



Sylvanie Williams was born in Louisiana around 1848. Not much is known about Williams' early life; however, she was listed as a resident of New Orleans in the 1870 census. Williams would go on to be an educator, activist and one of the most outspoken advocates for women's rights, particularly those of African American women.

As founder of the nationally recognized Phyllis Wheatley Club of New Orleans, Williams partnered with the National Association of Colored Women and was able to open a nursing school, free clinic and hospital for African Americans. She would later open the first playground for African Americans and reform countless schools in the New Orleans area. During the women's suffrage movement, African Americans were largely excluded but Williams

often advocated for African American women through the Phyllis Wheatley Club. Following her death in 1921, Williams was commemorated by naming a school and community organization after her.