

**Michigan Women's Studies Association**  
**Michigan Women's Historical Center & Hall of Fame**  
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### **Michigan Women's Historical Center Announces 2015 Hall of Fame Honorees**

Lansing, MI—Ten outstanding women were chosen from over 100 nominations to be inducted into the 32<sup>nd</sup> class of the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. The induction will take place at the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame Awards Dinner & Induction Ceremony on Thursday October 29, 2015 at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center (55 S Harrison Rd, East Lansing). The ceremony begins with a reception at 5 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m., and the awards presentation at 7 p.m. Sponsorship and advertising information is available online at [www.michiganwomenshalloffame.org](http://www.michiganwomenshalloffame.org). Reservations are \$150 per person and include a one-year membership or \$135 for members and can be made on our website or by calling (517) 484-1880 x203.

The 2015 contemporary honorees are:

**Dean Jocelyn Benson of Detroit** is the Dean of Wayne State University Law School and the youngest woman to lead a top 100 law school in U.S. history. She is a co-founder of the Military Spouses of Michigan, a network that provides support and services to military families, and a board member of the Southern Poverty Law Center. Upon graduation from Harvard Law, Benson served as a law clerk to the Honorable Damon J. Keith on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit and joined the faculty of Wayne State University Law School in 2005. In 2011, Benson was appointed to the national board of directors of iCivics, Inc., a nonprofit created and led by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor to improve civics education throughout the country.

**Rep. Maxine Berman of West Bloomfield** served in the Michigan House of Representatives for 14 years, during which time she was a strong advocate for women's health. Along with sponsoring a bill mandating informed consent for women diagnosed with breast cancer, another Berman law made Michigan the first state to require the accreditation of mammography facilities. She then successfully lobbied the federal government to create legislation for national standards, which passed in 1992.

**Sue Carter of East Lansing** is a trailblazer for women in radio. She was the first woman to join the news staff at WVIC/Lansing and WXYZ-AM/Detroit, the first woman editorial director at WDIV/Detroit, the first woman news director at WAVZ/New Haven and WABX/Detroit, and the first woman announcer for women's basketball at Michigan State University. Carter also served as press secretary to Governor Blanchard and was inducted in the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame in 2007.

**The Honorable Candice S. Miller of Harrison Township** was the first woman elected Secretary of State of Michigan, and is one of only three women (along with Debbie Stabenow and Martha Griffiths) to have been elected to both Michigan state government and the U.S. Congress. In her current position as a U.S. Representative, Miller has championed causes such as national security, water quality, and the preservation of the Great Lakes.

**Esther K. Shapiro of Detroit** is a consumer rights advocate. She was appointed the first director of Detroit's Consumer Affairs Department, where she created a program to hear and respond to consumer complaints. Shapiro traveled throughout Michigan helping others understand consumer legislation and how important it was to "read the label." She also served on the boards of many national organizations such as the Consumer Federation of America and the National Consumers League.

**Linda M. Woods, MSW, of Traverse City**, promotes understanding of Native American culture through education. Woods retired with over 30 years of experience as a substance abuse counselor and social worker, promoting wellness

and recovery within Native American communities across the country. She continues to facilitate cultural competency trainings throughout Michigan. Woods, a U.S. Air Force veteran, served during Vietnam and is the only known female veteran in the U.S. to carry an Eagle Staff, an esteemed symbol in Native American culture, on behalf of women veterans. She serves as a role model for Native American women.

The 2015 historical honorees are:

**Janet C. Cooper (1931-2002) of Detroit** worked for the Michigan Civil Rights Commission for over 30 years, ending her tenure as Deputy Director. She was the president of Michigan's ACLU and an advocate for gender equality in government. Cooper received a law degree from Wayne State University Law School, and taught at both Wayne State Law School and the Detroit College of Law at Michigan State University.

**Mabel White Holmes (1890-1977) of Chelsea** invented America's first ever prepared baking mix. JIFFY Baking Mix was introduced during the Great Depression. It was very popular due to its high quality and low price. Holmes became president of Chelsea Milling Company, which produces JIFFY mixes, after her husband's death in 1936.

**Maggie Walz (1861-1927) of Calumet** was a Finnish immigrant and advocate for the Finnish community in Michigan and women's rights. She helped numerous other Finnish women immigrate to the U.S. by paying for their passage, helping them learn English and finding them jobs. Walz was an astute businesswoman and after becoming the federal land agent for the Upper Peninsula's Drummond Island, founded a Finnish colony on the land.

**Myra Wolfgang (1914-1976) of Detroit** was a leader in the American labor movement. Wolfgang began working at the Detroit office of the Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Employees Union in her late teens and organized her first strike in her early twenties. For the next 40 years she dedicated her life to the betterment of working men and women. She was instrumental in convincing Michigan legislators to create a minimum wage for all employees in the state. Wolfgang is also a member of the Labor's International Hall of Fame.

**The Philip A. Hart Award** will also be presented at this event. This award is given annually by the Michigan Women's Studies Association Board of Directors to a man who has demonstrated a unique understanding and support of women's issues and concerns and has contributed to the advancement of women's rights and interests. This year the award will be presented to Judge David Newblatt.

**Judge David Newblatt** is a circuit judge and Presiding Judge of Genesee County Family Court. Judge Newblatt established Michigan's first and only Girls Court, a specialty treatment court that provides gender specific and trauma informed therapy, services and intensive judicial review to at-risk girls in the juvenile delinquency system. The goal is to build functionality and resiliency to reduce the risk of becoming victims of human trafficking and other negative outcomes.

### **About the Michigan Women's Historical Center**

The mission of the Michigan Women's Historical Center is to inspire and engage adults and children by celebrating Michigan women's history, promoting educational opportunities, and honoring the accomplishments of Michigan women. The Michigan Women's Historical Center, located at 213 W. Malcolm X Street in downtown Lansing, opened in 1987 and is home to the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame (established in 1983) featuring over 285 honorees past and present, changing history exhibits, and a fair trade gift shop. 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.

Biographical information and images for all of the members of the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame may be found at [www.michiganwomenshalloffame.org](http://www.michiganwomenshalloffame.org) and a commemorative plaque for each woman hangs in the Hall of Fame gallery in the Michigan Women's Historical Center.