

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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# ILLINOIS

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RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT ON JUNE 17, 1919

1920  2020  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE  
CENTENNIAL  
COMMISSION

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1920-2020



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"THE RIGHT OF  
CITIZENS OF THE  
UNITED STATES TO  
VOTE SHALL NOT BE  
DENIED OR ABRIDGED  
BY THE UNITED  
STATES OR BY ANY  
STATE ON ACCOUNT  
OF SEX."

The 19th Amendment

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# ABOUT

*The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission (WSCC) was formed by Congress to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote and the 19th Amendment.*

Throughout 2020, the United States is celebrating the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which secured women's constitutional right to vote. Today, more than 68 million American women vote in elections because of the courageous suffragists who never gave up the fight for equality. This centennial is an unparalleled opportunity to elevate women's history and to commemorate a milestone of American democracy.

**Use this toolkit as your guide to commemorating the centennial in your state and community.**



ALICE PAUL IN FRONT OF THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D.C., 1920.


# LEARN THE HISTORY

## THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

Suffragists began their organized fight for women's equality in 1848 when they demanded the right to vote during the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. For the next 72 years, women leaders lobbied, marched, picketed, and protested for the right to the ballot. The U.S. House of Representatives finally approved the "Susan B. Anthony Amendment," which guaranteed women the right to vote, on May 21, 1919. The U.S. Senate followed two weeks later and voted to approve the 19th Amendment on June 4, 1919. The 19th Amendment then went to the states, where it had to be ratified by three-fourths of the then 48 states to be added to the Constitution. Tennessee became the 36th and final state needed to ratify the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920. On August 26, 1920, the U.S. Secretary of State issued a proclamation declaring the 19th Amendment ratified and officially part of the U.S. Constitution. Today, August 26th is celebrated annually as Women's Equality Day.

## ILLINOIS QUICK FACTS

- Illinois ratified the 19th Amendment on June 10, 1919.
- The Illinois Equal Suffrage Association began pushing for the enfranchisement of women in 1869.
- Grace Wilbur Trout and Jane Addams assumed leadership of the suffrage organization in 1912 and used savvy political lobbying to win limited suffrage for women in Illinois in 1913.
- Suffrage organizations in Illinois included the National Woman's Party Illinois branch, Illinois Women's Alliance, and Chicago Woman's Club.
- Suffragists such as Louise deKoven Bowen, Gertrude Crocker, Lucy H. Ewing, Naomi Talbert, Madeline M. Watson, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Frances Elizabeth Caroline Willard, and Fannie Barrier Williams were active in Illinois.



SUFFRAGIST AND  
LAWYER INEZ  
MILHOLLAND AT A  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE  
PARADE IN NEW YORK  
CITY, MAY 3, 1913.

## LEARN THE HISTORY

ORIGINAL SOURCE: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# ILLINOIS AND THE 19TH AMENDMENT

**RATIFICATION DATE: JUNE 17, 1919**

Women first organized and collectively fought for suffrage at the national level in July of 1848. Suffragists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott convened a meeting of over 300 people in Seneca Falls, New York. In the following decades, women marched, protested, lobbied, and even went to jail. By the 1870s, women pressured Congress to vote on an amendment that would recognize their suffrage rights. This amendment was sometimes known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment and became the 19th Amendment.

The amendment reads:

*"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."*

Although progress on the federal amendment stalled, women also campaigned for changes to state suffrage requirements to win the vote. The Illinois Equal Suffrage Association began pushing for the enfranchisement of women in 1869. When Grace Wilbur Trout became involved in the Association through her membership in the Chicago Political Equality League, she initiated tactics that captured great publicity such as an automobile tour across the state. She and Jane Addams assumed leadership of the suffrage organization in 1912 and used savvy political lobbying to win limited suffrage for women in Illinois in 1913. Although women could only vote in presidential and municipal elections, national suffrage leaders considered this a great victory since Illinois became the first state east of the Mississippi where women could vote. Illinois women also campaigned for the women's suffrage amendment to the U.S. Constitution, including sending a large delegation to the 1913 Women's Suffrage Procession.

Ida B. Wells-Barnett founded the Alpha Suffrage Club in Chicago in 1913 to educate African American women about the political process and encourage them to use the power of the ballot to address issues important to their communities. Her efforts were instrumental in

securing the election of the city's first Black alderman, Oscar DePriest, in 1914.

After decades of arguments for and against women's suffrage, Congress finally passed the 19th Amendment on June 4, 1919. After Congress approved the Amendment, at least 36 states needed to vote in favor of it for it to become law. This process is called ratification.




Illinois hoped to be the first state to ratify the amendment. On June 10, 1919, Illinois lawmakers believed they had achieved that goal when ratification passed unanimously in the Illinois Senate and with only three votes opposed in the House. However, in their zeal to be first, the legislature inadvertently voted to approve the wrong language. Once the error was discovered, another vote was taken on June 17, 1919 and Illinois became the seventh state to ratify the amendment. By August of 1920, 36 states (including Illinois) ratified the 19th amendment, recognizing women's suffrage rights.

### Illinois Places of Women's Suffrage: State Fairgrounds

Places throughout Illinois are associated with women's struggle for suffrage, including the state fairgrounds. The first State Fair in Illinois was established in Springfield in 1853. The annual fair became an important social and cultural event in Illinois history. In 1907, the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association held its annual conference on the fairgrounds. Attendees voted to elect Ella S. Stewart president of the club. Stewart was also involved in organizing women's suffrage events in Chicago, and she worked with women like Jane Addams, founder of the Hull House. The fairground is listed as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places and hosts both public and private events.

Source: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/illinois-and-the-19th-amendment.htm>

# COMMEMORATE ACROSS YOUR STATE

-  **Issue Proclamations or Executive Orders:** Encourage your Governor and Mayors across the state to issue a commemorative proclamation or executive order to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or designate 2020 as "The Year of Illinois Women." Find samples and templates at [womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders](https://womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders).
-  **Pass Resolutions:** Encourage your state legislature, city councils, and town councils to pass commemorative resolutions to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as your Women's Equality Day, or reaffirm your state's or community's commitment to the 19th Amendment and to uplifting women's voices. Find samples and templates at [womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders](https://womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders).
-  **Join the Forward Into Light Campaign:** On August 26, 2020, buildings and landmarks across the country will light up in purple and gold to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. This nationwide celebration of the centennial is named for the historical suffrage slogan, "Forward through the Darkness, Forward into Light." Work with leaders, organizations, and communities in your state to celebrate women's right to vote in the official suffrage colors of purple and gold, from the State Capitol to skyscrapers to bridges to city halls.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ILLINOIS

- **The Illinois Senate declared June 10, 2019 as 19th Amendment Ratification Day in Illinois.**
- **The Illinois legislature passed a resolution authorizing the state treasurer to issue a commemorative coin for the suffrage centennial.**
- **The Evanston Women's History Project created the Suffrage 2020 Illinois website as a hub for the suffrage centennial in the state: [suffrage2020illinois.org](https://suffrage2020illinois.org).**

# GET INSPIRED

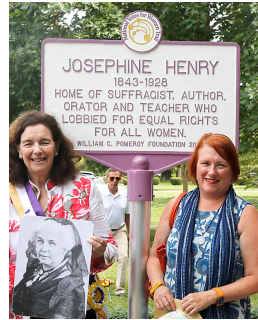
## COMING UP IN 2020



**FORWARD INTO LIGHT**



**PROJECT 19 SKYDIVERS**



**VOTES FOR WOMEN TRAIL**



**CENTENNIAL RIDE**

**Forward Into Light:** As part of the WSCC's Forward Into Light campaign, states across the country will light their buildings and landmarks in purple and gold on August 26, 2020, the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Some states started commemorating the centennial with lightings in 2019, including Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Virginia. Are you in for August 26, 2020? Contact the WSCC for more information.

**Project 19:** Led by the Women's Skydiving Network (WSN), Project 19 is a planned jump of 100 women skydivers in July 2020 outside of Chicago in celebration of the centennial of women's right to vote. The WSN also has a sponsored all-women Professional Demonstration Team, which is scheduling jumps (at no charge!) during 19th Amendment celebrations around the country throughout 2020. For more information, contact Team Captain Melanie Curtis at [mel@melaniecurtis.com](mailto:mel@melaniecurtis.com).

**Votes for Women Trail:** The National Votes for Women Trail is a project led by the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to place historic markers at locations relevant to the history of the women's suffrage movement in all 50 states. The WSCC is partnering with the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to complete the Trail in 2020. Visit [womensvote100.org/votes-for-women-trail](http://womensvote100.org/votes-for-women-trail) to follow the Trail and find historic sites in your state.

**Centennial Ride:** In honor of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, hundreds of women and men will participate in a cross-country motorcycle tour in 2020. Riders will leave from ten different starting cities around the country, and more than 1,000 riders will converge on Washington, D.C. on August 26, 2020. Learn more at [www.centennialride.com](http://www.centennialride.com).

# PLAN AN EVENT



"WE KNOCK AT THE BAR OF JUSTICE, ASKING AN EQUAL CHANCE."

-Mary Church Terrell, suffragist & founder of the National Association of Colored Women, 1898


- **What:** Hold a press conference, reception, or public program commemorating the centennial of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. Keep reading for examples and ideas!
- **Where:** Host an event at your State Capitol or City Hall, or at a historic site, museum, school, university, or community center. Find a list of historic sites and places in Illinois along the National Votes for Women Trail at [womensvote100.org/get-involved](http://womensvote100.org/get-involved).
- **When:** Events celebrating the centennial can be held anytime throughout 2020, but particularly important dates include Black History Month (February), Women's History Month (March), and June-August 2020, building up to the official centennial date on August 26, 2020.
- **Who:** Invite members of your community to your event, as well as state or local leaders such as your Governor, First Lady/First Partner, Members of Congress, State Legislators, Mayor, or local Council Members. Invite a guest speaker, such as a women's suffrage historian, and invite historic performers to portray famous women of history. Find a list of historians and performers at [womensvote100.org/get-involved](http://womensvote100.org/get-involved).
- **Additional Details:** The suffragists wore white dresses to display their unity, and the yellow rose became a symbol of the movement's ultimate victory. At your commemorative event, decorate the room with yellow roses, suggest your guests dress in white attire, and offer replica Votes for Women pins, which can be provided by the WSCC.

## Relevant Organizations in Your State:

- Illinois Historic Preservation Agency: [www2.illinois.gov/dnrhistoric/Pages/default.aspx](http://www2.illinois.gov/dnrhistoric/Pages/default.aspx)
- Illinois Municipal League: [nlc.org/state-municipal-leagues](http://nlc.org/state-municipal-leagues)
- Illinois State Museum: [illinoisstatemuseum.org](http://illinoisstatemuseum.org)
- Illinois State Historical Society: [historyillinois.org](http://historyillinois.org)
- Illinois Women Vote: [illinoiswomensvote.com](http://illinoiswomensvote.com)



# PLAN AN EVENT



"MEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING MORE; WOMEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING LESS."  
Susan B. Anthony & Elizabeth Cady Stanton, c.1868

## MORE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IDEAS

**Street Renaming:** Through your Mayor's office, change the name of a street in your city in honor of a local suffragist.

**Suffrage Exhibits:** Work with your local historical society to create an exhibit about your community's suffrage story.

**Purple and Gold Fireworks:** At your State Fair, County Fair, or community gathering, feature a display of purple and gold fireworks.

**Musical Performances:** Hold a concert featuring female composers or original music from the suffrage movement, which can be found online through the Library of Congress's searchable archives.

**Film Screenings:** Host screenings of films focused on the suffrage movement or women's empowerment, such as *Iron Jawed Angels*, *Suffragette*, or *A League of Their Own*.

**Suffrage Floats:** Include a suffrage-themed float in state and local parades.

**Community Murals:** Hire a local artist to create a suffrage-themed mural in your community that tells the story of the suffrage movement in your state.

**Suffrage Centennial Races:** Take the lead from the National Park Service's Race to Ratification and hold a suffrage-themed 5K or 10k in summer 2020.

**Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon:** Work with Wikipedia to plan an "Edit-a-Thon" focused on your state and local suffrage history.

**Suffrage Essay or Art Contests:** Hold an essay or art contest for students on topics related to your state and local suffrage history.

**Suffrage Book Club:** Form a book club with a locally owned bookstore to read and discuss books about the women's suffrage movement.

**Plantings of Yellow Roses:** Plant yellow roses in your home, school, or community gardens and share photos on social media using the hashtags #WomensVote100, #SuffrageSisters, and #SuffraGents.

# JOIN THE CONVERSATION

## STAY ENGAGED

- Follow @WomensVote100 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Check out the “Suffrage Sisters” YouTube channel
- Subscribe to our e-newsletter at [womensvote100.org](http://womensvote100.org)
- Keep an eye on our Illinois page at [womensvote100.org/illinois](http://womensvote100.org/illinois)

## FIND RESOURCES

- [womensvote100.org/learn](http://womensvote100.org/learn)
- [womensvote100.org/news](http://womensvote100.org/news)
- [womensvote100.org/states](http://womensvote100.org/states)

Use these hashtags on social media to engage with your community during this historic moment:

**#WomensVote100**  
**#SuffrageSisters**  
**#SuffraGents**

## SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

### Instagram



### Facebook



# THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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## WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION



# QUESTIONS?

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