

# Black History Month:

## Pioneers, leaders, & advocates in nursing



**SOJOURNER TRUTH**  
1797-1883

Before any formal training for nurses existed, she used her strong voice to advocate for the need for nursing education among her efforts for abolition and women's rights.



**ELIZA MAHONEY**  
1845-1926

Was the first African American in the US to earn a professional nursing license and co-founded the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses.



**ADAH BELLE SAMUELS THOMS**  
1870-1943

National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses co-founder, worked for acceptance of Black nurses as members of the American Red Cross. She also campaigned for equal rights for black nurses in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps.



**GOLDIE BRANGMAN**  
1920-2020

Served as founder and director of the Harlem Hospital School of Nurse Anesthesia where she famously treated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. after a near-fatal assassination attempt.



**HAZEL JOHNSON-BROWN**  
1927-2011

Broke racial barriers in the armed forces, serving as the first Black chief of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps and the first Black, female brigadier general.



**BETTY SMITH WILLIAMS**  
1929-PRESENT

Founder of the National Black Nurses Association and co-founded the Council of Black Nurses, Inc. She was the first African American nurse hired as an educator in higher education in the state of California.



**EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**  
1935-PRESENT

First registered nurse elected to Congress, and first Black female to serve as Ranking Member of Science, Space and Technology Committee.



**BEVERLY MALONE**  
1948-PRESENT

President and CEO of the National League for Nursing, former general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing and former deputy assistant secretary for health. She works to advance nurse education, diversity of the profession, and cultivate future nurse leaders.



**ERNEST GRANT**  
1958-PRESENT

First male president of the American Nurses Association and internationally known burn expert. He was also named Nurse of the Year for his work treating burn patients after the 9/11 terrorist attack.

### SOURCES:

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