

Tribute Resolution Honoring Civil Rights Pioneer and Librarian Barbara Johns

Whereas Barbara Rose Johns (1935 - 1991) was a pioneering leader in the American civil rights movement;

Whereas on April 23, 1951 and at the age of 16, Barbara Johns led all 450 of her classmates at Robert Russa Moton High School in Farmville, Virginia on a two-week strike to protest overcrowding, unequal conditions and lack of financial support of Black schools in comparison to white schools;

Whereas the student action got the attention of the Virginia chapter of the NAACP, who agreed to assist as long as the lawsuit would be for an integrated school system, and not just equal facilities;

Whereas in 1954, their case -- *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* -- was one of the five bundled with the 1954 Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education*, which declared school segregation unconstitutional;

Whereas Johns received a degree in library science from Drexel University and became a librarian for the Philadelphia school system;

Whereas the Moton High School, now a national historic landmark and museum is described as "the birthplace of America's student-led civil rights revolution;"

Whereas, according to many historians, Johns' actions helped launch the desegregation movement in the United States;

Whereas in 2020, Johns was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame;

Whereas a statue of Barbara Johns will be memorialized in National Statuary Hall at the United States Capitol, replacing Virginia's statute of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association, on behalf of its members:

1. honors the memory of Barbara Rose Johns, celebrates the placement of her statue in the National Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol, and remembers her service to the civil rights movement.

Mover: Aaron Dobbs, ALA Roundtable Councilor

Seconder: Raymond Pun, ALA Councilor at Large