

# DENISE MERRILL



Denise Merrill (D) of Hartford is currently serving as Secretary of the State, and was elected to her third term in 2018. Prior to her election as Secretary of the State she served in the House of Representatives for 17 years, representing Mansfield and Chaplin (1994-2011), and in 2009 she became only the second woman to be elected Majority Leader. As Secretary of the State she has focused on expanding voting rights and increasing voter registration as well as encouraging civic education and participation. She served as President of the National Association of Secretaries of State during the 2016 election and has prioritized modernizing and securing Connecticut's elections.

JAHANA  
**HAYES**



100  
1920-2020

**WOMEN VOTE**  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Jahana Hayes (D) of Wolcott was the first African American woman to represent Connecticut in Congress, where she served on the Labor, Agriculture, and Education committees in her first term. Prior to her career in politics she had an accomplished career as a teacher, and in 2016 was awarded National Teacher of the Year.

CLARE BOOTHE  
**LUCE**



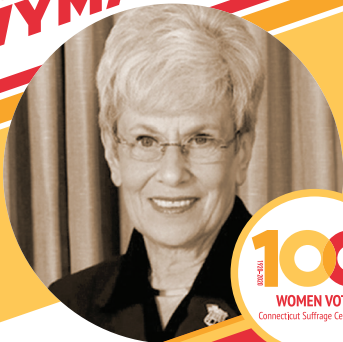
100  
1920-2020

**WOMEN VOTE**

Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Clare Boothe Luce (R) of Ridgefield was the first woman elected to United States House of Representatives from Connecticut in 1942. She was appointed to the House Military Affairs Committee, and during her second term she created the Atomic Energy Commission. Following her time in the House she was appointed as the Ambassador to Italy, the first American woman to hold a diplomatic role of this kind.

# NANCY WYMAN



100  
1836-2024

WOMEN VOTE

Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Nancy Wyman (D) of Tolland was the first woman to serve as State Comptroller of Connecticut from 1995 to 2011. She went on to be elected as Lieutenant Governor of the state (2011-2019). Wyman's career is noted for her attention to consumer protection issues, most notably health care reform. She founded the 1995 working group that led to the HUSKY Health plan, and was integral in the state's successful policy implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

# EUNICE GROARK



100  
1836-1936

WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Eunice Groark (A Connecticut Party) of Hartford was the first female Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut (1991-1995). She ran with Lowell P. Weicker, under the banner of newly created third party, A Connecticut Party. Groark cast the tie-breaking votes in favor of the income tax in 1991 and in favor of an assault weapon ban in 1993. In 1996, Groark ran with Audrey Rowe to form the first-ever all female ticket for governor and lieutenant governor.

CLARINE NARDI  
**RIDDLE**



Clarine Nardi Riddle (D) of New Haven served as Connecticut's first and only female Attorney General from 1989-1991. She was appointed by Governor William O'Neill to fill the vacancy created by the election of Joseph Lieberman to the United States Senate. She became the first female Attorney General to argue in front of the Supreme Court of the United States.

# DENISE NAPPIER



100  
1920-2020  
WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Denise Nappier (D) of Hartford was the first African American woman elected to statewide office, and the first African American woman elected as State Treasurer in the nation. While Joan Kemler was the first woman to serve as Treasurer, she was appointed to fill a vacancy, and so Nappier also holds the distinction of being the first woman elected to the role. As Treasurer Nappier advocated for better corporate governance and saved taxpayers billions of dollars. Prior to her election to statewide office she served as Hartford City Treasurer from 1989-1998.

# JOAN KEMLER



100  
1836-2024

WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Joan Kemler (D) of West Hartford was the first woman to serve as State Treasurer (1986-1987). She was appointed to this position by Governor William O'Neill to complete the term of Henry Parke, who resigned to accept a position in the private sector. Prior to her appointment she served as a state representative from 1975-1984, including a position as Assistant Majority Leader from 1979-1984.



# THEMIS KLARIDES



Themis Klarides (R) of Derby began her public service on her local Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Finance, and today is one of the leading voices of Connecticut's Republican Party. Elected to the House of Representatives in 1998, Klarides rose to a leadership role within her caucus when she became Deputy Minority Leader in 2007. In 2014 she became the first female Republican Minority Leader in the House, a position she still currently holds.

# EVELYN MANTILLA



100  
1838-2038

WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Evelyn Mantilla (D) of Hartford was not only the first openly bisexual legislator in the Connecticut General Assembly but also the first openly bisexual state official in the United States. Mantilla served in the House of Representatives from 1997 to 2007 and was the first Hispanic woman to become Deputy Majority Leader. She was a leading advocate for low-income families and civil rights.

EMILY SOPHIE

**BROWN**



100  
1848-2018

**WOMEN VOTE**

Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Emily Sophie Brown (R) of Naugatuck served in the General Assembly from 1921-1923, one of the first female legislators in the state. She was also a founding Board Member of the Naugatuck Chamber of Commerce and served on the Naugatuck Board of Education. She died at age 103 in 1985.

BETH  
BYE



100  
1920-2020

WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Beth Bye (D) of West Hartford was the first openly lesbian legislator in the Connecticut General Assembly. She served in the House of Representatives from 2007-2011 and the State Senate from 2011-2019. During her service she led the Appropriations Committee and the Higher Education Committee. An early childhood professional, Bye served on the West Hartford Board of Education before running for state office and left the Senate upon appointment to lead the Office of Early Childhood.

# MARGARET MORTON



100  
1838-2038

WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Margaret Morton (D) of Bridgeport was the first African American woman elected to the Connecticut General Assembly. She served in the House of Representative (1972-1980) and then State Senate (1980-1992). She chaired the Committee on Human Rights and Opportunities and was a champion for causes to help impoverished people in urban areas. She was the highest-ranking black woman in legislative history as Deputy President Pro Tempore upon her retirement in 1992.

FLORENCE D.  
**FINNEY**



100  
1838-1938

**WOMEN VOTE**

Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Florence D. Finney (R) of Greenwich was the first woman elected as President Pro Tempore of the State Senate (1973-1974) after Senator Cashman ascended to become Lt. Governor. She was first elected to the House in 1949 and then the State Senate in 1955 and was known throughout her career as an advocate for children, the sick, and the elderly.

# MARY M. HOOKER



100  
1921-2021  
WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Mary M. Hooker (R) of Hartford was one of the five first women elected to the state House of Representatives in 1921. She was elected twice to the House, serving again in 1925. She is remembered for being the first woman to speak on the floor of the House, saying “We women want the men in the House to feel that they may smoke just as if there were no women legislators present.” She served on the Hartford Board of Education for 20 years.

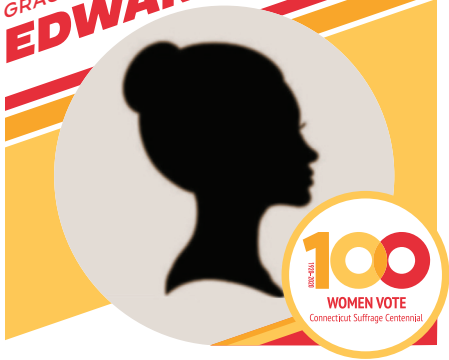
HELEN A.  
**JEWETT**



Helen A. Jewett (D) of Tolland was one of the five first women elected to the state House of Representatives in 1921 and the only Democrat. She later served for 35 years on the Tolland Board of Education and held leadership roles in several community organizations. She was the first female lawmaker to have the title Reverend in front of her name.



# GRACE I. EDWARDS



Grace I. Edwards (I) of New Hartford was one of the five first women elected to the state House of Representatives in 1921. She was nominated to run for state legislature immediately following the passage of the 19th Amendment.

LILLIAN S.  
**FRINK**



Lillian S. Frink (R) of Canterbury was one of the five first women elected to the state House of Representatives in 1921. She served in the House of Representatives five times, two terms in the 1920s and three terms in the 1950s. She was a member of the Republican State Central Committee as well as a Town Clerk of Canterbury for 25 years.

SARA B.  
**CRAWFORD**



100  
1838-2038

**WOMEN VOTE**

Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Sara B. Crawford (R) of Westport was the first female Secretary of the State of Connecticut from 1939-1941. She was a member of the Connecticut State House of Representatives from 1925-1927 and 1931-1937 and spent four terms on the Appropriations Committee. Outside of the Connecticut General Assembly, she was the president of the Westport Republican Women's club for 8 years and served as vice-chairman of the Republican Town Committee for 12 years.

# MOIRA LYONS



100  
1836-2024

WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Moira Lyons (D) of Stamford was the first woman elected to serve as Majority Leader and Speaker of the House in Connecticut, as well as one of two people to ever hold three terms as Speaker. She was elected to the General Assembly in 1980 and served as Speaker of the House from 1999-2004. While in office she served as co-chairwoman of the Transportation Committee and later pushed legislation to create the Transportation Strategy Board. She was also committed to backing legislation relating to early childhood initiatives.

# ELLA T. GRASSO

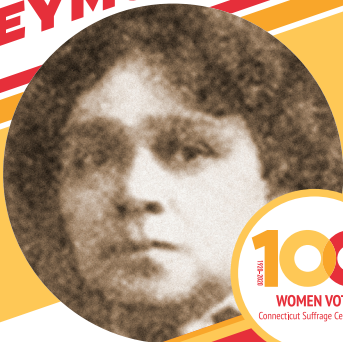


100  
1920-2020

WOMEN VOTE  
Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Ella T. Grasso (D) of Windsor Locks was the first female Governor of Connecticut (1975-1980) and the first woman to be elected governor in the United States in her own right. Grasso had a long career in politics starting in 1952 when she was elected to the General Assembly. She served as Secretary of the State from 1958-1970 and in Congress from 1970-1974. She remains the only woman to be honored with a statute on the outside of the State Capitol Building.

MARY TOWNSEND  
**SEYMOR**



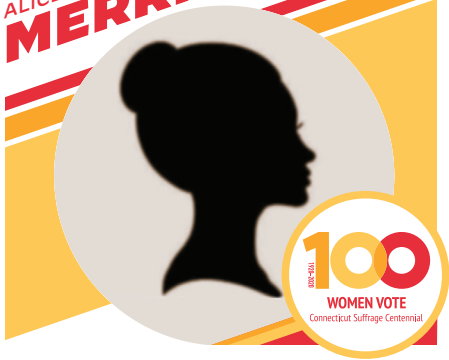
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1838-1938

**WOMEN VOTE**

Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Mary Townsend Seymor (Farm-Labor Party) of Hartford was the first African American woman to run for a seat in the Connecticut General Assembly in 1920. While she did not win, her candidacy paved a way for future candidates who had previously not had a pathway to run. She served as the first spokesperson for the NAACP-Hartford Chapter in 1917, and she remained active in advocating for worker's rights, civil rights, and the right to vote, especially for black women.

ALICE P.  
**MERRITT**



Alice P. Merritt (R) of Hartford was the first woman elected to the state Senate in 1925. She and her brother were the first siblings to serve in the state government at the same time. Outside of elected office she was instrumental in bringing Girl Scouting to girls in Connecticut.

# MARIA SÁNCHEZ



100  
1836-1936

WOMEN VOTE

Connecticut Suffrage Centennial

Maria Sánchez (D) of Hartford was the first Latina elected to the Connecticut General Assembly, and the first Puerto Rican elected to local office in Hartford. She served 16 years on the Hartford Board of Education and was then elected to the House of Representatives in 1988-1989. Sanchez was a founder of the Puerto Rican Parade and her grassroots advocacy led to the opening of the state's first bilingual school in 1972.