



Media Contacts:

Brady Smith, Director of Marketing

412-454-6459

bmsmith@heinzhistorycenter.org

Kim Roberts, Communications Manager

412-454-6382

kmroberts@heinzhistorycenter.org

Forging the Way: History Center Launches Women's History Initiative
-The "Smithsonian's Home in Pittsburgh" will mark the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage with an initiative focused on highlighting women's history in 2020 and beyond-

PITTSBURGH, Feb. 18, 2020 – Throughout 2020, the nation will commemorate the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in the U.S. The 19th amendment, ratified on Aug. 18, 1920, prohibits the states and the federal government from denying the right to vote to citizens on the basis of sex.

To mark the centennial of this watershed moment in American history, the History Center is launching **Women Forging the Way** – an initiative focused on highlighting women's history in 2020 and beyond.

There is no shortage of history-making Pittsburgh women. Journalist Nellie Bly traveled the world in a record-breaking 72 days. Musician Mary Lou Williams introduced new audiences to the world of jazz. Filmmaker Lois Weber became America's first woman film director. Abolitionist Jane Grey Swisshelm fought against slavery and advocated for women's rights.

The History Center will honor these women and many more through public programs, museum displays, digital storytelling, and more throughout the year. The initiative begins in March in conjunction with Women's History Month.

Full Slate of Public Programs Planned for Women's History Month and Beyond

March 5: Sophie: The Incomparable Mayor Masloff

To kick off Women's History Month, join the Rauh Jewish History Program & Archives to celebrate Dr. Barbara S. Burstin's recently released biography, "Sophie: The Incomparable Mayor Masloff." The evening will feature selections from the book and rarely seen materials from Masloff's archive.

March 8: Trailblazers of the Suffrage Movement – Celebrating 100 Years
Presented in partnership with Women in Film and Media Pittsburgh

On International Women's Day, experience the premiere of a new documentary honoring the 100th anniversary of the suffragist movement.

March 19: Breaking Barriers: "Women of Steel" Discussion and Screening
Presented in partnership with the Women's Press Club of Pittsburgh

Explore the changing role of women in the workforce and the power of video storytelling through excerpts from "Women of Steel," a locally-produced 1985 documentary. Local filmmakers, historians, and women in skilled trades will discuss memories of largely male-dominated industries and how things compare 35 years later.

May 7: Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence

Marking the centenary of the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920, this program will explore the history and complexity of the national suffrage movement with Dr. Lisa Tetrault, associate professor of history at Carnegie Mellon University, and Dr. Allison Lange, assistant professor of history at the Wentworth Institute of Technology.

June 20: Cooking Up History with Ashley Rose Young

The History Center will welcome Ashley Rose Young, food historian at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and a member of the McGinnis family, for a special program. Dr. Young and members of the McGinnis family will lead a fascinating exploration of female entrepreneurship through the lens of family food heritage.

More **Women Forging the Way** programs will be added to the schedule throughout the year. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit heinzhistorycenter.org/events.

Textile Display to Showcase Western Pa. Women

Beginning in late March, a collection of textiles belonging to women in Western Pennsylvania history will be on view within the museum's fourth-floor **Special Collections Gallery**.

From a habit worn by a Sister of Mercy to perform nursing duties to an Olympic jersey worn by basketball icon Swin Cash, the articles of clothing will all be white – the color many suffragists chose to wear as they fought for the right to vote in the early 1900s.

History Center Collecting and Documenting Women's History

The History Center is actively looking for objects, photographs, and archival material documenting women's history in the region to add to the museum's collection.

To learn more about donating an object, contact curator Emily Ruby at 412-454-6350 or elruby@heinzhistorycenter.org. To learn more about donating photographs or archival material, contact archivist Carly Lough at 412-454-6367 or ctlough@heinzhistorycenter.org.

For more information on the History Center's **Women Forging the Way** initiative, please visit heinzhistorycenter.org/ForgingTheWay.

The Senator John Heinz History Center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in Pennsylvania, presents American history with a Western Pennsylvania connection. The Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum is a museum within a museum, comprehensively presenting the region's remarkable sports story through hundreds of artifacts and interactive experiences for visitors of all ages. The History Center and Sports Museum are located at 1212 Smallman Street in the city's Strip District, and are open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The History Center's museum system includes the Sports Museum; the Fort Pitt Museum in historic Point State Park; and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, a National Historic Landmark located in Avella, Pa. in Washington County. More information is available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org.



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