Women’s Suffrage & the Struggle for Inclusion
Women’s Suffrage Attained by Race

- WHITE AMER.: 1920
- ASIAN AMER.: 1946
- NATIVE AMER.: 1962
- AFRICAN AMER.: 1965
- LATINO AMER.: 1975

Legend: Year the Right to Vote was Granted
Significant Suffrage Events by Race

**African-Americans**
- **1866**: White and Black women form the American Equal Rights Assn (AERA) promoting suffrage for women of all races
- **1869**: AERA splits into two orgs as women and Black men vie for suffrage. *
  *Some White suffragists employed racial prejudice in order to win the southern female vote.
- **1965**: Voting Rights Act passed allowing Blacks and minorities to vote.

**Native-Americans**
- **1890**: Native-Americans are granted a path to citizenship (with tribal ID only)
- **1924**: The right for Native-Americans to vote is granted state-by-state
- **1962**: Native-Americans in all states are granted the right to vote

**Asian-Americans**
- **1946**: Chinese-Americans receive the right to vote via the Magnuson Act
- **1952**: The Naturalization Act restricting Japanese-Americans from voting was repealed

**Hispanic-Americans**
- **1975**: Extension of the Voting Rights Act passed allowing citizens with “language barriers” to vote
Trail-Blazing African-American Suffragists

Mary Church Terrell: 1st President of Nat’l Assn of Colored Women; addressed Nat’l American Women Suffrage Assn in 1898.

Mary McLeod Bethune: Organized Black voters and worked to elect community-minded officials; started a training school for Black girls in 1904.

Sarah Parker: Leader in anti-slavery societies; she was evicted from a Boston theater, sued then won $500 in court; became a lecturer against slavery.
Notable Native-American Suffragists

Zitkala-Sa:
Co-founder of the Society of American Indians advocating for Native-American rights; later founded the National Council of American Indians, an important citizenship organization.

Debra Lekanoff:
A member of the Tlingit tribe, Debra represents the 40th district, only the second female tribal member to serve in the Washington State House of Representatives.

Susette LaFlesche Tibbles:
Served as interpreter and witness for Native-Americans in federal trials; worked towards recognition of U.S. citizenship for Native-Americans.
Significant Asian-American Suffragists

**Mabel Lee:**
At 16, she led a suffragist parade of 10,000; became the first Chinese woman to receive a PhD from Columbia University; helped Chinese-American women march for suffrage.

**Patsy Mink:**
The first Asian-American woman to serve in Congress or to run for president; fought for gender and racial equality, affordable childcare, and bilingual education.
Outstanding Hispanic Suffragists

**Jovita Idar:**
Trained as a teacher, she left teaching to pursue activism and wrote about women’s suffrage; her many accomplishments include providing education for Mexican-American students and advocating for fair treatment of Hispanics.

**Dolores Huerta:**
Also received training as a teacher but spent much of her career as a labor and civil activist leading voter registration drives and worker’s rights groups; in later years, worked towards election of Hispanics and women to political office.
Washington State and Women’s Suffrage

1853: Washington Territory’s first legislative session voted for women’s suffrage—lost by one vote

1883: Full voting rights are granted to women in the Washington Territory, including African-American women

1887: Supreme Court strikes down the law that granted Washington women the right to vote from 1883

1871: Susan B. Anthony addresses Washington Legislature, the first woman ever to present to a state legislature

1910: Washington passes women’s suffrage 2:1, leading the remaining western states to pass voting legislation

2019: Washington State legalizes non-traditional addresses on voter registrations, common for Native-Americans
Voting Rights & Obstacles for Minority Women

All women suffragists endured discrimination, ridicule, and abuse for the right to vote.

Non-white women face additional harassment against their skin color, heritage, and native language.

Even after federal laws allow voting rights for women of all races, state laws may still make it difficult to vote.

Voting rights continue to be eroded by partisan politics and gerrymandering.

Minorities are common targets for voter suppression and misinformation.
Types of Voter Suppression Methods in Current Use

- Voter ID Requirements
- Reduced Early Voting
- Restricted Polling Hours Conflict with Work Schedule
- Poll Site Harassment
- Purging Inactive Voter Registrations
- Unreasonable Name-Matching Requirements (e.g. hyphens, accents)
- Insufficient, Closed, or Underequipped Polling Stations
It’s Not All Bad News—Fighting Voter Suppression

Encourage absentee ballots. Voting by mail eliminates many problems around polling locations.

Encourage registered voters to double-check polling locations and voter registrations online in advance.

If you or others show up at the wrong location, demand a provisional ballot—it’s your right.

Help register voters and defeat suppressive policies.

Support efforts to make Election Day a holiday and automatic voter- and election-day registration.

WA State passed vote by mail and open voter registration laws in 2018. So REGISTER and VOTE!