CELEBRATING WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

March 2019

*Details and facts provided about these individuals taken directly from Biography.com unless otherwise noted.
Constance Baker Motley was a legal advocate in the Civil Rights Movement. She helped draft the complaint in 1950 for the *Brown v. Board of Education* landmark suit. In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Motley and her fellow lawyers. She became the first female African-American federal judge in 1966. She represented multiple students, "Freedom Fighters" and the legendary Martin Luther King Jr. so that King could march in Albany, Georgia. Motley won nine of 10 civil rights cases that she argued before the Supreme Court.

**CONSTANCE BAKER MOTLEY**
Judge, Civil Rights Activist (1921–2005)
Margaret Brent was a British colonizer who arrived to the US in 1638. In 1642 Margaret acquired one thousand acres from her brother Giles in payment of a debt. Her brother returned to England and bestowed upon her full power of attorney. In the 1640s, individuals often represented their own interests before the courts. Of these amateur lawyers Margaret Brent was perhaps the most successful of her day, and she often appeared in court representing her brother’s or her own interests. Brent went on to argue and win 100 court cases, and the namesake of the ABA Margaret Brent Award.

MARGARET BRENT
Lawyer, Landowner
(1601-1671)

*Bio from Encyclopedia.com*
Sonia Sotomayor is the first Latina Supreme Court Justice. She was appointed in 2009. After graduating law school, Sotomayor entered private practice, where she specialized in intellectual property litigation. While she climbing the ladder in private practice, Sotomayor served on the board of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, the New York City Campaign Finance Board and the State of New York Mortgage Agency. In 1992, she was the youngest judge appointed to her District’s Court. In addition to her work in the Court of Appeals, Sotomayor also began teaching law as an adjunct professor at New York University in 1998 and at Columbia Law School in 1999.
Kimberlé Crenshaw, Professor of Law at UCLA and Columbia Law School, is a leading authority in the area of Civil Rights, Black feminist legal theory, and race, racism and the law. A specialist on race and gender equality, she has facilitated workshops for human rights activists in Brazil and in India, and for constitutional court judges in South Africa. Her groundbreaking work on “Intersectionality” has traveled globally and was influential in the drafting of the equality clause in the South African Constitution.
Charlotte E. Ray grew up in New York, in a large family, as one of seven children. She graduated from the Howard University School of Law in 1872 and was admitted to the District of Columbia bar that same year, becoming the first female African-American lawyer in the United States. Active in the suffrage movement, Ray was a member of the National Association of Colored Women. Following her graduation, Ray started her own law office, specializing in commercial law. To attract clients, she advertised in a newspaper run by Frederick Douglass, a leader in the abolitionist movement.
Born in Jamaica, Claudia Gordon is the first deaf Black female attorney in the United States. She currently works in the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. Previously she held a position in the White House Office of Public Engagement as the Public Engagement Advisor to the Disability Community for less than a year. She is also the first deaf person to work at the White House in a detailee capacity. She graduated from Howard University in 1995. She now works at the Department of Homeland Security as senior policy advisor for the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.
As a judge, Sandra Day O'Connor developed a solid reputation for being firm but just. In 1979, O'Connor was selected to serve on the Arizona State Court of Appeals. Only two years later, President Ronald Reagan nominated her for associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. O'Connor received unanimous approval from the U.S. Senate and broke new ground for women when she was sworn in as the first female justice on the Supreme Court. For 24 years, Sandra Day O'Connor was a pioneering force on the Supreme Court. She'll long be remembered for acting as a sturdy guiding hand in the court's decisions during those years and for serving as a swing vote in important cases.
Belle “Arabella” Babb graduated from Iowa Wesleyan University in 1866. After her marriage to John M. Mansfield, she joined the Iowa Wesleyan faculty as a teacher of English and history. With her husband, Mansfield studied law, and together they applied for admission to the Iowa bar in 1869. The sympathetic examiners, saying that her examination gave “the very best rebuke possible to the imputation that ladies cannot qualify for the practice of law,” certified Mansfield as the first female lawyer in the country. Mansfield did not practice law, however, but continued to teach at Iowa Wesleyan. During that time she helped organize the Iowa Woman Suffrage Society.
Loretta Lynch was the first Black woman to serve as U.S. attorney general (2015–17). Lynch’s grandfather, a sharecropper, assisted those seeking to escape punishment under Jim Crow laws. Lynch attended Harvard University and Harvard Law School. As attorney general, Lynch made police reform a priority of the DOJ. It conducted investigations into the law-enforcement departments of various cities, following a series of high-profile allegations of police brutality. Lynch also focused on minority rights, including those of the LGBTQ+ community.

LORETTA LYNCH
U.S. Attorney General

*Bio from Brittanica.com*
Tammy Baldwin is the first openly gay politician elected to the U.S. Senate. She is also Wisconsin's first congresswoman. After passing Wisconsin's Board Bar of Examiners in 1989, Baldwin began practicing law in the state. She was elected to Congress in 1998. Representing Wisconsin's 2nd District from 1999 to 2012, and serving on the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Baldwin became known for her strong support of LGBT rights and universal health care. Baldwin's mantra is to ignore "the naysayers, the cynics, and the keepers of the status quo; [those who say] you can't, you shouldn't or you won't."

TAMMY BALDWIN
Lawyer, Senator
Born in Japan in 1947, Mazie Hirono moved to Hawaii seven years later with her family. She graduated from the Georgetown University Law Center in 1978 and briefly worked in the legal field before winning a seat in the Hawaii State House of Representatives. She served in this capacity until being elected Hawaii's lieutenant governor in 1994. Her victory made her the first Asian-American woman to be elected to the Senate, the first elected female senator from Hawaii, the first U.S. senator born in Japan and the nation's first Buddhist senator.

MAZIE HIRONO
Lawyer, Senator
Kyrsten Sinema became a member of the US Senate in 2019. She is the first openly bisexual member of the U.S. Senate. She was formerly a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, and has a Master’s Degree in Social Work, a PhD, and a law degree. At a time when the gap between rich and poor in America has never been wider, Sinema, who was homeless for a time as a child, has worked to cross economic divides through legislation on the state and national government levels. Sinema first started getting national attention in 2008, when she led a diverse coalition that defeated a ballot initiative that would have outlawed gay marriage.
A transgender woman, Yamamoto was born in Poston Relocation Camp, Arizona, 1943. She graduated from Cal State University with a B.S. in government in 1966. As a young adult, she struggled with her gender identity and decided to join the Army, in which she served from 66–68. She was awarded many medals such as the National Defense Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and Vietnam Campaign Medal. After the army she attended UCLA’s School of Law, where she co-founded the Asian Pacific Islander Law Student Association. In 1984 she opened her own practice, and has been working as a lawyer ever since.

MIA YAMAMOTO
Lawyer

*Bio from The Lavender Effect*
Intisar A. Rabb is a Professor of Law at Harvard Law School and a director of its Islamic Legal Studies Program. She also holds an appointment as a Professor of History at Harvard University. In 2015, she received awards from the Luce Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation for SHARIAsource – an online portal for content and context on Islamic law, designed to make available primary sources as well as informed scholarly commentary about them freely available in collaboration with other legal scholars. She received a BA from Georgetown University, a JD from Yale Law School, and an MA and PhD from Princeton University. She has conducted research in Egypt, Iran, Syria, and elsewhere.

INTISAR A. RABB
Law Professor
Ginsburg earned her bachelor's degree in government from Cornell University in 1954, finishing first in her class. She married law student Martin D. Ginsburg that same year. She graduated first in her class from Columbia Law School. After clerking for U.S. District Judge Edmund L. Palmieri (1959–61), Ginsburg taught at Rutgers University Law School (1963–72) and at Columbia (1972–80), where she became the school's first female tenured professor. During the 1970s, she also served as the director of the Women's Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union, for which she argued six landmark cases on gender equality before the U.S. Supreme Court. She was confirmed by the Senate as Supreme Court Justice in 1993.
Jane Bolin was a trailblazing attorney who became the first African-American female judge in the United States, serving on New York's Family Court for four decades. Bolin was a thoughtful, conscientious force on the bench, confronting a range of issues on the domestic front and taking great care when it came to the plight of children. She also changed segregationist policies that had been entrenched in the system, including skin-color based assignments for probation officers. Additionally, Bolin worked with first lady Eleanor Roosevelt in providing support for the Wiltwyck School, a comprehensive, holistic program to help eradicate juvenile crime.
TRAILBLAZING WOMEN HONORED BY THE ABA
Ms. Nagae founded consulting firm Peggy Nagae Consulting, in 1988. Nagae received her J.D. degree with honors from Northwestern School of Law at Lewis and Clark College, a M.A. in Spiritual Psychology from the University of Santa Monica, and a Bachelor of Illumination from the Jwalan Muktikã School for Illumination. She has practiced law as a criminal and civil trial attorney, worked at a Seattle litigation firm, as Asst. Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Oregon School of Law, and in other roles in academia. Nagae is currently co-chair of the Diversity Task Force for the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association. She is a recipient of the 2017 ABA Spirit of Excellence Award.
Heather Kendall-Miller, an Alaska native (Athabascan), is a senior staff attorney with the Native American Rights Fund in Anchorage, AK. Kendall-Miller is a graduate of Harvard Law School and has dedicated her career to public service. She was a law clerk at the Alaska Supreme Court and then served as a Skadden Fellow, where she worked as a staff attorney for the Alaska Legal Services Corporation representing indigent clients in court and in administrative hearings. She is a recipient of the 2018 ABA Spirit of Excellence Award.
Sharon M. McGowan is the Chief Strategy Officer and Legal Director of Lambda Legal. Earlier in her career, McGowan was a Staff Attorney with the ACLU's Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender & AIDS Project. McGowan was repeatedly recognized by the Attorney General for her efforts on LGBT issues, receiving awards for her role in developing the arguments advanced by the U.S. in support of nationwide marriage equality, and in guiding the DOJ to its position that discrimination on the basis of sex encompasses discrimination on the basis of gender identity. McGowan is a recipient of the 2019 ABA Stonewall Award.

SHARON McGOWAN
Lawyer, LGBTQ+ Rights Legal Strategist

*Bio from Lambda Legal*
Phyllis Randolph Frye is an Associate Judge for the Municipal Courts in the US city of Houston, Texas. Frye is the first openly transgender judge appointed in the United States. Phyllis devotes her practice exclusively to taking transgender clients -- both adults and minors -- through the Texas courts to change the clients’ names and genders on their legal documents. She is a recipient of the 2018 ABA Stonewall Award.
In 1999, Ann Claire Williams was appointed by President William J. Clinton to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. She became the first judge of color appointed to the Seventh Circuit and the third woman of color to serve on any United States Court of Appeals. Before assuming that position, Williams, appointed by President Ronald Reagan, served on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois for fourteen years. She is still the youngest woman of color ever appointed to a federal judgeship. Judge Williams began her career as a music and third grade teacher in the inner city schools of Detroit. She received the 2018 ABA Alexander Award.

HON. ANN CLAIRE WILLIAMS
Judge
Janet Reno became the first woman attorney general (1993–2001) of the United States. She began her career in politics in 1971 when she was named staff director of the Judiciary Committee of the FL House. In 1973 she was named assistant to the state AG and became state attorney in 1978. She was reelected five times, even though she was a Democrat in a largely Republican area. Her early days as US AG were marked by her efforts to secure greater protection for women seeking abortions, who were often victims of physical harassment. She was a recipient of the 1993 ABA Margaret Brent Award.

JANET RENO
U.S. Attorney General
(1938–2016)
TINA TCHEN
Lawyer, Women’s Advocate

Born in Columbus and raised in Cleveland, Ohio by Chinese immigrant parents, Christina “Tina” Tchen had the values of public service and community involvement instilled in her from a very young age. After completing her studies, Tchen clerked for U.S. District Court Judge John F. Grady, and then joined the Chicago office of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, & Flom LLP, where she would go on to practice complex civil litigation, class actions, corporate investigations and securities law, among other areas, for twenty-three years. The co-founder of the Time’s Up Legal Defense Fund and former chief of staff for First Lady Michelle Obama, Tina is a recipient of the 2018 ABA Margaret Brent Award.

TINA TCHEN
Lawyer, Women’s Advocate
Paulette Brown is the first African-American woman President of the American Bar Association (2015–2016). In her presidential term, she led the “ABA Diversity 360 Commission,” which explored the ways in which the ABA could advance diversity & inclusion more proactively in the legal profession. A former National Bar Association President, she is currently the Chief Diversity Officer at Locke Lord LLP in New Jersey. She is a mediator for the District Court for the District of New Jersey. She received the 2007 ABA Spirit of Excellence Award and the 2011 ABA Margaret Brent Award.