



THE PURPLE CAMPAIGN

**Black History Month
Honorees // February 2018**



Eleanor Holmes Norton

Chair, *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*
1977-1981

Eleanor Holmes Norton

In 1977, Eleanor Holmes Norton became the first-female chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Under her guidance, sexual harassment became recognized as illegal gender-based employment discrimination.

Her leadership and advocacy has had a lasting impact that continues to be felt today.



Rosa Parks

Founder, *The Committee for Equal Justice*
Established in 1944

Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks is best-known for refusing to move to the back of the bus. What many people don't know is that she was also sent by the NAACP to investigate the rape of Recy Taylor. In this role, Parks fought for the due process of Taylor's case, launching the Committee for Equal Justice for the Rights of Mrs. Recy Taylor.

The Committee brought national attention to sexual assault of black women that was widespread throughout the South.



Mechelle Vinson

Plaintiff, *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson* (1986)

Mechelle Vinson

In 1978, Mechelle Vinson was fired from her job at Meritor Savings Bank, after refusing to comply with her manager, Sydney Taylor's unwanted sexual advances. Mechelle then filed a lawsuit against Taylor and the bank, leading to the landmark Supreme Court case that legally redefined workplace sexual harassment: for the first time, sexual harassment was a form of illegal sex-based discrimination.

Mechelle paved the way for generations of women to come forward and say that their bosses' actions created hostile work environments. We honor her for bravery and advocacy.



Congresswoman Maxine Waters

United States House of Representatives (1991-Present)

Congresswoman Maxine Waters

On July 29th 1994, Representative Maxine Waters was gavelled off the House floor when she refused to stop speaking out about a member she felt had badgered a female witness during a hearing: “The day is over when men can badger and intimidate women, marginalize them and keep them from speaking.”

Nearly 23 years later, Rep. Waters once again stood up for women, this time herself, when she asserted, “Reclaiming my time,” citing a House procedural rule after her questioning was repeatedly ignored during a committee confirmation hearing. Those three words became a rallying cry for women to stand up for themselves, a viral hashtag, and the official theme of the recent Women’s Convention in Detroit – Reclaiming Our Time.

We honor her for her relentless activism and for always speaking truth to power.