



**National Association for the
Advancement of Colored People
Temple Branch
P.O. Box 157 • Temple, Texas 76503**

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NAACP Temple Branch
William Leak, Publicity and Communication
(254) 217-0298
vleak97177@aol.com
www.templetxnaacp.org

For Immediate Release

NAACP to Present Seven Recipients with the Ruby Bridges Trailblazer Award

The NAACP Temple Branch is delighted to extend its warmest congratulations to our recipients on being honored with the prestigious Ruby Bridges Trailblazer Award. This recognition is a testament to their extraordinary achievements and unwavering commitment to breaking barriers in their field. They will be awarded at the NAACP Temple Branch Founders Day Celebration on Saturday, February 10, 2024 at the Cultural Activities Center.

As the first to integrate the school system, Ruby Bridges paved the way for others to follow in her footsteps and shattered the oppressive chains of segregation. Similarly, these individuals embody the essence of the word “trailblazer” by being the first to hold the distinguished title of African American Woman or First Woman. Their pioneering spirit, resilience, and dedication have set a remarkable precedent and opened doors for countless others to embark on a similar journey.

Their outstanding contributions have propelled them to the forefront of their field and left an indelible mark on history. Their courage in facing challenges head-on and commitment to fostering inclusivity have undoubtedly inspired and empowered those around them.

The Ruby Bridges Trailblazer Award is a well-deserved recognition of their groundbreaking accomplishments. It serves as a reminder that, like Ruby Bridges, they have paved the way for others to dream bigger and aspire to greatness in their own right. In this inaugural year of honoring trailblazers in Temple, Texas with the Ruby Bridges Trailblazer Award, we aspire to continue this tradition, recognizing the abundance of firsts in the city of Temple.

Our hope is that this award be a source of pride and motivation for them to continue blazing new trails and pushing the boundaries of what is possible. Their achievements reflect their personal success and contribute to the progress of our society as a whole.

Once again, congratulations on this exceptional honor. May their journey inspire and uplift others, just as they have inspired us all.

Dell Ingram-Walker

First African American Woman Chief Operating Officer Vice President of Clinical at Baylor Scott & White McLane Children's Hospital and Clinics

Christine Knix

First African American Woman on the Temple Police Department and as a Texas Ranger

Virginia Leak

First African American Director of Nursing at Temple College in 1988 to 2007 and started the first Registered Associate Nursing Degree, and Nursing Program at Temple College

Margaret Pleasant

First Woman Pastor at St James United Methodist Church in Temple Texas

Dr. Teresa Beamon

First African American graduate with a Doctorate in the Nursing Program at UMHB

Brynn Myers

First Woman City Manager of Temple Texas

Dr. Zoe Grant

First African American City Council Woman of Temple Texas

Born in 1954, Ruby Bridges remains a prominent figure to this day, symbolizing unwavering courage in the American civil rights movement. At the tender age of six, she made history by becoming the first child to integrate William Frantz Elementary School, marking a significant stride towards desegregation. Her selection for this historic role was based on her exceptional intelligence. The renowned Norman Rockwell later immortalized her in a painting. Bridges' legacy endures as a beacon of strength and an unwavering advocate for equal rights, embodying the ongoing struggle for justice and equity.

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NAACP Mission: The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons.