Rosa Lee Parks Essay, Research Paper

Rosa Lee Parks This month I nominate Rosa Parks into the Justice Hall of Fame. She was a black civil rights advocate. She was born on Feb. 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Ala., and is still alive today. Parks briefly attended Alabama State Teacher College, which is now known as Alabama State University. She later moved to Montgomery, Ala., where, on her way home from work one day in 1955, she was told by a bus driver to give up her seat for a white man. Back then blacks were required, by law, to sit in separate rows than whites on the bus. Parks violated this law, therefore, was arrested and fined. She refused to give up her seat in the middle of the bus when a white person wanted to sit in her row. The front rows were for whites only. The law required blacks to leave middle rows when all seats in the front rows were taken and whites wanted to sit in the middle. Parks arrest motivated local black leaders to take action. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., led a boycott of the bus company that lasted more than a year. Resistance to black demands for the desegregation of Montgomery s buses was finally overcome when the Supreme Court ruled in November 1956 that the segregation of public transportation facilities was unconstitutional. The city government then agreed to unsegregated busing. The boycott involved the blacks who took the bus to stop doing so. Instead of using the bus they car pooled, walked, or rode a bike. The Montgomery boycott was very successful and made King widely known. It also led to mass protests demanding civil rights for blacks. Because of this, Parks is sometimes called the mother of the modern civil rights movement and was a symbol of the power of non-violent action. Parks was a seamstress and lost her job as a result of the Montgomery protest. She

moved to Detroit in 1957. In 1967, she joined the Detroit staff of John Conyers, Jr., a Democratic member of the U.S. House of Representatives. I picked Rosa Parks to be in the Justice Hall of Fame because she played a big part in helping blacks to get their rights. By violating the Jim Crow statutes, she sparked a yearlong black boycott of the city buses. It also served notice throughout the South that blacks would no longer submit meekly to the absurdities and indignities of segregation. Parks knew that what she was doing was against the law and she would be arrested. This did not matter to her. Parks, like many other blacks, was tired of the treatment they received from whites. What separated her from those other blacks was that she had the courage and bravery to take action. Parks used her right from the first amendment stating freedom of speech. She demonstrated this right in a non-violent way which led to a bigger non-violent boycott led by Martin Luther King, Jr. Rosa Parks may have lost her job because of her actions, but she gained something much greater. She gained the respect and admiration from fellow black Americans, and even some whites. She started the civil rights movements that ended segregation on buses and also sparked reactions by others to coordinate further civil rights actions. Because of Parks courage, the Southern Christian Leadership Council established the Rosa Parks Freedom Award in her honor. In 1979, she won the NAACP S Springarn Medal. Rosa Parks definitely changed history. Without her, who knows how America would have turned out. Today there may still be segregation or unjust laws against blacks. Rosa Parks should be in the Justice Hall of Fame because she showed justice by bringing justice to this country. That s why she is known as the mother of the civil rights movement.