FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 26, 2013

AMTRAK CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MARCH ON WASHINGTON  
Honors civil rights and Pullman Porter leader A. Philip Randolph

WASHINGTON — To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington, Amtrak is honoring A. Philip Randolph, a leader of the civil rights march, and who formed the first African-American labor union for Pullman Porters.

America’s Railroad®, along with the A. Philip Randolph Institute, hosted a wreath-laying ceremony this afternoon at the A. Philip Randolph statue at Washington Union Station.

“As we pause to recognize the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington, an important moment in history, we also remember Mr. Randolph’s fight for the rights of others that inspired him to be the voice of the Pullman Porters,” said Amtrak President and CEO Joe Boardman.

“Ultimately, his actions as a civil rights advocate helped to shape America’s railroad system.”

The Pullman Company, founded by George Pullman, manufactured railroad cars from the mid-1800s into the 20th Century and developed sleeping cars that bore the company’s name, Pullman cars. The Pullman Company hired African-Americans to work as porters on board its trains, and these porters became renowned for their outstanding service. Pullman Porters, as they came to be known, were organized into the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters under the leadership of Randolph in 1925. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters was the first union led by African-Americans to receive a charter in the American Federation of Labor.

“We are extremely proud of the legacy of A. Philip Randolph. His passion for justice and -more-
economic freedom for all inspired him to lead a movement and encourage change for all people, including those working on trains,” said Clayola Brown, president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

The statue of Randolph stands on the concourse of Washington Union Station. Amtrak named one of its sleeping cars, Superliner II Deluxe Sleeper No. 32503, the “A. Philip Randolph” in his honor.

Passenger trains played a pivotal role in America’s history. During the Great Migration of the early 1900s, African-Americans left the rural South aboard passenger trains to the Northeast and other regions of the country in search of better wages and job opportunities.

About Amtrak®:
Amtrak is America’s Railroad®, the nation’s intercity passenger rail service and its high-speed rail operator. A record 31.2 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2012 on more than 300 daily trains — at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) — that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian provinces. Amtrak operates intercity trains in partnership with 15 states and contracts with 13 commuter rail agencies to provide a variety of services. Enjoy the journey® at Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on facebook.com/Amtrak and follow us at twitter.com/Amtrak.

About A. Philip Randolph Institute:
A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin, are co-founders of the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI). Their fight for workers’ rights and civil rights were inseparable. They founded APRI in 1965 to continue the struggle for social, political and economic justice for all working Americans. 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.

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