



## Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools Celebrate WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Prepared by the Office of Multicultural Affairs

### The Women's Movement

The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) for Social Studies provide our students the opportunity to examine the Civil Rights Movement and the changing role of women during the second half of the twentieth century. Students in grades 3 and beyond learn about the life and contributions of Sojourner Truth, Susan B. Anthony, Georgia O'Keefe, Eleanor Roosevelt, Rosa Parks, and many others.

Two significant factors contributed to the emergence of women's history. The women's movement of the sixties caused women to question their invisibility in traditional American history texts. The movement also raised the aspirations as well as the opportunities of women, and produced a growing number of female historians. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, one of the early women's historians, has remarked that "without question, our first inspiration was political. Aroused by feminist charges of economic and political discrimination . . . we turned to our history to trace the origins of women's second-class status."



## Pocahontas

**Pocahontas** (pōkuhon'tus) [[key](#)], c.1595–1617, Native North American woman, daughter of Chief [Powhatan](#). Pocahontas, meaning “playful one” (her real name was said to be Matoaka), used to visit the English in Virginia at Jamestown. According to the famous story, she saved the life of the captured Capt. John [Smith](#) just as he was about to have his head

smashed at the direction of Powhatan. In 1613, Pocahontas was captured by Capt. Samuel Argall, taken to Jamestown, and held as a hostage for English prisoners then in the hands of her father. At Jamestown she was converted to Christianity and baptized as Rebecca. John [Rolfe](#), a settler, gained the permission of Powhatan and the governor, Sir Thomas Dale, and married her in Apr., 1614. The union brought peace with the Native Americans for eight years.

## Bradstreet, Anne (Dudley)



**Bradstreet, Anne (Dudley)**, c. 1612–1672, early American poet, Northampton, England, considered the first significant woman author in the American colonies. She came to Massachusetts in the Winthrop Puritan group in 1630 with her father, Thomas Dudley, and her husband, Simon Bradstreet, both later governors of the state. A dutiful Puritan wife who raised a large family, she nevertheless found time to write poetry. In 1650 her first volume of verse appeared in London as *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America*. It was followed by *Several Poems* (Boston, 1678), which contains “Contemplations,” probably her best work.

## Ross, Betsy



**Ross, Betsy**, 1752–1836, American seamstress. Her full name was Elizabeth Griscom Ross. She is known to have made flags during the American Revolution, although the long-accepted story that she designed and made the first American national flag (the Stars and Stripes) is generally discredited.

## Anthony, Susan Brownell



**Anthony, Susan Brownell**, 1820–1906, American reformer and leader of the woman-suffrage movement, b. Adams, Mass.; daughter of Daniel Anthony, Quaker abolitionist. From the age of 17, when she was a teacher in rural New York state, she agitated for equal pay for women teachers, for coeducation, and for college training for girls. When the Sons of Temperance refused to admit women into their movement, she organized the first woman's temperance association, the Daughters of Temperance. At a temperance meeting in 1851, she lectured (1851–60) on women's rights and on abolition, and, with Stanton, secured the first laws in the New York state legislature guaranteeing to women rights over their children and control of property and wages.



## Blackwell, Elizabeth

**Blackwell, Elizabeth**, 1821–1910, American physician, b. England; sister of Henry Brown [Blackwell](#). She was the first woman in the United States to receive a medical degree, which was granted (1849) to her by Geneva Medical College (then part of Geneva College, early name of Hobart). With her sister, Emily Blackwell (1826–1910) who was also a doctor, and Marie Zackrzewska, she founded (1857) the New York Infirmary for Women and Children, which was expanded in 1868 to include a Women's College for the training of doctors, the first of its kind. In 1869, Dr. Blackwell settled in England, where she became (1875) professor of gynecology at the London School of Medicine for Women, which she had helped to establish. She wrote *Pioneer Work in Opening the Medical Profession to Women* (1895) and many other books and papers on health and education.



## Sojourner Truth

During the Civil War, **Sojourner Truth** spoke on the Union's behalf, as well as for enlisting black troops for the cause and freeing slaves. In 1864, she worked among freed slaves at a government refugee camp on an island in Virginia and was employed by the National

Freedman's Relief Association in Washington, D.C. After the Civil War ended, she continued working to help the newly freed slaves through the Freedman's Relief Association, then the Freedman's Hospital in Washington. In 1867, she moved from Harmonia to Battle Creek, converting William Merritt's "barn" into a house, for which he gave her the deed four years later. In 1870, she began campaigning for the federal government to provide former slaves with land in the "new West." Sojourner made a few appearances around Michigan, speaking about temperance and against capital punishment.



## Bethune, Mary McLeod

**Bethune, Mary McLeod** (*buthyOOon'*) [[key](#)], 1875–1955, American educator, b. Mayesville, S.C., grad. Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, 1895. The 17th child of former slaves, she taught (1895–1903) in a series of southern mission schools before settling in Florida to found the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute for Negro Girls (1904). From 1904 to 1942 and again from 1946 to 1947, she served as president of the institute, which, after merging with Cookman Institute (1923), became Bethune-Cookman College. A leader in the American black community, she founded the National Council of Negro Women (1935) and was director (1936-44) of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration.



## Roosevelt, Eleanor

**Roosevelt, Eleanor** (Anna Eleanor Roosevelt) (*rō'zuvelt*) [[key](#)], 1884–1962, American humanitarian, b. New York City. The daughter of Elliott Roosevelt and niece of Theodore

[Roosevelt](#), she was an active worker in social causes before she married (1905) Franklin Delano [Roosevelt](#). From 1945 to 1953 (and again in 1961) she was a U.S. delegate to the United Nations, and in 1946 she was made chair of the Commission on Human Rights, a subsidiary of the UN Economic and Social Council. In that capacity, she was a key figure in the creation of the groundbreaking Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).



## Parks, Rosa M.

[Rosa Louise McCauley Parks 1913-2005](#) - An African American civil rights activist whom the [U.S. Congress](#) later called the "Mother of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement."

On Dec. 1, 1955, in Montgomery, AL, Parks, age 42, refused to obey bus driver James [Blake's](#) order that she give up her seat to make room for a white passenger. Her action was not the first of its kind. But unlike previous individual actions of [civil disobedience](#), Parks' action sparked the [Montgomery Bus Boycott](#). Parks's act of defiance became an important symbol of the modern Civil Rights Movement and Parks became an international icon of resistance to [racial segregation](#). She organized and collaborated with civil rights leaders, including boycott leader [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#), helping to launch him to national prominence in the civil rights movement.



## Teresa, Mother

[Teresa, Mother](#), 1910–97, Roman Catholic missionary in India, winner of the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize, b. Skopje (now in Macedonia) as Agnes Goxha Bojaxhiu. Of Albanian parentage, she went to India at 17, becoming a nun and teaching school in Calcutta (now Kolkata). In

1948 she left the convent and founded the Missionaries of Charity, which now operates schools, hospitals, orphanages, and food centers worldwide. She was beatified by Pope John Paul II.



## Chisholm, Shirley Anita St. Hill

**Chisholm, Shirley Anita St. Hill** (chiz'um) [[key](#)], 1924–2005, U.S. congresswoman (1969–83), b. Brooklyn, N.Y. An expert on early childhood education, she worked (1959–64) as a consultant to the New York City bureau of child welfare before serving (1964–68) in the state assembly. Elected (1968) to the U.S. House of Representatives as a Democrat, Chisholm became the first black woman to serve in that body. She quickly gained national attention as a vocal critic of the war in Vietnam and the House seniority system and as an outspoken advocate of the interests of the urban poor. An active member of the [Congressional Black Caucus](#), Chisholm made an unsuccessful bid for the 1972 Democratic presidential nomination. In 1993 she was nominated to be U.S. ambassador to Jamaica but withdrew because of ill health.



## Nancy Pelosi

**Democrat Nancy Pelosi** became the Speaker of the House of Representatives on Jan. 4, 2007. She is the first woman ever to hold the post. Pelosi graduated from Trinity College in Washington, D.C. in 1962. She worked her way up through the state Democratic party before entering Congress after a special election in California's 8th District in 1987. She was named Minority Leader in November of 2002, becoming the first woman to lead a political party in the history of the U.S. Congress. After Democrats won control of the House of

Representatives in the national elections of November 2006, she was elected Speaker of the House for the session beginning in 2007.



## Hillary Clinton

She was the first student to speak at Wellesley College's commencement, the first female partner at Arkansas's prestigious Rose Law firm, the first First Lady to hold a post-graduate degree, the first former First Lady to hold a seat in the U.S. Senate, and the first former First Lady to run for president. She served as a staff attorney for the Children's Defense Fund and was also on the congressional Impeachment Inquiry staff in 1974, at the tail end of the Watergate scandal.

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