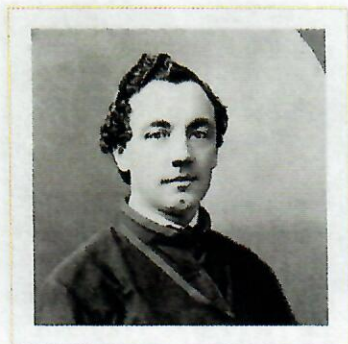
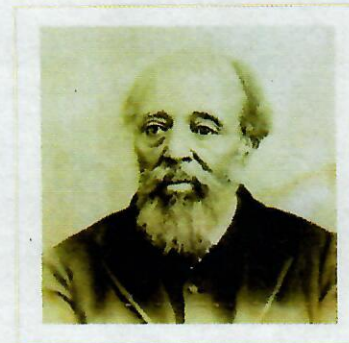


African American Pioneers in Higher Education

African American History Month serves as a powerful reminder of the many black pioneers in higher education. The following African American educators have earned a prominent place in history for their extraordinary achievements in academia.

Martin Henry Freeman (1826-1889) was the first African American professor and college president in the U.S. at the all-black Allegheny Institute — now known as Avery College — in Pittsburgh, Pa., where he served from 1851 to 1862. Freeman graduated from Middlebury College in Vermont in 1849. He later moved to Africa, where he served as a professor of mathematics and eventually as president of Liberia College in Monrovia.



The Rev. Patrick Francis Healy (1830-1910) was the first African American president of a predominantly white institution — the Jesuit College in Georgetown, District of Columbia, which became Georgetown University. Healy was born into slavery to a Catholic-Irish plantation owner and a mixed-race slave mother, allowing him to pass as white for much of his life. In 1865, he received a doctorate in philosophy from the Saint-Sulpice Seminary in Paris.

Marguerite Ross Barnett (1942-1992) became the first African American female president of a major American university when she was appointed president of the University of Houston in 1990. She graduated from Antioch College in 1964 with a degree in political science and went on to obtain her master's degree and PhD at the University of Chicago. Throughout her career, Barnett taught at many prestigious institutions, including Princeton University, Howard University, and Columbia University.

