

# Fritz Pollard Class of 1912

Lane Tech's Unsung Hero

LANE  TECH  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

# Fritz Pollard

## Pursuit of Excellence

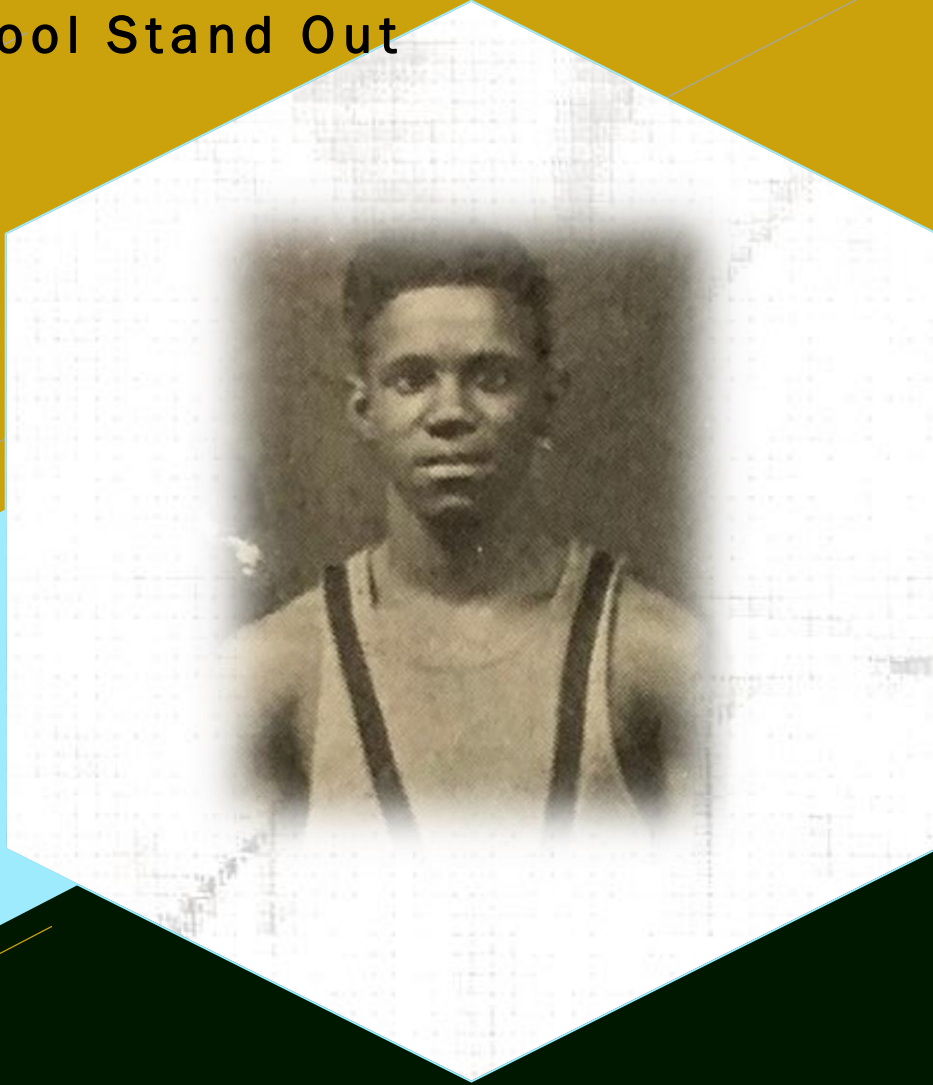


## Rogers Park Roots

- Fritz was the seventh of eight children born to a multi-racial mother and African American father who relocated from Missouri to Chicago to escape escalating racial tensions and afford their family more opportunity
- They were the first black family to settle in the all-white “village” of Rogers Park
- Descended from slaves who were freed after the Revolutionary War, the Pollard family placed a high value on education and was known for their resilience and determination

# Fritz Pollard

## High School Stand Out

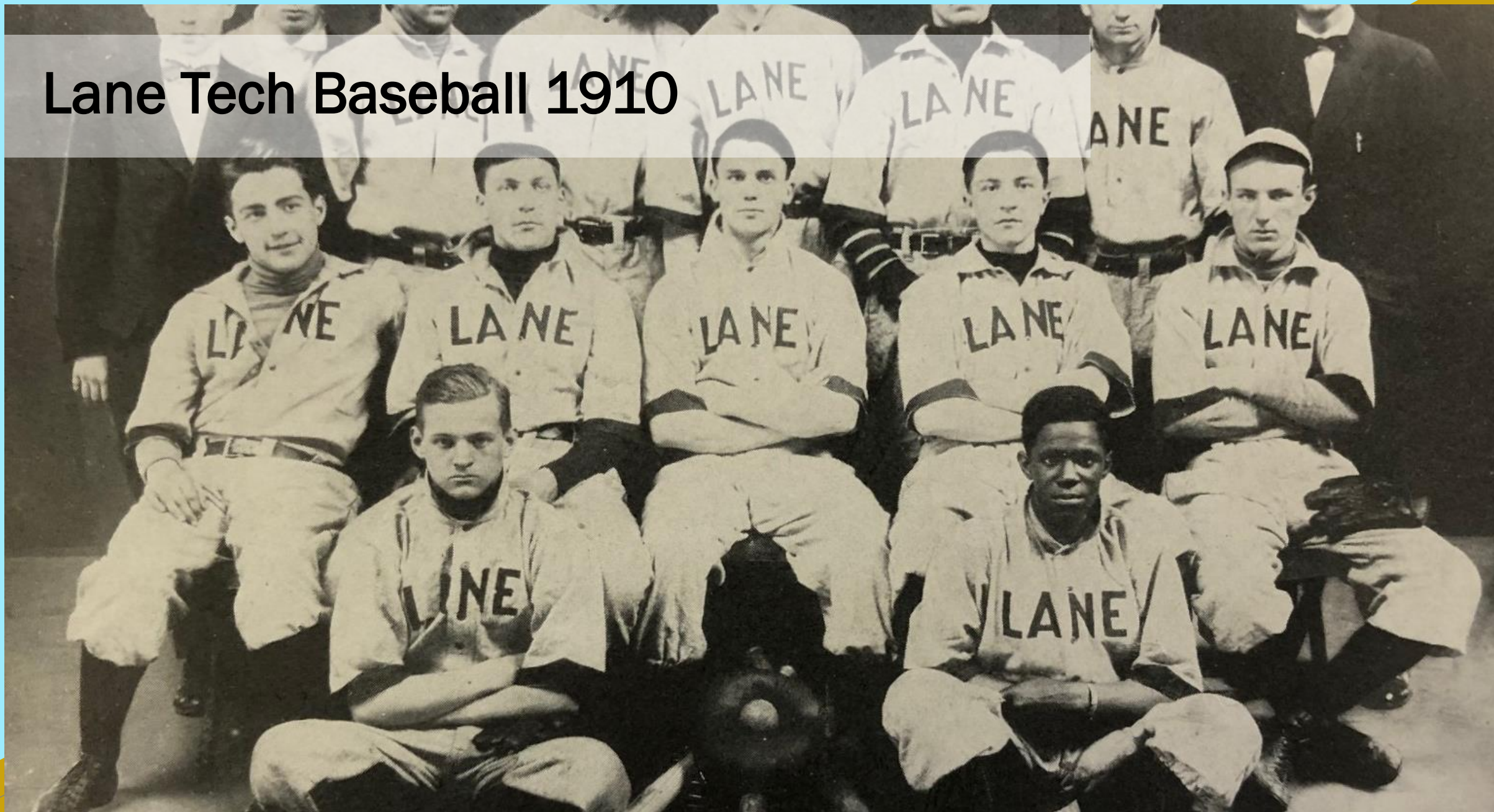


## Lane Tech Hero

- Mentored by older brother Leslie, Fritz was a three-sport, elite athlete who was compared to the fleet-footed god, “Mercury”
- He played shortstop on the “indoor” baseball team
- At a track meet in 1912 he took first in high and low hurdles, second in the half-mile and third in high jump, and won “County” three times
- Fritz compensated for his small stature with speed and agility as a running back on the football team



# Lane Tech Baseball 1910







Lane Tech Track 1910



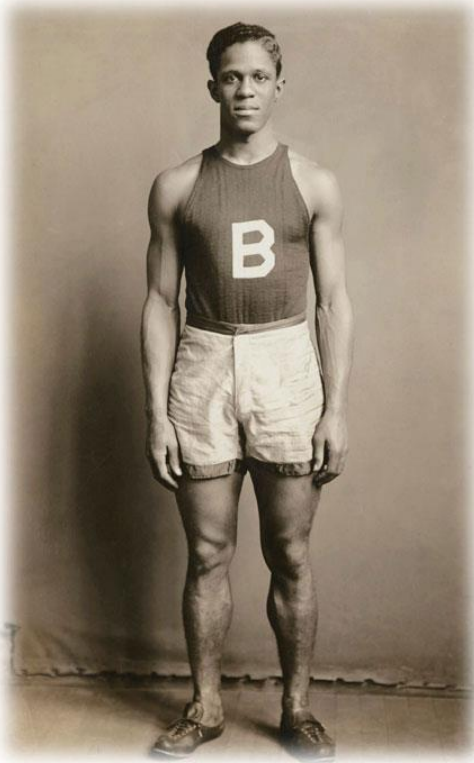


**Lane Tech Football 1911**



# Fritz Pollard

## Collegiate Trailblazer



## Breaking Barriers at Brown

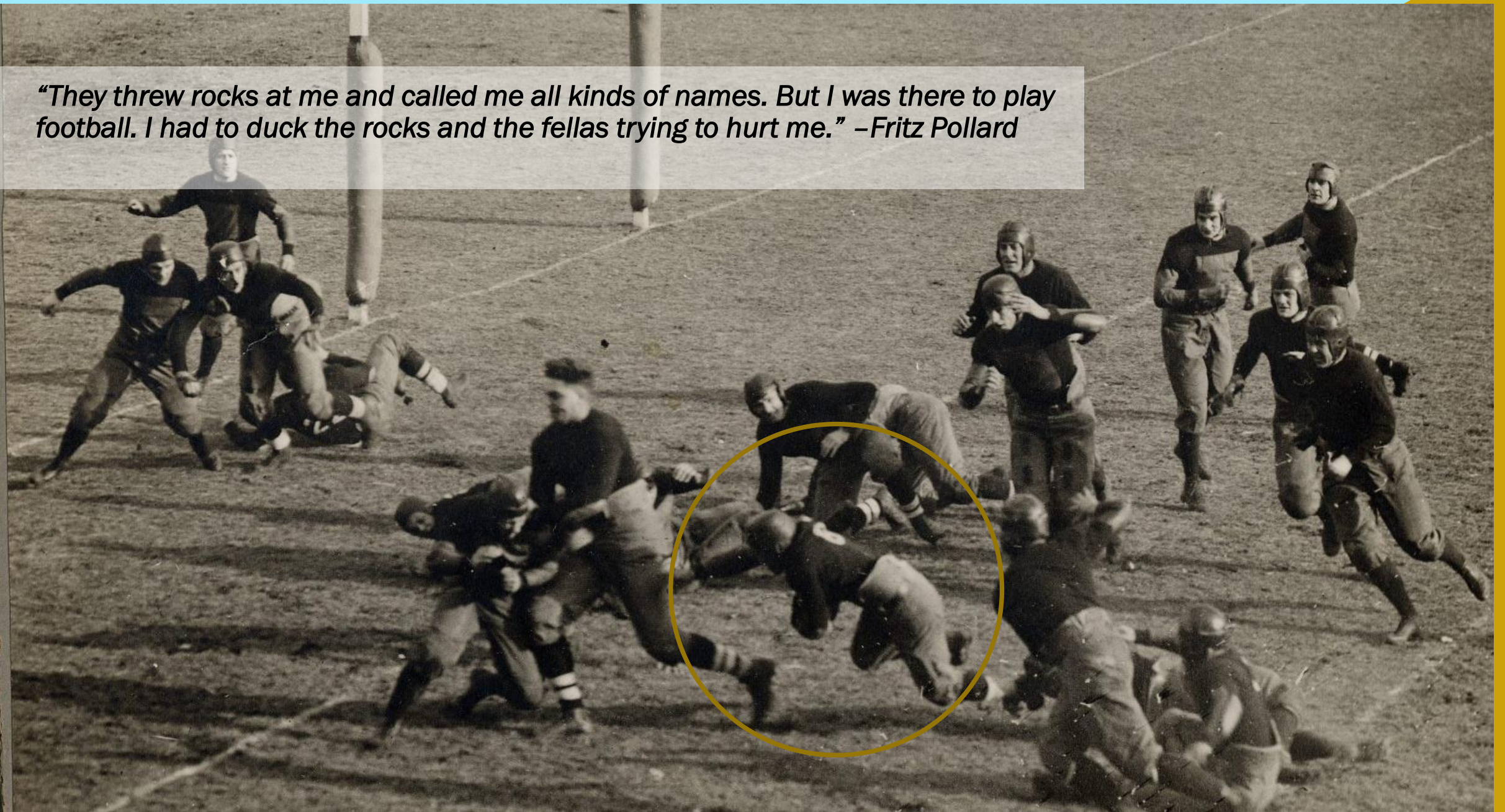
- Nicknamed the “Human Torpedo”, Pollard was the first African American to play for Brown University where he was credited for almost single-handedly beating both Yale and Harvard in the same week scoring 6 touchdowns and running for more than 540 yards
- First African American to play in the Rose Bowl in 1916, and to be named to Walter Camp’s All-American team
- First African American inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1954



**Brown University Football 1916**



*"They threw rocks at me and called me all kinds of names. But I was there to play football. I had to duck the rocks and the fellas trying to hurt me." –Fritz Pollard*





1916  
BROWN-21  
HARVARD-0

WERE THE DECIDING FACTOR...  
HE SCORED TWO TOUCHDOWNS



FRITZ  
Pollard

AND SET UP



# Fritz Pollard

## NFL Role Model

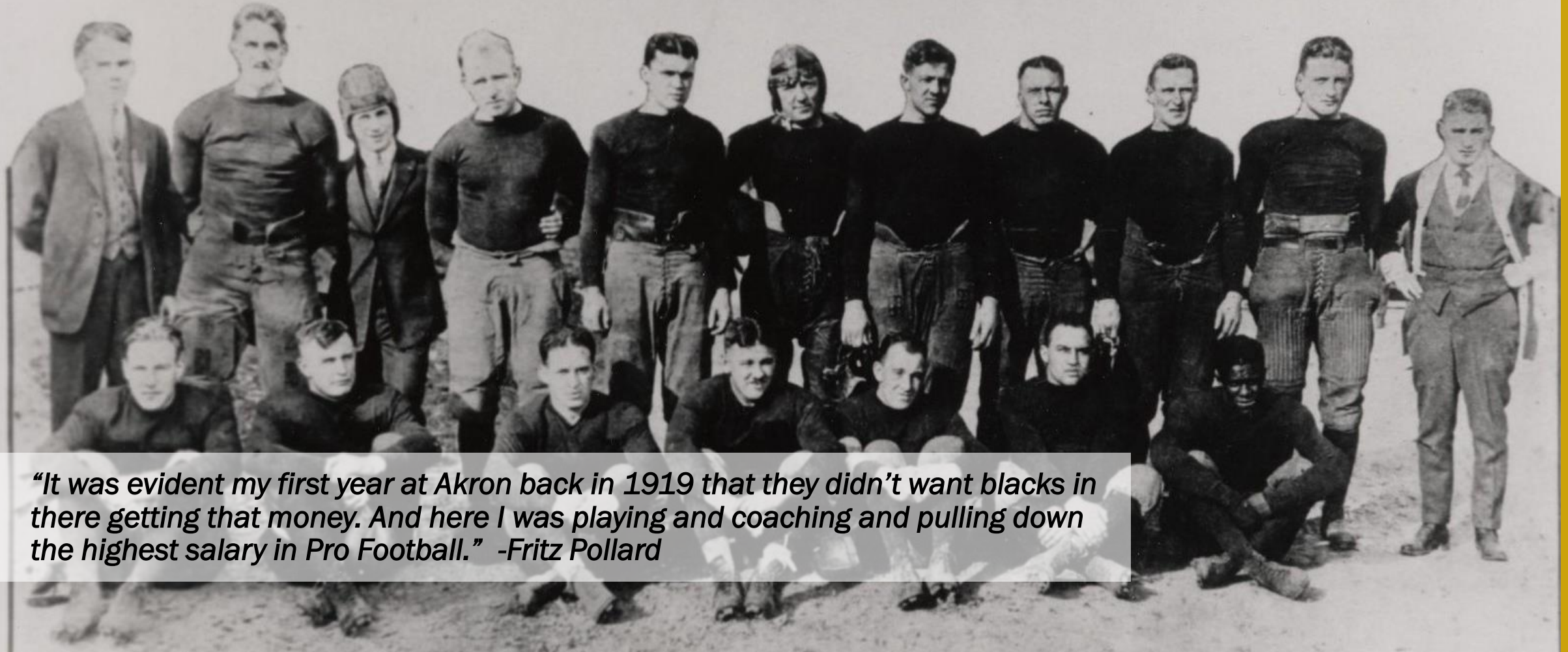


### Professional Football Firsts

- One of the first two African American athletes to play in the NFL & first African American quarterback
- Along with Jim Thorpe, one of the highest paid players in the early 20s
- First African American coach in the NFL
- Inducted into the NFL Football Hall of Fame in 2005
- Fritz Pollard Alliance Foundation advocates for more BIPOC coaches and front office sports executives in the NFL

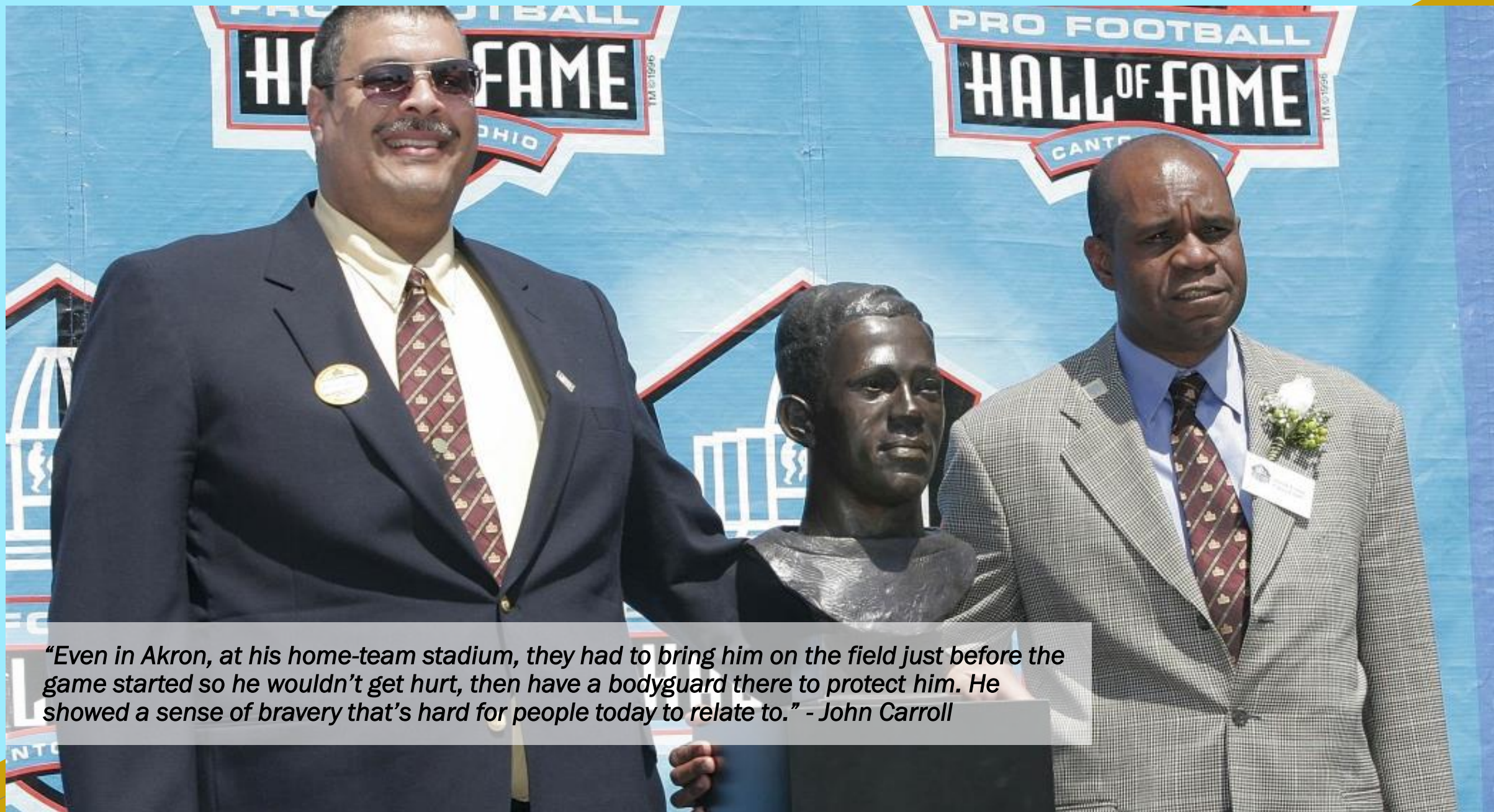
# WORLDS CHAMPS

## Akron—1920—Professionals



*"It was evident my first year at Akron back in 1919 that they didn't want blacks in there getting that money. And here I was playing and coaching and pulling down the highest salary in Pro Football." -Fritz Pollard*





*“Even in Akron, at his home-team stadium, they had to bring him on the field just before the game started so he wouldn’t get hurt, then have a bodyguard there to protect him. He showed a sense of bravery that’s hard for people today to relate to.” - John Carroll*



# THE FRITZ POLLARD ALLIANCE FOUNDATION

WORKS WITH THE NFL TO SUPPORT A MORE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE LEAGUE

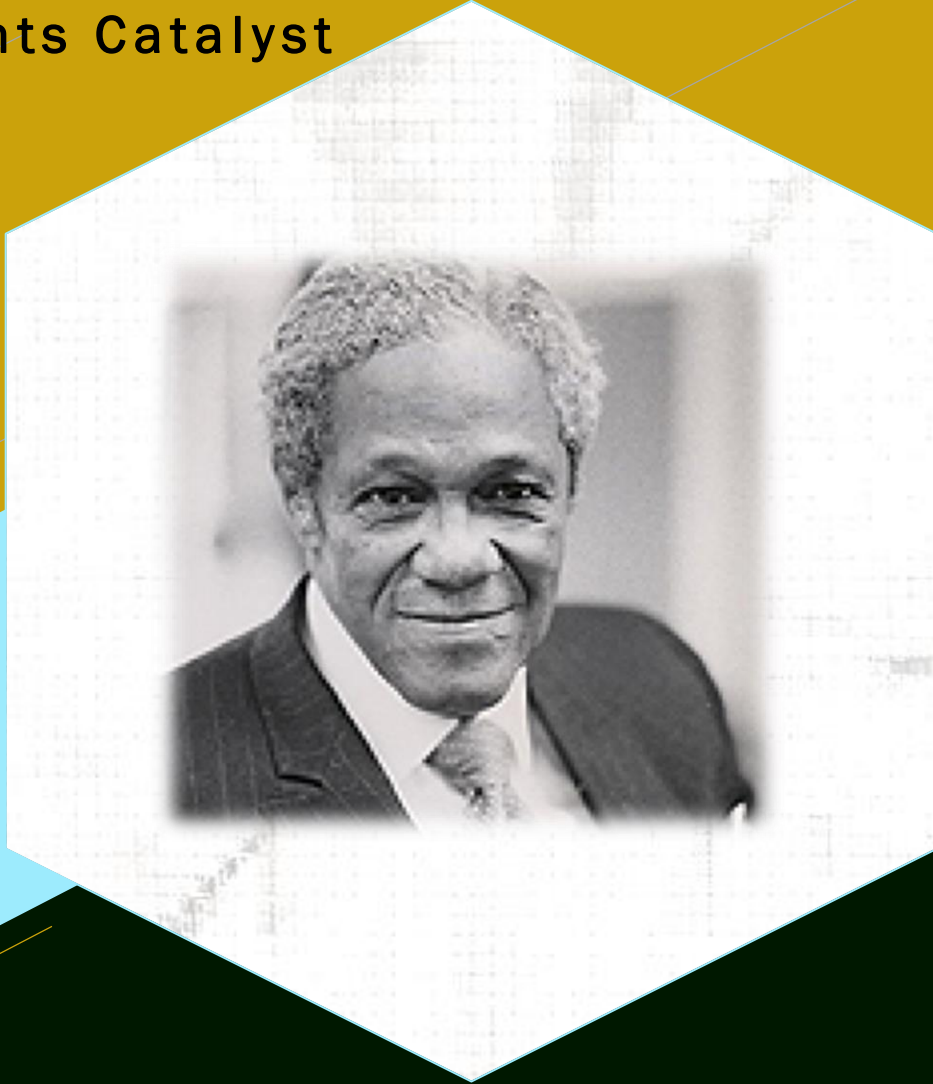


*The Fritz Pollard Alliance Foundation honors those whose lives embodied the strength, determination and will to change the course of history for generations to follow.*



# Fritz Pollard

Civil Rights Catalyst



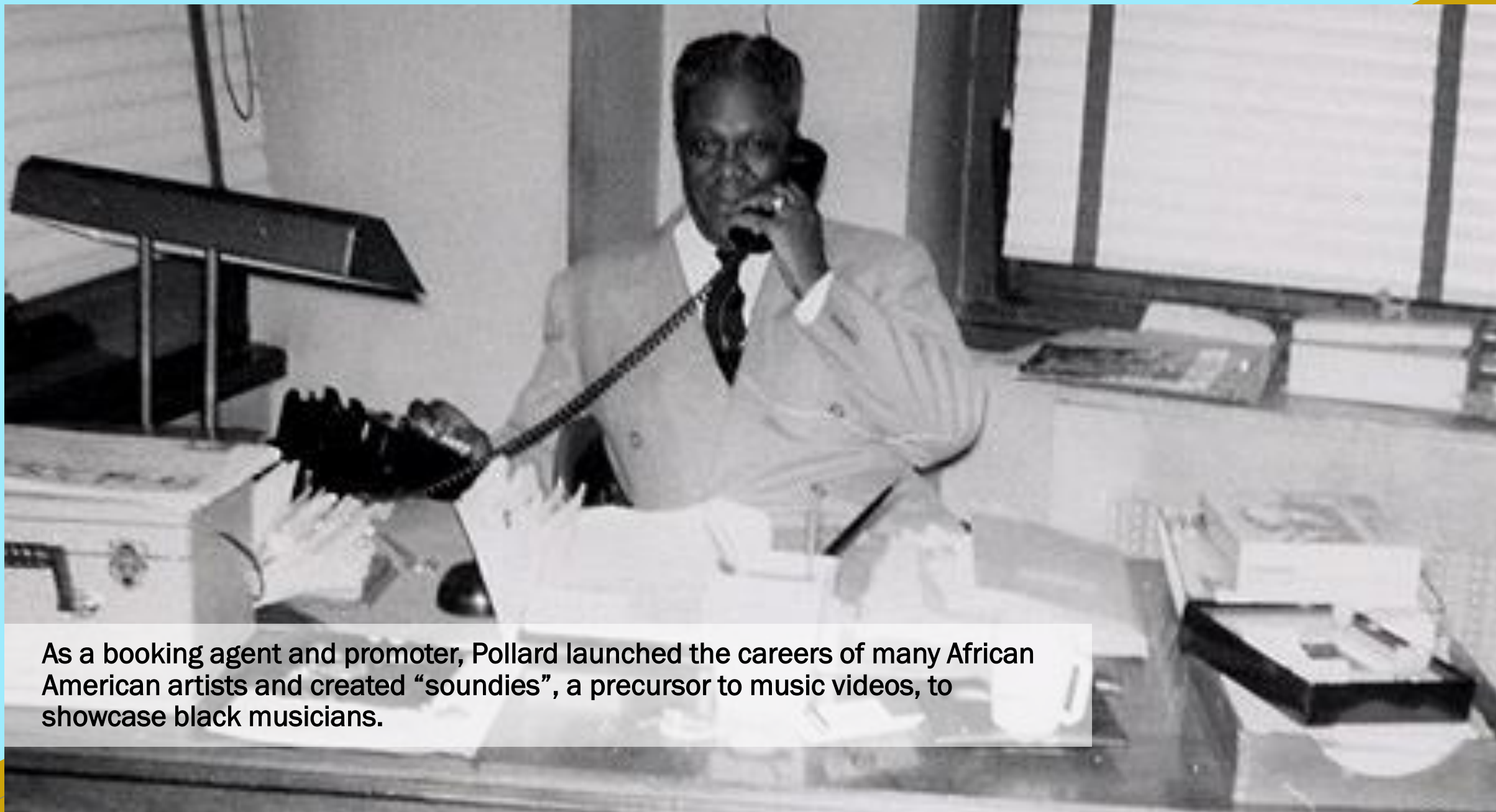
## Achievements in Leadership

- Actively hired and showcased African American football players
- Founded the Chicago Black Hawks and Harlem Brown Bombers all-black football teams
- Published the first black-owned tabloid, The New York Independent News
- Founded and operated a talent agency, music production company, PR firm, tax consultancy and investment firm



Fritz Pollard with his son Fritz Pollard Jr. who played football at the University of North Dakota and was a member of the US Track team at the 1936 Olympics along with Jessie Owens and Ralph Metcalf, winning bronze in the 110 hurdles.

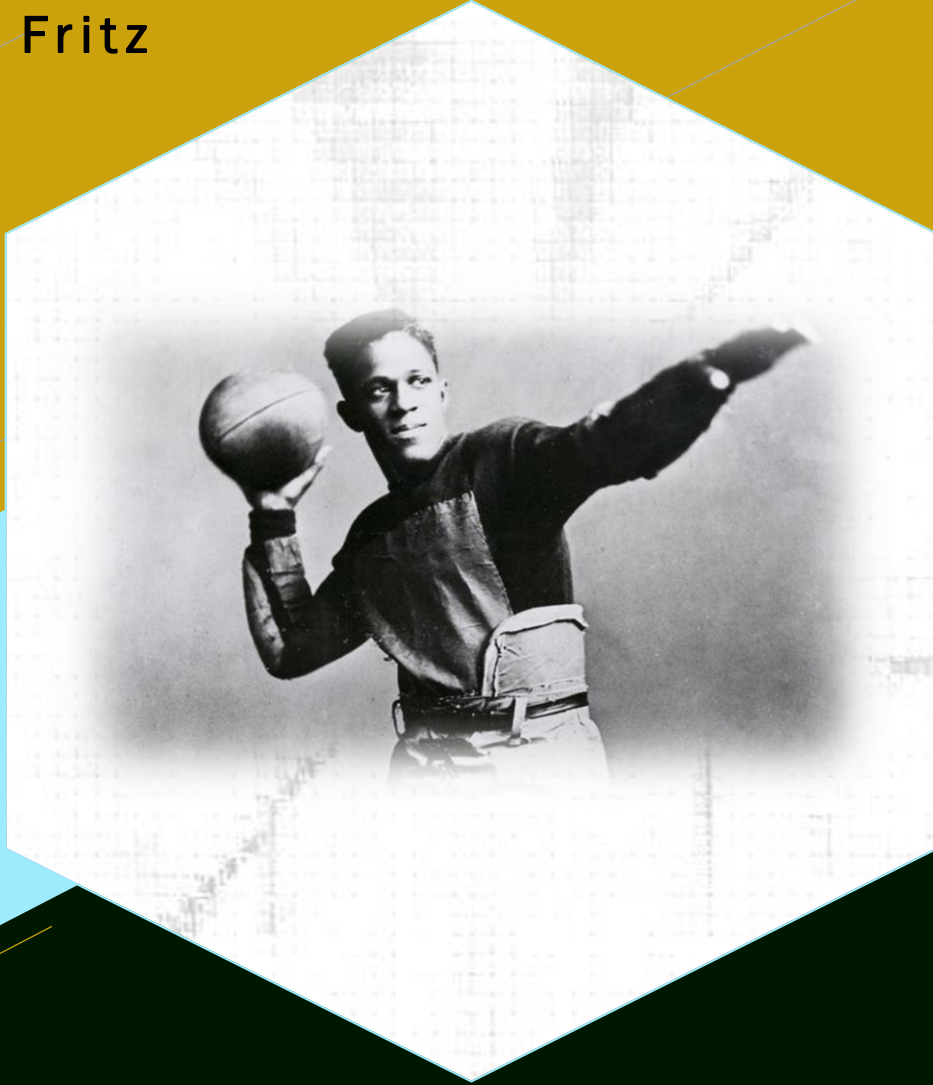




As a booking agent and promoter, Pollard launched the careers of many African American artists and created “soundies”, a precursor to music videos, to showcase black musicians.

# Fritz Pollard

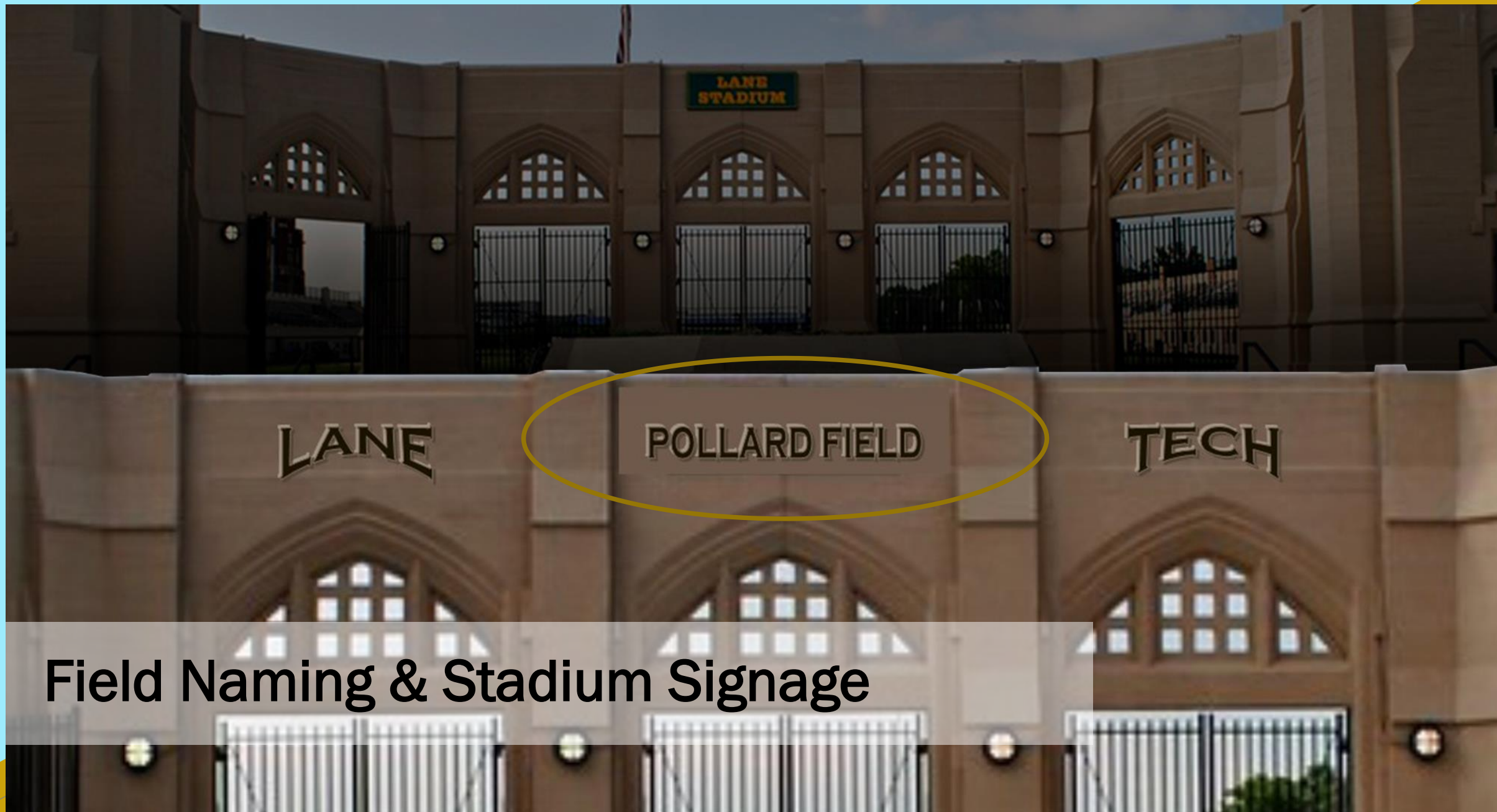
## Honoring Fritz



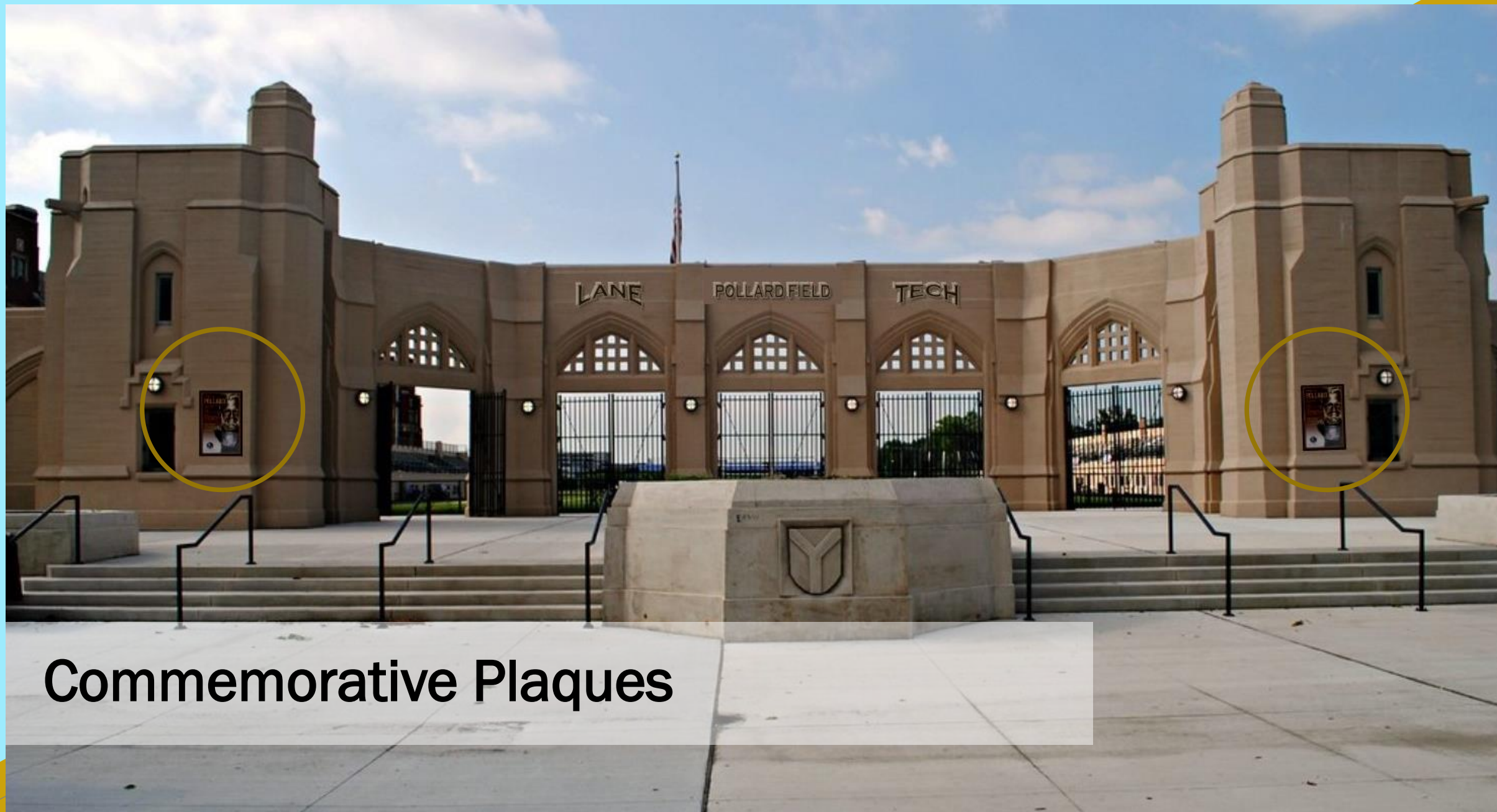
### “Pollard Field” Proposition

- Name the football field at Lane Stadium for Fritz Pollard
- Install commemorative plaques at the stadium entrance, highlighting Pollard’s achievements
- Coordinate companion curriculum on sports history and racial equity relative to Pollard for current Lane students





## Field Naming & Stadium Signage

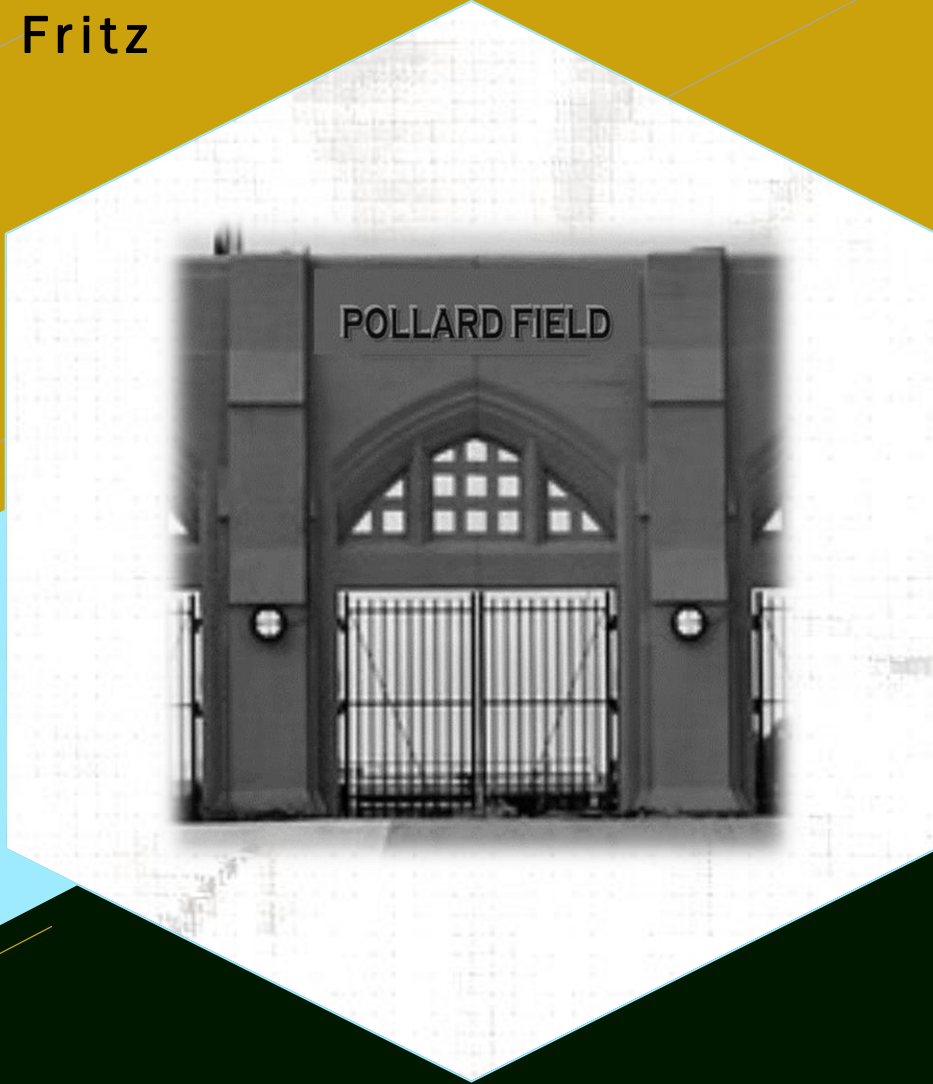


**Commemorative Plaques**



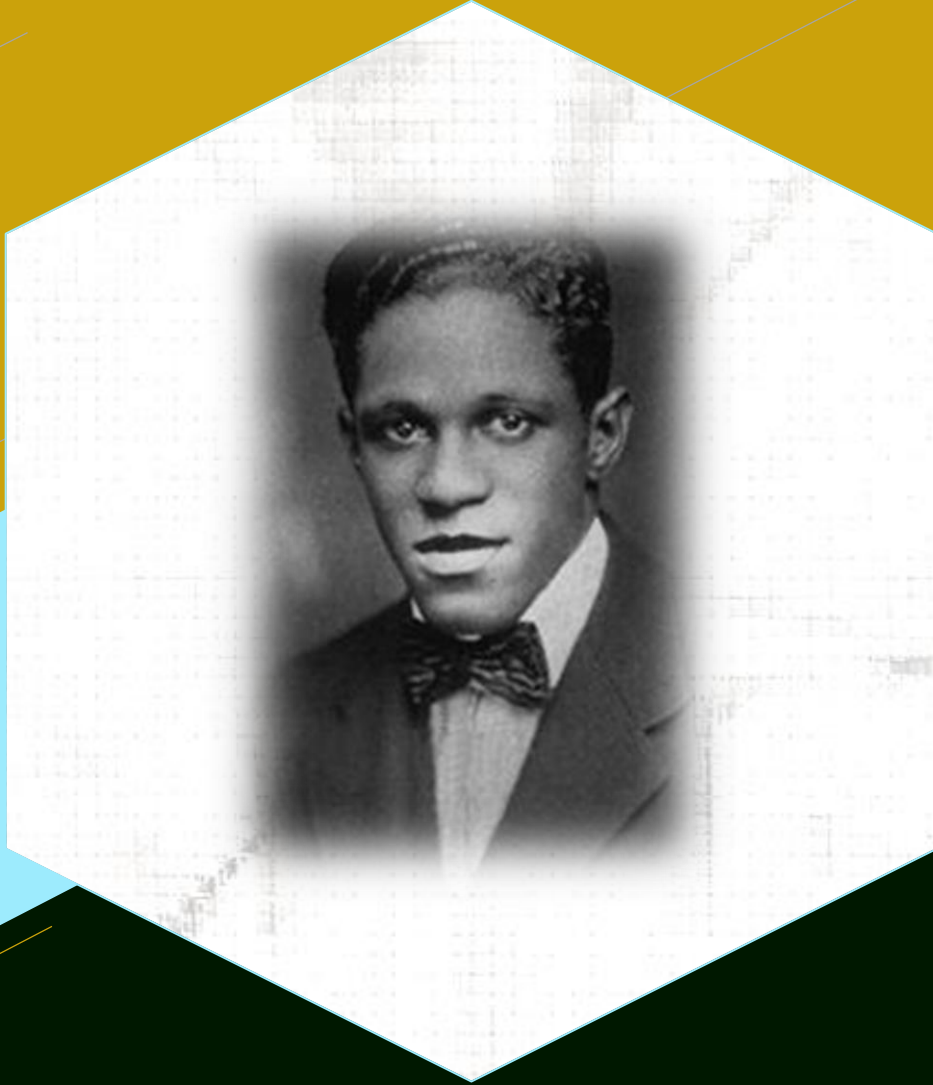
# Fritz Pollard

Honoring Fritz



## Pollard Field Commitment

- LTAA to coordinate funding, design, fabrication & installation in collaboration with Lane Tech College Prep and CPS Sports Administration, Equity & Facilities Departments
- Opportunity for community education, healing and celebration
- Project will bring together a range of stakeholders; BIPOC, athletes, historians, football fans/alumni/boosters, social justice advocates, families, teachers and five generations of Lane Tech alumni



# Fritz Pollard Class of 1912

We build on foundations we did not lay  
We warm ourselves by fires we did not light  
We sit in the shade of trees we did not plant  
We drink from wells we did not dig  
We profit from persons we did not know