



BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Delia Silance, ca. 1930. W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries

In Celebration of Delia Silance

Today, Purdue University churns out students with master's degrees with the efficiency of Ford's assembly line. Of course, it's not easy. It requires dedication, and many students endure hardships along the way. These items are not up for debate.

But imagine being an African American woman at Purdue in 1932.

An African American. Woman.

At the turn of the 20th century, systemic racism and discriminatory practices continued to be deeply embedded in throughout the country, causing a lack of economic opportunities for African American residents. Education beyond grade school

was considered to provide no economic advantage and it wasn't until Sterling R. McElwaine, [Lincoln School's](#) new principal, arrived and restored confidence in the benefit of education for all.

It is during this time that the four children of Emma and Louis Silance were growing up, and under the guidance of their community-minded parents, attended Lincoln, Jefferson High School, and Purdue University. Indeed, all four children received college degrees; the two girls became educators and the two boys, pharmacists.

In 1923, a black student headed the honor roll at Jefferson High School, and that student was Delia Silance. Delia graduated Jefferson in 1925 with a \$50 scholarship from the National Association of Colored Women's Club, which she used to pursue studies at Purdue.

At that time, racial segregation prohibited black students from living in Purdue housing, eating in the student dining facilities, and participating in extracurricular and recreational activities. Despite the restrictions placed on her, Delia graduated in 1932 and received the Dean Shoemaker Award for Academic Excellence. With encouragement from the Dean, Delia went on to receive a Master of Science degree in 1933.

Delia parlayed her education into a successful teaching career that spanned many years and several states, but Delia returned to Lafayette in the 1950s where she worked at Purdue in the Division of Educational Reference. She retired from Purdue in 1970.

Delia was recognized as an active social and civic leader and an outspoken proponent of education for black youth. As a leading force in the Mary L. Club (an affiliate of the Indiana State Federation of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs), Delia was passionate about the club awarding scholarships to promising local black high school graduates, stating "We realize that what we give is of very little significance financially...but we hope that it will serve to be an incentive to the students to do their best in school and to do something worthwhile with their talents and their lives. Just knowing that someone notices and cares about their accomplishments and ambitions can be stimulating."

Delia passed away in 1984 in Lafayette.

As we move about our days, it is worthwhile to consider the foundations laid by those who came before us. Delia Silance is a testament to the power of education, the power of community involvement, and the power of persistence. It's important to recognize that opportunity and choice are not automatically granted to everyone and that for many people, circumstances are something that must be overcome and not something assumed to be a benefit.

Delia exemplified what it means to be On A Mission. We celebrate Delia for her commitment to education and her desire to make a difference in her community.

Reference: Darlene Clark Hine, *When the Truth is Told: A History of Black Women's Culture and Community in Indiana, 1875-1950*, The National Council of Negro Women, 1981.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Did you know that about 1 in 12 U.S. high school students have experienced either physical or sexual dating violence? Healthy relationships are based on equality and respect, not control and power. Parents who "relate before they date" have the opportunity to empower kids to set boundaries and recognize red flags before they get serious. Watch our social media for tips! For more information, visit loveisrespect.org.



2023 Salute To Women Nominations are Open

Join us on June 22 for the 49th Annual Salute To Women! This signature event has provided women who lead and serve Tippecanoe and surrounding counties with a place to be celebrated, their achievements applauded, and their tireless work recognized. We are currently accepting nominations for the 49th cohort - if you know an exceptional woman worthy of this award, please visit our [website](#) for information on how to nominate them! Deadline for nominations is April 3, 2023.

It's GALENTINE'S DAY!

Join our friends at [Merle Norman Cosmetics](#) for a Galentine's Day Party! Grab your girlfriends and head down to Merle Norman for a fun afternoon of shopping, mimosas, chocolate-covered strawberries, door prizes, and a [@shop_linked](#) permanent jewelry pop-up shop! 20% of all proceeds go directly to our Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program. Get yourself something new and feel good doing it. Thank you to Diane Boener and Merle Norman for supporting our community!



When one of our Domestic Violence clients succeeds, we all do. Your support of YWCA Greater Lafayette helps to ensure the future of the work we do. Stories like this are the reason we show up every day:

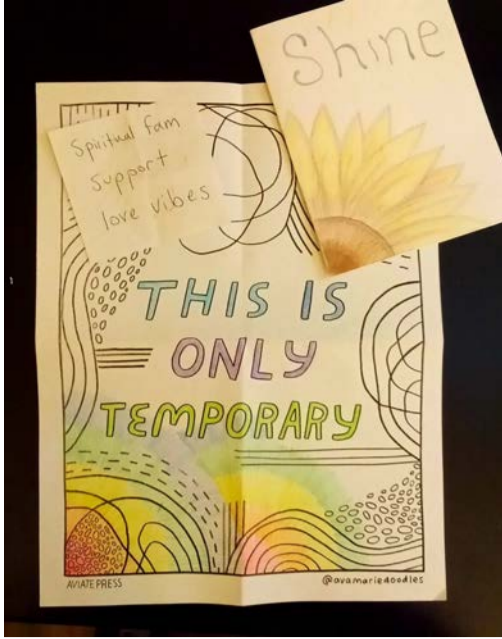
From Lori, Lead Case Advocate: This first week of the new year, we have two survivors moving into safe and secure housing! We worked hard to support, advocate for and give guidance to these women.

With your generosity, we can help even more women and children have the safe, stable lives they deserve. Give your gift today!

[Donate](#)

YWCA Around Town

It may be a quiet time of year for events and festivals, but that doesn't mean we aren't working hard for our community!



Our Empower! Support Group for survivors of domestic and sexual violence helps attendees learn about the cycle of violence and control and teaches survivorship techniques. After one of our recent sessions, guests shared pictures they colored, and one attendee provided a note with three words that described her feelings that she was having after attending last night.



Nohemi and Floyd shaking things up at the Tippecanoe County Human Relations Commission meeting.



Our Women's Wellness Program received an award from the Indiana Cancer Consortium for Outstanding Contributions in Cancer Control. We are so proud of this team and all the work they do advocating for women's health!



Nohemi presenting at the Diversity Roundtable. The Diversity Roundtable provides leadership and promotes strategies to achieve a culture that values diversity as evidenced by attitudes, policies, and practices within Greater Lafayette.

CURRENT ASSOCIATION AND SHELTER NEEDS

YWCA Greater Lafayette welcomes donations, and we accept a wide variety of items to help keep our buildings maintained and our programs and services impactful. Please visit the [Shelter and Association Needs](#) page for more information regarding donations and a current list of needs, or shop our [Amazon Wishlist!](#)

Urgent needs this month include:

- **Box fans**
- **Paper plates, bowls, cups, spoons, and forks**
- **Laundry soap (five gallon buckets preferred), softener, and dryer sheets**
- **New and unopened feminine hygiene pads (no tampons or liners)**
- **Coats (all sizes)**
- **Uber gift cards**
- **Gloves**
- **Trash bags (small and large)**

Upcoming Events

April - Stand Against Racism - Info To Come

[June - Salute to Women](#)

YWCA Greater Lafayette is on a mission! For almost a century we have been the leader in serving our community as we work to eliminate racism and empower women. Your gift will help support ongoing programs focused on protecting and promoting dignity, peace, justice, and freedom for women and families within the Greater Lafayette community and throughout Indiana's central region. We simply could not do this important work without you! Give today and change tomorrow!

[Make a Donation](#)

