

PROFILE OF RESISTANCE

Freeman A. Hrabowski university president

*"Listen to the stories of other people. Be inspired by their stories, but be inspired by your own story."*ⁱ



Background Information

Born: August 13, 1950

Hrabowski was raised in segregated Birmingham, Alabama as an only child. His parents were both teachers. At age 19, Hrabowski graduated from the Hampton Institute with high honors in mathematics. He went on to get his master's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He then began a career as an administrator at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Eventually he became the president of the school.

Hrabowski's Resistance

When Hrabowski was only 12 years old, he joined the Children's Crusade march for civil rights. The Children's Crusade was part of the fight to end segregation in Birmingham. During the march, he was arrested and put in jail for five days with real, adult criminals. Although that was a scary time, the newspapers printed pictures of children being arrested, which angered many people. The Children's Crusade eventually caused the city of Birmingham to change its unfair laws.

When Hrabowski got out of jail, he met Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who told him, "What you do this day will have an impact on generations as yet unborn." This statement inspired him to continue fighting for equality. His life mission became fighting for equality through education. As the president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, he worked to help students of all backgrounds find success in the classroom.ⁱⁱ

Achievements

Hrabowski received many awards for his leadership and service. Specifically, he received the U.S. Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring, the Columbia University Teachers College Medal for Distinguished Service, and the Harold W. McGraw Jr. Prize in Education. He also served as an advisor to President Barack Obama on higher education policy and received an honorary doctorate from Harvard University.ⁱⁱⁱ

Essential Questions

1. As a child, Freeman Hrabowski and his classmates were arrested for protesting. Do you think children would be arrested today if they protested? Why or Why not?

2. Do you think that there is a certain age a person has to be to make a difference? If so, what age and why? If not, why?

3. ***“Listen to the stories of other people. Be inspired by their stories, but be inspired by your own story.”^{iv}***

a. What is an inspiring part of your story?

Hint: Your story is your personal history, like where you were born and what you have done growing up.

i Wisdom From One Of World’s Most Influential People. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2019, from NPR.org website: <https://www.npr.org/2012/06/06/154432628/wisdom-from-one-of-worlds-most-influential-people>

ii Freeman Hrabowski’s Biography. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2019, from The HistoryMakers website: <https://www.thehistorymakers.org/biography/freeman-hrabowski-39>

iii Sun, B. C. W., The Baltimore. (n.d.). Freeman Hrabowski’s UMBC legacy grows as he celebrates 20 years as president. Retrieved October 28, 2019, from Baltimoresun.com website: <https://www.baltimoresun.com/education/bs-md-hrabowski-profile-20120901-story.html>

iv Wisdom From One Of World’s Most Influential People. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2019, from NPR.org website: <https://www.npr.org/2012/06/06/154432628/wisdom-from-one-of-worlds-most-influential-people>