



# Stone Lake Gazette

VOL 6 NO 7

ELK GROVE, CA

FEBRUARY 27, 2026

## Black History Month

Move over textbooks .. the News Club just uncovered the real spirit of Black history. For the past month, eight student reporters have been on a mission: to dig past the dates and names in history books and find the heart of Black excellence.

This edition celebrates eight icons who redefined what it means to be a leader.

They range from the stars of the 19th century to the legends of today. Through these biographies, our writers discovered that whether you are in a laboratory, a courtroom, or a gymnasium, history is made by those who refuse to give up.

Simone Biles .....	2
·	
George Washington Carver .	3
·	
Renee Elise Goldsberry .....	4
·	
Michael Jackson .....	5
..	
Katherine Johnson .....	6
·	
John Lewis .....	7
·	
Esmeralda Simmons .....	8
·	
Ida B. Wells .....	9
..	



# SIMONE BILES

BY NALANI RAMIREZ



## Who is Simone Biles?

Simone Biles is one of the best gymnasts. In 2013, she won her first world title as a senior competitor. At the 2014 world championships she took home four medals!

## Early Life

Simone Biles was born on March 14, 1997, in Columbus, Ohio. She overcame a turbulent early childhood marked by her biological mother's addiction and time in foster care. She and her sister were adopted by her grandparents, Ron and Nellie Biles, in 2003. They moved to Spring, Texas, where Simone discovered gymnastics at age 6 during a daycare field trip.

## Character Traits

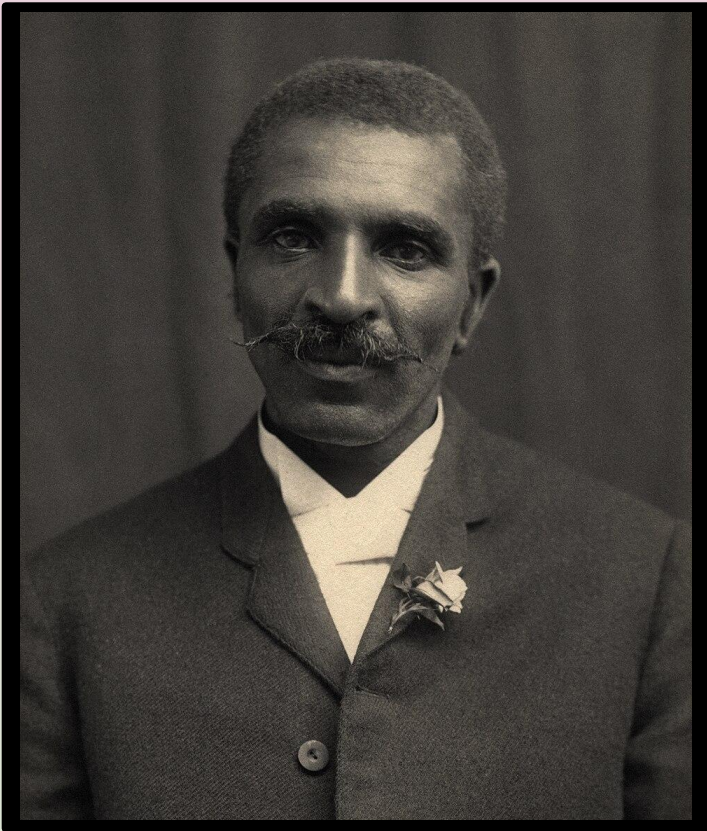
- Extraordinary resilience
- Intense focus
- Relentless work ethic
- Confidence

## Made a Change

Simone Biles has impacted society by revolutionizing gymnastics and redefining strength through her vocal advocacy for mental health. She has fundamentally restructured the culture, physics, and power dynamics of professional sports.

## Fun Facts

- She has multiple original and difficult skills named after her on vault, beam, and floor.
- Simone Biles is only 4'8 which makes her one of the shortest athletes on the U.S. national team
- After every competition Simone orders herself a pepperoni pizza with stuffed crust
- In 2022, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Joe Biden



# George Washington Carver

Emmia Hartley

## Impact

George made an agriculture extension in Alabama. He also made an industrial research lab where he worked very hard day and night on the development of hundreds of applications for new plants.

## Early life

When George was a baby, his sister and mother were kidnaped by the person who enslaved them, Moses Carver. The kidnapers were slave raiders who were planning to sell them.

## Quick Facts

Full name: George Washington Carver

Date of birth: 1864

Death date: January 5, 1943

## What is he famous for

George was famous for having more than 300 ways to use peanuts, soybeans, sweet potato, and pecans. His nickname was “The plant doctor”, because he helped plants come back alive after being dead or almost dead.

## Why I chose him

I chose George Washington Carver because even though he was kidnaped and never had seen his family since he was a baby, he still made the world a better place and impacted plants a lot.

# Renée Elise Goldsberry

By Olivia Varela



*Renée performing Hamilton as Angelica*

## Famous For

Renée is most famous for being Angelica Schuyler in the smashing hit musical Hamilton!

She is a Grammy and Tony award winning singer and actress. Renée was born on

January 2, 1971.

## EARLY LIFE

Renée was raised in both Houston and Detroit. She is the daughter of Betty Sanders, a psychologist. Her father was an industry executive in Michigan.

Renée has two younger brothers and one older brother.

## HAMILTON

As you know Renée was Angelica Schuyler in the musical Hamilton, but she almost didn't want to be in the show. The auditions were a workshop, and she thought she wouldn't be cast.

## Facts

- Renée starred in the musicals *Rent*, *the Lion King*, and *the Color Purple*
- She has two children, and her husband is Alexis Johnson.
- She started acting in 1997.

420224





# Michael Jackson

By: Grace Zhang

## Quick Facts

Full Name: Michael Joseph Jackson

*Birthday: August 29, 1958*

Deathdate: June 25, 2009

## Early Life

Michael Jackson was born in Gary, Indiana. He was the eighth child of ten. Michael's music career began when he was five years old under his father's encouragement. Later, Michael and his siblings formed a music band called the Jackson 5.

## Famous For

Michael Jackson broke racial barriers in the United States and influenced the evolution of pop music, earning him the title of "King of Pop". He is famous for the moonwalk, which was the signature move for the song "Billie Jean".

## Impact

Michael Jackson presented a lot of popular music in the United States and introduced an era of several different cultures globally. Michael donated over 300 million dollars to charities and visited cancer patients, burn victims, and children in orphanages.

## African American Roots

At the peak of his singing career, Michael Jackson decided to take a DNA test to find his African roots. The test announced that he came from the kingdom of Sanwi, which is close to the border of present day Ghana.



# Katherine Johnson

KAYLEIGH SAEPHANH

## **Who?**

Katherine Johnson

## **Birth Date**

August 26, 1918

## **Death Date**

February 20, 2020

## **Early Life**

Katherine Johnson was born in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. For her, math came easy, but she had to master geometry and algebra. When Katherine was 10, she started high school. She was in college by 15. At 18, she graduated with honors.

## **Why I Choose Her**

The reason why I choose Katherine Johnson is because she accomplished a lot while working for NASA. Another reason is she graduated at a really young age.

## **Impact**

Katherine Johnson had made several impacts but the outcomes had the biggest impact. In 2015, Katherine was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor award a civilian can receive from the United States government. She also had a building named after her called the Katherine G. Johnson Computational Research Facility.

## **Why She Is Famous**

Katherine Johnson is famous for her work with NASA's Mercury program of crewed space flights. In 1961, she helped calculate the path for the spacecraft Freedom 7. That spacecraft was to send the first U.S astronaut to space. The following year, she verified that a computer had planned John Glenn's path correctly.



# John Lewis

Emma Cohen

## What did he do?

John Lewis was a paramount American civil rights leader and longtime Georgia Congressman known as the “conscience of the Congress”. As a “Big Six” leader, he organized the 1963 March on Washington, led the 1965 “Bloody Sunday” Selma march, and served 17 terms in the House, advocating for voting rights and nonviolent social changes.

## Struggles

John Lewis faced severe physical violence, over 40 arrests, and systemic racism while leading the 60s Civil Rights Movement, most notably fracturing his skull on “Bloody Sunday” in 1965. As a “Big Six” leader, he endured beatings, tear gas, and threats to his life while fighting for voting rights, later serving 30 years in Congress.

## Early Life

Born on February 21, 1940, in rural Pike county, Alabama, John Lewis was raised in poverty as the son of sharecroppers. He grew up to be a pivotal figure in the Civil Rights Movement. Inspired by Martin Luther King Jr., he organized sit-ins as a student and became a leader in nonviolent protests.

## Quick Facts

**Full Name:** John Robert Lewis

**Birthday:** February 21, 1940

**Born in** Pike County, Alabama, US

**Died:** July 17, 2020 (age 80)

## Impact

John Lewis was a monumental civil rights leader. He worked hard to secure voting rights and racial equality for over 60 years.

# Esmeralda Simmons

By: Alicia Garcia



## EARLY LIFE

Esmeralda Simmons was born in 1950 (specific birth date has not been publicly disclosed). Simmons was raised in Brooklyn, New York.

## WHAT IS SHE FAMOUS FOR?

Esmeralda Simmons is famous for being the founder and executive director of the Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar Evers College. Also she has fought for decades over civil rights and domestic human rights violation.

## WHY I CHOSE HER

I chose Esmeralda Simmons because she is a strong and brave woman. Domestic abuse and treating people differently based on what they look like has never been right and people don't see that. Social Justice NEEDS to be spread out to the world more. Stay strong!

## AFRICAN AMERICAN ROOTS

Esmeralda Simmons is African American. Simmons honors African ancestral traditions, emphasizes community responsibility, and values cultural diversity and collective empowerment.

## IMPACT MADE

Esmeralda Simmons has made a lasting, measurable impact on the world through DECADES of civil rights and domestic human rights violation leadership.

# Ida B. Wells

Katrina Chang



## Quick Facts

- Born on July 16, 1862
- Died on March 25, 1931

## Early Life

Ida B. Wells was born into slavery. At the age 16, she took care of her younger siblings because her parents and brother died from yellow fever.

## Impact

Ida B. Wells impacted the world by exposing lynching in the U.S. She fought for women rights, and wrote articles about the truth.

## What she is famous for?

Ida B. Wells was famous for writing articles about the truth of black people. People became very angry, but she never stopped writing about African American's life conditions.

## Fun Facts

- Wrote newspapers under the name "Lola"
- She loved to read
- At age 67, she ran for the Illinois State Senate
- She published a Red Record