

Use Your Voice

In the history of the US, many groups of people have had to fight to be heard. The US Constitution gives all citizens the right to vote, but it needed many amendments before it actually included all the people included today. It took five amendments to get it right!

In 1870, following the Civil War, Congress passed the **Fifteenth Amendment** of the United States Constitution. This Amendment granted voting rights regardless of race.

The **Nineteenth Amendment**, passed in 1920, extended voting rights to women.

The **Twenty-fourth Amendment** was passed in 1964 and made it illegal for Congress to require that citizens pay taxes in order to vote in federal elections.

The **Twenty-sixth Amendment** was passed in 1971 and lowered the voting age from 21 to 18, because Congress believed that citizens who serve in the military should have the right to vote for civilian officials who determine military policy.

In 1965, Congress enacted the **Voting Rights Act of 1965**. This law protected the rights guaranteed by the Fifteenth Amendment by ensuring that no one could prevent citizens from exercising their right to vote by requiring literacy or any other tests as a condition for suffrage.

Youth Voice Leadership RESPECT

