

ARKANSAS BLACK HISTORY



Courtesy of Philander Smith College

Philander Smith College is a private, historically black college in Little Rock. It was founded in 1877 as Walden Seminary to provide educational opportunities for formerly enslaved individuals west of the Mississippi, and the Rev. Thomas Moore was named the first president. The name was changed in 1882 to honor the financial contributions of Adeline Smith who was the widow of Philander Smith. The school has a long-standing relationship with the United Methodist Church. The school awarded its first bachelor's degree in 1888. Students from Philander Smith College were known for their activism. During the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, Philander Smith College students were engaged in nonviolent resistance; they were instrumental in the desegregation of the downtown lunch counters in Little Rock.



ARKANSAS
HERITAGE