Fannie Lou Townsend was born on October 6, 1917 in Montgomery County, Mississippi. At the age of six, she began picking cotton to help the family and only had a sixth grade education. In 1944, Fannie married Perry "Pap" Hamer. Fannie Lou became involved in voter registration when members of (SNCC) came to Mississippi in 1961. On June 9, 1963, she and other SNCC workers were stopped and arrested in Winona, Mississippi. While in custody, Hamer and other workers were beaten severely. Because of discrimination in the regular Democratic Party, Fannie Lou Hamer co-founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). At the Democratic national convention in Atlantic City, NJ, in 1964, Fannie and other delegates challenged the Party. In 1965, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act. Hamer continued to work to better conditions in Mississippi by organizing grass-roots antipoverty projects. In 1969, Hamer founded the Freedom Farm Cooperative in which people were able to grow their own food. It grew upwards of 680 acres of land. Fannie Lou Hamer died on March 14, 1977. She and her husband Perry are buried on the Freedom Farm Co-op land which is now known as the Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Garden. For more information on Fannie Lou Hamer, visit www.fannielouhamer.info/donors.

National Fannie Lou Hamer Statue Fundraiser Drive

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