event organized by the Truman Library Institute — the nonprofit partner of the

Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum — is sponsored by Boeing and CPKC. The symposium features prominent military leaders, historians, journalists and elected officials who will honor the long history of Black veterans' service and sacrifice and examine the legacy of President Truman's executive order that paved the way for the modern civil rights movement. The symposium is open to the public with [free registration](#) for in-person and livestream participation.

About President Truman and Baseball

President Truman had a deep history with America's pastime and is often quoted for saying "May the sun never set on American baseball."

He went to the ballpark more than any other U.S. president, throwing out the first pitch six days after the end of World War II. Because no U.S. president had attended a baseball game since the beginning of the war on April 14, 1941, Truman regarded this pitch as a symbol to the American people of the return of peace for the country.

President Truman also opened the first baseball game of the 1946 season with the first left-handed ceremonial presidential first pitch in Major League history. Nearly twenty years later in 1961, after the New York Yankees record-setting season, Roger Maris and Mickey Mantle, who both batted left-handed, each gave President Truman an autographed bat.

President Truman and Civil Rights

As a World War I veteran, President Truman was outraged by the violence against Black American veterans returning to the segregated South and the silent reaction of state authorities. In 1946, President Truman created the first-ever President's Committee on Civil Rights to investigate the status of civil rights in the U.S. and propose measures to strengthen and protect them. The committee issued its landmark report, [To Secure These Rights](#), in 1947, calling for equal voting rights, the creation of a Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department to combat lynching and other assaults on Black lives and freedoms, equal employment and fair-housing laws.

The first president to address a civil rights organization, President Truman gave a speech to the NAACP on June 29, 1947, pledging his support to uphold the civil rights of all Americans: "It is my deep conviction that we have reached a turning point in the long history of our country's efforts to guarantee freedom and equality to all our citizens," Truman said. "All Americans enjoy these rights. And when I say 'all' Americans — I mean all Americans."

The Truman Civil Rights Symposium is free and open to the public. To learn more, visit TrumanLibraryInstitute.org/Civil-Rights-Symposium.

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The [Truman Library Institute](#) is the member-supported, nonprofit partner of the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum — one of 15 presidential libraries of the National Archives. The Institute was founded by President Truman to ensure that his Presidential Library would flourish as a "classroom for democracy"

where young people, especially, might better understand the American presidency and the fundamental principles guiding our democracy. Nationally acclaimed civics-education programs — including the White House Decision Center — serve nearly 50,000 students and teachers annually, inspiring the next generation to lead lives of service and purpose. For more, visit www.TrumanLibraryInstitute.org