

# Think globally, highlight locally

## Celebrate your community's suffragists

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Whether you're an educator in Buffalo, Long Island, Plattsburgh or any point in between, NYSUT's Social Studies Subject Area Committee has a challenge for you. Find female suffragists from your community and highlight those hometown heroines in your classroom for the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment. Ratified by Congress on Aug. 18, 1920, the measure constitutionally guarantees a woman's right to vote.

The idea is based on the concept of acting locally to effect global change, said committee chair Jennifer Allard, a North Colonie Teachers Association member and seventh-grade social studies teacher at Shaker Jr. High near Albany.

"The local history angle is super important," said Allard, who hopes the focus will empower students

toward greater civic engagement. "By taking action within their local communities, many suffragists became agents of change at a national and global level."



**Belva Ann Lockwood**  
1830-1917

Committee member Jessica Groves, vice president of the Vestal TA, wrote a high school lesson plan highlighting attorney Belva Lockwood, the first woman to run for president as a third-party candidate. The opening of the Belva Lockwood Inn in a local building Lockwood once operated as a girl's school — The Owego Female Seminary — inspired the lesson.

"Although she was only here for a couple of years, highlighting someone local helped my students connect our community with the bigger picture," said Groves, noting that she discussed Seneca Falls and the women's suffrage movement in earlier lessons and that most of her students hadn't heard of Lockwood. "It starts with getting to know the community you live in. There are lots

of local stories in everyone's town." Believing that women shouldn't solely depend on men for support, Lockwood fought for equality for women in the classroom, the courtroom and in politics. She was the first woman to gain admittance to, and argue cases before, the U.S. Supreme Court. The community of Lockwood, located about 45 minutes west of Vestal High School in Broome County where Groves teaches, is named in her honor.

Using local activists can be a great hook because students are often more interested in local figures than national figures, said committee member Joseph Karb, a social studies teacher and president of the Springville Faculty Association.

"As Eleanor Roosevelt so eloquently stated, 'human rights start in small places close to home,'" Karb said. "This is true of the suffrage movement as well, with activists coming from all over the state including our largest cities and some of the smallest towns."

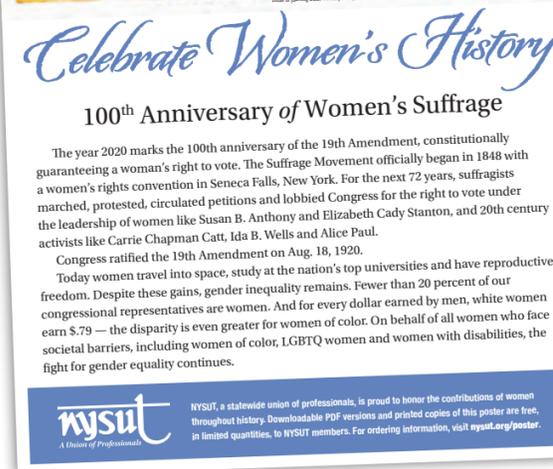
Allard said studying local heroines can also give students an opportunity

to delve into local research by interviewing community members, or finding information through local historians, librarians or the county clerk's office. "They often know an individual's family history, how to access census records or get the 'ungettable' source," she said.

"Women's history is OUR history. Highlighting local heroines of the suffrage movement is a wonderful way to celebrate the centennial of the 19th Amendment," said NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango, chair of the union's Women's Committee.

"Local libraries, state and community history museums, university special collections and archives are great resources for finding and teaching students about the suffragists who once lived in their backyards."

For mini-lesson plans or profiles of several New York suffragists, visit [nysut.org/women](http://nysut.org/women). The "Women's History 2020" section offers other materials to help educators highlight the 19th Amendment centennial in their classrooms.



For a free download of the 100th anniversary poster and past Women's History Month posters, including two that feature suffragists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Mary McLeod Bethune, visit [nysut.org/poster](http://nysut.org/poster).

## Free poster celebrates women's history

NYSUT celebrates Women's History Month — March — with a free poster celebrating the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which constitutionally guarantees a woman's right to vote. The Suffrage Movement officially began in 1848 with a women's rights convention in Seneca Falls.

For the next 72 years, suffragists marched, protested, circulated petitions and lobbied Congress for the right to vote under the leadership of women like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and 20th century activists like Carrie Chapman Catt, Ida B. Wells and Alice Paul. Congress ratified the 19th Amendment on Aug. 18, 1920.

Today women travel into space, study at the nation's top universities and have reproductive freedom. Despite these gains, gender inequality remains. Fewer than 20 percent of our congressional representatives are women. And for every dollar earned by men, white women earn 79 cents — the disparity is even greater for women of color. On behalf of all women who face societal barriers, including women of color, LGBTQ women and women with disabilities, the fight for gender equality continues.

For a free download of this and past Women's History Month posters, visit [nysut.org/posters](http://nysut.org/posters).

## Resources to kickstart your lessons

For a variety of centennial and women's history resources, go to [nysut.org/whm2020](http://nysut.org/whm2020). Members of NYSUT's Social Studies Subject Area Committee and the NYSUT Women's Committee have compiled the following:

- A list of State Education Department resources on women's history, including info from the NYS Archives, NYS Museum and NYS Library.
- Profiles and mini lesson plans of several unsung heroines of women's suffrage.
- The 2020 Women's Vote Centennial Initiative, a central organizing and information-sharing site offering programs, projects and activities.
- The National Women's History Alliance, info to promote women's history and the goals of education, empowerment and equality.

- The National Votes for Women Trail, an interactive map and database compiled by the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites, identifies important suffrage sites across the nation.

- For primary source documents, go to [c3teachers.org/inquiries/womens-rights](http://c3teachers.org/inquiries/womens-rights).
- Create interactive maps at [scribblemaps.com](http://scribblemaps.com).
- Use [polleverywhere.com](http://polleverywhere.com) to develop word clouds based on terms and keywords.
- The American Federation of Teachers' Share My Lesson website is a treasure trove of info by educators, for educators. Visit [sharemylesson.com](http://sharemylesson.com).
- The National Education Association has compiled a large number of Women's History Month ideas and lesson plans by grade level. Go to [NEA.org](http://NEA.org) for more.

## Unsung Heroines of Women's Suffrage

**Matilda Joslyn Gage**  
1826-1898  
Born in Cicero near Syracuse, she was the youngest speaker at the 1852 Women's Rights Convention in Syracuse.



**Sarah J. S. Garnet**  
1831-1911  
A Brooklyn resident, she founded the Equal Suffrage League in the late 1880s to advocate for voting rights for African-American women.



**Marietta Holley**  
1836-1926  
A writer known as the "female Mark Twain," this North Country native questioned political arguments against suffrage in her writings.



**Harriot Stanton Blatch**  
1856-1940  
Born to activism, the daughter of legendary suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton formed the Equality League of Self Supporting Women and the National Women's Party.



**Mary Burnett Talbert**  
1866-1923  
The Buffalo resident was a noted educator and activist in the suffrage, anti-lynching and anti-racism movements.



**Harriet Burton Laidlaw**  
1873-1949  
Born in Albany, she was a New York-based suffragist, reformer and peace activist who served as director of the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

