



## 2013 National Women's Hall of Fame Inductees

Last month, we profiled two women who, on October 12, 2013, will be inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame ([www.greatwomen.org](http://www.greatwomen.org)). Two of the other inductees this year, who are also profiled in our book *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*, are the first female Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, and pioneering educator Emma Willard.

For twenty-five years, Nancy Pelosi has broken ground for women in politics. She has focused her political career on strengthening America's middle class and creating jobs, reforming the political system to create clean campaigns and fair elections, and ensuring safety in America's communities, neighborhoods and schools. In 2002, Pelosi became the first woman to lead a major political party in the U.S. as the Democratic Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, and from 2007-2011, she served as the first female Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.



Nancy Pelosi



Emma Willard

Upon her election as Speaker of the House, Pelosi said: "It's an historic moment for the Congress, it's an historic moment for the women of America. It is a moment for which we have waited over 200 years. Never losing faith, we waited through the many years of struggle to achieve our rights. But women weren't just waiting, women were working, never losing faith we worked to redeem the promise of America, that all men and women are created equal. For our daughters and our granddaughters, today we have broken the marble ceiling. For our daughters and our granddaughters, the sky is the limit. Anything is possible for them."

Emma Willard is credited with being the first person to make secondary education available for women. She began her teaching career at the age of 17. When her nephew came to live with her while he was attending a nearby boys' academy, she was astounded to discover the differences between the education provided to girls and boys. This revelation led her to draft a pamphlet called "A Plan for Female Education," which she sent to the governor of New York. The plan envisioned not only a charter for a seminary but a financial endowment to support the operation of the school. The governor was so impressed with Willard's suggestions that he recommended the legislature appropriate money to establish a school that followed Willard's outline. Although the legislature voted her a charter in Waterford, New York, no money was appropriated.

Some prominent citizens of Troy, New York were impressed by Willard's proposal and managed to raise money for a school building as well as funds for maintenance and staff. She moved to Troy and by 1821, the Troy Female Seminary became a reality. It opened with 90 girls from seven states. The school has since been renamed in honor of Emma Willard; today it is a college preparatory boarding and day school for girls in grades nine through twelve. One of its graduates was famous suffragist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

We are proud to stand on the shoulders of these women; we salute their upcoming induction into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

**Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America**  
**Charlotte S. Waisman and Jill S. Tietjen**  
**[www.herstoryatimeline.com](http://www.herstoryatimeline.com)**

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