

# The Story of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Even though the Africans were legally free, they did not have the same rights or opportunities as other Americans. African Americans could not vote. They could not get well-paying jobs or good houses.

African Americans did not like this unfair treatment. In 1905, a group of African Americans had a meeting in Niagara Falls, Canada. Dr. William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was one of the people at the meeting. At the meeting, the group talked about ways to help African Americans get better housing and better jobs. They wanted African Americans to have the chance to vote.

The African Americans formed the Niagara Movement. The Niagara Movement decided to bring legal cases in the courts to get rights for African Americans. The Niagara Movement had meetings in Niagara Falls; Harper's Ferry, West Virginia; Oberlin, Ohio and Boston, Massachusetts.

In 1908, there was a race riot in Springfield, Illinois. The Springfield riot lasted for two days. During the two days, many African Americans were wounded and killed. Many people in the country learned about this riot because Springfield was Abraham Lincoln's hometown.

In January 1909, a social worker named Mary Ovington, a news reporter named William English Walling and Dr. Henry Moskowitz started talking about the Springfield riot and thinking of ways to help African Americans. Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois joined them.

On February 12, 1909, they asked other people to join them. They picked February 12, 1909 because if Abraham Lincoln had been alive, he would have been 100 years old on that day. Many people did join them. This was the beginning of the NAACP. In May 1910, the group elected officers. The Director of Publicity and Research was Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois.

Dr. Du Bois introduced the members of the Niagara Movement to the members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Both organizations wanted to make life better for African Americans. Since they had the same goals, many members of the Niagara Movement became members and officers in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.



The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People published its own magazine called The Crisis. It was first published in November 1910. Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois was the editor. The Crisis is still published today.

Today, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has over 500,000 members, 1,700 branch chapters, and 450 college and youth chapters.

*The Home Page of the NAACP can be found at <http://www.naacp.org>*

