

Welcome to Women's History Month

"My mother helped me understand how not to show off what I knew, but how to use it so that others might benefit."

Dorothy Height (March 24, 1912 -April 20, 2010) American Civil Rights and Women's Rights Activist



History tells us that Dorothy Irene Height was a largely unsung giant of the civil rights movement. Dr. Height was not as well-known as her contemporaries. It was harder for her to be accepted as a leader because she was an African American woman. Dorothy Height, deciding it was better to use what she knew to benefit others, quietly became a widely-respected and influential leader of organizations focused primarily on improving the circumstances and opportunities for African American women.



She spent her lifetime involved in organizations such as the National Council of Negro Women, of which she was president for four decades; the National Staff of the YWCA; the Council for United Civil Rights Leadership; "Wednesdays in Mississippi," which brought together black and white women from the North and South to create a dialogue of understanding; African-American Women for Reproductive Freedom; and, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the largest civil rights for women's rights organization in the USA. One of the things Ms. Height said in an April 2010 interview with *Time* is that she has observed that many people will talk about people of different races but will not talk to people of different races. It was hard for her to understand why people are not willing to face the realities together.

With her great knowledge and even greater accolades, Dr. Height never acted haughty or condescending. Instead, she was approachable and kind; an icon ahead of her time. Whenever we talked, she would take the time to listen intently to what I was saying, imparting words of wisdom that remain with me to this day. She was a wonderful mentor, patient and highly intelligent. Our conversations always ended with me feeling inspired and refreshed. It is fitting that the United States Postal Service would honor this compassionate leader of many with a Forever Stamp as part of the Black Heritage Series. I am privileged to recognize a phenomenal woman of American History, Dr. Dorothy Irene Height.

