

GREENWOOD Is Our Inspiration.

The *Rise* and *Fall* of "Black Wall Street"

In 1906, a wealthy African American, O.W. Gurley, moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma and purchased 40 acres of land that he wanted to ensure would be sold only to other African Americans. Gurley provided a path to security and prosperity for Blacks struggling in the segregated Jim Crow South. His experiment created the Greenwood District. The main thoroughfare was known as America's Black Wall Street.

The Greenwood District flourished in the early 1900s and emerged as an African American entrepreneur center. Craftsmen, merchants, architects, cobblers, attorneys, entertainers, artists, accountants, bankers and manufacturers all found a home (and a market) there. Historians estimate that a dollar circulated 36 times in the community and may remain in Greenwood for as long as a year. At a time when the entire state of Oklahoma only had two airports, six Black families in the Greenwood District owned their own private planes.

As the standard of living for Greenwood's Black families grew, so did resentment in the surrounding white communities.

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On May 31, 1921, the Greenwood District was attacked, looted and burned by white rioters. Approximately 300 people died, 35 blocks of the city were ruined, and more than 800 people were treated for injuries.

To this day, Greenwood remains a symbol of the economic potential of community solidarity. "Greenwood was one of the most powerful centers of brains and money in the America of that time," said Andrew J. Young, Civil Rights leader and former U.N. Ambassador. "The Greenwood experience tells us that African Americans have the talent, the marketable skills, and the entrepreneurial energy to compete anywhere in the world."

Greenwood offers modern banking for the culture. We are a digital mobile banking experience made for Black and Latinx customers. When you open a digital bank account with Greenwood, you save money, help the community, and get paid early. Recirculating wealth. That's the Greenwood way. We offer full-service banking in your hand.

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