

What Makes Oberlin So Special?

*Heritage – A Town of Many **Firsts***

- 1835 - Oberlin College was one of the **first** colleges in the United States to admit African-Americans.
- 1835 – Oberlin immediately became involved in the anti-slavery movement, and during the next 25 years the colony institution function as a unit in the underground railroad.
- Since 1833 Oberlin College was the **first** co-educational Institute in the Country.
- John Mercer Langston, an Oberlin College graduate, was the **first** black lawyer in the United States
- Oberlin has been considered “The Town that **Started** the Civil War” due to the rescue known as the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue.
- Mary Jane Patterson was the **first** black women to receive a BA degree in the United States graduated from Oberlin College.
- Oberlin College Student Charles Martin Hall **discovers** the process for extracting aluminum from ore.
- Alice Swing, elected in 1895 was the **first** woman elected to the Oberlin School Board and the **first** women elected to a School Board in Ohio.



One of the first Colleges to admit African-Americans in 1835



- **The Oberlin Collegiate trustees allowed African American to admitted because they felt that “the education of people of color should be encouraged and sustained,” Oberlin became the first college in the nation to admit not only women students, but African American students, as well.**
- **So it was, that in 1835, black students began to enroll in the Institute; soon after, the earliest black settlers arrived in town. What had started out being a homogeneous community was beginning to become noticeably diverse.”**

The First African-American Woman graduated from the First Co-Educational Institution in the Country



- **Mary Jane Patterson** (*pictured above*) was the first African American woman to receive a bachelor's degree when she graduated from Oberlin College in 1862.
- **Oberlin Collegiate Institute** was unique from the beginning because it included several different courses of study (a female course, a college course, a preparatory course). Women students were allowed to enroll in college level classes, thus making the Institute the first co-educational college in the country.

Oberlin has been called “The Town that Started the Civil War”

Oberlin has been titled “The town that started the Civil War” because the Oberlin-Wellington rescue in 1858 was said to have raised consciousness nationwide regarding the anti-slavery movement. Twenty-one members from Oberlin and Wellington were arrested (*pictured below*) and taken to jail for their involvement in this rescue. This case provoked much controversy throughout the country and was said to be the incident to have much influence on the anti-slavery movement in the North and, ultimately, the Civil War

Nat Brandt wrote a book about this rescue called “The Town that Started the Civil War.”

John Fairchild hid the fugitive Slave, John Price, in his home. Councilperson Sharon Soucy, is a descendent of John Fairchild.

