

RUBY BRIDGES

Biography

Ruby Bridges is a civil rights activist who at the age of six was the first Black student to integrate an all-white elementary school in New Orleans. She was born in Mississippi in 1954, the same year the United States Supreme Court handed down its landmark decision ordering the integration of public schools. Her family later moved to New Orleans, where on November 14, 1960, Bridges began attending William Frantz Elementary School, single-handedly initiating the desegregation of public education in New Orleans. Her walk to the front door of the school was immortalized in Norman Rockwell's painting *The Problem We All Live With*, in Robert Coles's book *The Story of Ruby Bridges*, and in the Disney movie *Ruby Bridges*. She has recently written the New York Times bestseller *THIS IS YOUR TIME*, which follows the publication of her award-winning autobiography, *Through My Eyes*.

She established the Ruby Bridges Foundation to provide leadership training programs that inspire youth and community leaders to embrace and value the richness of diversity. Bridges is the recipient of numerous awards, including the NAACP Martin Luther King Award, the Presidential Citizens Medal, and honorary doctorate degrees from Connecticut College, College of New Rochelle, Columbia University Teachers College, and Tulane University.