



Grace Lee Boggs

(1915 - 2015)

Inducted: **2009**

Era: **Contemporary**

Locale: **Detroit**

Group: **Asian American**

Area(s) of Achievement: **Civil Rights, Community Service**

Grace Lee Boggs was an activist, writer, speaker, and philosopher whose political involvement spanned the major U.S. social movements of the 20th century: among them workers' rights, civil rights, women's rights, and environmental justice.

Born in Providence, Rhode Island of Chinese immigrant parents in 1915, Boggs was educated in philosophy at Barnard and Bryn Mawr. In the 1940s, she worked with the West Indian Marxist C.L.R. James. After being involved in the successful 1941 March on Washington movement to demand jobs for blacks in defense plants, she decided to commit herself to movement building in the black community. This led her to Detroit in 1953, where she assisted in the publication of *Correspondence*, a newsletter written and edited by blacks, workers, women, and youth. Through *Correspondence* she met and married James Boggs, and for 40 years was his partner in the burgeoning Black Power and Rebuilding Detroit movements. Among their many accomplishments was the founding of Detroit Summer, a multicultural youth program designed to revitalize Detroit from the ground up. They also co-authored the book *Revolution and Evolution in the Twentieth Century*.

After James' death, friends established the James and Grace Lee Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership which continues the couple's legacy of helping community members develop into visionary leaders and critical thinkers.

In her later years, Boggs maintained an active speaking schedule, wrote a weekly column for the progressive *Michigan Citizen* newspaper, and penned an autobiography called *Living for Change*.