

March marks the annually celebrated  
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

H A P P Y  
*Women's Day*



The month of **March** marks the annually celebrated **Women's History Month** — an observance of the incredible accomplishments of women throughout history. But, why March? Let's take a look at how history got us here and what the month long holiday means to different people.

### **The roots of International Women's Day**



*International  
Women's  
Day  
March 8*

In the early 20th century, labor movements across North America and Europe helped spur the first celebrations of women in modern history. Then, during the first World War, members of the women's movement in Russia organized the first unofficial International Women's Day on March 8, 1913,

the 40th anniversary of the Paris Commune, with a goal of peacefully protesting the war. It was then that the date of March 8 became significant to the women's movement, and women across Europe held rallies in solidarity exactly one year later.

It wasn't until more than 50 years later in 1977 that the United Nations finally recognized the holiday. According to the UN website, it is "a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political."

The international organization also believes International Women's Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by women — but to also recognize that no country has yet achieved gender equality.



## Women's History Week



It was only a year after the first officially recognized International Women's Day that Sonoma County, Calif., celebrated Women's History Week. Institutions like Sarah Lawrence College took note and began initiating similar celebrations within their own organizations, communities and school districts. Efforts to secure a "National Women's History Week" paid off when President Jimmy Carter issued a presidential proclamation declaring the first week of March National Women's History Week in 1980.

## And finally an entire month

Those first steps toward success led to Representative Barbara Mikulski, who at the time was in the House of Representatives, and Senator Orrin Hatch co-sponsoring a Congressional Resolution for National Women's History Week that same year. Their co-sponsorship demonstrated the wide-ranging political support for recognizing and celebrating the achievements of women.

As a result of increasing country-wide recognition and continued growth in state schools, government and organizations, 14 states dubbed the third month of the year Women's History month by 1986. A year later, Congress declared the holiday in perpetuity.

Each year, the National Women's History Alliance (NWHF), now declares an annual theme. This year's is "Valiant Women of the Vote," which "celebrates the women who have fought for woman's right to vote in the United States."

"In recognition of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, we will honor women from the original suffrage movement as well as 20th and 21st century women who have continued the struggle (fighting against poll taxes, literacy tests, voter roll purges and other more contemporary forms of voter suppression) to ensure voting rights for all," the NWHF added.



THE STATUS OF WOMAN IN AMERICA:  
A VOICE FROM THE SOUTH  
*“Anna Julia Cooper”*





## ANNA JULIA COOPER

The scholar and educator Anna Julia Cooper (1858–1964) was a true liberal artist, a devout Christian, an early advocate for the rights of women, and the fourth Black woman in the United States to receive a Ph.D. Born a slave on a Raleigh, North Carolina plantation, despite all odds, she obtained what should have been her right: an education. She mastered the liberal arts, learned Latin and Greek, and wrote her dissertation in French at the University of Paris-Sorbonne. She went on to become the principal of Dunbar High School in Washington D.C., America's first public high school for Black students. While working as principal, Cooper continued to write and speak publicly about the importance of higher education, morality, and spirituality within the American Black community. After receiving her Ph.D., she became the second president of Frelinghuysen University in Washington, D.C. She died on February 27, 1964, at the age of 105.

- taught at Wilberforce University (Ohio) and Saint Augustine's University (NC)
- Was the first female principal of the M Street High School for Colored Students in DC
- Wrote several books including A Voice from the South
- Earned her PhD in philosophy from University of Paris, France after raising her five grandchildren
- US Postal Service honored Dr. Cooper on a postal stamp in June 2009



If you have a U.S. passport, you may have seen this quote inside of it: “the cause of freedom is not the cause of a race or sect, a party or a class, it is the cause of humankind, the very birthright of humanity.” Those are the words of Anna Julia Cooper, only the fourth black woman ever to receive a Ph.D., which she earned from the Sorbonne in Paris in 1925. Cooper was born into slavery in North Carolina in 1858. After the Civil War, she went on to Oberlin College, where she received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in 1884 and 1887, respectively. In 1892, she published a collection of political essays called *A Voice From the South*. This book is a groundbreaking tome of feminist ideas from a black woman of the 19th century. But it is also filled with Cooper’s characteristic snark. For instance, during her lifetime, women of all races had to fight to be educated. The view was that schooling would make women unfit for marriage. And she agreed, arguing that education shifted power from the man to the woman. “The question,” she wrote, “is not now with the woman, ‘How shall I so cramp, stunt, simplify and nullify myself as to make me eligible to the honor of being swallowed up into some little man?’” Instead the man would have to figure out “how to reach the ideal of a generation of women who demand the noblest, grandest and best achievements of which he is capable...”

*Yes, girl. That is a read for the ages.*



## Kamala Harris



In November 2016, Kamala Harris became only the second African-American woman ever elected to the United States Senate, when she won in her home state of California. She is a Democrat and was previously attorney general in the state of California. Because Harris's parents are of Indian and Jamaican descent, she is also the first Indian-American woman ever elected to the U.S. Senate as well. After the president

issued his "Muslim ban," Harris vocally defended immigrant rights, demanding that people detained because of the ban have access to proper legal counsel. There has already been significant buzz about Harris's potential to become the first female president. She is one to watch.

**KAMALA HARRIS IS MADAM VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
as of JANUARY 20, 2021**



**Kamala Devi Harris** is an American politician and attorney serving as the 49th Vice President of

the United States. She is the United States' **first female** vice president, the highest-ranking female official in U.S. history, and the first African American and first Asian American Vice President.



## WOMEN BREAKING THE CORPORATE GLASS CEILING

### THE NEWCOMERS



- **Rosalind “Roz” Brewer, 58:** Already the 48th most powerful woman in the world according to *Forbes*, Starbucks chief operating officer Brewer is set to become even more powerful: in January she was named as Walgreens Boots Alliance’s next CEO. When she takes the helm of the company in March, she will be not just Walgreens’ first female CEO, but the only Black female chief executive of a S&P 500 company.
- **Jane Fraser, 53:** The Scotland-born banking executive will make history when she becomes the CEO of Citigroup next month: Fraser is currently the firm’s president, and when she takes over for current chief executive Michael Corbat she will be the first woman to run one of Wall Street’s four biggest banks.
- **Karen Lynch, 58:** Lynch became the chief executive of CVS, one of the world’s largest healthcare companies, on February 1. She was most recently the company’s executive vice president and president of Aetna, and she previously held executive positions at Cigna and Magellan Health Services.

## Jo Ann Jenkins became the CEO of AARP



Shortly after Jo Ann Jenkins became the CEO of AARP in 2014, an organization dedicated to helping Americans over the age of 50, she came out with some radical-sounding advice: don't retire.

"I'm 57 and having the best time," Jenkins [said](#) in 2015.

"I've had some wonderful work experiences during the course of my 30-plus years here in Washington, but I have to say that today I am finding more fulfillment in the work that I'm doing than I have in any other position I've held."

Fortunately for c-suites across the country, women are taking this advice, and 2020 saw more female CEOs of

America's largest companies than ever before. Many of these women also happen to be over the age of 50, and in breaking up corporate boys clubs are helping to shatter age and gender norms. *Forbes* and "Know Your Value" are highlighting these barrier-breakers in [a new weekly segment on Morning Joe](#), and this week's spotlight goes to women over 50 who are breaking the corporate glass ceiling.

## Carol Tomé became the CEO of AARP



**Carol Tomé, 64:** The 11th-most powerful woman in the world [according to Forbes](#), Tomé is the chief executive of UPS. It's a role she hadn't been planning for: a longtime Home Depot executive who'd worked her way up to CFO, she retired in 2019.

Retirement didn't last long. When UPS—a company on whose board Tomé has served since 2003—needed a new chief executive in 2020, Tomé was ready to reactivate her corporate life. Wall Street appears to approve of her leadership: UPS stock is up 65% since she

took the reins in June.

**Congratulations to Dr. Marlene Williams**  
**Clinical Director of Cardiology**  
**at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center**

**Faculty & Staff Recognition**



Congratulations to **Dr. Marlene Williams**, Clinical Director of Cardiology at **Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center** for her election to the [Association of University Cardiologists \(AUC\)](#). The AUC, founded in 1961, is limited to an active membership of 135 academic cardiologists from the United States, whom are elected by their peers. Dr. Williams received her undergraduate degree in biochemistry from McGill University, medical degree from the Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons and completed a residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital. She is also Course Director of the advanced clinical clerkship in coronary intensive care at Bayview Medical center.

## Sarah Thomas became the 1<sup>st</sup> Woman to Referee Super Bowl



**Sarah Thomas** is an American football official, currently for the National Football League (NFL), who wears uniform number 53. Thomas was the first woman to officiate a major college football game, the first to officiate a bowl game, and the first to officiate in a Big Ten stadium.

The Super Bowl saw a lot of changes this year, but there is one detail about this year's big game between Kansas City and Tampa Bay that is very noteworthy. On Sunday, Sarah Thomas made history as the very first woman to referee a Super Bowl.

NFL executive vice president of football operations Troy Vincent, Sr. said in a statement to CBS: "Sarah Thomas has made history again as the first female Super Bowl official." He continued, "Her elite performance and commitment to excellence has earned her the right to officiate the Super Bowl. Congratulations to Sarah on this well-deserved honor."





**Barbara Walters**

American journalist known particularly for her highly effective technique in [television](#) interviews of world-renowned figures.

**Diane Sawyer** - ABC News anchor, tackling some of the biggest issues of our time in new ways with original reporting, prime-time specials, long-form interviews and in-depth investigations. One of the most respected journalists in the world, she has traveled the globe delivering thorough and breaking news reports, and has conducted interviews with almost every major newsmaker of our time. Her prime-time documentaries have won critical acclaim for shedding light on difficult and previously underreported topics, including her comprehensive reporting on the U.S. foster care system and realities of poverty in America. In 2017, she helped lead ABC News to win an Edward R. Murrow Award for Overall Excellence in Television.



**Sheila C. Johnson**, best known as co-founder of Black Entertainment Television, made history in more ways than one. Not only is she one of the few African American women billionaires, she's also the first African American woman to be owner or partner in three major professional sports franchises—the NHL, NBA, and WNBA. She is the current CEO of Salamander Hospitality. When Viacom bought them out in 2000, Sheila and Bob pocketed \$1.3 billion—making them, pre-Oprah, the nation's first African-American billionaires.

## Children's Rights Advocate MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN



**Marian Wright Edelman** (born June 6, 1939) is an American activist for [children's rights](#). She has been an advocate for disadvantaged Americans for her entire professional life. She is founder and president emerita of the [Children's Defense Fund](#).<sup>[1]</sup> She influenced leaders such

at [Martin Luther King Jr.](#) and [Hillary Clinton](#).

Due to her academic achievement, she was awarded a [Merrill scholarship](#) which allowed her to travel and study abroad. In 1959 she returned to Spelman for her senior year and became involved in the [Civil Rights Movement](#). In 1960 she was arrested along with 77 other students during a sit-in at segregated Atlanta restaurants. She graduated from Spelman as valedictorian. She went on to study law and enrolled at [Yale Law School](#) where she was a John Hay Whitney Fellow, and earned a [Juris Doctor](#) in 1963. She was a member of [Delta Sigma Theta](#) sorority. Edelman received an [honorary doctorate](#) from [La Salle University](#) in May 2018.



Edelman was the first [African American](#) woman admitted to [The Mississippi Bar](#) in 1964. She began practicing law with the [NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund's](#) Mississippi office, working on racial justice issues connected with the civil rights movement and representing activists during the [Mississippi Freedom Summer](#) of 1964. She also helped establish the [Head Start program](#). Edelman moved in 1968 to [Washington, D.C.](#), where she continued her work and contributed to the organizing of the [Poor People's Campaign](#) of [Martin Luther King Jr.](#)<sup>[13]</sup> and the [Southern Christian Leadership Conference](#). She founded the Washington Research Project, a public interest law firm, and also became interested in issues related to childhood development and children.

Edelman was elected the first Black woman on the Yale board of trustees in 1971. In 1973, she founded the [Children's Defense Fund](#) as a voice for poor children, children of color, and children with disabilities. The organization has served as an advocacy and research center for children's issues, documenting the problems and possible solutions to children in need. She also became involved in several school desegregation cases and served on the board of the Child Development Group of Mississippi, which represented one of the largest Head Start programs in the country. In 2020, Edelman became president emerita of the Children's Defense Fund, and [Starsky Wilson](#) began to head the organization.



Best of The MY HERO Project

## Marian Wright Edelman

Children's Rights Activist

*"Service is the rent we pay for being.  
It is the very purpose of life,  
and not something you do  
in your spare time."*

## CELEBRATING ANGELA DAVIS – ACTIVIST & SCHOLAR



**Angela Davis** was born on January 26, 1944 in [Birmingham, Alabama](#). Her family lived in the "Dynamite Hill" neighborhood,



which was marked in the 1950s by the bombings of houses in an attempt to intimidate and drive out middle-class black people who had moved there. Davis

occasionally spent time on her uncle's farm and with friends in [New York City](#). Her siblings include two brothers, [Ben](#) and Reginald, and a sister, Fania. Ben played [defensive back](#) for the [Cleveland Browns](#) and [Detroit Lions](#) in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Davis attended Carrie A. Tuggle School, a segregated black elementary school, and later, Parker Annex, a middle-school branch of [Parker High School](#) in Birmingham. During this time, Davis's mother, Sallye Bell Davis, was a national officer and leading organizer of the [Southern Negro Youth Congress](#), an organization influenced by the [Communist Party](#) aimed at building alliances among African Americans in the South. Davis grew up surrounded by communist organizers and thinkers, who significantly influenced her intellectual development.

Davis has received various awards, including the Soviet Union's [Lenin Peace Prize](#). Accused of supporting political violence, she has sustained criticism from the highest levels of the US government. She has also been criticized for supporting the Soviet Union and its satellites. Davis has been inducted into the [National Women's Hall of Fame](#). In 2020 she was listed as the 1971 "Woman of the Year" in [Time](#) magazine's "100 Women of the Year" edition, which covered the 100 years that began with women's suffrage in 1920. Davis is included in [Time's 100](#) Most Influential People of 2020.

## CELEBRATING JUDGES



**Joan Ruth Bader Ginsburg** was an American lawyer and jurist who served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1993 until her death in September 2020



**Sandra Day O'Connor** is a retired attorney, politician, and the first woman associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, a position she held from 1981 until her retirement in 2006. She was the first woman nominated and confirmed



**Sonia Maria Sotomayor** is an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. She was nominated by President Barack Obama on May 26, 2009 and has served since August 8, 2009. Sotomayor is the first Hispanic and Latina member of the Court



Elena Kagan is an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. She was nominated by President Barack Obama on May 10, 2010 and has served since August 7, 2010. Kagan is the fourth woman to become a member of the Court. Kagan was born and raised in New York City.



**Amy Vivian Coney Barrett** is an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. She is the fifth woman to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. She was nominated by President Donald Trump and has served since October 27, 2020.

## CELEBRATING 1<sup>ST</sup> LADY OF PRESIDENTS



**Nancy Davis Reagan** was an American film actress and the second wife of Ronald Reagan, the 40th president of the United States. She was the first lady of the United States from 1981 to 1989. She was born in New York City. After her parents separated, she lived in Maryland with an aunt and uncle for six years.

**Eleanor Rosalynn Carter** is an American who served as First Lady of the United States from 1977 to 1981 as the wife of President Jimmy Carter. For decades, she has been a leading advocate for numerous causes. Carter was politically active during her White House years, sitting in on Cabinet meetings.



**Jacqueline Lee "Jackie" Kennedy Onassis** was an American socialite, writer, and photographer who became First Lady of the United States as the wife of President John F. Kennedy.





**Michelle Obama** is a lawyer, writer and the wife of former 44<sup>th</sup> U.S. President Barack Obama. Prior to her role as first lady, she was a lawyer, Chicago city administrator and community-outreach worker.

***She is the first African-American First Lady of the United States.***

Through her four main initiatives, she became a role model for women.

As first lady, Michelle Obama

initiated Let's Move! a program aiming to end childhood obesity within a generation. Through it, elected officials, business leaders, educators, parents, and faith leaders worked together to provide more nutritious food in schools, bring healthy and affordable food into underserved communities, plant vegetable gardens across America, and provide new opportunities for kids to be more active. Each year local schoolchildren helped plant and harvest the garden she started on the White House South Lawn. Its vegetables and fruits were served at the White House and donated to soup kitchens and food banks.

During Barack Obama's second term Michelle spearheaded the Reach Higher Initiative to help students understand job opportunities and the education and skills they need for those jobs. She encouraged young people to continue their education past high school in technical schools and community colleges as well as at colleges and universities. Worldwide, she championed the education of girls and women. In a commencement address at the City College of New York she told graduates, "Never view your challenges as obstacles." It is a lesson she has embodied all her life. Throughout her time in the White House Mrs. Obama worked to support veterans and military families. She also focused her energies on what she calls her most important role: MominChief to her daughters, who grew into accomplished young women during their eight years in the White House.

As first lady, Michelle focused her attention on social issues such as poverty, healthy living and education.

## CELEBRATING SOPHIE GERMAIN



**Sophie Germain (1776 – 1831)** A great female mathematician was Sophie Germain. Sophie was born in 1776 in Paris. She came from a middle-class family.

Sophie Germain had access to many educational resources in her father's library. During the French Revolution, she was forced to stay indoors for her own safety. One day, she stumbled across a book about the legend of Archimedes' death, who was speared to death because of this love for mathematics. This Book Sparked her interest in Mathematics.

She spent her time reading and teaching herself mathematics, including differential calculus. However, her attention was considered inappropriate for females during this time. Her parents took away all her clothes, candles, books to make her room too cold and too dark to her study. This did not faze Sophie.

When Sophie was 18 years old, a new school called the École Polytechnique was established in Paris. This school was intended to train mathematicians and scientists. However, women were not permitted to attend. Despite her parents' disapproval and societal discrimination, she did not give up. Gradually, she able to obtain and study the lecture notes from some of the courses.

Sophie used the pseudonym M. LeBlanc and submitted a mathematical analysis paper to J. L. Lagrange, who was a faculty members at the École Polytechnique school. Lagrange was very impressed with the writing and wanted the meet the student who wrote to him.

When he met with Sophie, he was even more impressed after he learned the author was a woman. Later, Lagrange mentored Sophie and introduced her into the male-dominated mathematical society.

Sophie Germain also sent some of her work in number theory to the most famous mathematician of the time, Carl Friedrich Gauss using her same pseudonym, M. LeBlanc. After three years, Gauss discovered that the author was a woman, and he was utterly thrilled and impressed. In one letter to Germain, Gauss said:

“The scientific notes which your letters are so richly filled have given me a thousand pleasures. I have studied them with attention, and I admire the ease with which you penetrate all branches of arithmetic, and the wisdom with which you generalize and perfect. I ask you to take it as proof of my attention if I dare to add a remark to your last letter.”

Her work was hampered by her lack of formal training and access to resources that male mathematicians had at the time. But she became the first woman to win a prize from the French Academy of Sciences, for work on a theory of elasticity, and her proof of Fermat's Last Theorem, though unsuccessful, was used as a foundation for work on the subject well into the twentieth century.

## CELEBRATING MARY LOU BRESLIN



**Mary Lou Breslin** (born in 1944) is a disability rights law and policy advocate and analyst. She is an adjunct faculty member at the University of San Francisco in the McLaren School of Business Executive Master of Management and Disability Services Program. She is the co-founder of the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF), a leading national civil rights law and policy center led by individuals with

disabilities and parents of children with disabilities. She served as the DREDF's deputy and executive director, and president and chair of board of directors.

Breslin was the driving force behind DREDF's leadership in the enactment of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Fair Housing Act, and the Civil Rights Restoration Act. She currently serves as the senior policy advisor with DREDF, focusing on their healthcare research initiatives.

Mary Lou Breslin was born in October 1944 and is a well-known figure in the disabled community through her activism and achievements for changing the way people with disabilities live their daily lives. She grew up with a polio-related disability in the 1950-1960's and had to face society's harsh psychological and physical obstacles that came along with her visible physical disability.

Through these obstacles, she remained optimistic even through the post war culture that would be reflected in the 1970's onward and wanted to take matters into her own hands. Although she got admitted to various universities, her options were limited because most of the schools would not accommodate her.

Mary Lou Breslin received the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Award from the University of California, San Francisco in 2015 which acknowledged DREDF's advocacy on behalf of people with developmental disabilities. Earlier in her career she received a Mary E. Switzer Merit Fellowship in 1995. The Physical and Mental Disability Rights Committee of the American Bar Association awarded her and DREDF the Paul A. Hearne Award in 2000 and the community leadership award from the San Francisco foundation in 2009 for improving the lives of people with disabilities. In 2013, Breslin was named a Fellow by Encore.org.

## CELEBRATING GRACE BREWSTER MURRAY



Born **Grace Brewster Murray** in New York City on December 9, 1906, Grace Hopper studied math and physics at Vassar College. After graduating from Vassar in 1928, she proceeded to Yale University, where she received a master's degree in mathematics in 1930. That same year, she married Vincent Foster Hopper, becoming Grace Hopper (a name that she

kept even after the couple's 1945 divorce). Starting in 1931, Hopper began teaching at Vassar while also continuing to study at Yale, where she earned a Ph.D. in mathematics in 1934—becoming one of the first few women to earn such a degree.

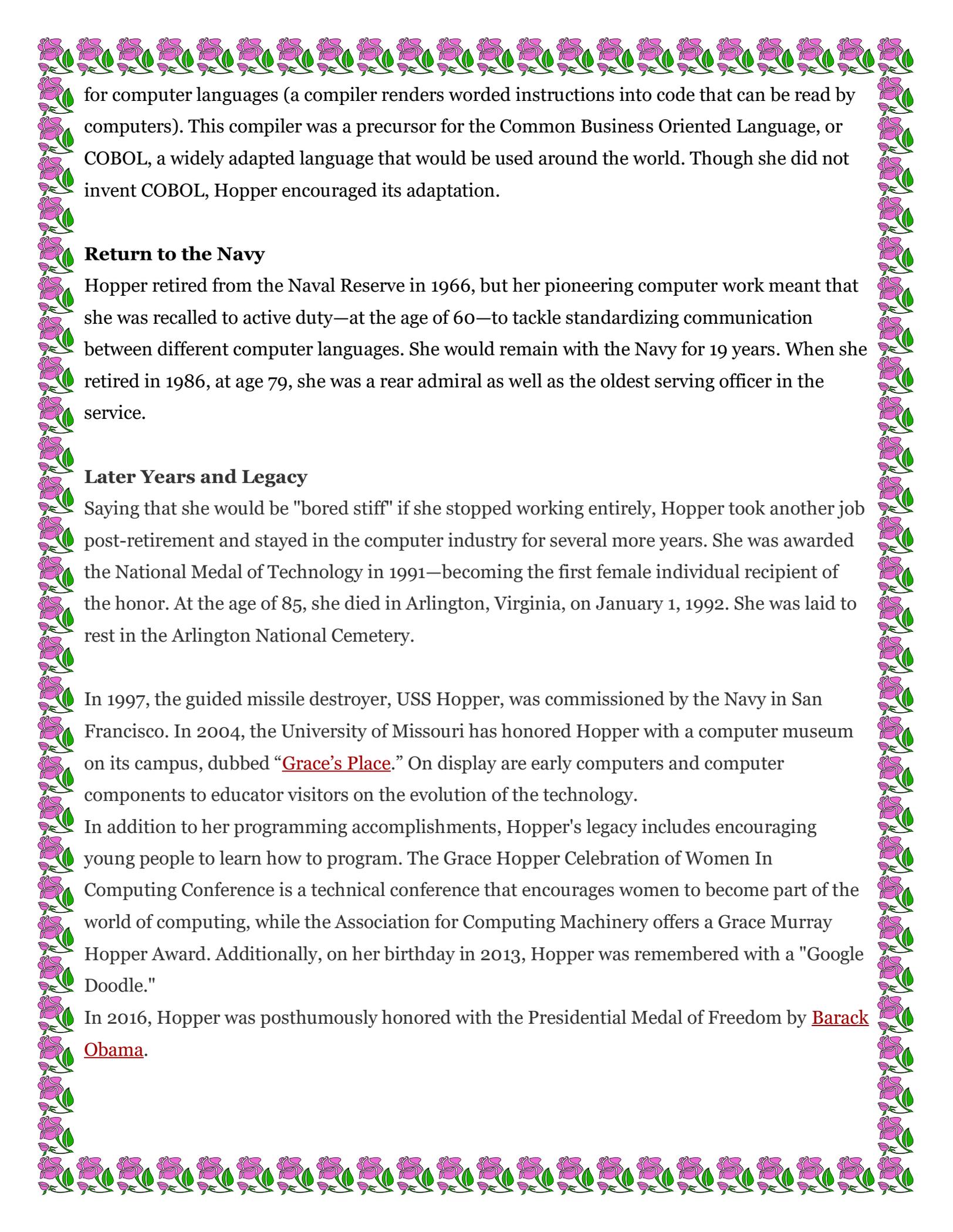
### **World War II**

Hopper, who became an associate professor at Vassar, continued to teach until World War II compelled her to join the U.S. Naval Reserve in December 1943 (she opted for the Navy, as it had been her grandfather's branch of service). She was commissioned as a lieutenant in June 1944. Given her mathematical background, Hopper was assigned to the Bureau of Ordnance Computation Project at Harvard University, where she learned to program a Mark I computer.

### **Career in Computing**

After the war, Hopper remained with the Navy as a reserve officer. As a research fellow at Harvard, she worked with the Mark II and Mark III computers. She was at Harvard when a moth was found to have shorted out the Mark II, and is sometimes given credit for the invention of the term "computer bug"—though she didn't actually author the term, she did help popularize it.

Wanting to continue to work with computers, Hopper moved into private industry in 1949, first with the Eckert-Mauchly Computer Corporation, then with Remington Rand, where she oversaw programming for the UNIVAC computer. In 1952, her team created the first compiler



for computer languages (a compiler renders worded instructions into code that can be read by computers). This compiler was a precursor for the Common Business Oriented Language, or COBOL, a widely adapted language that would be used around the world. Though she did not invent COBOL, Hopper encouraged its adaptation.

### **Return to the Navy**

Hopper retired from the Naval Reserve in 1966, but her pioneering computer work meant that she was recalled to active duty—at the age of 60—to tackle standardizing communication between different computer languages. She would remain with the Navy for 19 years. When she retired in 1986, at age 79, she was a rear admiral as well as the oldest serving officer in the service.

### **Later Years and Legacy**

Saying that she would be "bored stiff" if she stopped working entirely, Hopper took another job post-retirement and stayed in the computer industry for several more years. She was awarded the National Medal of Technology in 1991—becoming the first female individual recipient of the honor. At the age of 85, she died in Arlington, Virginia, on January 1, 1992. She was laid to rest in the Arlington National Cemetery.

In 1997, the guided missile destroyer, USS Hopper, was commissioned by the Navy in San Francisco. In 2004, the University of Missouri has honored Hopper with a computer museum on its campus, dubbed "[Grace's Place](#)." On display are early computers and computer components to educator visitors on the evolution of the technology.

In addition to her programming accomplishments, Hopper's legacy includes encouraging young people to learn how to program. The Grace Hopper Celebration of Women In Computing Conference is a technical conference that encourages women to become part of the world of computing, while the Association for Computing Machinery offers a Grace Murray Hopper Award. Additionally, on her birthday in 2013, Hopper was remembered with a "Google Doodle."

In 2016, Hopper was posthumously honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom by [Barack Obama](#).

## CELEBRATING BARBARA HILLARY



**Barbara Hillary** - Born on June 12, 1931 in [New York City](#) area now known as [Lincoln Square neighborhood](#) (formerly [San Juan Hill, Manhattan](#)) was an American nurse, publisher, adventurer, and inspirational speaker. Hillary was raised in [Harlem](#) by her mother Viola Jones Hillary, her father having died while she was two. One of her favorite books was the adventure novel [Robinson Crusoe](#). She attended the [New School](#) in New

York City where she majored in [gerontology](#), earning both her Bachelor of Arts and master's degrees. Following her graduation from the New School, she became a nurse, practicing for 55 years before retiring.

she attended the [New School University](#), from which she earned bachelor's and master's degrees in [gerontology](#). Following her education, she became a nurse as well as founding the Arverne Action Association and the *Peninsula Magazine*.

In 2007 at the age of 75, Hillary became the first known [black woman](#) to reach the [North Pole](#).<sup>[3]</sup> She reached the [South Pole](#) in January 2011 at the age of 79, becoming the first [African-American](#) woman on record to make it there and simultaneously the first black woman to reach both poles. Following her ventures to the North and South poles she became an inspirational speaker, addressing organizations such as the [National Organization for Women](#).

Having survived breast cancer in her 20s and lung cancer in her 60s, her health began to decline in 2019. After being admitted to a hospital in Far Rockaway, New York, she died on November 23, 2019 at the age of 88.



## **Adventurer**

---

Trips to the North and South poles

After retiring from nursing, Hillary sought adventure dog-sledding in [Quebec](#) and photographing polar bears in [Manitoba](#). When she learned that no black woman had reached the North Pole, she was determined to become the first one to do so. A polar expedition at the time cost around \$20,000 and

required her to ski, which she had never done before. To raise funds, she sent letters to potential sponsors and took in donations, eventually raising over \$25,000 to fund her expedition to the Arctic. To prepare for her journey she took cross-country ski lessons, hired a personal trainer and worked out with weights. On April 23, 2007, at the age of 75, she became one of the oldest people to set foot on the North Pole, and the first black woman.

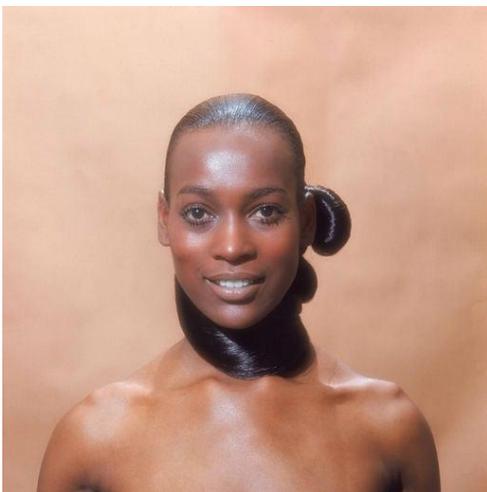
Five years later, she became the first African-American woman on record to stand on the South Pole at age 79, on January 6, 2011.

Having survived breast cancer in her 20s and lung cancer in her 60s, her health began to decline in 2019. After being admitted to a hospital in Far Rockaway, New York, she died on November 23, 2019 at the age of 88.



**Cher** is an American singer, actress and television personality. Commonly referred to by the media as the "Goddess of Pop", she has been described as embodying female autonomy in a male-dominated industry.

**Jacqueline Joyner-Kersey** is an American retired track and field athlete, ranked among the all-time greatest athletes in the heptathlon as well as long jump. She won three gold, one silver, and two bronze Olympic medals, in those two events at four different Olympic Games.



**Naomi Ruth Sims** was an American model, businesswoman and author, She was the first African-American model to appear on the cover of Ladies' Home Journal, which occurred in November 1968, and is widely credited as being the first African-American supermodel.