

CIVIL WAR HEROES

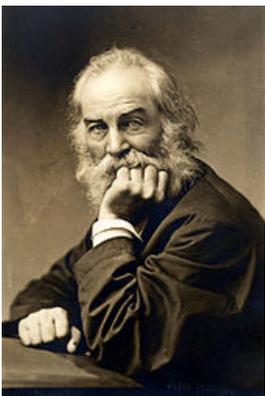
We recently conducted a workshop in Texas for a court group that brought all its administrative support staff, along with officers, to examine *“The Many Faces of Leadership.”* Their organization’s goal in bringing the entire staff together was to demonstrate the need for leadership at every level of the organization.

Using civilians in the Civil War, we helped them see the importance of stepping up to responsibility and leadership. Here are two of the role models we studied.



CLARA BARTON. *“You have never known me without work, and you never will. It has always been a part of the best religion I had,”* said the woman who risked her life to bring supplies and aid to soldiers in the field during the Civil War. She had no official title, no military position, but she plowed a new path for volunteers with her example of determination, compassion, and service to those in need. It was not enough for Barton to work from home collecting bandages and supplies. She went directly to the battlefields to comfort and nurse the fallen soldiers where she was often in the line of fire.

*“I may be compelled to **face** danger, but **never** fear it, and while our soldiers can stand and **fight**, I can stand and feed and nurse them.”—Clara Barton*



WALT WHITMAN. *“Behold I do not give lectures or a little charity, When I give, I give myself.”* Journalist and poet, Whitman was living in Brooklyn when he read in the newspaper that his brother, George was among the wounded in the Battle of Fredericksburg. He hurried to the battlefield, where he found George alive, but witnessed Army hospitals struggling with enormous burdens of surgery and caring for the wounded. Whitman determined to help in any way he could, beginning three years of services in Washington hospitals. Taking a part-time job, he bought gifts of food, tobacco, and writing paper, then spent hours visiting and comforting the sick, wounded, and dying. He wrote letters home for them, quoted the Bible, and listened to their stories.

Whitman later wrote of his encounters. *“He is one of the thousands of our unknown American young men in the ranks about whom there is no record or fame, no fuss made about their dying so unknown, but I find in them the real precious & royal ones of this land, giving themselves up . . . in their country’s cause .*

From these role models—along with Harriet Tubman, Matthew Fontaine Maury, and Frederick Douglass—workshop attendees found inspiration for stepping up to responsibility, regardless of title or position.