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### **How Rosa Parks Inspires Me**

There are many great and powerful African American leaders around the world today and in the past. Many of those leader have impacted and changed the lives of others like Dr.Martin Luther King Jr., Barack Obama, Harriet Tubman and many more. The historical African American leader that means the most to me is Rosa Parks because Rosa Parks was a strong independent woman who stood up for what she believed in. Rosa Parks is a wonderful leader for so many reasons most people know her because she wouldn't give up her seat on the bus but she was also a seamstress, author and secretary. Rosa is a great inspiration to me and others like me. She teaches all girls and all genders in general how to make a stand and fight for what you believe in.

Rosa was born in Tuskegee, Alabama she was born Rosa Louise McCauley to Leona and James McCauley she had one younger brother named Sylvester. Rosa's parents got divorced when she was still young and she, her brother and her mother went to go live on her grandparents farm. Alabama was a segregated state at this time meaning blacks and whites were treated differently; Rosa attended the local school for African-American children where her mother taught. After she finished elementary school she attended the Montgomery Industrial School for Girls where she tried to obtain a high school diploma but unfortunately didn't because her mother became very ill so Rosa quit school to help her mother. A few years later Rosa met

Raymond Parks who she fell in love with and married just 1 year later. Rosa, worked part time jobs, and went back to school finally earning her diploma.

Rosa had grown up all her life with racism in the south, Rosa and her husband Raymond wanted to do something about what was happening so they both decided to join the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or the NAACP. Rosa saw an opportunity to do something when the freedom train arrived in Montgomery. According to the Supreme court the freedom train was not segregated so Rosa decided to lead a group of black students to attend the expedition at the same time and place as the white students.

December 1, 1955 is when Rosa Parks made a famous statement while sitting on the bus. Rosa had settled on a seat on the bus after a long day at work all the other seats were filled when a white man came aboard and the driver told Rosa and a few other Black passengers to give up their seats and Rosa refused. The driver explained to her that if she didn't give up her seat he would have to call the police she still refused and the driver called the police she was arrested on sight. Rosa was charged with breaking a segregation law and was told to pay a fine of \$10 she refused, saying she was not guilty and that the law was illegal. That night a large number of black leaders banded together and decided to boycott city busses. This was a difficult feat for most because many had no cars and had to drive to work or catch a carpool each day. The boycott lasted an astonishing 361 days until the Supreme Court ruled that the segregation laws in Alabama were unconstitutional.

After the laws were revoked things didn't get much easier Rosa received multiple death threats and at many times feared for her life. Her and her husband decided to move to Detroit, Michigan where Rosa continued to attend civil rights meetings. Rosa Parks became a symbol to

many African-Americans of the fight for civil rights. Rosa died on October 24, 2005 at the age of 92 in Detroit, Michigan. 3 days after she passed all of the busses in both Montgomery and Detroit reserved their front seat with black ribbon in her honor and the busses remained this way until she was put in her final resting place at Woodlawn Cemetery in Detroit, Michigan. Rosa Parks was an amazing leader and great role model she taught people to stand up for what you believe in and not let people push you around. Rosa went down in history as an amazing woman and she is remembered still to this day for being a symbol of freedom and equality for all.