



Black History Month (& Year) Information:

Where would we be without the extreme sacrifices made by great women in the annals of African-American History

Mary Jane McLeod Bethune (born Mary Jane McLeod--July 10, 1875 – May 18, 1955): Was an American educator, stateswoman, philanthropist, humanitarian, and civil rights activist, best known for starting a private school for African-American students in Daytona Beach, Florida and co-founding of UNCF (United Negro College Fund) on April 25, 1944 with William Trent and Frederick D. Patterson. She attracted donations of time and money, and developed the academic school as a college. It later continued to develop as Bethune-Cookman University. She also was appointed as a national adviser to president Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of what was known as his Black Cabinet. She was known as "The First Lady of The Struggle" because of her commitment to gain better lives for African Americans.

Shirley Anita Chisholm (November 30, 1924 – January 1, 2005): Was an American politician, educator, and author. In 1968, she became the first black woman elected to the United States Congress, and she represented New York's 12th congressional district for seven terms from 1969 to 1983. In 1972, she became the first black candidate for a major party's nomination for President of the United States, and the first woman to run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. In 2015, Chisholm was (posthumously) awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Dorothy Irene Height (March 24, 1912 – April 20, 2010): Was an American administrator and educator who worked as a civil rights and women's rights activist, specifically focused on the issues of African-American women, including unemployment, illiteracy, and voter awareness. She was the president of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) for forty years and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2004.

Sojourner Truth (born Isabella [Belle] Baumfree--c. 1797 – November 26, 1883): Was an African-American abolitionist and women's rights activist. Truth was born into slavery in Swartekill, Ulster County, New York, but escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826. After going to court to recover her son in 1828, she became the first black woman to win such a case against a white man.

She gave herself the name Sojourner Truth in 1843 after she became convinced that God had called her to leave the city and go into the countryside "testifying the hope that was in her". Her best-known speech was delivered extemporaneously, in 1851, at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio. The speech became widely known during the Civil War by the title "Ain't I a Woman?," a variation of the original speech re-written by someone else using a stereotypical Southern dialect; whereas Sojourner Truth was from New York and grew up speaking Dutch as her first language. During the Civil War, Truth helped recruit black troops for the Union Army; after the war, she tried unsuccessfully to secure land grants from the federal government for former slaves (summarized as the promise of "Forty Acres And A Mule").