



## **Town of Riverhead** *Office of the Supervisor*

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### **In honor of Black History Month; Residents Who've Contributed to Riverhead's History**

#### **Fighting for Freedom - Read by NJROTC Cadet Lieutenant Commander Michael Daniel**

Civil War Soldier David Chippie answered President Lincoln's call to fight in the Civil War. A Corporal in the 29<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Infantry- one of 900 black men, Native Americans and at least one Hispanic – farmers, laborers and freed men - who trained with sticks because they had no weapons yet. Both Mr. Chippie and his mother are buried in the Riverhead Cemetery.

Garfield Langhorn - Riverhead's most famous war hero, Garfield was honored posthumously in 1970 with the Congressional Medal of Honor for sacrificing his own life to save others. His statue sits outside Town Hall.

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#### **Riverhead Firsts for Equality - Read by Betty Harris**

Charles Crump was Riverhead's first African-American Town Assessor in the early 70's. His wife, Betsy Crump along with Ben Butler, Lelia Hamilton and Marion Johnson, were pioneer African/American teachers in the Riverhead School District.

Richard Ligon had to fight to join the Riverhead Fire Department but after his initial rejection, was the first African-American to join in 1977. He went on to serve as Captain of the Red Hook & Ladder Company, Fire Commissioner and was Riverhead's Firefighter of the Year in 1993.

Harriet Gilliam was elected Riverhead's first black councilwoman in 1992.

Thelma Booker was the first African American to join the Women of the Moose in 2002 and broke the color barrier again as she was elected their first African-American Senior Regent in 2004.

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#### **Focusing on the Future - Read by NJROTC Cadet Lieutenant Commander Michael Daniel**

Before he even graduated from Riverhead High School in 1997, Rashad Robinson hosted a talk show on Cablevision's public access channel and led a protest or two. Rashad has continued to make his voice heard, through work in government, community organizing and advocacy. Since 2011, he has served as executive director of Color Of Change – working to strengthen the political voice of black America and bring about positive change- and has grown into a highly respected civil rights leader and human rights advocate.