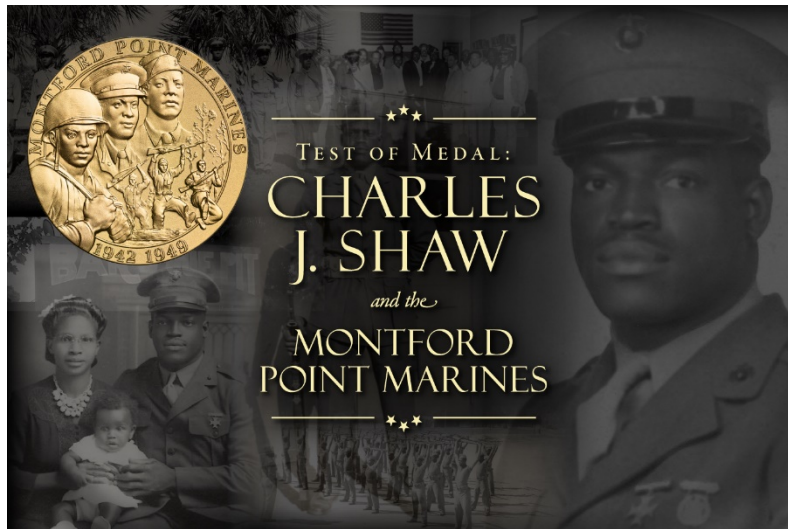


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MEDIA CONTACT:
KELLY BISHOP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & BRANDING
KBISHOP@BOWERS.ORG OR 714-567-3628

Local Hero's Congressional Gold Medal and More to Be Displayed at Bowers Museum



November 6, 2020 (Santa Ana, California) – In celebration of Veterans Day on November 11, 2020, Bowers Museum will grant free admission to the museum for all Veterans and launch a temporary display to honor local hero, Charles J. Shaw. On view in Bowers' Fluor Gallery November 11 to January 10, 2021, *Test of Medal: Charles J. Shaw and the Montford Point Marines* is a display on Mr. Shaw, the first Black drill instructor to train an integrated platoon of Marines and an important member of the African American community in Santa Ana, CA.

Included in this display are a variety of Shaw's personal possessions from his time in the Marines, various medals and patches, and most remarkably, his Congressional Gold Medal and Certificate.

This display will be free with museum general admission for all visitors. Free admission on Veterans Day for all Veterans will include admission to Bowers' current blockbuster exhibition [Inside the Walt Disney Archives: 50 Years of Preserving the Magic](#), as well as 7 other [permanent exhibitions](#) from around the globe currently on view.

On Tuesday, November 20 Bowers will hold a virtual presentation entitled [Charles J. Shaw and the Montford Point Marines: presented by L. E. \(Michael\) Johnson](#). Several other important programs featuring, and honoring, Veterans will accompany this display through January. Tickets and details at bowers.org.



Sgt. Charles J. Shaw II at Montford Point, North Carolina, 1946-49. Courtesy of Shaw family.

BOWERS
MUSEUM

2002 NORTH MAIN STREET, SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92706
BOWERS.ORG | TEL 714.567.3600 | FAX 714.567.3603

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Overcoming Adversity

From 1942-1949, nearly 20,000 African American men from across America came to Montford Point camp in Jacksonville, North Carolina seeking the American dream of inclusion and the opportunity to defend our country as a United States marine. Like the wider society at large that was socially and culturally divided by race, the marine corps trained these men separately denying them their rightful place in the corps and in its rich tradition of service. These men served in battle, provided critical supplies to those on the front lines and evacuated the wounded to safety. They did their jobs with professionalism and ably proved their courage in epic battles of the Pacific like Saipan, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa.



S.Sgt. Charles J. Shaw II with Platoon 44, Parris Island, South Carolina, 1949. Courtesy of Shaw family.

About Charles J. Shaw

Charles J. Shaw II enlisted as one of the first Black Marines in 1943, about a year after Blacks were allowed in the USMC, and served as a drill instructor at the nation's only base for Black Marines, the segregated Montford Point, North Carolina. In 1949 when Montford Point was deactivated following the desegregation of the USMC, Sergeant Shaw was transferred to Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island where he became the first Black Marine to train a group of desegregated marines.



The Bar-B-Que Pit in Santa Ana, California. Courtesy of Shaw family.

In 1956 he moved his family to "Little Texas" in Santa Ana. Around that time Charles Shaw opened the Bar-B-Que Pit on the corner of 3rd St and Hesperian which became a cornerstone of the community. It was among the first Black run businesses in Santa Ana and a pillar of Santa Ana's Black community. His children were among the first Black students in Santa Ana to attend desegregated schools.

On November 23, 2011 President Barack Obama signed into law a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines. Almost a decade later, Charles Shaw was posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal and recognized for his pioneering role in desegregating the USMC in a private ceremony on October 10, 2020.

About Bowers Museum

The Bowers Museum has earned an international reputation through its world-class exhibitions, including *Guo Pei: Couture Beyond*; *A Quest for Beauty: Van Cleef & Arpels*; *Warriors, Tombs and Temples: China's Enduring Legacy*; *Terra Cotta Warriors: Guardians of China's First Emperor*; and *Mummies—Death and the Afterlife: Treasures from the British Museum*, and the current presentation of *Inside the Walt Disney Archives* on view through February 28, 2021; in addition to its own extensive art collections from the Pacific Rim. While at the Bowers visitors can enjoy a leisurely luncheon the award-winning Patina restaurant, **Tangata** and browse the rare and exotic at the **Bowers Museum Gallery Store**. Visit bowers.org for information and tickets.