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Nancy Kelsey (1823-1896) was 17 years old and the mother of an infant daughter when she became the first woman to travel to California on a wagon train in a group that included her husband, their baby, and about 30 men. Young women like Nancy were vital to settling the West.

Nancy Lieberman (1958-) was the first woman to break the gender barrier in order to play professional basketball in the United States Basketball League.

Agnes Nestor (1880-1940) was the first elected female president of an international labor union. Nestor began work in a glove-making factory when she was still in her teens, and by the age of 22 she was a strike organizer to press for better pay and better work conditions. She became one of the founders of the women's International Glove Workers Union.

Kitty O'Neil (1947-) O'Neil was the first woman to be accepted into Stunts Unlimited (1976), an organization of Hollywood's top stunt people. (Kitty's accomplishment is all the more remarkable when readers learn she has been deaf since she was a baby.)

Loretta Walsh (1896-1925) Walsh was the first woman to serve on active duty in the Navy after enlisting in 1917.

Sheyann Webb (1956-) is sometimes referred to as Martin Luther King Jr.'s "smallest freedom fighter." She took part in "Bloody Sunday" in 1967 and continues to fight for human and civil rights.

To read more about each of these women and to read about the other women being featured in "30 Under 30," please visit www.americacomesalive.com.

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