

Suffrage & the Haudenosaunee

Women had political authority on the land where Pittsford is today for centuries before US women won the right to vote. Early suffrage leader Matilda Joslyn Gage knew this. Matilda lived near the Onondaga nation and had close ties with the Haudenosaunee people. The Wolf Clan of the Mohawk Nation gave her the name Karonienhawi or "She who holds the sky." Elizabeth Cady Stanton, another suffrage leader, had close family ties with the Oneida Nation.

These suffragists witnessed the political role of Haudenosaunee women:

- Choosing their chief
- Holding key political roles
- Controlling their own personal property

In their writings and speeches, both women held up Haudenosaunee culture as an example of women being full citizens of their society.



*Caroline Ga-ha-no Parker Mountpleasant,
from New York State Women's Suffrage
Exhibition/New York Heritage Digital Collection*

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