

PROFILE OF RESISTANCE

HIGHLANDER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER



Highlander's Resistance

The Highlander Research and Education Center, originally called Highlander Folk School, was founded in 1932 by Don West and Myles Horton. West and Horton originally worked with unemployed people, workers, and union leaders. They helped individuals use their own experiences to help build a more peaceful, democratic society. There were no grades. Highlander focused on educating to the specific needs of their students. Workshops focused on skills based learning and local content to educate students. For example, union leaders focused on leadership and protesting strategies from local activists to improve working conditions.

In the 1950s, Highlander focused on racial inequities in the US. They taught desegregation workshops, non-violent tactics, and helped potential Black voters develop their skills for literacy tests. Highlander prepared students for the test with Black history and literature. Countless students of all ages, genders, and races attended workshops from Highlander.¹

Highlander faced pushback from local communities and politicians through various threats. Highlander was regarded as a 'Communist training school', and was closed in 1962. The school was then moved to Knoxville Tennessee and renamed.²

Achievements

Highlander educated individuals like Rosa Parks and John Bevel, and was visited by activists like Eleanor Roosevelt and Martin Luther King, Jr.. Highlander has fought for social justice for almost ninety years.³

¹ Highlander Folk School. (2018, May 22). Retrieved November 12, 2019, from <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/highlander-folk-school>.

² Glen, J. M. (2018, March 1). Highlander Folk School. Retrieved November 12, 2019, from <https://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entries/highlander-folk-school/>.

³ HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL. (n.d.). Retrieved November 12, 2019, from <https://highlanderfolkschool.weebly.com/>.

