



ISSUE IN FOCUS

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EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

National African American History Month

February 4, 2013

The United States dedicates February to National African American History Month. This edition of *Issue-in-Focus* which leads with President Barack Obama's message, traces generations of African Americans, free and slave, who risked everything to realize their democratic rights in a country where "all men are created equal".



President Barack Obama: *"In America, we share a dream that lies at the heart of our founding: that no matter who you are, no matter what you look like, no matter how modest your beginnings or the circumstances of your birth, you can make it if you try. Yet, for many and for much of our Nation's history, that dream has gone unfilled. For African Americans, it was a dream denied until 150 years ago, when a great emancipator called for the end of slavery. It was a dream deferred less than 50 years ago, when a preacher spoke of justice and brotherhood from Lincoln's memorial. This dream of equality and fairness has never come easily -- but it has always been sustained by the belief that in America, change is possible."* [Full text of President Barack Obama's Proclamation.](#)

LEGACY OF STRUGGLE AND TRIUMPH

[Ursula Burns' Path to Success in the Fortune 500](#)

There are four African Americans serving as chief executives in the Fortune 500, *Fortune* magazine's ranking of the top U.S. companies. Among this small group of trailblazers, Ursula Burns of Xerox Corporation has the distinction of being the only black female to serve as the chief executive of a Fortune 500 company.

Beyond Dr. King - This living book profiles a less recognized African American figure of importance, introducing figures like Claudette Colvin (the 15 year old African American woman who refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus months before Rosa Parks did the same thing), Bishop Richard Allen, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett. Read stories of African American achievement and check back on the first day of each month to read new profiles of inspiring African Americans.

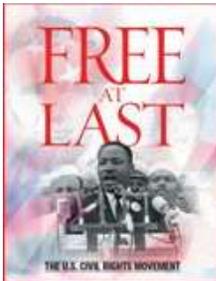
Justice for All: The Legacy of Thurgood Marshall

Thurgood Marshall stands as one of the great American heroes of the 20th century: He was the attorney who ended legal segregation in the United States with his victory in the Brown v. Board of Education case, and the U.S. Supreme Court justice who championed expanded rights for every individual American -- minorities, women, and immigrants, among many others.

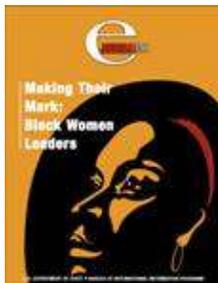
Black History Month Honors Legacy of Struggle and Triumph

Each February, Black History Month honors the struggles and triumphs of millions of American citizens over the most devastating obstacles — slavery, prejudice, poverty — as well as their contributions to the nation’s cultural and political life.

PUBLICATIONS



Free At Last - The U.S. Civil Rights Movement - This book recounts how African-American slaves and their descendants struggled to win — both in law and in practice — the civil rights enjoyed by other Americans. It is a story of dignified persistence and struggle, a story that produced great heroes and heroines, and one that ultimately succeeded by forcing Americans to confront squarely the shameful gap between their universal principles of equality and justice and the inequality, injustice, and oppression faced by millions of their fellow citizens.



Making Their Mark: Black Women Leaders

This issue of *eJournal USA* profiles African-American women of the 20th and 21st centuries who have made significant contributions to many spheres of American life. It also offers insights into how earlier generations of African-American women serve as touchstones for the present generation.



Rosa Parks: Mother of the Civil Rights Movement

Rosa McCauley Parks is known today as the “mother of the civil rights movement” because her arrest for refusing to give up her bus seat sparked the pivotal Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott.

FACTS

Facts for Features: Black History Month - Collections of statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau's demographic and economic subject area intended to commemorate

Black History Month.

[The American Jobs Act Impact for African-American Families](#)

The American Jobs Act reflects a commitment to strengthen the recovery and help increase access to jobs for all Americans. With unemployment among African-Americans at an unacceptably high rate of 16.7 percent – and 1.4 million African-Americans out of work for more than six months – the President believes that inaction is not an option.

[African American Members of the United States Congress: 1870-2012](#)

This Congressional Report show the current numbers and percentages of African Americans who were elected to the U.S. Congress.

[African Americans of the Senate](#)

The role of African Americans in Senate history is not limited to those who served in elected office. In fact, one of the earliest and most enduring roles of African Americans in Senate history came with the construction of the U.S. Capitol.

[African American Women in Elective Office in the U.S.](#)

Numbers and names of African American women elected to U.S. Congress, statewide elective executive offices, state legislatures and big-city mayors.

VIDEOS

Watch [videos on Biography.com](#) about the extraordinary lives of famous figures in Black History. From trailblazers like Harriet Tubman to barrier-breakers like [Jackie Robinson](#), beloved entertainers such as Louis Armstrong to Civil Rights leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., explore their biographies and the stories of many more who changed the world with their groundbreaking achievements.

Civil Rights Heroes



[Martin Luther King Jr.](#)



[Rosa Parks](#)



[Malcolm X](#)



[Thurgood Marshall](#)

Activists



[Harriet Tubman](#)



[Frederick Douglass](#)



[Sojourner Truth](#)



[W.E.B. DuBois](#)

Entertainers



 [Louis Armstrong](#)



 [Josephine Baker](#)



 [Richard Pryor](#)



 [Beyoncé Knowles](#)

Writers



 [Toni Morrison](#)



 [Langston Hughes](#)



 [James Baldwin](#)



 [Alice Walker](#)

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