Ida B. Wells was born in Holly Springs, Mississippi June 16, 1862, a slave. She was an African American journalist, abolitionist and suffragist who led an anti-lynching crusade. Her parents were active in the Republican Party during Reconstruction and they instilled in her the need for education and activism. Wells established several civil rights organizations. In 1896, she formed the National Association of Colored Women. Wells is also considered a founding member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In 1913 she founded the first black woman suffrage group, Alpha Suffrage Club in Chicago. Also, in 1913 she went to Washington to participate in their first suffrage parade. She, alone with 60 other black women, marched with the Illinois delegation. Her community-based work and efforts led to Illinois passing in June 1913, the Presidential and Municipal Bill which allowed women over 21 the right to vote in presidential and municipal elections but not in state elections. Ida Wells died March 25, 1931, in Chicago, Illinois.

In 2020, Ida B. Wells was honored with a posthumous Pulitzer Award in the Special Citations and Awards category. The Pulitzer Prize Board said the award was given “for her outstanding and courageous reporting on the horrific and vicious violence against African Americans during the era of lynching.”

Martha McSally was born in 1966 in Warwick, Rhode Island. She graduated in 1988 from the U.S. Air Force Academy with a B.S. in Biology. She then earned a master's degree in public policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and proceeded to pilot training.

In January 1995, McSally was deployed to Kuwait where she flew combat patrol over Iraq and thus becoming the first female U.S. fighter pilot to fly in combat and the first woman to command a fighter squadron. In 2001, McSally sued the Department of Defense challenging the requirement that U.S. and UK servicewomen stationed in Saudi Arabia wear the abaya when travelling off base. At the time, she was the highest-ranking female fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force. After serving 26 years in the U.S. Air Force, she retired in 2010 as a full Colonel. She has continued to speak out about gender relations in Saudi Arabia.

In 2012, she ran for Congress but lost in a close election. In 2014, she ran again and won serving until she announced a run for the U.S. Senate in 2018. In a very close election, she lost but was appointed to serve the remaining term of the late Senator John McCain. She became the first female Republican Senator from Arizona. McSally has continued her fight for the rights of women both here and internationally and for the military. She is a vocal leader on the issue of military sexual assault since coming forth in 2019 about being raped while in the Air Force.