

MICHIGAN WOMEN'S HISTORICAL CENTER & HALL OF FAME

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Michigan Women's Hall of Fame to Celebrate Last Women's History Month at Cooley-Haze House

Lansing, MI – After 34 years, the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame announces that it will be moving its operations from the historic Cooley-Haze House in downtown Lansing to the Meridian Mall in Okemos in late April.

In the late 1970s, the City of Lansing and the Michigan Women's Studies Association (MWSA) negotiated a lease for the historic Cooley Haze House. At that time MWSA had \$900 in the bank and the ambitious goal of creating a place for people to engage and delve deep into the history of Michigan women. This dream—originally called “an idea that's time had come”—became reality on June 10, 1987, when the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame opened to the public. It was the first women's history museum in Michigan and the first museum in the country dedicated to the history of one state's women.

Since 1987, the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame (MWHOF) has continued to grow. Dr. Gladys Beckwith served as the first Executive Director of the organization as an unpaid volunteer for over 25 years. Today, the Center is proud to have paid professional full-time and part-time staff. Over the past 30 years, membership has grown and more than 20 original exhibits about Michigan women have been created. Most of these exhibits still circulate the state as traveling exhibits. Programs have expanded, the budget has grown, and attendance to the Center has increased. When the Center opened to the public in 1987, fewer than 40 women had been inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame; as of 2016 there are 308. In addition, the MWHOF, which began as a non-collecting institution, now boasts an artifact and archival collection documenting the history of Michigan women and of women nationally.

“We are truly excited to begin this new chapter in our organization's history, and will always cherish the memories shared in this building,” said Interim Executive Director Caitlyn Perry Dial. “While this move is bittersweet for us, we are looking forward to the opportunity to grow and to the amenities, including ADA accessible exhibits, increased foot-traffic, and ample parking, which our new space will provide at the Meridian Mall,” she added.

In preparation of saying goodbye to their long-time home, the Hall of Fame invites the public to celebrate their last Women's History Month at the Cooley-Haze House. The following events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted:

Women's History Month Reception

Wednesday, March 8, 5:30-7:30 PM

Enjoy a first look at the new 2016 Michigan Women's Hall of Fame inductee banners. A brief program will be held at 6 PM and refreshments will be provided. This event is free and open to the public.

This reception is sponsored by National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club Inc.— Greater Lansing Area Club, Mary & Bill Seeger, and Shirley & Bill Zeller.

Women's History Month Family Saturdays

Two Saturdays in March, 1-3 PM, join us for family friendly drop-in activities. Admission is complimentary.

- March 4, 2:00 pm – Storyteller Karrie Koroch – An hour of special stories of Michigan's great women and girls throughout history.
- March 18 - Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds – In cooperation with National Nutrition Month, we're empowering women and girls to embrace a healthy lifestyle and love their bodies. Join us for an afternoon of activities that will get you moving and love the skin you're in!

The Women's History Month Family Saturdays are sponsored by MSU Federal Credit Union and Great Lakes Hand Surgery Center.

Equal Means Equal Film Screening

Thursday, March 23, 6:30 PM

Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Rd, East Lansing, MI 48823

\$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors (65+), and \$5 for students. Visit ememichiganwomen.eventbrite.com or call 517-484-1880 x203 for advanced purchase.

Please join us with the East Lansing Film Festival for a special screening and discussion of the documentary *Equal Means Equal*. This film is an unflinching look at how women are treated in the United States today. By following both real life stories and precedent setting legal cases, director Kamala Lopez discovers how outdated and discriminatory attitudes inform and influence seemingly disparate issues, from workplace matters to domestic violence, rape and sexual assault to the foster care system, the healthcare system and the legal system. Along the way, she reveals the inadequacy of present laws in place that claim to protect women, ultimately presenting a compelling and persuasive argument for the urgency of ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment. Panel discussion will immediately follow the film screening.

This film screening is sponsored by Dr. Gladys Beckwith, the Center for Gender in a Global Context at MSU, and Pamela Withrow.

Special Exhibit: Great Girls in Michigan History

Extended to April 1, 2017

Michigan girls do great things. In this exhibit you will meet nine girls from different eras, with different dreams, from across the state of Michigan who all accomplished something amazing before the age of 20. It was not always easy for these girls; most had significant obstacles to overcome to reach their goals. Visitors will leave knowing what qualities Great Girls possess and inspired to reach their own dreams. This is appropriate for visitors of all ages.

The mission of the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame is to promote the equality of women by honoring the history and celebrating the accomplishments of Michigan women. The Michigan Women's Historical Center, located at 213 W. Malcolm X Street in Downtown Lansing, is home to the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame featuring over 300 honorees past and present, changing history exhibits, and a fair trade gift shop. Until April 2nd, museum hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 12-4 p.m. and the 1st Sunday of every month, 2-4 p.m. Closed all major holidays and holiday weekends. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for students (6-18) and free for children 5 and under. The Michigan Women's Historical Center & Hall of Fame is operated by the Michigan Women's Studies Association, a non-profit 501c3 organization.

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