National Women’s Hall of Fame Virtual Induction Series
Inaugural Event December 10, 2020
Mary Church Terrell, Suffragist

Seneca Falls, NY: On December 10, 2020 the National Women’s Hall of Fame will launch its inaugural virtual induction, the first in a new series showcasing under-represented women of achievement, posthumously. The Virtual Induction Series will serve as a way to innovate the way the NWHF operates and reflects on the past, honoring women posthumously that were deceased prior to the establishment of the NWHF, overlooked in their lifetime, or passed away before they were able to be inducted.

We begin this series of virtual posthumous inductions with six prominent Black women who have shaped our nation. During the research process it became apparent that the NWHF lacked diversity within its nomination pool, most notably of historic Black women and other women of color. In order to openly acknowledge and amend the disparities within the nomination pool, the Virtual Induction Series will recognize and induct other marginalized women of achievement including those from the Latinx, Asian, Native American, LGBTQ+ sisterhoods, as well as additional Black women. An outreach effort to organizations involved in these communities is being undertaken to identify and nominate more candidates.

The first of our Virtual Induction Series will showcase six Black women who shaped our nation. With this first step, the NWHF engages in an on-going process of learning, educating, and honoring the women throughout our nation’s history to whom we are indebted.

Mary Church Terrell (1863-1954) Mary Church Terrell was one of the first African-American women to earn a college degree, and became known as a national activist for civil rights and suffrage. She taught in the Latin Department at the M Street school—the first African American public high school in the nation—in Washington, DC. In 1896, she was the first Black woman in the United States to be appointed to the school board of a major city, serving in the District of Columbia until 1906. Terrell was a charter member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (1909) and the Colored Women’s League of Washington (1894). She helped found the National Association of Colored Women (1896) and served as its first national president, and she was a founding member of the National Association of College Women (1910). Mary Church Terrell believed in racial uplift and equal opportunity. She actively embraced women’s suffrage and actively campaigned for Black women’s
suffrage. She picketed the Wilson White House with members of the National Woman's Party organized by Alice Paul. Having been an avid suffragist during her years as an Oberlin student, Terrell continued to be active within suffragist circles in the National American Woman Suffrage Association. After the age of 80, Terrell continued to participate in picket lines, protesting the segregation of restaurants and theaters. During her senior years, she also successfully persuaded the local chapter of the American Association of University Women to admit Black members. She lived to see the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, holding unconstitutional the racial segregation of public schools. Terrell died two months later at the age of 90, on July 24, 1954.

**Fellow 2020 Inductees**

Aretha Franklin, Singer, Activist  
Barbara Hillary, Adventurer  
Barbara Rose Johns, Activist, Librarian  
Henrietta Lacks, Medical Research Revolutionizer  
Toni Morrison, Author

**About the NATIONAL WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME**

The National Women's Hall of Fame was founded in 1969 and is the nation's oldest membership organization and museum dedicated to honoring and celebrating the achievements of distinguished American women. In pursuit of its mission of "Showcasing Great Women...Inspiring All," the National Women's Hall of Fame honors the women of the past, relates the history of women's struggles, prepares the women of the future and serves as the voice celebrating the value of women.

Situated in Seneca Falls, NY, the birthplace of women's rights, the Hall tells women's stories by focusing on the leadership lessons from its Inductees throughout American history. The Hall recently completed revitalizing the former Seneca Knitting Mill as its new home. The new building is a vibrant, state-of-the-art facility serving as a leadership center and an educational venue where visitors can discover and be inspired by the stories of great American women. For information about our 2020 Inductees, please go to:  

For registration to the virtual induction:  
https://www.eventinterface.com/NWHFVirtualInduction2020/  

**DISCLAIMER:** The views, beliefs and opinions expressed by Inductees do not necessarily represent the views, beliefs and opinions of the National Women's Hall of Fame, its members, affiliates, Board, donors or volunteers, or induction sponsors or attendees.

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