

Research Update June 2025

To date, the Colorado Black Equity Study team has:

- Completed a study of the slaveholding backgrounds of early Colorado politicians, which identified nine leading Colorado politicians who had personally owned slaves along with dozens more who were raised in slaveholding families.
- Completed a study of lynching in late 19th-century Colorado, including the complicity of the state government in allowing lynchings of Black Coloradans to occur—and to go unpunished.
- Followed Black Coloradans' experience with the legal system into the 20th century by examining laws dealing with race, documenting the state's failure to enforce antidiscrimination laws, establishing the KKK's deep involvement in criminal justice, and researching early Black lawyers in Colorado.
- Identified bombings that targeted Black Denverites in the 1920s (image), and documented how later legal policies such as zoning and restrictive covenants kept Black residents largely out of neighborhoods near City Park until after World War II. [Source: *Rocky Mountain News*, November 16, 1921.]
- Documented historical banking practices among Black Coloradans by examining the records of an important Black financial institution (American Woodmen), researching historical lending practices in Boulder, establishing the KKK ties of Denver bankers, and analyzing historical wealth data from the Census.



In summer 2025, the Colorado Black Equity Study team is:

- Drafting sections of the report covering the late 19th century.
- Conducting oral histories with Black Coloradans.
- Continuing research in the areas of criminal justice, housing, and banking.
- Partnering with museums and historical societies across the state for additional research in rural areas and small towns.
- Partnering with the state's GIS team to map historical data on Black Coloradans for use in both internal analysis and public presentation.
- Sending a staff researcher to Washington, DC, to examine the Urban League and NAACP collections at the Library of Congress.

In fall 2025, the Colorado Black Equity Study team will:

- Begin in-depth research in the areas of education and health.
- Complete studies on Pueblo, Black suburbanization, and mass incarceration.