

# Asa Philip Randolph Institute

# MEMBERSHIP

## New Jersey Essex County Chapter

A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI) is an Organization of Black Trade Unionist to Fight for Racial Equality and Economic Justice. Today, APRI is led by President Clayola Brown, whose vision and energy has sparked a new beginning for our organization and for the movement as a whole. Founded by A. Philip Randolph, who brought the gospel of trade unionism to millions of African American households. Randolph led a 10-year drive to organize the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) and served as the organization's first president. Mr. Randolph's achievements forever changed our nation-breaking down barriers of racism and injustice. To this day, his activism, spirit and voice shape our nation's progress on civil rights and workers' rights. Asa Philip Randolph deserves to be remembered and honored for his commitment to social justice and workplace equality.

You can help ensure that A. Philip Randolph's spirit and legacy live on to educate and inspire future generations and forge a bond with the rich history of the civil rights and labor movements by becoming a member.

Yearly Membership Fee :

\$20.00 Reguler

\$10.00 Retire

Date :

Phone/Cell Numbers:

Full Name:

E-Mail:

Address:

Local Affiliation/ Title:

Local Name:

## Who We Are

The Essex County New Jersey chapter of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, founded in 1970, is committed to supporting the ideals of our founder Asa Philip Randolph. By fighting for civil rights, workers rights, education and job training we support those efforts that insist on a democratic society that encourages participation of all individuals in the economic, political and social justice reforms that uplift and improve the lives of all Americans.

We are a 501C-3 non-profit organization.

What We Support : Education : Get Out And Vote : Career Training

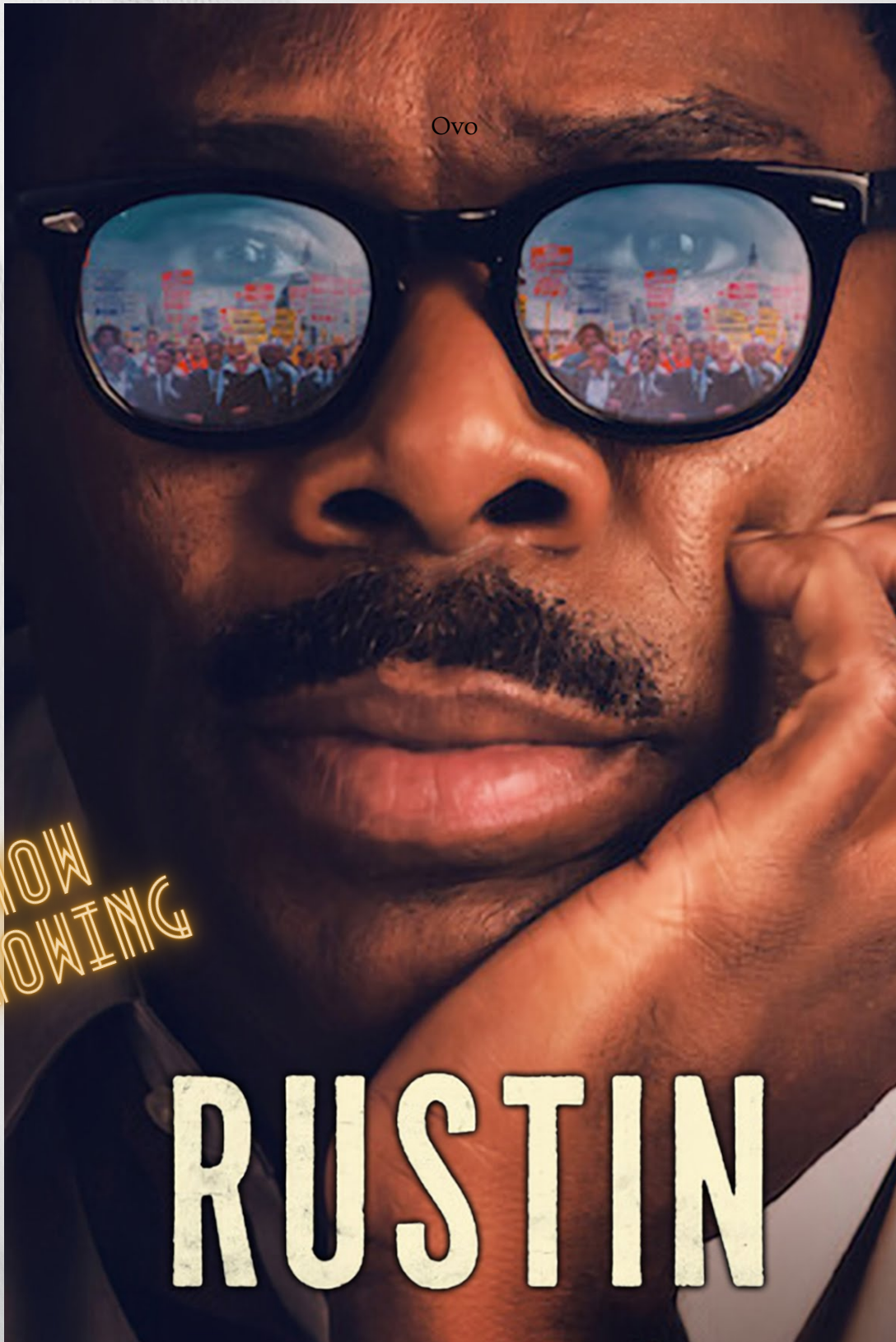
<https://www.essexcountynjapri.org>



## Asa Philip Randolph Institute

**Rustin True Story: All About Bayard Rustin, the Real-Life  
Activist Portrayed in Netflix Film**

**Colman Domingo portrays late activist Bayard Rustin in the biopic,  
now on Netflix**



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SHOWING

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## Early Life and Move to Harlem

Asa Philip Randolph was born on April 15, 1889 in Crescent City, Florida, where his father was a preacher in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He grew up in an intellectual household, and Randolph and his older brother both studied at the Cookman Institute in Jacksonville, a Methodist school founded during Reconstruction as Florida's first all-Black institution of higher education.

Inspired by the writings of leading Black intellectual W.E.B. Du Bois, Randolph moved to New York City in 1911. He settled in Harlem, where he found a job working on the switchboard in an apartment building and enrolled in courses at the City College of New York. Randolph's devotion to the socialist cause led to a job working for the Brotherhood of Labor, an employment agency for Black workers. In 1914, he married Lucille Green, a young widow and Howard University graduate who owned a beauty salon in the building where he worked.

## The 'Messenger' and Randolph's Socialist Politics

Randolph and Chandler Owen, a law student and fellow socialist thinker, met in 1915 and became close friends. The two men joined the Socialist Party the following year and soon began publishing a magazine, Hotel Messenger (later renamed the Messenger), to advance their socialist views and rally fellow African Americans to the cause. In 1918, Randolph and Owen were arrested and jailed briefly for sedition for their public criticism of Woodrow Wilson's presidential administration and its policies during World War I.

Randolph was an early supporter of Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican-born founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). But by 1920, he and other influential Black leaders in Harlem had begun to publicly criticize Garvey, helping spur a federal investigation that would eventually lead to Garvey's deportation.

## Founding of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP)

In the summer of 1925, Randolph received an invitation to speak to a group of porters from the Pullman Palace Car Company, a Chicago-based company that hired mainly African American men to serve white passengers aboard its luxury railroad sleeping cars. Pullman porters were generally paid far lower wages than white workers, and subjected to punishing working hours and conditions. After this initial meeting, Randolph agreed to help organize the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), the nation's first predominantly Black labor union.

Under Randolph's leadership, the BSCP became the first Black union to be granted a charter by the American Federation of Labor (AFL). In 1934, Congress amended the earlier Railway Labor Act to specifically cover workers in sleeping cars, making it illegal for Pullman to fire members of the BSCP. The new legislation paved the way for Randolph and the BSCP to win a collective bargaining agreement and sign a contract with Pullman that recognized the union, reduced porters' monthly work hours and raised wages.

After the AFL merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1955 to form the AFL-CIO, Randolph joined the organization's executive council; he became one of its first two Black vice presidents in 1957.

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## Civil Rights Activism and the March on Washington

Meanwhile, in addition to workers' rights, Randolph had gained national prominence as an outspoken advocate for racial equality. In 1941, he announced a large protest march in Washington, D.C., aimed at convincing President Franklin D. Roosevelt to end discrimination in the nation's defense industries. After Roosevelt responded by issuing Executive Order 8802, which opened war industries in World War II to Black workers and created the Fair Employment Practice Commission (FEPC), Randolph canceled the planned march. In 1948, Randolph's activism similarly helped persuade President Harry Truman to desegregate the U.S. armed forces with passage of the Universal Military Service and Training Act. Randolph organized several other major protest marches in the nation's capital in the late 1950s, including the Pilgrimage of Prayer (1957) and two youth marches protesting the slow pace of school desegregation in the South. In 1959, he helped found the Negro American Labor Council (NALC), which aimed to fight racial discrimination within labor unions.

In 1963, Randolph worked with fellow activist Bayard Rustin to spearhead the massive March on Washington held on August 28. At that event, nearly 250,000 people gathered to hear from civil rights leaders including Martin Luther King Jr., who delivered his iconic "I Have a Dream" speech from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Randolph, whose beloved wife, Lucille, died only weeks before the event, told the crowd they were witnessing the beginning of a new fight "not only for the Negro but for all Americans who thirst for freedom and a better life."

## Later Years and Founding of A. Philip Randolph Institute

The March on Washington helped pave the way for passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the first major piece of civil rights legislation since the Reconstruction era. That same year, Lyndon B. Johnson awarded Randolph the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his career of activism. In 1965, Rustin took charge of the newly founded A. Philip Randolph Institute, which replaced the NALC as the primary mode of advancing Randolph's labor and civil rights goals.

Randolph retired as president of the BCSP in 1968, and his public profile gradually receded as his health worsened. He spent his later years living quietly in New York City, and died in 1979, at the age of 90.

### Sources

J.Y. Smith. "A. Philip Randolph Dies at 90." The Washington Post, May 17, 1979.

A. Philip Randolph: Biography. The Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University.

Andrew E. Kersten. A. Philip Randolph: A Life in the Vanguard. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2007)