

Civil Rights Leaders

Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks was a significant person during the civil rights movement. She lived in a time when Black people were mistreated, especially in places like Montgomery, Alabama, where she lived. One day, when she was on a bus, the driver told her to move from her seat just because she was Black.

But Rosa refused to give up her seat to a white person, which was against the law back then. This brave act started a big protest called the Montgomery Bus Boycott. People stopped riding the buses until the unfair rules were changed. Rosa's actions helped make things better for Black people all across America. She became famous for standing up for what was right, and her bravery is still remembered today.

Frye, Galliard. "Rosa Parks." Encyclopedia of Alabama, Alabama Humanities Alliance, 1 Mar. 2024, encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/rosa-parks/.



Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. was significant in American history, especially for civil rights. He was born in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1929. His family was religious, and Martin followed his father into the ministry. He believed in fairness and equality for everyone, regardless of skin color.

Martin used peaceful ways to protest unfair laws and segregation, where Black people were treated differently than white people. One of his famous protests was the Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama, where Black people refused to ride buses until they were treated fairly. Martin's speeches and actions inspired many people across the country. He won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in 1964. Sadly, he was killed in 1968, but his dream of equality lives on. Today, we remember him with a holiday every January, and his message of peace and fairness still inspires people everywhere.

Bass, S. Jonathan. "Martin Luther King Jr." Encyclopedia of Alabama, Alabama Humanities Alliance, 25 Apr. 2024, encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/martin-luther-king-jr/.



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Bess Bolden Walcott

Bess Bolden Walcott was a significant person at the Tuskegee Institute. She helped collect and organize things unique to the school's history, like the belongings of George Washington Carver.

She also started a Red Cross group to help people, especially the Tuskegee Airmen and Black people who needed health care. Bess was born in 1886 in Ohio and grew up in a family that believed in working hard and helping others. She went to college and then started working at Tuskegee Institute. Bess did a lot of different jobs there, like teaching and helping run the library. She even started some newspapers to tell people about the good things happening at the school. She talked to people about the brave Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. Bess was very busy helping others her whole life. She died when she was 101 but left a significant legacy of helping and caring for others.



Williams, Shari. "Bess Bolden Walcott." Encyclopedia of Alabama, Alabama Humanities Alliance, 27 Mar. 2023, encyclopediaofalabama.org/media/bess-bolden-walcott/.

John Lewis

John Lewis was a very important person in America. He helped make things fair for everyone, especially Black people. When he was young, Black people couldn't always go to the same schools or sit at the same lunch counters as white people. But John Lewis wanted to change that. He joined marches and protests to ensure Black people could vote and attend good schools.

One day, he marched in Selma, Alabama, to fight for voting rights. But the police hurt him and his friends. This made many people angry, and the government changed the rules so everyone could vote. Later, John Lewis worked in the government to fight for fairness and equality for everyone, regardless of skin color. Even after he passed away, people remember him for being brave and kind, and they keep working to make his dreams come true.



Wallenfeldt, Jeff. "John Lewis." Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., 9 Mar. 2024, www.britannica.com/biography/John-Lewis-American-civil-rights-leader-and-politician.

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Coretta Scott King

Coretta Scott King was a very important person in America. She was born in Alabama in 1927 and died in Mexico in 2006. She was married to Martin Luther King, Jr., who was famous for fighting for civil rights. Coretta Scott King fought for fairness and equality for everyone, especially Black people. She went to college in Ohio and studied music in Boston. That’s where she met Martin Luther King, Jr., and they got married in 1953. Together, they worked to make things better for Black people.

They moved to Alabama, where Martin Luther King, Jr., became a pastor. Coretta Scott King joined her husband in fighting against unfair rules, like when Black people couldn’t sit in the same places as white people on buses. Even after Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed, Coretta Scott King kept working for civil rights. She started a center in Atlanta to help people learn about nonviolence and fairness. She also gave awards to Black authors and illustrators for their children’s books. Even after she passed away, people still remember her for being brave and kind.

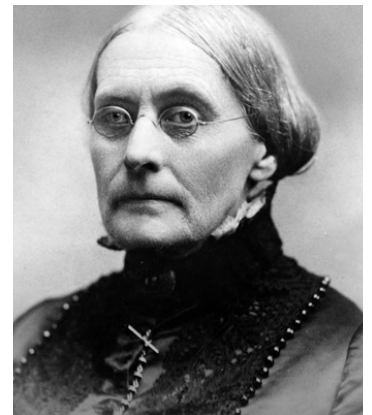


Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. “Coretta Scott King”. Encyclopedia Britannica, 23 Apr. 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Coretta-Scott-King>. Accessed 2 May 2024.

Susan B. Anthony

Susan B. Anthony was a very important person in American history. She believed that women should have the right to vote and worked hard to make that happen. Susan was born in 1820 in Massachusetts to a Quaker family. She learned to read and write when she was only three years old!

As she grew up, she became involved in movements to end slavery and to stop people from drinking too much alcohol. Susan traveled around the country with other activists, like Frederick Douglass and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, talking about why women should be able to vote. She even helped start groups like the National Woman Suffrage Association. But, even though she fought for women’s rights, she didn’t always include Black women in her efforts. Susan kept fighting for women’s right to vote until she died in 1906, but it wasn’t until 1920, 14 years after her death, that the Nineteenth Amendment passed, giving women the right to vote.



“How Susan B. Anthony Became a Suffragist.” Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2024, www.britannica.com/video/226767/who-was-Susan-B-Anthony.

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Elizabeth Peratrovich

Elizabeth Peratrovich was a brave civil rights activist from Alaska who fought for fairness and equality for Native Americans. Born in 1911, she grew up facing discrimination but never stopped working for change.

With her husband Roy, Elizabeth pushed for laws to end unfair treatment, like not being allowed in certain places just because they were Native. In 1945, because of her hard work, Alaska passed the first law in the U.S. against discrimination.

Elizabeth’s efforts are remembered every February 16th on Elizabeth Peratrovich Day. Her story teaches us to stand up for what’s right and treat everyone with kindness and respect.

Weingroff, Richard. “Who Is Elizabeth Peratrovich? The Story behind the Country’s First Anti-Discrimination Law.” Who Is Elizabeth Peratrovich? The Story Behind the Country’s First Anti-Discrimination Law | FHWA, U.S. Department of Transportation, 2023, highways.dot.gov/highway-history/general-highway-history/who-elizabeth-peratrovich-story-behind-countrys-first-anti.



Ruby Bridges

Ruby Bridges was a fearless girl who helped make things fair for everyone. In 1960, when she was only six, she became the first Black student to attend an all-white school in the South. Ruby was born in Mississippi on September 8, 1954, but her family moved to New Orleans when she was little. At that time, many schools were still separated by race, but a significant court decision said that schools should be mixed so Black and white kids could go to school together. Even though the court said this, some people didn’t want it to happen.

When Ruby’s parents decided to send her to the white school, it caused much trouble. She had to walk through a crowd of people shouting mean things at her every day. She was even the only student in her class! Some people were friendly and helped her family, but others were not. Her dad lost his job, and stores wouldn’t sell food to her mom. But Ruby never gave up. She kept going to school, even when it was hard. Over time, more Black students joined her at the school.

Ruby grew up to be a strong woman who fought for fairness. She started a foundation to teach people about being kind and fair to each other. In 2000, she was honored for her bravery by becoming a deputy marshal. Ruby Bridges showed that even one little person can make a big difference.

Michals, Debra. “Biography: Ruby Bridges.” National Women’s History Museum, Platinum Transparency, 2024, www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/ruby-bridges.

