

THREE TRAILBLAZING WOMEN

Charlotta Spears Bass (1874-1969)

Charlotta Spears Bass was the first Black female candidate for Vice President of the United States in 1952. Running as a member of the Progressive Party, her campaign slogan was: "Win or lose, we win by raising the issues." For Charlotta, these issues were Civil Rights, specifically housing rights, labor rights and voting rights, as well as police harassment and brutality towards Black people. Charlotta was also a pioneering journalist who edited and published the *California Eagle* for 40 years. By 1925, The *Eagle's* circulation of 60,000 made it the largest African-American newspaper on the west coast. During the Great Depression, she championed Black businesses by bringing the controversial "Don't buy where you can't work" boycott to Los Angeles. Read more about Charlotta [here](#).



Patsy Matsu Takemoto Mink (1927-2002)

After Hawaii became a U.S. State in 1959, Patsy Matsu Takemoto Mink became the first woman of color elected to the US House of Representatives to represent the state and the first Asian-American woman to serve in Congress. A lawyer by profession, in Congress Patsy fought for gender and racial equality, affordable childcare and bilingual education. She was one of the authors and sponsors of Title IX that stated that, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." In 1972, Patsy ran for President on an anti-Vietnam War platform. After a long hiatus, Patsy returned to the House in the 1990s as an ardent defender of the social welfare state at a time when much of the legislation she had helped establish was being rolled back. After her death, the Title IX law was renamed the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act. She was also posthumously honored with Presidential Medal of Freedom - the nation's highest civilian honor. More about Patsy can be found in this [short video documentary](#).



Charlene Alexander Mitchell (1930-)

On July 4, 1968, Charlene Alexander Mitchell was nominated for president of the United States by the Communist Party. She was the first Black woman to be nominated for the country's highest office by any political party. As a young teen, Charlene picketed segregated places in Chicago and began a long career of working to dismantle racism within the economic system. Her unrelenting activism and persistence is most famously illustrated in the success of the campaign to free Angela Davis. In 1994 she served as an official observer of the first democratic elections in post-apartheid South Africa and was an observer at the congress of the South African Communist Party that year. In recent years, she returned to Cuba for rehabilitation medical treatment following a stroke suffered in 2007. She now belongs to the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism. Read more about Charlene's work her in her own words [here](#).

