



Women of Michigan



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Introduction

In the fall of 1870, a dozen years after the first women applied for admission, and more than half a century after its founding, the University of Michigan formally welcomed its first female students. Since that time, thousands of women have made their mark on the University. This exhibit is intended to highlight a few of the many pioneers, dedicated scholars, and supporters of this "dangerous experiment". Some of the names may be more familiar than others. Whether or not you are familiar with them, we invite you to visit the [Bentley Historical Library](#) to learn more about these women, and many who have followed them. When possible links have been provided to the online finding aids (guides to the material) for the collections. Reading the finding aids will give you an idea as to the type of papers, photographs, and other items archived for the women. If you have any questions or comments about the exhibit, please email our [Reference Department](mailto:Bentley.ref@umich.edu) (Bentley.ref@umich.edu).

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Lucinda Hinsdale Stone

A native of Hinesburg, VT, Lucinda Stone was born September 30, 1814, the youngest of Aaron and Lucinda (Mitchell) Hinsdale's twelve children. She was educated at the Hinesburg Academy and Middlebury Female Seminary. At Hinesburg Lucinda studied alongside men preparing for college. Though she desired to follow them to college, she was not admitted to Vermont University. Lucinda taught at Burlington Female Seminary, a seminary at Middlebury, and in Natchez, MS.

Lucinda and James Stone were married in Grand Rapids in 1840. After living in Massachusetts, the couple returned to Michigan, where Dr. Stone was in charge of a branch of the University of Michigan, now Kalamazoo College. Mrs. Stone supervised the female students of the college. One of her pupils, Miss Madelon Stockwell, would become the first female student at the University of Michigan. In appreciation of her efforts to allow female students and faculty, Mrs. Stone was awarded an honorary Ph. D. from the University in 1890; she was the first woman to receive such an honor.



Mrs. Stone's intense interest in women's clubs earned her the nickname "Mother of Women's Clubs". The time Mrs. Stone spent in Mississippi shaped her attitude against slavery, and led her to the abolitionist movement. Additionally, her work as a suffragist created friendships between Mrs. Stone and national suffragist leaders such as Julia Ward Howe, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

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Eliza Jane Read Sunderland

Eliza Sunderland, daughter of Amasa and Jane (Henderson) Read was born in Huntsville, IL on April 19, 1839. She ventured east to study at Mount Holyoke Seminary, and upon graduation returned to teach in the Midwest. In Aurora, IL, Eliza quite possibly became the first woman high school principal in the country.

Eliza married Jabez Sunderland in 1871. Together they would live in several cities, spending the greatest amount of time in Ann Arbor, MI. While in Ann Arbor, Mrs. Sunderland received a Bachelor of Arts



and Doctor of Philosophy.

Mr. Sunderland was a Unitarian pastor, and Mrs. Sunderland was very active in the church as well. The Unitarian church allowed women to be pastors, and though she was never one herself, Mrs. Sunderland gave numerous sermons from her husband's pulpit. It was written that no woman in the country was more popular as a speaker at Unitarian gatherings than Mrs. Sunderland. In 1893 she spoke at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago and received accolades from the Chicago Tribune.

Mrs. Sunderland was among the women for whom Lucinda Stone advocated a faculty position. Unfortunately the movement was not successful. Mrs. Stone was just one of many prominent women with whom Mrs. Sunderland was acquainted. Another achievement of Mrs. Sunderland's was being the first woman elected to the Hartford Board of School Visitors. She passed away before completing her term.

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Esther Boise Van Deman

Esther Boise Van Deman was born October 1, 1862 in South Salem, OH, the daughter of Joseph and Martha (Millspaugh) Van Deman. Ms. Van Deman received both her bachelors and masters degrees from the University of Michigan, in 1891 and 1892 respectively. She received her doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1898. Over the years Van Deman taught at several schools, including Wellesley College, Mt. Holyoke College, and the University of Michigan.



Van Deman was an archaeologist, and the first woman to specialize in Roman field archaeology. Her preliminary publication was *The Atrium Vestae* (1909). Van Deman had attended a lecture in Rome two years beforehand, and had noticed that the bricks blocking a doorway were different than those of the rest of the structure. The differences in the building materials provided clues to the chronology of the building. She continued researching and publishing, and her methods were to become standard procedure.

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Bertha Van Hoosen

Bertha Van Hoosen was born March 26, 1863 in Stoney Creek, MI. She was the daughter of Joshua and Sarah Taylor Van Hoosen. Dr. Van Hoosen received her bachelor's degree from Michigan in 1884. She was among the first women to graduate from the University of Michigan's medical school. A member of the class of 1888, Dr. Van Hoosen began her career in Chicago in 1892. She continued to practice there until age 88, a year before she died. Her professional affiliations included being the first president of the American Medical Women's Association. Additionally, she was the only woman of her time, other than Madam Marie Curie, elected an honorary member of the International Association of Medical Women.

Among Dr. Van Hoosen's many accomplishments was publishing the book *Petticoat Surgeon*, an autobiography. Topics included in the novel are 19th century Michigan farm life, important episodes in her career, and encounters with foreign physicians. A 1924 survey of Michigan's alumnae asked respondents to name the ten most outstanding women graduates. Dr. Van Hoosen was among those listed most often.



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Women of Michigan



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Timeline¹

Early Years

- 1817 Founding of the University of Michigan
- 1837 The original statute establishing the University of Michigan was written, stating that "the university shall be open to all persons who possess the requisite literary and moral qualifications."

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1850s and 1860s

- 1858 University of Michigan President Henry Tappan stoutly opposed the applications of Sarah Burger, Harriet Patton, and Augusta Chapin for admission to the University.
- 1859 Nearly 1500 Michigan citizens signed and presented to the Board of Regents a petition for the admission of women to the University.
- 1866 Alice Boise Wood is the first woman to attend classes as an unregistered student at the University².
- 1867 The State Legislature adopted a resolution favoring the right of women to attend the University of Michigan, declaring that "the high objects for which the University of Michigan was organized will never be fully attained until women are admitted to all its rights and privileges."

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1870s and 1880s

- 1870 The Board of Regents passed a resolution allowing women to attend the University, and Madelon Stockwell became the first woman to enroll.
- 1871 Amanda Sanford became the first alumna of the University by graduating from the medical school.³
- Later the same day, Sarah Killgore Wertman became the first woman in the country to both graduate from law school and be admitted to the bar. She was the first woman lawyer of Michigan in two respects; she was the first to graduate from the University's Law School and the first admitted to the Michigan Bar. Others had been admitted to law school, graduated, or been admitted to the Bar, but she was the first to do all three.⁴
- Also see [Sarah Killgore Wertman](#)
- 1876 Mary Henrietta Graham, believed to be the first African American woman at Michigan, is admitted. She graduated with a Ph.B. in 1880⁵.

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The Quadratic Club, the first all-women's society, was founded.

1878 Grace Roberts became the first African American to receive a medical degree (homeopathy)⁶.

1882 The first woman to study engineering was Mary Hegeler, who graduated in 1882 with a Bachelor of Science degree⁶.

1885 Effie Southworth, who would later become the first woman plant pathologist hired at the USDA, graduates from the University⁷.

1885 June Rose Colby is the first woman to receive a Ph.D. upon examination⁸.

Sophia Bethena Jones, the first African American woman to graduate with a medical degree, was admitted to the Medical Department

1886 Barbour Gymnasium opened, providing the first on-campus space for women students' exclusive use.

1888 [Bertha Van Hoosen](#) graduated from the University of Michigan's Medical School.

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1890s

1890 Ida Gray (Dent. 1890) became the first African American woman to graduate in Dentistry from the University of Michigan and the first black woman in the United States to earn a D.D.S. degree.

[Lucinda Stone](#) received an honorary Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of Michigan.

The Michigan League was established as a counterpart to the exclusively male Michigan Union. The League combined a small women's club called the Alethian Society iwth the larger Fruit and Flower Mission.

Five sororities with fifty-five total members were established.

1891 Women alumnae proposed that they be allowed to raise funds to pay the salaries of women faculty elected by the regents. The University Senate refused the arrangement.

1892 [Eliza Sunderland](#) received her Doctor of Philosophy degree under the supervision of John Dewey.

Mary Stone and Ida Kahn are the first Chinese students admitted to the University⁶.

1894 The Women's League, a growing booster organization, proposed taxing each male student twenty-five cents to raise money to buy land for women's playing fields. They did not prevail.

1895 Marion Sarah Parker becomes the first woman to graduate with a B.S. in Civil Engineering⁹.

1896 Four years after being admitted, Mary Stone became the first Asian woman to earn a U-M medical degree¹⁰.

[Eliza Mosher](#), one of Michigan's first women Medical School graduates in 1875, returned as the University's first dean of women, a position created to oversee health and behavior of female students.

1899 Catharine Kellogg and a group of women from Detroit offered to make a substantial gift to the University for the endowment of a chair to be occupied by a woman, not to teach physical

culture or gym, but a course in what would today be women's studies. The matter was tabled by the regents.

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1900s and 1910s

1900 President Angell called the increase in the number of women obtaining college educations "one of the most striking educational facts of our time." By 1900 women constituted the majority of graduates in the Literature Department.

1902 The University established the doctrine of in loco parentis, regulating women's living arrangements, social calendars, dress codes, and modes of behavior. Myra Beach Jordan, the new Dean of Women, set up a series of rooming houses, after which women's dormitories followed.

After the newly-formed junior faculty research club refused to admit women, the Women's Research Club was inaugurated.

1905 A women's athletic association was organized, creating women's baseball, hockey, and basketball teams.

1908 Palmer Field is purchased and equipped as a women's athletic field¹¹.

1909 [Esther Boise Van Deman](#) published *The Atrium Vestae*.

1910 Women outnumbered men, 22 to 13, respectively, among the students being initiated into the Phi Beta Kappa honor society.

1914 Suzan Rose Benedict was the first woman to receive a Ph.D. in mathematics at U-M¹².

1915 Two all-women dormitories, Helen Newberry Hall and Martha Cook Hall, were first opened to students.

1917 Regent Levi Barbour established a fellowship program at the University for Asian women seeking professional degrees in the United States.

Fourteen alumnae clubs formed the Alumnae Council of the University of Michigan Alumni Association.

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1920s and 1930s

1920 [Elizabeth Crosby](#) came to the University of Michigan to teach in the Department of Anatomy. She became the highest-ranking woman faculty member at the Medical School. In 1946 she was chosen the first woman to give the Henry Russell Distinguished Lecture.

The Nineteenth Amendment gave American women the right to vote; women voted for the first time in a national election. Helping to win the vote for women were several University of Michigan alumnae, including Lucy Maynard Salmon (1876) and Octavia Bates (1877).

1921 The Faculty Women's Club was organized; it included both faculty and members' wives and the few women on the teaching staff.

1926 Sih Eu-yang Chen becomes the first woman to receive a MBA from what is now the Ross School of Business.¹³

1928 The Women's Athletic Building is completed¹⁴.

1929 The construction of the Women's League building was completed.

Esther Marsh Cram became the first woman elected to the Board of Regents.

Mary Barton Henderson begins serving as the first alumnae secretary¹¹.

1930 The first state-financed dormitory for women, Mosher-Jordan Hall, opened.

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1940s

1944 Chemist Isabella Karle was the first American woman to receive a doctorate in physical chemistry from UM (B.S. 1941, PhD 1944), and the first woman to teach chemistry at the University⁷.

The Regents placed the first limit on the number of women who could be admitted to the University, making enrollment dependent upon the availability of housing.

1945 The Society of Women Engineers was organized.

Women held all of the editorial positions at the *Michiganensian* and served as Presidents of the senior classes in the College of LSA and in the Law School.

Women served for the first time as "waiters and busboys" in the dining rooms of "that sacrosanct male bastion, the Michigan Union." They were still compelled, however, to enter the Union through the side door.

1946 The all-male Student Council was replaced by the Student Government Council, a co-ed student legislature where women won 7 out of 50 seats.

1949 The joint faculty and student Committee on Student Affairs decided not to recognize any organization that prohibited memberships based on race, religion, or color.

The Catherine Neafie Kellogg Professorship became a reality. Initiated in 1899 with a gift from Catherine Neafie Kellogg, who stipulated that the chair bearing her name "be filled by a woman of acknowledged ability", the Professorship was made possible after the U-M Alumnae Council and others provided additional financial support. The first woman to hold the Catherine Neafie Kellogg chair was Helen Peak, professor of psychology. Peak was for a long time the only tenured woman professor in psychology and was nationally known for her research in cognitive psychology.¹⁵

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1950s and 1960s

1954 Women were finally allowed to enter through the front door of the Michigan Union.

1955 The first woman academic dean, Rhoda Redigg, was appointed in the School of Nursing.

Elizabeth Crosby became the first woman admitted to the Faculty Research Club since its founding in 1900.

1957 After standing vacant thirty-three years, the position of Alice Freeman Palmer Professor of History chair was awarded to Caroline Robbins, its first recipient. In 1924 George Palmer had donated \$35,000 to establish the chair, "the holder of which shall always be a woman."

1958 First African American woman to graduate in engineering, Willie Hobbs Moore¹⁶.

1961 Senior women with good standing were allowed to move off-campus and coeducational dormitories began to appear in

greater numbers.

1962 Amalya Kearse, the only African-American of eight women in her class of about 350, graduates. In 1969, Kearse became a partner at Hughes Hubbard and the first African-American to be elected to partnership of a major Wall Street firm. Ten years later, President Jimmy Carter appointed her to the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan, the first woman to be named to that prestigious judicial body. She was only the second African-American named to that bench, the first being Thurgood Marshall¹⁷.

Louise Cain, the former president of the League of Women Voters in Michigan, proposed the Center for the Continuing Education of Women (CCEW). In 1964 CCEW opened its doors with a three-fold mission of service, research, and advocacy.

1963 Coeducational dormitories are approved beginning with the fall term, and a single director of residence halls is appointed to administer both men's and women's housing¹¹.

1964 The Michigan Union and the Women's League merged administratively, largely bringing an end to gender-segregated social facilities.

1968 Barbara Newell, the first woman to serve as an executive officer at the University, was appointed Acting Vice President of Student Affairs.

Requirements for mandatory residence hall hours for women are eliminated by the Regents¹⁸.

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1970s and 1980s

1970 Women filed a comprehensive sex discrimination complaint against the University. The federal government investigated, found that the University had failed to develop an adequate affirmative action plan for women, and temporarily withheld federal research funds.

The Board of Regents officially abolished the curfew requirement for women living in University residence halls.

The Women's Advocate Office was established in Student Services; Claire Jeanette was appointed first advocate.

1971 In response to the federal government's finding of sex discrimination, President Robben Fleming established the Commission for Women (CFW) with Barbara Newell as its first chair. The commission successfully pressed for changes in University policies and practices.

The Human Sexuality Office was created as part of the Office of Student Affairs, and Cynthia Gair was appointed as the first lesbian advocate.

1972 The Office of Affirmative Action was founded, with Nellie Varner as its first director.

Seven women were admitted to the previously all-male [University of Michigan Marching Band](#).

Congress enacted Title IX; in response, President Fleming created a committee to study women's intercollegiate athletics.

1973 The Executive Committee of the College of LSA approved the proposal for a [Women's Studies Program](#), and the next fall

five courses were offered. Margaret Lourie was appointed the first director.

The Athletic Department, under pressure, inaugurated a [women's varsity athletics](#) program.

1974 Carolynne Davis was appointed as Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and became the first woman to hold a permanent position in the University of Michigan's senior administration.

First female cheerleaders at the University⁶.

1975 Women's Studies was approved as an undergraduate major.

All athletic facilities opened to both men and women⁶.

1977 Joan Stark was appointed Dean of the School of Education, becoming the first female dean to lead any college or school at Michigan, except for the School of Nursing (previously a separate institution).

1978 Amid protests, Barbour Gym was demolished.

1979 The Women of Color Task Force was formed to address staff concerns and to provide opportunities for professional development.

1980 The first annual "Take Back the Night" rally was held.

The University adopted specific guidelines to protect all University employees and students from sexual harrasment.

CCEW's Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program was established and Barbara Sloat named Director.

1981 Women's athletics officially join the Big 10 conference¹⁹.

1984 Graduate courses in Women's Studies were added with the creation of the graduate certificate program.

1985 Linda Wilson was appointed Vice President for Research. This was the first time a woman had been appointed as an executive officer in the University, except in an interim capacity.

1986 Following an anti-rape sit-in, the University created the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Program (SAPAC), with Julie Steiner as its first coordinator.

1988 Blenda Wilson was appointed Chancellor of the Dearborn campus. She was the first African American woman to hold a position as an executive officer at the University.

The "Women's Agenda for the 1990s" was submitted to the President of the University. It called for attention to mentoring, workload balance, hiring and salary equity, and the need for special efforts to address race and sex discrimination experienced by women of color.

1989 CCEW changed its name from the Center for the Continuing Education of Women to the [Center for the Education of Women](#) (CEW).

The President's Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (PACWI) was created by President James Duderstadt; Carol Hollenshead was named Chair.

Edie Goldenberg was appointed Dean of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Diane Ake, a pioneer in the Trades at Michigan, became the first woman to join the Sheet Metal Shop. Previously Diane had become the first woman to work as a window washer and

the first female Maintenance Mechanic²⁰.

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1990s

1990 The percentage of tenured and tenure-track women on the faculty continued to lag. In the 1980s it grew only 1 percent, from 17 to 18 percent of the faculty.

The Family Care Resources Program was established and Leslie DePietro appointed as its first Director.

1992 The Michigan Initiative for Women's Health (MIWH) was founded to foster research and education on women's health issues.

1993 The Board of Regents adopted a policy prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation.

1994 President James Duderstadt announced the Michigan Agenda for Women, a plan to make Michigan "the leader among American universities in promoting and achieving the success of women as faculty, students, and staff."

The Institute for Research on Women and Gender was founded and Abigail Stewart named Director.

The Women's Studies Program established an interdepartmental doctoral degree program in cooperation with the English and psychology departments.

CEW and the Women's Studies Program launched the Women of Color in the Academy project designed to highlight contributions of women of color and to build a faculty network.

The first woman Distinguished University Professor, Martha J. Vicinus, the Eliza M. Mosher Distinguished University Professor of English, Women's Studies and History, was appointed²¹.

1995 Dr. Alexa Canady, one of the foremost children's neurosurgeons in the country, received the University of Michigan Alumnae Council's Athena Award. Canady, who received her undergraduate degree in 1971 and her M.D. in 1975 from U-M, became the first female African American neurosurgeon in the United States.²²

1997 Graduate School Dean Nancy Cantor was appointed to the position of Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Anthropologist Joyce P. Marcus was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, the first U-M woman to be so named²³.

1998 At the recommendation of President Lee Bollinger, the Regents appointed three women to positions as Executive Directors, bringing the total to five. For the first time an equal number of women and men held leadership positions.

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Recent Events

2001 Karen England of Greenville was elected drum major by her fellow band members, the first woman to do so for an ensemble that made its initial appearance on a football field in 1898 and didn't admit women to its ranks until 1972.²⁴

Linda Abriola, one of the world's foremost researchers in groundwater contamination and remediation, became the first woman at the University of Michigan College of Engineering to be appointed to a named professorship; the Horace Williams King Collegiate Professorship of Civil and Environmental

Engineering²⁵.

2002 Mary Sue Coleman is appointed President of the University of Michigan. The thirteenth President of the University, she is also the first woman appointed to the post²⁶.

2003 Dr. Valerie Castle is the first woman in the Medical School to be appointed a department chair, that of the Department of Pediatrics and Communicable Diseases at the Health System²⁷.

Mary Sue Coleman delivered her first Michigan graduation speech alongside Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm. Granholm was the first woman elected Governor of the state.²⁸

Deborah Goldberg, in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, became the first woman to chair a natural science department in LSA²⁷.

2005 Nancy Burns was appointed Director of the Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research (ISR). She is the first woman selected to lead an ISR center since the Institute was founded in 1948.²⁹

2006 The Cornelia G. Kennedy Scholarship is established at the Law School. Judge Kennedy's (AB '45, JD '47) achievements include being the first woman appointed to the federal bench in Michigan and the first woman to become a chief judge of a United States district court.³⁰

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1. Unless noted, all material included in the Timeline is from:

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Research and Design by Jennifer Sharp, [University of Michigan](http://www.umich.edu), [School of Information](http://www.umich.edu), MSI '07.