Thurgood Marshall 1908–1993

*Born Baltimore, Maryland*

Thurgood Marshall played a major role in the 1940s and 1950s as a leader in the struggle to end racial discrimination in the United States. From 1938 to 1961, he served as chief staff lawyer for the NAACP. Marshall devoted much effort to tailoring arguments that led the Supreme Court to its unanimous 1954 *Brown v. the Board of Education of the City of Topeka* decision, which ruled segregation of public schools by race to be unconstitutional. But he realized the struggle was not over. At a party celebrating the *Brown* decision, Marshall warned his colleagues, “I don’t want any of you to fool yourselves, it’s just begun; the fight has just begun.” He went on to become the first African American Supreme Court justice, nominated by President Lyndon Johnson in 1967.

Betsy Graves Reyneau (1888–1964)

Oil on canvas, 1956

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