

2024



WOMEN!



2024



Created by

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The Women's History Center
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nationalwomensfoundation.org



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A note on titles, degrees, and genders:

Many of the women in this planner earned titles and degrees recognizing their education, accomplishments, and positions. It was impossible to document them all with consistency and accuracy—especially over three centuries. Therefore, we have only used names throughout, recognizing that all women referenced deserve enormous respect and acknowledgement for their accomplishments. The focus of this planner is on the women of DC. A number of these amazing historic individuals pushed the boundaries – for their era – of gender norms and traditional sexual orientation. We celebrate their strength and determination to live their own lives despite enormous social pressure to the contrary.



DC WOMEN!

INTRODUCTION

Washington, DC

DC Women! celebrates women in many fields. It documents giants who have had a profound impact on the District of Columbia and on all of us who live here. The images and brief stories in *DC Women!* should inspire us all. This was a difficult planner to prepare. First, it was impossible to do justice to even a fraction of the amazing women of Washington, DC. There are very brief profiles of more than 150 DC women, a small percentage of the women who deserve to be recognized for their contributions to Washington and to the nation. The list of women we haven't included is long! Among them: First Ladies. Congresswomen. Appointees. Even the first woman Vice President! We did not include women who spent years in DC and made important contributions but who represented another place or maintained their primary residence in another location.

Very profound realities and inequities underlie DC's history. We hope that *DC Women!* stimulates interest in DC history and the important contributions of these remarkable women. The digital version of the planner includes links and references for students and others interested in exploring some of these issues and topics in greater depth. It is available on the website of the National Women's Foundation.

DC Women! is a planner. It is intended as a tool to inspire and help us set goals for 2024—an important year—and record our plans and progress over its course. Many of our past gains are under attack today. Women must continue the struggle to protect the vote—especially for people of color and youth—as well as reproductive and other rights, and in the case of DC, the full privileges of a state! We must each work to ensure that hard-won rights are protected, restored, and won for future generations.

Let's honor these women by making a difference in 2024.

With hope and gratitude,

Pamela R. Johnson
National Women's Foundation
Washington, DC

2024

JANUARY

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2025

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JANUARY 2024

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EDUCATION

In the 19th century, many people came to Washington drawn by its educational opportunities, especially freedmen and women from the South, where formal education for Blacks was prohibited or limited. In 1804, Congress established a public school system for DC. Schools such as Eastern High School (1) were built, although for white children only. A number of women and abolitionists opened and taught in schools for Black children; one such was Anne Marie Becroft, who established a school for Catholic girls in Georgetown in 1820.

- [Abolitionist Myrtilla Miner](#) (2) opened the Normal School for Colored Girls in 1851 to train teachers; it was a predecessor of the University of the District of Columbia.
- [Mary Jane Patterson](#) (3), thought to be the first Black woman to obtain a college degree, taught and was the first Black principal at the Preparatory High School for Colored Youth, now Dunbar High School.
- [Nannie Helen Burroughs](#) (4) established a National Training School for Women and Girls in 1909 (5).
- [Anna Julia Cooper](#) (6) was a brilliant scholar, civil rights activist, and writer as well as a teacher and principal at the M Street School.
- [Lucy Diggs Slowe](#) (7) was an educator, first Dean of Women at Howard, tennis champion, and an AKA founder.

In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that the segregation of DC's schools was unconstitutional. DC adopted a plan and integrated schools (8) rapidly although many white families moved to the suburbs.

DC WOMEN!



EDUCATION



DC's universities and their population of students have grown over the years. Today there are 199,730 university students in DC; 63% of them are women. Georgetown University, founded in 1789, admitted women to the College in 1969. Congress established George Washington University in 1812 with the first woman admitted in 1888 and Black students in 1954. Howard University admitted women from its founding in 1857.

DC ★ **WOMEN**
Learn More!

★ **MINER ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL**

★ **A VOICE FROM THE SOUTH**
by Anna Julia Cooper

★ JANUARY 2024

Monday
1 New Year's Day

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JANUARY 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN!

Helen Hayes (1900-1993)

"The hardest years of life are between ten and seventy."—Born in DC, Helen Hayes is a three-time Tony winner, two-time Oscar winner, and Grammy winner. Best known for playing the role of Queen Victoria in "Victoria Regina" for 969 shows during the 1930s, Hayes moved to the silver screen, and even recorded an audio of the Bill of Rights. Known as the "First Lady of American Theater." [Helen Hayes Awards](#) have been presented since 1984 to honor and foster the growth of Washington's theater community.



JANUARY

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★ JANUARY 2024

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Saturday
13 Delta Sigma Theta founded

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JANUARY 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN!

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Founders
"Intelligence Is the Torch of Wisdom"

—Founded in 1913 at Howard University, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority was created by 22 Howard women to promote academic excellence and public service to communities in need. Today, its chapters around the globe are primarily composed of Black, college-educated women who continue to work to address serious issues impacting their community.



JANUARY

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★ JANUARY 2024

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15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Alpha Kappa Alpha founded

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DC WOMEN!



JANUARY 2024

Nellie May Quander (1880-1961)

Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority

—Washington, DC native Nellie M. Quander, was a descendant of Nancy Carter Quander, an enslaved person freed by George Washington in his last will and testament. Higher education: Howard University (BA), Columbia University, and Uppsala, Sweden, (MA) and a teaching certificate from NYU. Quander was a lifelong educator, suffragist, activist, and the first international president of the first Black sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA), founded at Howard in 1908.



JANUARY

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★ JANUARY 2024

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DC WOMEN!



JANUARY 2024

Edna Burke Jackson (1911-2004)

—Dunbar High School and *summa cum laude* Howard graduate, outstanding educator, and poet. After DC schools were desegregated in 1955, Jackson became the first Black woman teacher at Woodrow Wilson HS. Beloved history teacher for 22 years. In 2022, Wilson HS was renamed Jackson-Reed to honor Jackson and Vincent Reed, DC's first Black principal. It is the first HS in DC to be named after a woman.



JANUARY

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DC WOMEN!



JANUARY 2024

Maria Tukeva

"I have to keep thinking about what envelope to push next, what challenge we must overcome."— Principal Maria Tukeva founded and has led the bilingual Columbia Heights Educational Campus (CHEC) for more than 35 years, successfully preparing immigrant and economically disadvantaged (Title I) students for success in college and careers.



JANUARY

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SLAVERY & EMANCIPATION

Founded in 1791, Washington, the new nation’s capital, was carved out of two states that permitted slavery, Maryland and Virginia. It also served as a major slave market and, by the 1850 Census, was home to 8,461 free and 4,694 enslaved people. Enslaved women, who largely served as domestic workers, outnumbered men. From its founding, Washington was a destination for enslaved individuals seeking freedom and a center for anti-slavery activists.

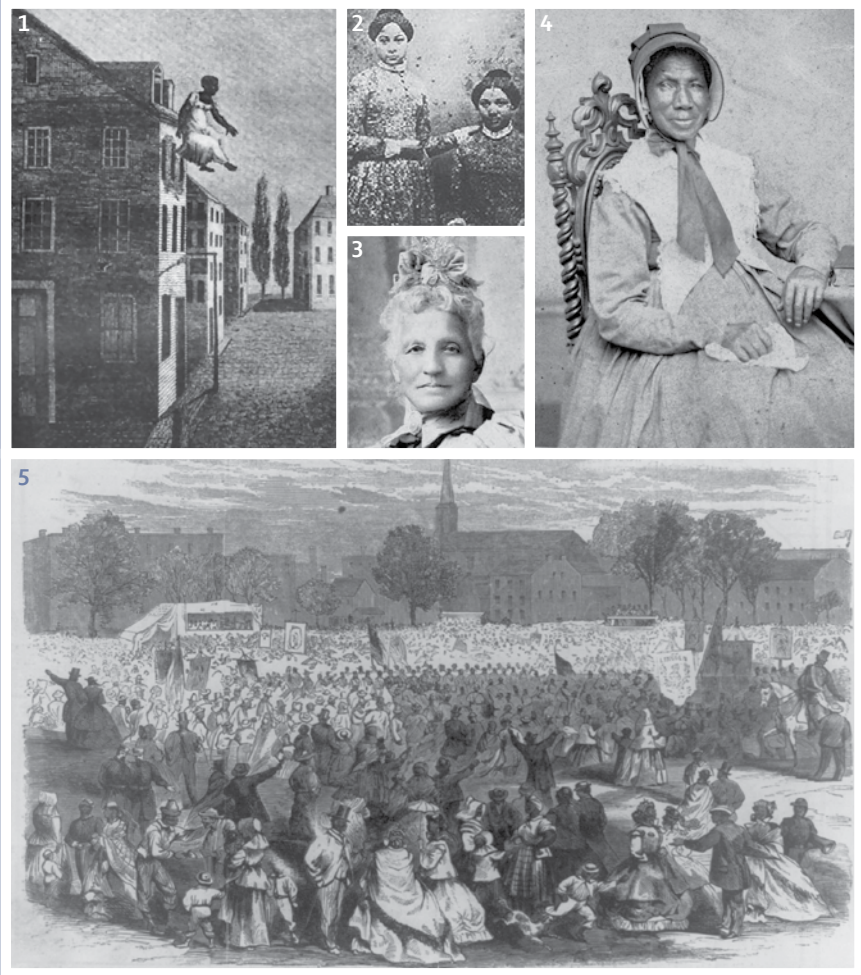
- Anna Williams (1), born enslaved in 1791, jumped from the 3rd story window of an F Street Tavern to escape a slave trader from Georgia. Williams’ two daughters were sold into slavery.
- In 1848, the teenaged Edmonson sisters, Mary and Emily (2), tried to flee with other enslaved individuals on the *Pearl*, a schooner bound for freedom in the North. After the plan was discovered, the sisters were shipped to New Orleans for sale, then purchased and returned to DC. Mary later died from tuberculosis but Emily, whose freedom was purchased by sympathizers, entered the Normal School for Colored Girls and was a passionate abolitionist and neighbor of Frederick Douglass.
- [Elizabeth Keckley](#) (3), a seamstress, purchased her own freedom and became Mary Todd Lincoln’s personal dressmaker. Keckley also founded the Contraband Relief Association which supported freed women and children.
- [Mary Dines](#) (4), formerly enslaved in Maryland, escaped to DC in 1850. When the Civil War broke out, Dines settled in a “contraband camp” and sang with a chorus during President Lincoln’s visit to the camp.

On April 16, 1862, President Lincoln signed the DC Compensated

DC WOMEN!




SLAVERY & EMANCIPATION



[Emancipation Act](#), freeing all enslaved individuals in DC, months before the national Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863. On April 19, 1866, Washingtonians celebrated the fourth anniversary of DC's Emancipation in Franklin Square (5).

DC  **WOMEN**
Learn More!

 [Explore JSTOR](#)

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DC WOMEN!



FEBRUARY 2024

Helen Appo Cook (1837-1913)

—A leader of the movement for African American women's clubs, advocate for universal suffrage, education, and communities and women of color. Cook attended the first convention for universal suffrage in Washington in 1869 and was a critic of Susan B. Anthony's lack of support for suffrage for Black men. Cook was president of the Colored Women's League and a co-founder of the National Association of Colored Women in 1896.



FEBRUARY

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★ FEBRUARY 2024

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DC WOMEN!



FEBRUARY 2024

Georgia Douglas Johnson (1877-1966) "*The heart of a woman goes forth with the dawn, As a lone bird, soft winging, so restlessly on.*"—A poet, playwright, musician, teacher, and part of the Harlem Renaissance, Johnson protested racial inequities and lynching through poems and plays. Johnson's S Street home was a gathering place for African American writers and intellectuals for more than 40 years. Published in *The Crisis*, Johnson's work influenced Maya Angelou and many others.



FEBRUARY

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★ FEBRUARY 2024

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19 Presidents' Day

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DC WOMEN!



FEBRUARY 2024

Ophelia Settle Egypt (1903-1984)

"No matter how poor, rich or successful you become, always reach out to those around you."

—Educator, sociologist, medical social worker, and early proponent of family planning, Egypt worked to make women's and reproductive healthcare accessible to Black communities and directed the first Planned Parenthood clinic in SE Washington. Conducted oral histories with formerly enslaved individuals across the South and authored a seminal work, *The Unwritten History of Slavery* (1945).



FEBRUARY

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★ FEBRUARY 2024

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DC WOMEN!



FEBRUARY 2024

Patricia Harris (1924-1985)

"I am a Black woman, the daughter of a dining car waiter... a Black woman who could not buy a house eight years ago in parts of (DC). I didn't start out as a member of a prestigious law firm, but as a woman who needed a scholarship to go to school."—Harris, a lawyer, educator, and public servant, broke many barriers for African American women—first to be a US Ambassador; first to be a member of the president's Cabinet as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and first member of the board of a Fortune 500 company (IBM). Harris was also the first National Executive Director of Delta Sigma Theta.



FEBRUARY

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WOMEN & THE CIVIL WAR

DC women supported the Civil War in a variety of ways. They said goodbye to fathers, husbands, and sons and took care of the home front. They went to work, bought bonds, taught in schools, ran hospitals, cared for the wounded, and paid taxes.

- Widows and mothers of soldiers who had been killed were hired by the US Treasury to cut and count banknotes being printed on sheets of four to finance the war (1).
- [Elizabeth Proctor Thomas](#) (2), born a free woman, was forced to give up both home and farmland so that Fort Stevens could be built.
- [Clara Barton](#) (3) was an early female employee of the US Patent Office when the Civil War broke out. During the war, Barton served as a nurse to wounded soldiers on the front lines and organized relief support, becoming known as the “Angel of the Battlefield.” Following the war, Barton established the Missing Soldiers Office to reunite families—now a small museum—and, later, the American Red Cross.
- [Mary Edwards Walker](#) (4), an abolitionist and spy, was the first woman to serve as a surgeon in the Union Army. Captured by Confederates, Walker was the only woman to be awarded the Medal of Honor.
- 3,000 women—including Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman (who also served as a spy for Union troops) and nuns—served as nurses in the Civil War and helped revolutionize medicine. Before the war, all nurses had been men. Nurses on both sides are honored in a DC Memorial (5).

DC WOMEN!



WOMEN & THE CIVIL WAR



Following the war, many women were empowered by their wartime experiences. Clara Barton observed that the Civil War advanced opportunities and women's social position by 50 years.

DC  **WOMEN**
Learn More!

 DC CONTRABAND CAMPS

 WOMEN'S ROLE IN CIVIL WAR

★ MARCH 2024 Women's History Month

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Thursday
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Friday
8 International Women's Day

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Sunday
10 Harriet Tubman Day

MARCH 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN!

Parade for Women's Suffrage

(March 3, 1913)

"We demand an amendment to the Constitution of the United States enfranchising the women of this country."—In the first civil rights march in Washington, led by suffragist Alice Paul, 5,000 women came from across the US and other countries to advocate for an amendment to secure the right to vote for women. Howard sorority sisters, led by Mary Church Terrell, participated despite being discouraged by organizers concerned about alienating southern participants.



MARCH

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★ MARCH 2024

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Sunday
17 St. Patrick's Day

MARCH 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN! ★★

C.E. Ray (Charlotte) (1850-1911)

—Ray was a barrier breaker for women and African American women, becoming the first Black woman lawyer in the US in 1872; the first admitted to the DC Bar, and the first woman admitted to the DC Supreme Court. Ray was an outstanding attorney. Nonetheless, and despite advertising as C.E. (not Charlotte) Ray, prejudice against the young lawyer was too strong and the practice failed. Ray moved to New York and became a teacher—one of the few professional fields that welcomed women — and a lifelong advocate for women’s rights.



MARCH

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★ MARCH 2024

Monday
18

Tuesday
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MARCH 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN! ★★

Shirley Ann Jackson

"...perhaps the ultimate role model for women in science"—Born in DC, the first Black woman to earn a doctorate in any subject at MIT, is a [theoretical physicist](#), and a [highly regarded leader in research, public policy, and academia](#). Appointed as head of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, becoming both the first woman and first African American chair. Jackson also served on the President's Council of Advisors on Science, on the Nature Conservancy Global Board, and as president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for 23 years.



MARCH

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★ MARCH 2024

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31 Easter Sunday

MARCH 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN! ★★

Katharine Graham (1917-2001)

—*Personal History*, Katharine Graham's memoir, won a Pulitzer Prize in 1998. During 1963-1991, Graham was at the helm of the family's paper, *The Washington Post*, at a critical moment in the women's movement and the Watergate investigation. This directly affected Graham's attitudes and led to the promotion of gender equality within the company. Graham was the first woman elected to the board of the Associated Press and the first woman publisher of a major American newspaper in the 20th century.



MARCH

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APRIL 2024

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WOMEN & SOCIAL JUSTICE

DC women have long been committed to a broad range of social justice issues, including abolition, education, equal pay, desegregation, maternal and child health, poverty, and suffrage. For DC’s Black women, social justice was often deeply personal, reflecting their life experiences and commitment to the many needs of their community (1).

- [Mary Church Terrell](#) (2), a teacher and lifelong activist for racial and social justice, was elected as the first president of the National Association of Colored Women in 1896, working alongside such extraordinary co-founders as Harriet Tubman, Anna Julia Cooper, and Ida B. Wells. Even at 86, Terrell was picketing DC’s segregated restaurants.
- [Belva Lockwood](#) (3) was a lawyer, the first woman to practice in front of the Supreme Court, and, in 1884, the first to run for President. An ardent advocate for women’s rights, equal pay, suffrage, and other causes, Lockwood came to DC to have greater access to power and influence.
- [Marie Bottineau Baldwin](#) (4) was a lawyer who came to DC to advocate for the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and for Native American women.
- The daughter of enslaved parents, [Mary McLeod Bethune](#) (5) became an educator, college president, a presidential advisor, head of “the Black Cabinet” in the Roosevelt administration, close friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, and founder and long-time president of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). Bethune had a profound impact on innumerable issues and organizations and on the wellbeing of the Black community.
- [Dorothy Ferebee](#) (6), obstetrician at Freedmen’s Hospital and lifelong activist on behalf of the rights of women and Blacks.

DC WOMEN!



APRIL 2024

DC WOMEN!



WOMEN & SOCIAL JUSTICE



Ferebee was the second president of NCNW, founder of the Southeast Neighborhood House in 1929 to promote health of the poor in the Black community, and director of the Mississippi Health Project sponsored by AKA.

- Terrell, Baldwin, and Lockwood as well as members of the Delta Sigma Theta and AKA sororities marched in the 1913 parade for women's suffrage.

★ APRIL 2024

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DC WOMEN!



APRIL 2024

Marjorie M. Lawson (1912-2002)

—An attorney with two law degrees and the first Black woman judge appointed in DC, Lawson worked extensively on civil rights and urban renewal while living in Logan Circle. With a focus on real estate laws that benefited African American communities, Lawson was appointed the civil rights director during Kennedy's presidential campaign, and also served as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1965.



APRIL

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★ APRIL 2024

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DC WOMEN!



APRIL 2024

Sophie Lutterlough (1910-2009)

—A Dunbar graduate, Lutterlough was hired by the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History as the first woman elevator operator—on a trial basis. After studying the museum's displays and collections on lunch breaks and reading scientific texts on entomology (the study of insects), Lutterlough was finally accepted as a research assistant—one of the first African Americans in a scientific role. This [groundbreaking entomologist](#) identified centipedes, ticks, and other insects and even had a tick named *Pygmephorus lutterloughae*.



APRIL

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★ APRIL 2024

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DC WOMEN!



APRIL 2024

Evalyn Walsh McLean (1886-1947)

"Confidence, to my way of thinking, generally is all the magic needed to work miracles."

—An American author and mining heiress, McLean was a popular DC figure and close friend of Alice Longworth and Florence Harding. McLean was the last private owner of the [Hope Diamond](#), one of the most famous diamonds in the world. The Hope Diamond is currently on display at the Smithsonian.



APRIL

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★ APRIL 2024

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DC WOMEN!



APRIL 2024

Georgia Ellard

—In 1952, Ellard moved to DC, a largely segregated city, and went to work for the National Park Service for 33 years—breaking barrier after barrier restricting opportunities for African Americans and women. Ellard started as a clerk-typist, worked up to professional positions, and ultimately became the Superintendent of Rock Creek Park, the country’s first and largest natural urban park.



APRIL

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WRITERS & JOURNALISTS

One of the ways women entered the public square was to write and publish. An extraordinary number of these writers and journalists lived and worked in Washington, DC.

- One of the first was [Anne Royall](#) (1), a writer and publisher committed to exposing political corruption. A travel writer on American life, Royall moved to DC in 1829 and wrote and published a newspaper on Capitol Hill.
- [Mary Clemmer Ames](#) (2), a keen observer and writer, reported on the Civil War from the front lines and wrote *Letters from Washington* and *Ten Years in Washington*.
- It was not easy to be a woman journalist in the 19th century. In 1897, after Marian Longfellow O'Donoghue was denied access to the all-male Washington Press Club, 17 women—writers, journalists, a poet, and a teacher—formed the [League of American Pen Women](#) (3) to support professional women writers.
- [First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt](#) was a prolific writer who also supported other women writers by holding a monthly press conference at the White House (4), providing women journalists access to important stories.

DC women broke many barriers:

- [Alice Dunnigan](#) (5)—the first African American woman to receive White House credentials (1948).
- [Ethel Payne](#) (6)—journalist and foreign correspondent and “First Lady of the Black Press.”
- [Connie Chung](#) (7)—the first Asian American to anchor a major TV news show.

DC WOMEN!



WRITERS & JOURNALISTS



- [Gwen Ifill](#) (8), the ground-breaking African Latina journalist, hosted the PBS TV program, *Washington Week in Review*.
- [Helen Thomas](#) (9)—a fixture of the White House press corps who covered ten US presidents and who celebrated a joint birthday with President Obama in the Press Briefing Room.
- [Carolivia Herron](#) (10)—a DC native, author of a *New York Times* best seller, *Nappy Hair*, and a professor at Harvard, Howard, and other colleges.

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DC DC WOMEN!



MAY 2024

Karin Tanabe

"I am a very small dot in this world. My actions are of little significance. But put together with the actions of many, they could have great significance." *National Public Radio*

Tanabe is a historical fiction writer whose novel—*The Gilded Years: A Novel*—is based on the experiences of the first African American to “pass” and attend Vassar College in 1897—40 years before they were allowed. Also a Vassar graduate, Tanabe was a writer for *Politico* and author of 7 books.



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★ MAY 2024

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12 Mother's Day

DC DC WOMEN!



MAY 2024

Maureen Bunyan

— One of the founders of the International Women's Media Foundation and the National Association of Black Journalists. Bunyan broke barriers in journalism and reporting at the local, national, and international levels. One of the first African American women anchors for a local evening newscast, Bunyan received numerous awards and local Emmys.



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★ MAY 2024

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DC DC WOMEN!



MAY 2024

Denise Rolark Barnes

"Everything that we write today becomes history for tomorrow."—Barnes is the publisher and second-generation owner of *The Washington Informer*. Having started to help out and work during summers from age 9, Barnes has led the development of a multimedia organization that serves Washington's African American community. Barnes also supports local youth through Washington Informer Charities which sponsors the DC National Spelling Bee, an African American heritage tour, scholarships, and events.



MAY

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DC DC WOMEN!



MAY 2024

Nina Totenberg, Susan Stamberg, Linda Wertheimer and Cokie Roberts

"...they were all but unstoppable." Washington Post

—The 2021 book, *Susan, Linda, Nina & Cokie: The Extraordinary Story of the Founding Mothers of NPR* by Lisa Napoli, outlines the careers and friendships of the four trailblazing journalists who turned the non-profit National Public Radio into one of the US's most popular media outlets and paved the way for women in broadcast journalism. Their stories offer new perspectives and uplift the voices of underrepresented communities.



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DC DC WOMEN!



MAY 2024

Martha B. Briggs (1838-1889)

"A born teacher...her work showed those qualities of head and heart that have made her name famous in the annals of education in the character of the graduates."—Born to Black abolitionists, Briggs believed that education was essential to end slavery. Briggs' career included traveling with 40 teachers to the South after the Civil War to teach newly freed Blacks. In 1869, she settled in DC to train teachers at what would become Howard's School of Education, as the principal of the Miner Normal School, and, then, as the principal at Howard.



MAY

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JUNE 2024

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ARTS

Washington has long had a vibrant art scene. DC women have expressed themselves as sculptors, painters, and muralists as well as in other media.

- [Vinnie Ream](#) (1), a precocious artist, sculpted a bust of Abraham Lincoln in 1865 at the age of only 17. At 18, Ream was commissioned by Congress to create Lincoln’s statue for Statuary Hall.
- As early as 1899, [Eastern High School](#) (2) was training young women in various art forms.
- Artists such as painter [Alice Pike Barney](#) and photographer [Frances Benjamin Johnston](#) were examples of “The New Woman” who engaged in social issues and reflected changing lifestyles in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Barney (3) was an American impressionist painter and sculptor with a studio on Sheridan Circle.
- Johnston (4), largely based in DC, traveled to photograph diverse subjects and changing lifestyles—including DC girls in art class (2) and this self-portrait astride a bicycle.
- [Alma Thomas](#) (5), after retiring as a DC art teacher, became known for “exuberant watercolors” and was a founding member of the Washington Color School. Although generally an abstract painter, Thomas participated in and painted an inspiring image of the 1963 March.
- [Lily Spandorf](#) (6) was a contemporary painter who has captured Washington’s buildings and neighborhoods as well as events like the Smithsonian Folklife Festivals and Christmas at the White House.



ARTS



- [Doris Fugh Lee](#) (7) trained in China, then taught and applied Chinese techniques to paintings of scenes in Washington.
- [Georgia Mills Jessup](#) (8) painted DC scenes and was also a sculptor who worked with clay inspired by the historic pottery of the Pamunkey Tribe of Virginia. Shown here with Wilhelmina Holladay.
- Born in the segregated South, [Peggy Cooper Cafritz](#) (9) came to DC to attend GW University. Cafritz became a DC fixture—a civil rights activist, innovative educator, patron of African and Afro-American arts and artists, and co-founder of Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

★ JUNE 2024

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DC WOMEN!



JUNE 2024

Marjorie Merriweather Post

(1887-1973)—A businesswoman, philanthropist, and art collector. An only child, Post inherited Postum Cereal Company at age 27. Well-prepared, having attended Board meetings from the age of 10, Post expanded the company including introducing frozen foods to the US. Post supported many causes and DC institutions such as the Smithsonian and the Kennedy Center and developed a large collection of art, jewelry, and furnishings as well as elaborate homes including [Hillwood, now a DC museum](#), and Mar-a-Lago.



JUNE

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★ JUNE 2024

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16 Father's Day

DC WOMEN!



JUNE 2024

jonetta rose barras

— barras, a prolific, award-winning DC-based poet, author—of *The Last of the Black Emperors* and *Whatever Happened to Daddy's Little Girl*—a frequent contributor to the Washington press, and now joined by weekly contributions in the TheDCLine. barras is committed to supporting fatherless girls and young women's self-actualization with arts and other tools. barras created a video series, "Trauma: A Barrier to Public Health," as a result of a prestigious 2018 fellowship at the USC Annenberg Center for Health Journalism.



JUNE

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★ JUNE 2024

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DC WOMEN!



JUNE 2024

Dorothy Gilliam

"I am not a maid, I am a reporter,"

—As the first Black woman reporter for *The Washington Post*, Gilliam faced constant discrimination, including being mistaken for a maid and walking miles to get lunch in a desegregated cafeteria. Over 30 years, Gilliam pushed through adversity and founded the Young Journalist Development Program to inspire more trail blazers. Dorothy Gilliam is also a talented author and television commentator who advocates for civil rights, social change, and newsroom diversity.



JUNE

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★ JUNE 2024

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DC WOMEN!



JUNE 2024

Betty Monkman

—A noted historian and author, Monkman served under eight presidents in the White House Curator's office (1967-2002), ultimately as Chief Curator. Today, Monkman works with the White House Historical Association to preserve and educate the public about the White House. Monkman is a noted interviewee for oral history projects and publications and widely cited authority on the history and furnishings of the White House, including its important collection of art.



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JULY 2024

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DC INSTITUTIONS

DC women have created a number of Washington’s important cultural and physical institutions that have endured over time. [Eliza Scidmore](#) (1), as an example, traveled extensively in Japan and became devoted to introducing cherry trees to Washington. Ultimately, the government of Japan donated the trees to DC in 1912. They thrived and are now one of the most loved and famous symbols of the District. There are many more examples, including:

- [Marjorie Phillips](#) (2), an artist and one of the first collectors of modern art in the US, co-founded the Phillips Gallery, an enduring treasure.
- [Marian Anderson](#) (3), barred from performing in Constitution Hall, gave the first integrated concert in Washington on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on Easter Sunday in 1939, creating what has become a sacred space and the site of countless marches and other events that continue to bring us together.
- [Mildred Bliss](#) (4) worked with landscape architect Beatrix Farrand and created the 53-acre garden known as Dumbarton Oaks in Georgetown.
- [Zelda Fichandler](#) (5) co-founded and, for 41 years, led Arena Stage—DC’s first integrated theater and the nation’s first regional theater.
- Architect [Chloethiel Woodard Smith](#) (6) designed the plans that defined the southwest waterfront and other parts of DC.
- [Wilhelmina Holladay](#) (7), determined to correct the lack of women artists in DC’s museums, conceived, founded, and led the National Museum of Women and the Arts.

DC WOMEN!



JULY 2024

DC WOMEN!



DC INSTITUTIONS



- [Loretta Neumann](#) (8) received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the DC Preservation League for activism on behalf of the preservation of DC's Civil War Defenses and many other contributions to preserve and protect the District's history and monuments.

DC  **WOMEN**
Learn More!

★ MARIAN ANDERSON as a Symbol of Justice in Media and Press

★ JULY 2024

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DC WOMEN!



JULY 2024

Alice Roosevelt Longworth (1884-1980)

"The other Washington Monument." "If you can't say something good about someone, sit right here by me."—Alice Roosevelt

Longworth was an American writer and the daughter of Theodore Roosevelt. Alice broke many of the social norms of the time and was unafraid to be herself. In fact, Alice frequently interrupted White House meetings and offered political advice, earning the unofficial title of political adviser to Theodore Roosevelt.



JULY

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★ JULY 2024

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DC WOMEN!



JULY 2024

Vanilla Beane (1919-2022)

—“Combining grace, elegance, and longevity, Ms. Vanilla Beane embodied Black excellence. Her talents have been on display in our city since I was just a little girl. No matter the occasion or the outfit, whether she was designing for a neighbor or a civil rights icon like Dorothy Height, Ms. Beane always knew how to make the perfect hat . . . her story is a part of DC’s story. She was DC’s Hat Lady.” Mayor Bowser



JULY

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DC WOMEN!



JULY 2024

National Association of Colored Women's Clubs

—Founded in July 1896 in DC by a “Who’s Who” of 19th century African American women as the National Association of Colored Women, the NACWC pursues social justice through a national network of clubs for youth and adults. Headquartered in DC, the organization and its national clubs and affiliates have supported equity, child welfare and education, suffrage, and many other social issues for more than 125 years. Here state delegations have come to DC to protest lynching.



JULY

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★ JULY 2024

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DC WOMEN!



JULY 2024

Concepción Picciotto (1936-2016)

"Read My Lips, No New Wars"—Picciotto, born in Spain and known as Connie, protested nuclear weapons across from the White House for more than 30 years through five presidents, reported to be the longest continuous protest in the US. Picciotto occupied a tent in Lafayette Park and posted handdrawn protest signs. Respected by many, Picciotto was memorialized in 2016 by fellow protestors and admirers.



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CIVIL RIGHTS & WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The 1960s–1970s were an extraordinary period, as activists addressed rights—and wrongs—around gender, race, and ethnicity. Their efforts led to significant changes for women and minorities in access to voting, education, reproductive rights, employment, equal pay, and more. How? Through massive demonstrations in DC (1), effective lobbying and strategizing, and transformative laws and judicial decisions, such as: Equal Pay Act (1963), Voting Rights Act (1965), Civil Rights Act of 1964 (including Titles VI and VII), Title IX (1972), and *Roe v. Wade* in 1973.

DC women led many of these initiatives, working with partners across the country, from Betty Friedan to Gloria Steinem. They got laws passed, and then worked hard to get the laws implemented and enforced. These initiators include:

- [Dorothy Height](#) (2), inspirational leader and visionary, known as the “Godmother of Civil Rights,” ally of the “big six” civil rights leaders, leader of the YWCA, and President of the NCNW.
- [Esther Peterson](#) (3), long-time consumer activist; labor lobbyist; head of the Women’s Bureau; and chair of President Kennedy’s Commission on the Status of Women, which documented discrimination against women, offered reforms to address them, and fostered state commissions nationwide.
- [Pauli Murray](#) (4), a lifelong activist, scholar, first African American with an S.J.D. from Yale Law School, first Black female Episcopal priest, and co-author, with Mary Eastwood (5), of “Jane Crow and the Law: Sex Discrimination and Title VII”. With 26 other women, they launched the National Organization for Women in 1966, which campaigns for economic and racial justice, reproductive rights, LGBTQIA+, and constitutional equality for women.
- [Bernice Sandler](#) worked with Congresswoman Edith Green to craft Title IX, banning sex discrimination in educational institutions receiving federal funding. She and Margaret Dunkle (6) led a national effort to make Title IX’s promise a reality through regulations and enforcement.
- [Karen Mulhauser](#) (7) was the first national executive director of the [National Abortion Rights Action League](#) (NARAL) and later Chair of Planned Parenthood MW.

DC WOMEN!



CIVIL RIGHTS & WOMEN'S RIGHTS



Many more DC women (and others) founded or led new organizations: Marcia Greenberger and Nancy Duff Campbell, the National Women's Law Center; Judy Lichtman, Women's Legal Defense Fund; Ellen McGovern, Lobby Corps, AAUW; and Olya Margolyn, National Council of Jewish Women.

Even after Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibited racial discrimination in educational institutions, it was still legal to discriminate against women until Title IX passed in 1972. Black women needed both Title VI and Title IX to get a fair educational shake.

Tragically, today, some of these hard-won rights are under attack, with the Supreme Court's reversal of basic tenets of the Voting Rights Act and *Roe v. Wade*, as well as new state laws and practices that have pushed back progress. But we can be inspired by the past and redouble our efforts to address today's rights—and wrongs—related to gender, race, and ethnicity.

DC ★ WOMEN
Learn More!

★ **WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY**

★ JULY 2024 ★ AUGUST 2024

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AUGUST 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN!

Carol Burris (1943-1989)

— Burris founded and led The Women’s Lobby from 1970-79 and mobilized women to lobby the House and Senate championing laws foundational to women’s rights. On more than 25 occasions, they testified and helped shape such legislation as: the Child Care Tax Credit, Pension Reform, Title IX, Equal Credit, the Equal Rights Amendment, and Minimum Wage for Domestic.

CAROL BURRIS

AND THE WOMEN’S LOBBY



AUGUST

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★ AUGUST 2024

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AUGUST 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN!

Charlotte Gordon Chapman (1925-1999)

—Chapman came to DC during World War II and worked with a wide variety of DC political and civic boards and activities including the Convention Center and the University of the District of Columbia. When working as Mayor Washington's inauguration co-chair, Chapman realized the urgent need to preserve DC History. With the support of the Council and the DC Commission for Arts and Humanities, The Museum of the City of Washington was established with Chapman as President of the Board. The museum helped local schools improve the teaching of DC history and merged with the Sumner School archives in 1991.



AUGUST

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★ AUGUST 2024

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AUGUST 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN!

Kimberly Bassett

—A staunch advocate for voting access and women's rights, Bassett is the Secretary of State of the District of Columbia and former Director of the Mayor's Office on Women's Policy and Initiatives working on programs such as training women in all 8 wards on salary negotiation techniques to reduce the pay gap. An activist and innovator, Bassett previously worked with DCVote on voting representation and helped launch Text4baby, a free, award-winning national program that used text messaging to support 3 million expectant mothers.



AUGUST

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★ AUGUST 2024

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AUGUST 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN!

Loretta Ross

"The right to have a child, the right to not have a child and the right to raise your children. Everyone should have that. It's not that hard to explain — it's just hard as hell to achieve."

—As an [academic, feminist, and activist](#), Ross has won numerous accolades for being an advocate for reproductive justice, especially among women of color. As an author, Ross has written on reproductive justice activism and the history of African American women, including *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organizing for Reproductive Justice* and *Radical Reproductive Justice: Foundation, Theory, Practice, Critique*.



AUGUST

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26 Women's Equality Day

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AUGUST 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN! ★★

Ellen Malcolm

"Early Money Is Like Yeast (EMILY)"—Malcolm, a political activist devoted to progressive causes, has "changed the face of power" in the US. Malcolm had a critical insight working for a woman candidate who lost after the campaign ran out of money and had to take down TV ads. [Malcolm founded and ran EMILY's List](#) to raise money to support pro-choice women Democrats for office. The impact has been dramatic: since 1985, EMILY's List has helped elect more than 1,700 pro-choice women—20 governors, 201 members of Congress, and more than 1,500 state and local officials.



AUGUST

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HOME RULE

When the District was created in 1790 from land ceded by Maryland and Virginia, white men who owned land could continue to vote in their respective states. With the passage of the 15th and 19th amendments, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and other reforms, the prohibitions against voting by women and voters of color were lifted. However, DC residents could not vote for the President until 1963 and the passage of the 23rd Amendment. In 1973, when the [Home Rule Act](#) was passed, DC residents could at last elect a Mayor and a Council. However, even today, DC lacks the rights and privileges of a state and has no voting representation in Congress.

DC women have long pushed for home rule and statehood for DC:

- After the [League of Women Voters](#) was formed in 1920, the DC chapter (LWVDC) called itself the “Voteless League of Women Voters” and began more than a century of pressing for DC self-government (1).
- First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt considered DC home and was a strong advocate for home rule, testifying to Congress about the need for greater resources for DC social programs (2).
- [Daisy Harriman](#) was a suffragist, founder of the Woman’s National Democratic Club, activist, diplomat, and strong advocate and member of DC’s Home Rule Committee (3). At the age of 94, Harriman was able to cast a vote for the President for the first time.
- [Hilda Mason](#) (4) was a teacher, DC council member, and proponent of children, education, and statehood.
- Anne Anderson (5) has long led LWV statehood efforts as Chair of the LWVDC Committee for Full Rights for DC Citizens.

DC WOMEN!



SEPTEMBER 2024

DC WOMEN!



HOME RULE



- [Anise Jenkins](#) (6) is a DC activist working on behalf of human rights and statehood and Executive Director of Stand Up! For Democracy in DC.
- [Josephine Butler](#) (7) was a lifelong activist, organizing labor unions and co-founding the DC Statehood Party.
- [Eleanor Holmes Norton](#) (8), a lawyer, professor, strong advocate, and DC's elected delegate (even though non-voting) to the House of Representatives since 1991.

DC ★ WOMEN
Learn More!

★ VOTELESS VOTERS IN WASHINGTON DC

★ SEPTEMBER 2024

Monday
2 Labor Day

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DC WOMEN!



SEPTEMBER 2024

Jewel Mazique (1913-2007)

—A legendary fearless activist committed to social justice, frequent writer for *The Washington Afro-American* newspaper and an unsung heroine of the Black Freedom Movement. Mazique was an advocate for full integration of the military and integration of the DC transportation sector and an advisor to leaders such as Malcolm X and African Presidents Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.



SEPTEMBER

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DC WOMEN!



SEPTEMBER 2024

Maria S. Gómez

—Coming from Colombia to DC at 13, Maria Gómez built a new life and the Mary's Center, delivering comprehensive health and social services to 65,000 clients a year. After becoming a public health nurse and working with the Mayor's office, Gómez created an innovative approach to providing health services addressing recipients' broader needs, such as education, language, and vocational training. Recipient of the Presidential Citizens Medal, Gómez is shown meeting with First Lady Michelle Obama.



SEPTEMBER

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★ SEPTEMBER 2024

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DC WOMEN!



SEPTEMBER 2024

Zitkala-Ša (1876-1938)

—Zitkala-Ša (also known as Gertrude Simmons Bonnin) was a Yankton Dakota activist, organizer, writer, editor, teacher, and composer. Living in DC and Virginia, Zitkala-Ša influenced critical changes in US laws that affected voting rights, education, health care, and legal standing for Native American people and cultural preservation. Zitkala-Ša will be a 2024 honoree of the American Women quarters program of the US Mint.



SEPTEMBER

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★ SEPTEMBER 2024

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DC WOMEN!



SEPTEMBER 2024

Perle Mesta (1889-1975)

—Often described as a “socialite,” Mesta used the term “feminist” when speaking at the 1952 Democratic Convention in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment. A highly successful investor in oil and gas, Mesta was also the US Ambassador to Luxembourg; an activist member of the National Women’s Party; and the “hostess with the mostess” due to lavish bipartisan parties in DC promoting and raising funds for causes.



SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER 2024

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DC GOVERNMENT

DC has three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. For most of the District’s history, members of all three branches were appointed by the federal government, and DC residents have had limited political rights or representation. From 1802 to 1973, no woman served as mayor or had ever been named to the DC Council. Since the passage of the Home Rule Act in 1973, which established an elected Mayor and a 13-member council, DC residents have been able to vote for local officials and have elected a significant number of women to serve.

In 1991, Sharon Pratt (1) was elected as the first woman mayor of DC and the first African American woman mayor of any major US city. [Current Mayor Muriel Bowser](#) (2) was elected in 2015 and re-elected twice, in 2018 and 2022.

[Since Home Rule, 23 women have been elected to and served on the DC Council](#): Polly Shackleton, Nadine Winter, and Willie Hardy in 1975. In 1979, they, together with Wilhelmina Rolark, Hilda Mason, Betty Ann Kane, and Charlene Drew Jarvis constituted the first women majority of the Council (3). *

- [Carol Schwartz](#) (4) was elected as an at-large member of the Council in 1985 and also ran and lost five times—for mayor.
- [Linda Cropp](#) (5) became the first woman to chair the Council (1997-2007).
- [Betty Ann Kane](#) (6) served DC for some 44 years, as a member of the DC School Board, a member of the DC Council, and Chair of the DC Public Service Commission.
- Today, 5 women serve on the Council: Anita Bonds and Brianne Nadeau and 3 millennials—Janeese Lewis George, Christina Henderson, and Brooke Pinto (7).

Women have long played important roles in DC’s presidentially appointed judiciary. In 1921, [Mary O’Toole](#) (8) was appointed to DC’s Municipal Court, becoming the first woman judge in the US. [Ketanji Brown Jackson](#) (9), born in DC, was appointed to the DC judiciary by President Obama and to the Supreme Court in 2023 by President Biden. Jackson is the first African American woman and the first public defender on the nation’s highest court.

DC WOMEN!



DC GOVERNMENT



*Other DC Councilwomen: Kathleen Patterson (1995-2007); Eydie Whittington (1995-1997); Sharon Ambrose (1995-2007); Mary Cheh (2007-2023); Yvette Alexander (2007-2017); LaRuby May (215-2107); and Elissa Silverman (2015-2023).

DC  **WOMEN**
Learn More!

 **GUIDES TO LOCAL HISTORY OF DC**

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DC WOMEN!
★ ★ ★
OCTOBER 2024

Madeleine Albright (1937-2022)

—Georgetown Madeleine Albright, Ambassador to the UN and the first woman Secretary of State: *"It took me a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it, I am not going to be silent...The reason I made women's issues central to American foreign policy, was not because I was a feminist, but because we know that societies are more stable if women are politically and economically empowered...In order to get through a lot of complicated issues, it helps to have a little bit of humor...So people are talking about a revolution. What a revolution it would be to have a woman president."*



OCTOBER

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★ OCTOBER 2024

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12 Yom Kippur

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DC WOMEN!



OCTOBER 2024

Allie B. Latimer

"Being a woman was as bad as being Black."

—A lawyer (Howard Law), civil rights activist, and ordained Minister. One of the founders and first president of [FEW](#)—Federally Employed Women—created to advocate for improved working conditions for women in the federal government and established in the wake of Executive Order 11375 which banned discrimination of women in the federal government. Latimer was elected to the National Women's Hall of Fame in 2009.



OCTOBER

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★ OCTOBER 2024

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14 Indigenous Peoples Day

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DC WOMEN!



OCTOBER 2024

LaDonna Harris

—Harris, a Comanche Native American, is a social activist and politician and the founder and president of Americans for Indian Opportunity. Harris was the first Native American woman to run for Vice President, as a candidate for the Citizens Party (1980). In 2018, Harris was one of the first inductees to the National Native American Hall of Fame.



OCTOBER

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★ OCTOBER 2024

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DC WOMEN!



OCTOBER 2024

Susan Rice

“Progress is the product of human agency. Things get better because we make them better.”—A DC native, Susan Rice is a distinguished diplomat, policy advisor, and public official who served in various positions during the Clinton, Obama, and Biden administrations. Rice is the first person to be both National Security Advisor and Domestic Policy Advisor. Rice was appointed the 27th US Ambassador to the United Nations. Author of *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*.



OCTOBER

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DC WOMEN!



OCTOBER 2024

Alice Rivlin (1931-2019)

— Rivlin helped rescue DC from bankruptcy in 1998. With \$700 million in debt, DC’s finances were taken over by the Congress and President Clinton appointed Rivlin to sort out the issues. Rivlin was the first director of the Congressional Budget Office and later director of the Office of Management and Budget. Rivlin also directed the Brookings Institution’s Greater Washington Research Project, which studies the region’s finances and demographics.



OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER 2024 National American Indian Heritage Month

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FOOD & FARMS

In 1609, the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers was home to the [Nacotchtank](#), an Indigenous people blessed with a myriad of natural resources and fertile land they used for hunting, farming, and trade. Men hunted and fished while women did most of the agricultural work.

"The women and children doe the rest of the worke. They make mats, baskets, pots, morters, pound their corne, make their bread, prepare their victuals, plant their corne, gather their corne, bear all kinds of burdens, and such like."
 Explorer Capt. John Smith, 1609

Agriculture continued, during the colonial period when it was dominated by large farms and plantations with most growing tobacco with enslaved laborers as well as small farmers who grew and marketed produce. As one example, [Alethia Browning Tanner](#) (1) sold vegetables at a market in Lafayette Park opposite the White House and was able to earn enough to purchase freedom from slavery. President Jefferson, who bought produce at Washington's farm markets, is thought to have been a customer.

- The Civil War had a huge impact with many large farms being confiscated for use by the military. It also posed huge challenges for feeding large numbers of soldiers. Women were called on to produce rations of salt pork and hard tack (2). Over time, as DC's population grew, houses replaced farmland and supermarkets replaced markets; the last DC farms closed prior to World War II.
- In 1997, two DC women, Ann Yonkers (3) and Bernadine Prince, founded [FRESHFARM](#) market and set out to create markets to serve the DC community and encourage regional farmers to bring fresh produce to DC residents.
- In 25 years, FRESHFARM has grown from 15 original farmers in a single market on Dupont Circle to 26 markets and farm stands, 265 farmers and producers earning \$24.7 million annually, and more than 700,000 customers.

NOVEMBER 2024 ★★ DC WOMEN!

[112]

- Women chefs have also been important in DC and have stimulated



FOOD & FARMS



interest in high quality, local produce and diversified tastes from around the globe. [Nora Pouillon](#) (4), a renowned Washington chef, has long promoted locally sourced organic foods. Pouillon founded and ran Nora's, the first certified organic restaurant in the US. [Rose Previte](#) (5) is a Washington-based chef whose award-winning restaurants Compass Rose, Maydān, and Kirby Club serve diverse cuisines from around the world.

- Today, once again, urban farmers—most of whom are women—are growing produce in DC, including [Gail Taylor](#) (6), who founded Three Part Harmony Farm in Northeast DC in 2012. Taylor grows vegetables, herbs, and flowers using sustainable agricultural methods, and also encourages others to grow local and fight food insecurity by becoming self-sufficient growers.

★ NOVEMBER 2024 National American Indian Heritage Month

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DC WOMEN!



NOVEMBER 2024

Jordyn Greer

"If you want to see change, you have to vote!"

—Greer is a proud member of of Richard Wright Schools' Class of 2024, President of the Rotary Interact Club, a member of the National Honor Society, and an intern with the team that created this planner. Shown after registering to vote, Jordan is a strong advocate for voting and is working with fellow members of the National Honor Society to register all eligible students in 2024. That is why Jordyn's high school is # 1 in DC for voter registration! Want to know more? Visit yourvoicematters.vote



NOVEMBER

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★ NOVEMBER 2024

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11 Veterans Day

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DC WOMEN!



NOVEMBER 2024

Dovey Johnson Roundtree (1914-2018)

"I have found that there is always somebody who would be the miracle-maker in your life if you but believe."

—Inspired and mentored by civil rights giants, Mary McLeod Bethune and Pauli Murray, Roundtree was one of the first women to join the military as an officer in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in World War II as well as a noted lawyer and an ordained minister. Roundtree used the law as a tool to achieve civil rights and won groundbreaking cases on bus desegregation and repudiation of the "separate but equal" doctrine in interstate bus transportation. Roundtree also successfully defended poor individuals across the South.



NOVEMBER

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★ NOVEMBER 2024

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DC WOMEN!



NOVEMBER 2024

Virginia Ali

"The DC Woman Who Fed the Civil Rights

Movement"—Co-founder of DC's food landmark, [Ben's Chili Bowl](#), Ali has hosted the community for more than 65 years—mayors, students, teachers, Duke Ellington, President Obama . . . all of us. Ali served Martin Luther King his favorite Ben's chili cheeseburger before the March on Washington. Ben's was also one of the few businesses untouched in the 1968 riots.



NOVEMBER

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DC WOMEN!



NOVEMBER 2024

Marian Wright Edelman

—Attorney and tireless advocate for civil rights, especially the rights of children to a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start. Founded (1973) and led [Children's Defense Fund](#) as a voice for children. First Black woman admitted to the Mississippi bar; worked with the NAACP LDEF in Mississippi including during Freedom Summer. An author, scholar, and researcher, Edelman has served on many boards and received many awards including the Presidential Medal of Freedom.



NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER 2024

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DC WOMEN SING!

DC's music scene is notable for the women artists who came *from* DC as well as those who came *to* DC to perform. The District's [Howard Theater](#) on Black Broadway hosted jazz artist Abbie Mitchell on its opening night in 1910 (4 years before New York's Apollo Theater opened). Mitchell was followed by such greats as Sister Rosetta Tharpe, the "Godmother of Rock and Roll," Mamie Smith, the teenaged Ella Fitzgerald, Leslie Uggams, Pearl Bailey, and many others. Although most of these performers and their audiences were Black, in 1941 the first female interracial "Big Band"—the International Sweethearts of Rhythm—performed at the Howard, breaking all records with an audience of 35,000 in a single week.

Women singers have also come *to* DC to promote civil rights, peace, and other causes. Inspired by [Marian Anderson's 1939 performance](#), organizers of the 1963 March on Washington invited Anderson as well as Mahalia Jackson, Joan Baez, Odetta, and the Eva Jessye Choir to perform.

Many DC women musicians have studied, taught, and performed music in DC and beyond:

- [Roberta Flack](#) (1), with roots in church choral music, studied voice and piano at Howard University, taught at multiple DC schools, and had a brilliant career that incorporated classical music, folk ballads, and Motown.
- Mezzo-soprano [Denyce Graves](#) (2) graduated from Duke Ellington School of the Arts and is recognized worldwide as one of today's most exciting opera stars.
- [Chita Rivera](#) (3) was a singer, dancer, and actor who starred in "West Side Story" and "The Kiss of the Spider Woman" and was a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

DC WOMEN!



DC WOMEN SING!



- [Shirley Horn](#) (4), a singer and pianist who played with dozens of jazz greats, was nominated for nine Grammy Awards, winning in 1999 for Best Jazz Vocal Performance.
- [Sweet Honey](#) in the Rock (5) is an acclaimed acapella performance ensemble rooted in African American history and culture.
- [Maiesha Rashad](#) (6), the "First Lady of Go-Go," combined Gospel and jazz in the distinctive genre created by Black musicians in Washington.

DC  WOMEN
Learn More!

 DC WOMEN PLAYLIST

★ DECEMBER 2024

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DC WOMEN!



DECEMBER 2024

Lillian Evanti (1890-1967)

—Born and educated in DC (Howard University), Evanti was an opera singer, a coloratura soprano, whose career launched in France in 1924 as the first African American to perform with a major European opera company. Returning to DC, Evanti periodically gave recitals in the Belasco Theater and the Roosevelt White House for integrated audiences, and even on a barge on the Potomac. From the 1940s, Evanti was more active as a composer, including both blues and religious compositions and, from the 1950s, with the Evanti Chorale.



DECEMBER

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★ DECEMBER 2024

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DC WOMEN!



DECEMBER 2024

Therrell C. Smith

"It brings me joy to know that I've touched so many lives. This is what my life is all about, my goal is to continue."—DC native Therrell Smith, dancer, ballet studio director, and teacher and graduate of Fisk University (BA, sociology) began dancing at age 8 and later was selected to study in Paris with Mathilde Kschessinska, *prima ballerina assoluta* of the Imperial Russian Ballet. Smith, considered a legendary figure by the International Association of Blacks in Dance, founded the Therrell Smith School of Dance in 1948, always enjoying spreading joy through dance.



DECEMBER

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★ DECEMBER 2024

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DC WOMEN!



DECEMBER 2024

Mary Henry Day (1910-2006)

—The biography, *Mary Day: Grande Dame of Dance in the Nation's Capital* by Elvi Moore, outlines Day's germinal importance to dance in DC. After studying at the London Royal Academy of Dance, Day returned home, taught privately, and choreographed local high school ballets. Day co-founded (later becoming sole artistic director of) [The Washington School of Ballet](#) and, in 1967, launched the associate professional company The Washington Ballet.



DECEMBER

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

★ DECEMBER 2024

Monday
23

Tuesday
24

Wednesday
25 Christmas Day

Thursday
26 Hanukkah (first day)
Kwanzaa (first day)

Friday
27

Saturday
28

Sunday
29

DC WOMEN!



DECEMBER 2024

Bennetta B. Washington (1918-1991)

—First “First Lady” of the District of Columbia votes with husband, Mayor Walter Washington, who was elected after the passage of the 1973 Home Rule Act. A community leader, educator, professor, and school administrator at Cardozo and other schools, Washington also founded and directed the Job Corps for Women at the Department of Labor.



DECEMBER

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Monday
30

Tuesday
31 New Year's Eve

Wednesday
1 New Year's Day

Thursday
2

Friday
3

Saturday
4

Sunday
5

DC WOMEN!



DECEMBER 2024



"Women belong in all places where decisions are being made."

—Happy New Year from the Women of DC!

Carol Schwartz, Denise Rolark Barnes, former DC Mayor Sharon Pratt, Therrell Smith, Judith Terra, Antoinette Ford, Janice Davis (left to right).

DECEMBER

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					





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