

MUSC Celebrates Black History Month 2017

Featured Profiles in Science and Health Care

Information on this document is attributed to the African American Registry at www.aaregistry.org and BlackPast.org

DOROTHY LAVINIA BROWN was born in 1919. She was an African American doctor, legislator, and the first black female surgeon in the South. Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, she was five-months old when her unmarried mother placed her in the Troy Orphanage, where she lived until she was 13 years old. Brown first became interested in medicine at the age of five when she had her tonsils taken out. After high school, she obtained a scholarship to Bennett College, receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1941. In 1944, she enrolled at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee graduating in 1948 in the top third of her class. Brown started as an intern at Harlem Hospital in New York. With strong opposition to female surgeons, she was denied a surgical residency; but she did not let this stop her from becoming a surgeon. She went back to Meharry and got a residency there and completed it in 1954. Dorothy Brown became the first African-American female surgeon in the South. In 1966, she became the first African-American woman to be elected to the Tennessee State Legislature for a two-year term. Brown died of congestive heart failure on June 13, 2004, in Nashville.

Source: http://www.aaregistry.org/historic_events/view/surgical-pioneer-dorothy-l-brown

MARIE M. DALY was born in 1921. She was an African American biochemist. From Corona, New York, Marie Maynard Daly earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Queens College in 1942 and a Master of Science from New York University in 1943. She received a Ph.D. in Chemistry from Columbia University in 1948, the first Black female to earn a Ph.D. in Chemistry in America. She retired from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in 1986, and in 1988 she established a scholarship for African American chemistry and physics majors at Queens College in memory of her father. Professor Daly's area of research focused on nucleic acids. Marie Daly died on October 28, 2003.

Source: http://www.aaregistry.org/historic_events/view/marie-m-daly-biochemist-born

ERNEST EVERETT JUST was born in 1883 and was a Charleston-born biologist and educator, teaching for 30 years at Howard University. Just was the only African American in his class at Dartmouth College, where he graduated magna cum laude in 1907. While teaching at Howard, he helped students form Omega Psi Phi, which became a national black fraternity. Beginning in 1929, Just undertook a series of extended research tours to Italy, Germany, and France. As his health declined, Just moved to Washington D.C. to be with his sister, where he died in 1941 after suffering from pancreatic cancer.

Source: http://www.aaregistry.org/historic_events/view/collegiate-mentor-biologist-ernest-just

ROBERT TANNER FREEMAN

Robert Tanner Freeman was the first professionally trained black dentist in the United States. A child of slaves, he eventually entered Harvard University and graduated only four years after the end of the Civil War on May 18, 1869. As a child, Robert befriended Henry Bliss Noble, a local white dentist in the District of Columbia. Freeman began working as an apprentice to Dr. Noble who encouraged him to apply to dental colleges. Two medical schools rejected Freeman's application but with the encouragement of Dr. Noble, who had contacts at Harvard Medical School, Freeman applied there. Initially rejected, he was accepted into Harvard Medical School in 1867 at the age of 21, after a

petition by Dean Nathan Cooley Keep to end the school's historical exclusion of African Americans and other racial minorities. Dr. Freeman returned to Washington, D.C. after his graduation to open his own practice. He became a pillar in the D.C. black community because of his commitment to mentoring other African American youth interested in the medical profession. Sadly he died from a water-borne illness just four years after graduation from dental school.

Source: <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/freeman-robert-tanner-1846-1873>

MARY MAHONEY was born in 1845 and was the first black woman in the United States to become a nurse. Born in Boston, she was the oldest of three children. At 18, she began working at the New England Hospital for Women and Children as a cook and cleaning woman. At the age of 33, she was accepted as a student nurse in the hospital and on August 1, 1879, she was one of only four to graduate out of 42 entries. Mahoney became involved in the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN) in 1908. In 1911, she moved to New York for a year, heading the Howard Orphan Asylum for Black children on Long Island. In her post-retirement years, she supported women's suffrage and became one of the first women in Boston to vote. Mary E. Mahoney died on January 4, 1926.

Source: http://www.aaregistry.org/historic_events/view/nursing-pioneer-mary-mahoney