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## Thousands march on Washington to commemorate suffrage movement

[Jess Miller](#) March 3, 2013 7:27 pm



**Click on photo to enlarge or download:** Descendants of Elizabeth Cady Stanton – one of the authors of the 19th Amendment – Coline Jenkins, left, wears an academic robe worn by her great-grandmother, Harriot Stanton Blatch, in a voting rights parade. Her daughter, Elizabeth Jenkins, holds a photo of her foremothers, including Stanton. Both marched to the Washington Monument on Sunday SHFWire photo by Jess Miller

WASHINGTON – When Cynthia Welcher Moore, 69, of Youngtown, Ohio was a student at Kent State University, the memory of her grandmother inspired her to help found the first [Delta Sigma Theta](#) chapter on the university's campus.



**Click on photo to enlarge or download:** A sea of crimson and cream floods the west lawn of the Capitol as thousands of Delta Sigma Theta sisters gather to commemorate the 22 original members from Howard University, who marched in the first women's suffrage procession March 3, 1913. SHFWire photo by Jess Miller

Fifty years later, Moore and nearly 13,000 of her fellow sorority sisters from all across the nation and the globe gathered on Capitol Hill to honor the 22 founding members of Delta Sigma Theta from [Howard University](#). The first accomplishment of those 22 members was to participate in the first women's suffrage parade on March 3, 1913, organized by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns. They did what no one else had ever done: march up Pennsylvania Avenue to demand that Congress approve and the president endorse a

constitutional amendment allowing women to vote.

Between 5,000 and 8,000 women marched that day, persevering through catcalls, jeers and hurled bottles from the nearly 500,000 men who had come to watch. More than 300 women were injured, and 100 were hospitalized.

The Theta sisters came together again Sunday to recreate the suffrage march and celebrate the 100-year anniversary of their sorority.

Moore's grandmother was the Rev. Sarah Craig Reed, who founded the Reeds Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Youngstown, Ohio. Since not

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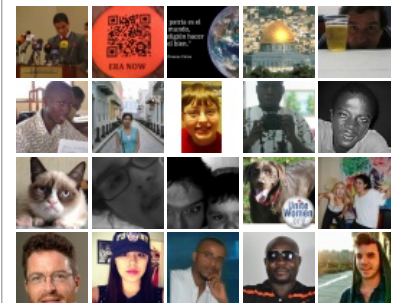
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everyone could travel to Washington for the first suffrage march, Moore said that her grandmother organized one on her own.

"They had a separate march, black and white people together, and they marched 500 strong down the main streets of Youngstown," Moore said.



**Click on photo to enlarge or download:** Twins Syvanna, left, and Symonne, 9, pose with their mother, Sonja Brooks, a Baltimore County, Md., alumnae of the Deltas. The girls said they wanted to march because they knew women did not always have the right to vote. SHFWire photo by Jess Miller

Her grandmother's inspiration led Moore to found Epsilon Mu, the first Delta Sigma Theta sorority chapter at Kent.

"It's very impactful for me to be here," she said. "I had to do it."

Jeanean M. Bryant and Denise Robinson led 200 Deltas from Michigan in the march, which was organized by state and country just like the original march.

Both were excited for the opportunity to participate in such a historic event.

"We are here spending time with others and retracing

the steps of our founders from 100 years ago. That's very important to us," Robinson said.

Others agreed.

"It's so historical, it just lights us up," said Carolyn Ogletree Brown, 64, of Akron, Ohio, who was marching with her daughter, Shayla, 33.

There were plenty of young participants in the march.

"We learned about the march, and we plan on being future Deltas, so this is kind of one step closer to being a Delta," said Symonne Brooks, 9, the daughter of Baltimore County, Md., alumnae Sonja Brooks.

"We're marching because we used to not have the right to vote, but now we're able to vote," her twin sister, Syvanna, said.

Deltas weren't the only participants in the march. The [National Women's History Museum](#), [UniteWomen.org](#), [the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial](#) and the [Sewall-Belmont House and Museum](#) were all represented. Even though many of the groups had specific goals or purpose for marching, in addition to remembrance, they were careful not to overshadow the Deltas' centennial celebration.

"We're here in support, but it's more symbolic," said Linda Mahoney, Maryland NOW president.

"It's celebrating the suffrage march, and voting rights is an important part of participating in the public sphere and we want to support the Deltas," she said.

The march lasted 3 miles, proceeding down Constitution Avenue and ending at the Washington monument. At the end of the march, thousands paused to reflect on the historic event that had happened exactly 100 years

ago.



**Click on photo to enlarge or download:** President of Md. NOW Linda Mahoney, front row with the purple sash, leads a contingent of fellow members from the National Organization for Women from across the country. Mahoney said that the fight for equal rights is not over. SHFWire photo by Jess Miller

“The reason we’re here today is because in everything that we do, we look back at what has taken place in history, and learn,” Karen Teegarden, president of UniteWomen.org., said. “What did they do that we can learn from? We have to honor every woman that has come before us.”

Reach Reporter Jess Miller at [jessica.miller@shns.com](mailto:jessica.miller@shns.com) or 202-326-871. SHFWire stories are free to any organization that gives the reporter a byline and credits the SHFWire.

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Scripps Howard Foundation Wire  
1090 Vermont Ave. N.W. - Suite 1000  
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