

Champions by Choice: The Long Climb to the Top

Legacy of Woman Suffrage in Washington State

This series was created to honor and celebrate the contributions made by women in Washington state to advance suffrage and equal rights over the past 100 years. This is the final chapter of this series. Thank you for reading!

CHAPTER 6 **CASTING LONG SHADOWS:** Others who have carried the torch

In the early 1900s, many women who worked outside the home were employed in fisheries, canneries, laundries, breweries, hotels and restaurants. Most worked 10 hours a day, and many worked seven days a week.

As the years passed, women began to take advantage of opportunities to enter new and challenging career fields, such as medicine, aviation, music, publishing and advanced education. There are many examples of women who chose to push beyond traditional boundaries, leading the way for others to follow. Without the right to vote, the voices and contributions of these women and millions of others may have gone unnoticed and been difficult to imitate. Every person has been positively influenced and encouraged to succeed

by women who have made sacrifices in the name of suffrage and equal rights.

Alice Lord (1877–1940) was a Seattle waitress who often worked 14 hours a day for very little pay. She realized that there needed to be reform in work conditions for women, including an established minimum wage — but she knew she couldn't bring about the necessary



Alice Lord (Photo courtesy of Washington State Historical Society)

changes by herself. Lord organized other women to found one of the earliest women's unions chartered by the American Federation of Labor: the Waitress Union. After women gained the right to vote in 1910, there was greater support for laws pertaining to

women's issues. In 1911, Washington state became one of the first in the nation to grant women an eight-hour workday. (To learn more about Alice Lord, see HistoryLink.org essay 865.)



Vi Hilbert (Photo courtesy of Jill LaPointe)

Vi Hilbert (1918–2008) was the only child of a father who was a fisherman and a logger. In order to find work, her parents moved often to different locations along the Upper Skagit River. As a result, Hilbert attended more than 15 schools, making it difficult for her to develop friendships. Instead, she spent much of her time listening to her parents tell stories in their native Lushootseed language.

Hilbert was determined to get the best education possible for a young native woman in the early 20th century, so she eventually attended a boarding school where she was encouraged to speak English only. It wasn't until she was nearly fifty years old that she was approached by language scholars to help save her traditional Coast Salish language. Because she had listened carefully and honored the language of her parents, she was able to translate taped stories of native elders, publish several collections of stories and cultural information,



The primary fundraiser for the suffrage movement in Washington was the "Washington Women's Cookbook." It included favorite family recipes, along with plenty of information about why it was important to gain the right to vote. The cookbook, which sold for \$1 and featured the official slogan, "Votes for Women," on its cover, was an ideal way to get this type of information to women in their homes.

Washington Women's Cookbook, 1908. (Photo courtesy of Washington State Historical Society)

and create lesson plans to teach the disappearing Lushootseed language to a new generation. Without Vi Hilbert, the words of her ancestors might have been lost forever. (To learn more about Vi Hilbert, see HistoryLink.org essay 7130. To hear Hilbert speak in Lushootseed, see HistoryLink.org essay 8156.)

As a young woman, **Missouri Hanna** (1857–1926) experienced many tragedies. Her husband drowned in a boating disaster, her son died of a medical problem and her youngest daughter was severely injured in a bicycle accident. She decided to move to Edmonds to see if the salt air and sea breezes of the waterside community would help her disabled daughter. Hanna purchased a tract of land on a bluff above the Puget Sound and sold building lots. Because she was a single parent in need of additional income, she purchased the local newspaper, the Edmonds Review. Very few women were involved in the publishing business at this time, and many men in the community were skeptical and unsupportive. Over many years and against the odds, Hanna built the Review into a fine newspaper, covering local events, politics and suffrage. She also founded the suffrage magazine Votes for Women. She was Washington's first female newspaper publisher and is known as the "mother of journalism" in Washington state. (For more information, see HistoryLink.org essay 8107.)

Measure Your Knowledge of Washington State Suffrage

Select a Washington state woman you admire. She can be a historic figure or someone who influences you today. Write a one-page paper that explains the importance of her contributions to what you wish to accomplish in your life. You must include how her ability to vote and earn equal rights contributed to her success in her given career field or life path.

Optional: Bring a favorite recipe from home along with a short explanation of why it is important to your family. Your class will gather all the essays and recipes to create a class cookbook. Classes are encouraged to submit copies of their cookbooks to the Seattle Times Newspapers In Education program — where one class will be selected from each grade-level group (K–2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–12) as a winner. Cookbooks must be submitted to nie@seattletimes.com with the subject line "Cookbook Contest" by January 15, 2011, to qualify. For complete contest rules and further information, please see the featured content section of the NIE website, seattletimes.com/nie.



Newspapers In Education

The Seattle Times

Inspiring Students To Learn

This project was made possible through a partnership of The Seattle Times Newspapers In Education program, HistoryLink.org and Heritage 4Culture.

To register for NIE, e-mail nie@seattletimes.com or call 206/652-6290.



HistoryLink.org



CULTURE
KING COUNTY LODGING TAX

This series was written by Patricia Filer