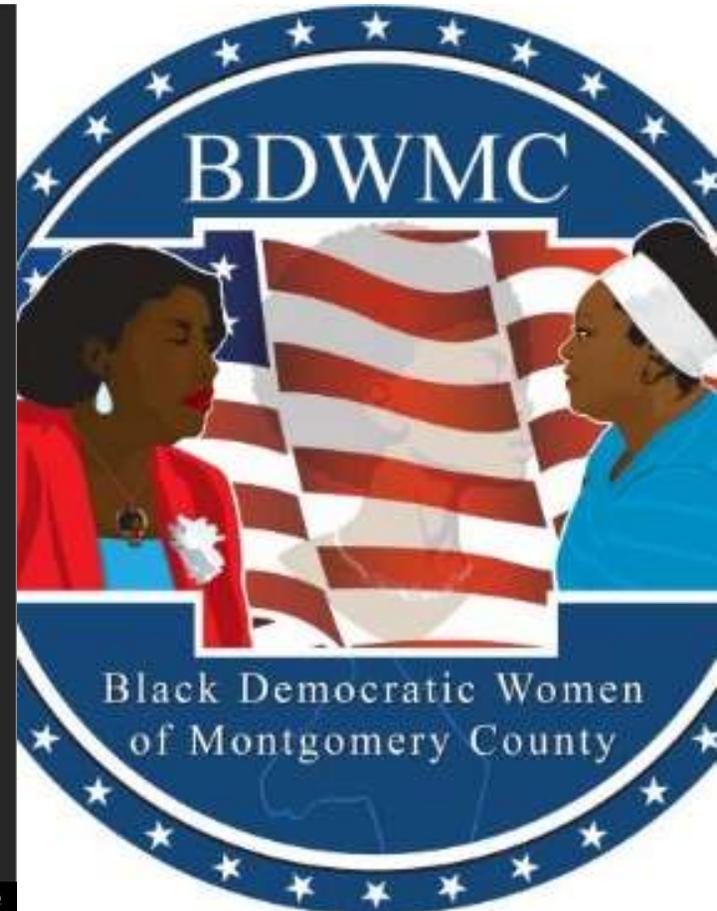




BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

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A Century of Black History Commemorations 1926-2026

The Black Democratic Women of Montgomery County (BDWMC) proudly celebrates the 100th anniversary of Black History Month. Founded by historian Carter G. Woodson—who established the Association for the Study of Negro Life in 1915—what began in 1926 as Negro History Week has grown into a month-long celebration dedicated to preserving and sharing the richness of Black life, history, and culture.

As we honor this milestone, the BDWMC invites our community to celebrate the powerful legacy of several Black women in politics—past and present, national and local—whose leadership continues to shape our democracy.

Black Women Suffragettes

Aside from Harriet Tubman, many courageous sisters—now recognized as the Black Suffragettes—fought tirelessly for both the abolition of slavery and the advancement of women’s rights. Leaders such as Mary Church Terrell, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, and Maria Stewart—some formerly enslaved, others born free—took their place in the women’s rights movement of the 1850s and 1860s, even as they were excluded from white suffragette marches.

In 1851, Sojourner Truth, the only Black woman present, delivered her iconic “Ain’t I a Woman” speech at the Ohio Women’s Convention in Akron, boldly challenging racism and sexism in a single stroke. Her words continue to echo as a defining moment in the struggle for equality.

Mary Church Terrell (1863-1954)



- Co-founder and first president of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) championing the motto *"Lifting as We Climb"* to advance civil rights and women's rights.
- One of the first Black women in the United States to earn a college degree and among the earliest appointed to a school board of a major city (Washington, D.C.).
- Key civil rights activist who helped desegregate restaurants and public spaces in Washington, D.C., successfully pushing for enforcement of anti-discrimination laws.
- Founding member of the NAACP and a powerful national lecturer advocating for racial justice, women's suffrage, and educational equity

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911)



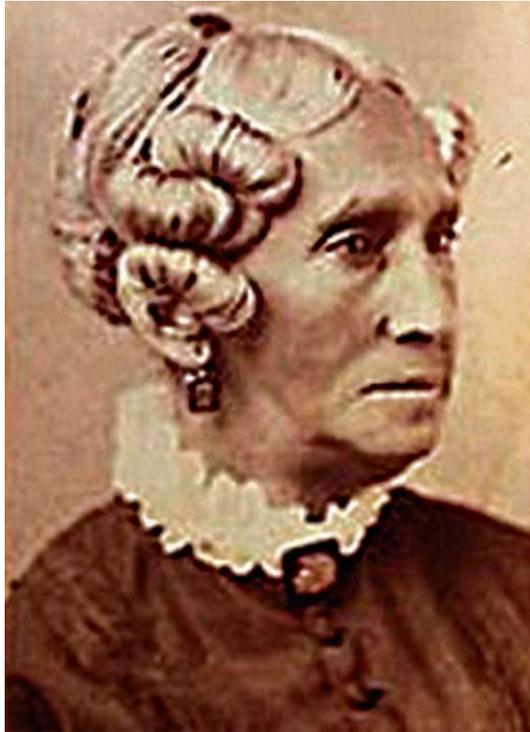
- Pioneering abolitionist, poet, and lecturer whose writings and speeches advanced the causes of freedom, temperance, and women's rights.
- Co-founder of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), helping shape its mission of racial uplift and women's empowerment.
- One of the first Black women to publish a short story in the United States, using literature as a tool for social change.
- Advocate for education and civil rights, working with the Underground Railroad and speaking nationwide against slavery and injustice.

Mary Ann Shadd Cary (1823-1893)



- First Black woman in North America to publish and edit a newspaper, *The Provincial Freeman*, promoting abolition and self-reliance.
- Courageous activist who encouraged Black migration to Canada after the Fugitive Slave Act, advocating for independence and community building.
- One of the first Black women to earn a law degree in the United States, breaking barriers in education and professional leadership.
- Powerful voice for women's suffrage, speaking at national conventions and challenging discriminatory policies.

Maria W. Stewart (1803-1879)



- One of the earliest known Black American women to deliver public political speeches, boldly addressing racism, sexism, and moral reform in the 1830s.
- Trailblazing writer and lecturer whose essays urged Black self-determination, education, and spiritual strength.
- Advocate for abolition and women's rights long before these movements gained national momentum.
- Influential mentor and educator, working to uplift Black youth through teaching and community leadership.

Sojourner Truth's Speech "Aint I a Woman"

Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that 'twixt the negroes of the South and the women at the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this here talking about?

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man - when I could get it - and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?

Sojourner Truth's Speech "Aint I a Woman" (cont'd)

Then they talk about this thing in the head; what's this they call it? [member of audience whispers, "intellect"] That's it, honey. What's that got to do with women's rights or negroes' rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?

Then that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, 'cause Christ wasn't a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him.

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.

Obliged to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner ain't got nothing more to say.

Black Women Civil Rights Movers

The vital contributions of Black women during the Civil Rights Movement are too often overlooked. While Black men are frequently credited for the movement's major victories, countless women were the strategists, organizers, and moral force behind its progress. Among these trailblazers were:

- **Dorothy Height**, a key architect of civil rights and women's rights advocacy
- **Septima Poinsette Clark**, the "Mother of the Movement," who built citizenship schools that empowered thousands
- **Ella Baker**, a brilliant organizer who championed grassroots leadership and helped found the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)
- **Fannie Lou Hamer**, whose fearless testimony and voting-rights activism reshaped the national conscience

Dorothy Height (1912-2010)



Dorothy
Height

- Committed her life to racial justice and gender equality
- Helped to organize the 1963 March on Washington and had strong working relationships with Dr. Martin Luther King, A. Phillip Randolph and Roy Wilkins
- Helped founded the National Women's Political Caucus

Septima Poinsette Clark (1898-1987)



- Began her career as a teacher in a one room schoolhouse in rural South Carolina because she was prohibited from teaching in the Charleston Public School System
- After joining the Charleston branch of the NAACP, she became more involved in social injustice matters gaining the right to teach in the public school system and fighting for integration
- She designed programs to teach reading and writing and provided instruction in adult literacy, voter registration, political parties, local school boards, taxes and social security.

Ella Baker (1903-1986)



- She debunked the notion that Black Southerners were complacent and passive
- She cofounded the Young Negroes Cooperative League
- She was the field secretary for the NAACP and was instrumental in chartering many NAACP branches
- A mentor to young activists, she served as their "political mother".

Fanny Lou Hamer (1917-1977)



- She rose to national prominence in 1964 during Freedom Summer (the non-violent campaign to end segregation in Mississippi).
- Cofounded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic and after being threatened for lack of representation travelled to the Democratic Convention to argue for representation.
- Her testimony about the horrific conditions Mississippians were living under was aired on TV stations across the country despite opposition from the President Johnson

A Timeline of Black Women in Politics

- 1952: **Charlota Bass** was the first Black woman to run for Vice-President representing the Progressive Party
- 1959: **Marsha Johnson** advocated for LGBTQ+ rights
- 1966: **Barbara Jordan** wins Texas Senate seat
- 1969: **Shirley Chisholm** first Black woman elected to Congress; she ran for President in 1972
- 1974: **Mary Pinkett** first Black City Councilwoman in New York
- 1976: **Margaret Wright** runs for President representing the People's Party
- 1977: **Patricia Harris** first Black woman to serve in a presidential cabinet.
- 1984: **Isabell Masters** runs for President representing the Looking Back Party
- 1993: **Carol Moseley Braun** first Black woman to serve in the Senate
- 1996: **Monica Moorehead** runs for President representing the Worker's World Party

A Timeline of Black Women in Politics (cont'd)

- 2005: **Condoleeza Rice** first Black woman to serve as Secretary of State
- 2009: **Ayana Pressley** first woman of color elected to the Boston City Council
- 2014: **Mia Love** first Black woman elected to Congress from Utah
- 2016: **Lisa Blunt Rochester** first Black woman elected to Congress in Delaware
- 2018: **Stacy Abrams** runs for governor of Georgia
- 2020: **Kamala Harris** elected to serve as Vice-President
- 2022: **Karen Bass** first woman to serve as mayor of Los Angeles
- 2023: **Laphonza Butler** California Senate seat appointment
- 2024: **Cherelle Parker** first woman elected as mayor of Philadelphia

Black Women in Politics Making Waves Nationally



**Jasmine Crockett, TX
Congresswoman**



**Alyia Gaskins, VA
Mayor of Alexandria**



**Angela Alsobrooks,
MD Senator**



**Ketanji Brown Jackson,
Supreme Court Justice**

Black Women in Politics Leading Pennsylvania



Joanna McClinton
State House
Democratic Leader



Summer Lee, 12th
Congressional
District Rep



Donna Bullock,
House of Representatives

Black Women in Politics Leading Montgomery County

Jamila H. Winder



- Commissioner Jamila H. Winder has served on the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners since 2023 and currently holds the role of Chair.
- Commissioner Winder is dedicated to uplifting all Montgomery County communities and enacting policies that strengthen the local economy, revitalize our main streets, and empower our most vulnerable residents.

Black Women in Politics Leading Montgomery County



Dr. Janine Darby,
Coroner



Andrea Baptiste,
Jury Commissioner



Tina Lawson Esq.,
Register of Wills Clerk
of the Orphans Court

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