

National Youth Foundation *Presents:*

# Marian Spencer: A Light in the Darkness



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“I loved this book! It is beautifully written and illustrated by a group of talented young writers and artists. In *Marian Spencer: A Light in the Darkness*, we learn about Mrs. Spencer’s activism to combat segregation and discrimination. Along the way, the reader is reminded to shine their own light as they strive for equality and liberty.”

**Sharon Robinson**

Author

Daughter of Rachel and Jackie Robinson

Vice Chair of the Jackie Robinson Foundation Board of Directors





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# 2019

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## Amazing Women's Edition Sponsors

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### OUR MISSION

The National Youth Foundation is dedicated to enriching the lives of children through creative educational programming. Our mission is to promote inclusion and equality, while helping young students develop their literary skills through academic and team building projects.

On June 28, 1920, an amazing thing happened! A small but bright light came into a world of darkness that needed faith and courage to light the way.







Marian Alexander Spencer was born and raised in the town of Gallipolis, Ohio in the home of her grandfather, a freed slave from West Virginia. Raised by her parents, she had a twin sister and two brothers.

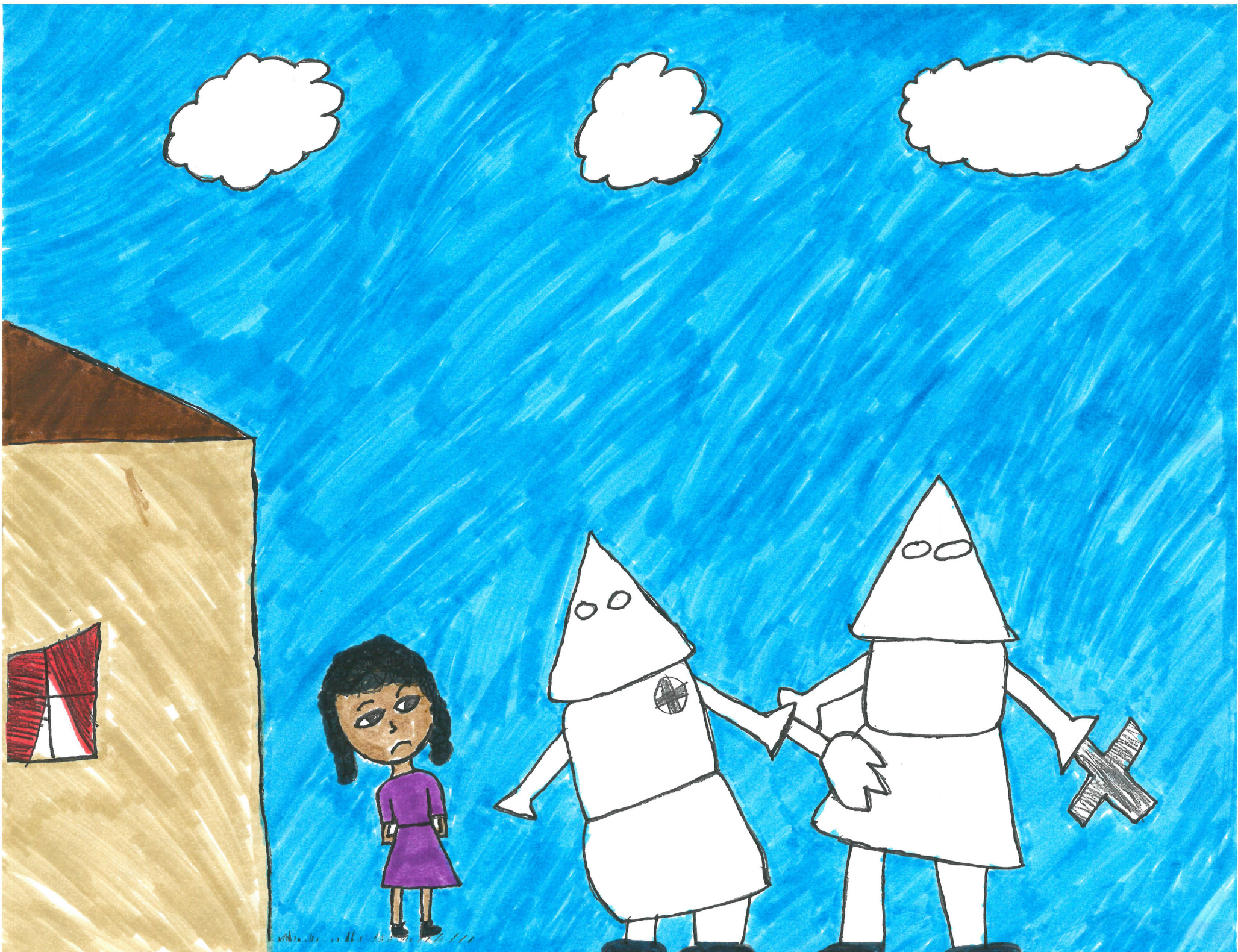






When she was young, she watched marches of the Ku Klux Klan in front of their home. She saw their hatred and darkness, and she knew her light was needed to shine love, that has no color, into their hearts.







At age 13, she decided to join the NAACP. She wanted to help others see the way to make a difference.







Her grandfather inspired her to help others and always stand up for what is right.







She moved to Cincinnati where she went to the University of Cincinnati and earned a degree in English in 1942. Getting an education fueled her light to shine brighter.



University of Cincinnati!

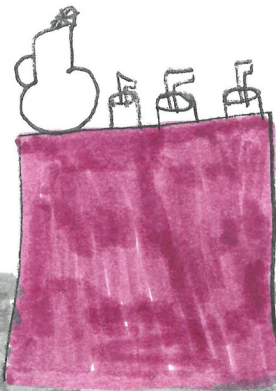
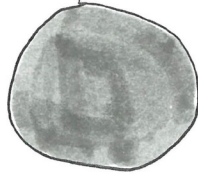




While she was in college, people of color were not allowed to participate in the school's prom. Marian shined her light and spoke out about this darkness.

# IPROM!

No colored people allowed!



In 1940, she married Donald Spencer and had two sons.  
Her husband was a Cincinnati teacher.







Marian spoke out about the segregation of the Cincinnati Public Schools. Many schools were not integrated. There were just “white schools” and “black schools.” Marian said, “Every child should at least have a chance to get a good education.”



Woodward



Taft





One day in 1952, she wanted to take her sons to Coney Island in Cincinnati. But when they got there, they were turned away by a guard holding a gun because of the color of their skin.



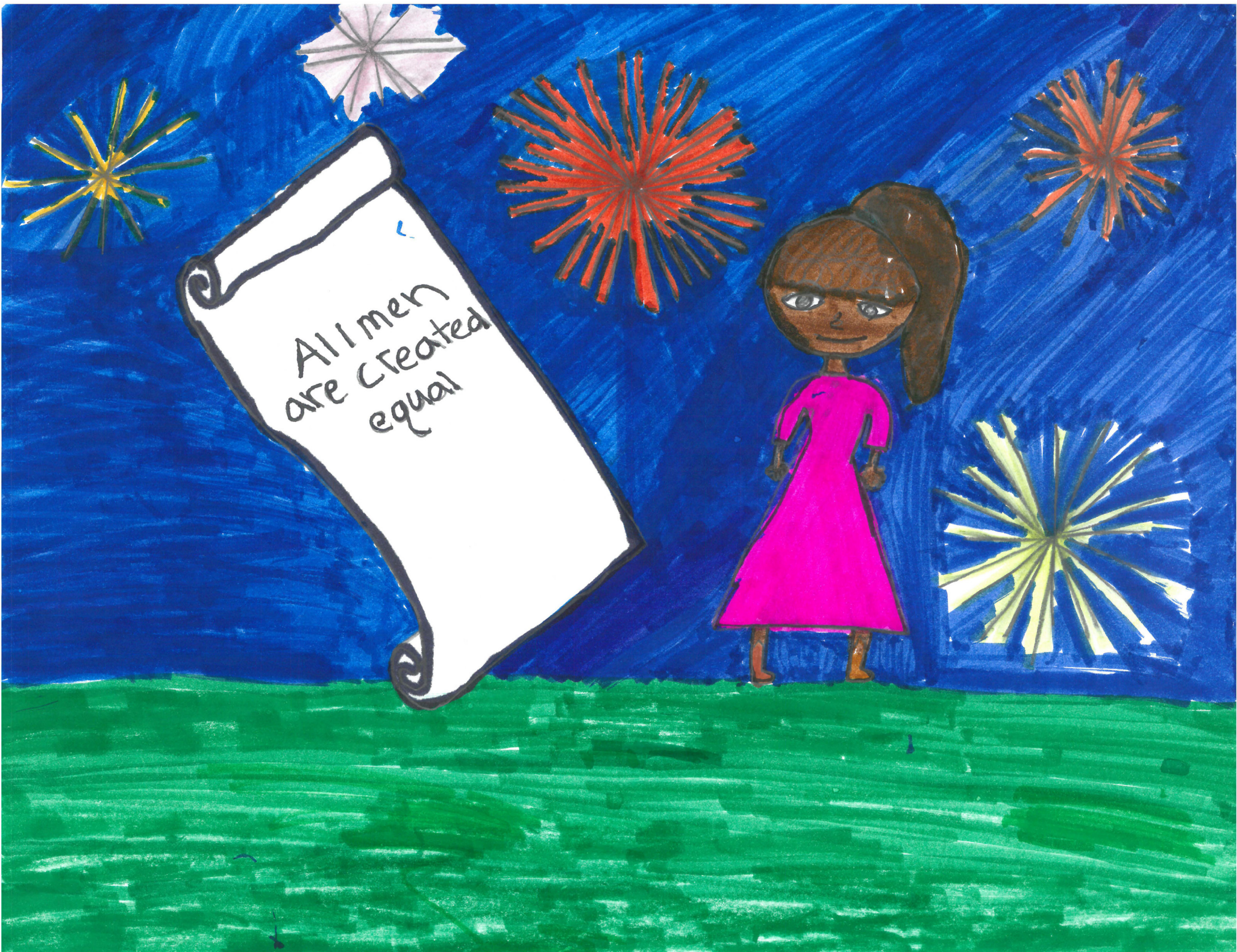
CONEY ISLAND





That was July 4th, a day celebrating our country's Independence. Marian knew that our country was founded on the belief that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."







ALL men, ALL people, are created equal in our country,  
not just some.







Marian had the courage to file a lawsuit and won, desegregating Coney Island. Marian's light shined through the darkness to reveal equality and liberty.







Marian continued over many years to fight for civil rights.  
She inspired others to do the same.







She became the first elected president of the Woman's City Club, was president of the Links Incorporated, and served as a member of the University of Cincinnati's Board of Trustees.



Women's  
City  
Club

U.C. Board  
of  
Trustees.

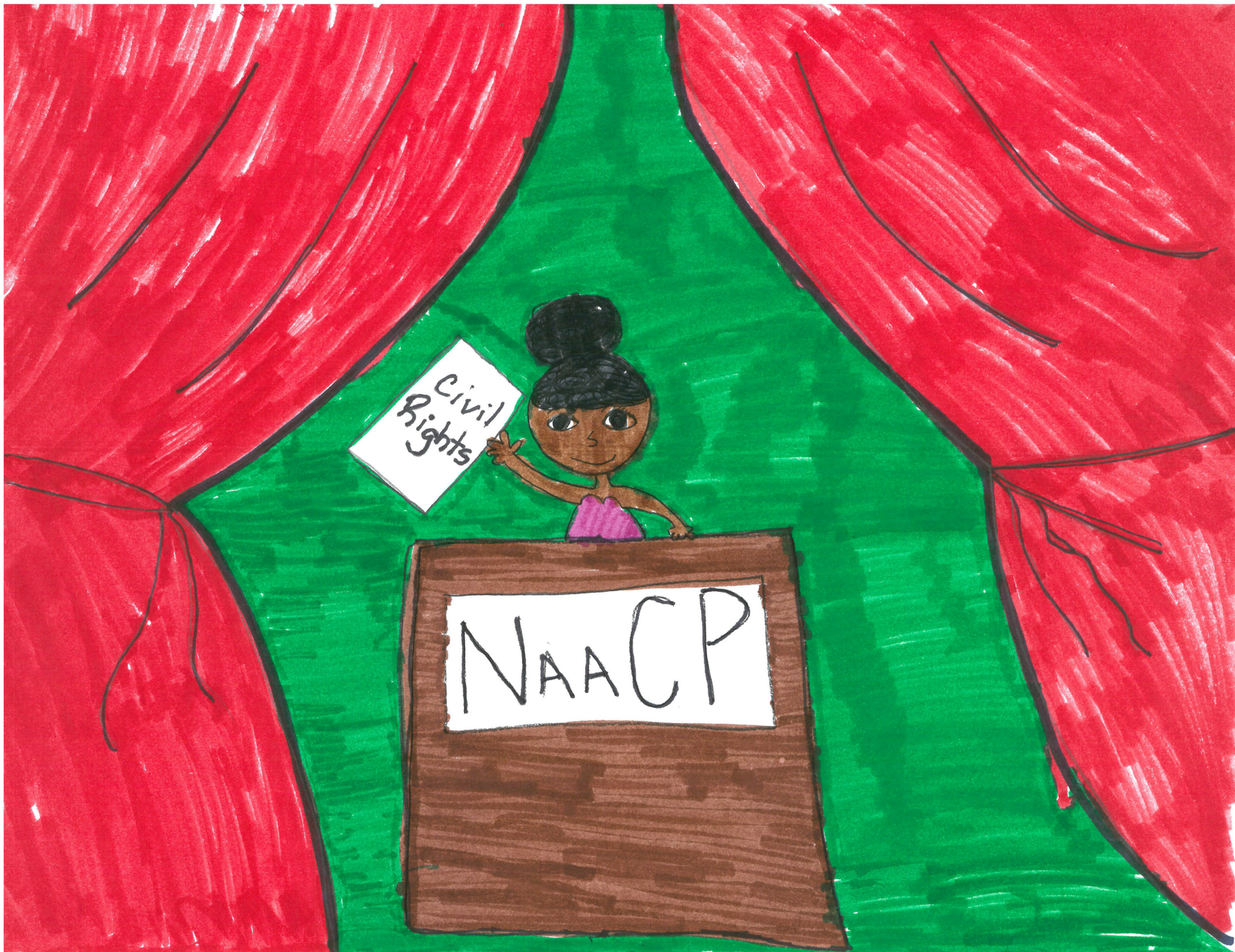
Links, Inc.





In 1981, she became the first female president of the Cincinnati branch NAACP. She also served as chairperson of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission.







In 1983, Marian was the first African-American female elected to Cincinnati City Council and served as Vice Mayor. People saw Marian's light and wanted to help her shine!



# CINCINNATI CITY COUNCIL



Vice-Mayor  
Spencer



Marian's light was recognized for the many things she did!



Cincinnati Enquirer  
Woman of the Year Award!

Brotherhood Award  
National Conference of  
Christians and Jews

YWCA Career Woman  
of Achievement Award

Humanitarian Award  
Freedom Heritage Foundation





Marian still lives in Cincinnati. She continues to selflessly help others and is dedicated to making a difference.







That small, but bright light that came into a world of darkness grew into a powerful beacon that continues to inspire and light the way to truth, equality and justice for all people. Thank you, Marian Spencer!!!



## MEET THE JUDGES



COURTNEY R. BANGHART  
Princeton University Women's  
Basketball Head Coach



ERIN FALLIGANT  
Author, *A Smart Girl's Guide to  
Getting it Together & The Legend  
of the Shark Goddess*



DANIEL JAMES BROWN  
Author, *The Boys in the Boat*



RUDINE SIMS BISHOP  
Professor Emerita, Ohio State  
University  
Author  
Winner: 2017 Coretta Scott  
King/Virginia Hamilton Lifetime  
Achievement Award (American  
Library Association)



