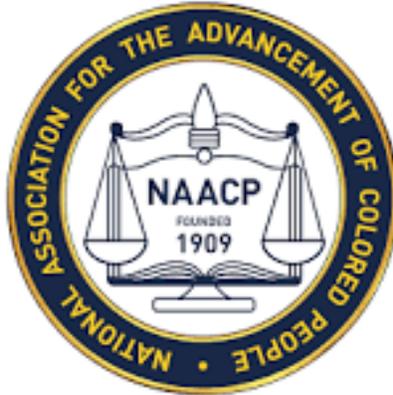


FEBRUARY CELEBRATION OF



Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history.

NAACP



naacp.org

Friday, February 12, 2021, is the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) Founders Day, **marking 112 years** of the NAACP's fight to advance justice for ALL. The NAACP has 2,200 branches and a half million members.

Description:

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is a civil rights organization in the United States, formed in 1909 as an interracial endeavor to advance justice for African Americans by a group including W. E. B. Du Bois, Mary White Ovington, Moorfield Storey and Ida B. Wells.

Founded: February 12, 1909, [New York, NY](#)

In 1909 W.E.B DuBois and a multi-racial coalition established the NAACP as an organization for the Black community and their allies from across the political spectrum to fight for human rights and equality. They recognized something that rings true to this very day.

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Henry Louis Gates Jr.



*Henry Louis "Skip" Gates Jr. is an American literary critic, professor, historian, filmmaker, and public intellectual who serves as the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and Director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University. American literary critic and scholar **known for** his pioneering theories of African literature and African American literature.*

***The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song* premieres February 16 and 17, 9-11 p.m. on THIRTEEN MEDIA WITH IMPACT ([check your Local Listings](#))**



The Black Church Episodes:

“This series comes at a time in our country when the very things our African American ancestors struggled and died for – faith and freedom, justice and equality, democracy and grace – all are on the line,” says Gates. “No social institution in the Black community is more central and important than the Black church.”

For many, the Black church is their house of worship. For some, it is ground zero for social justice. For others, it is a place of transcendent cultural gifts exported to the world, from the soulful voices of preachers and congregants to the sublime sounds of gospel music.

Renowned Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. traces the 400-year history of this remarkable social institution in ***The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song.***

The series, executive produced, hosted, and written by Dr. Gates (*[The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross](#)*, *[African American Lives](#)*, *[Black America Since MLK: And Still I Rise](#)*) examines the vital role the Black church has played in shaping the Black American experience, revealing how Black people have worshipped, and through their spiritual journeys, improvised ways to bring their faith traditions from Africa to the New World while translating them into a form of Christianity that was their own and also a redemptive force for a nation whose original sin was found in their ancestors’ enslavement across the Middle Passage.

“The Black church was more than just a spiritual home. It was the epicenter of Black life. Out of it came our Black businesses, our Black educational institutions,” Rev. Al Sharpton observes in the series.

“The church gave people a sense of value, belonging, and worthiness. I don’t know how we could have survived as a people without it,” adds Oprah Winfrey.



Today in Black History we salute the journey of our Legendary Supreme Singer “Mary Wilson”

Special Tribute to:



Mary Wilson (March 6, 1944 – February 8, 2021) was an American singer and concert performer best known as a founding member of [the Supremes](#), the most successful [Motown](#) act of the 1960s and the best-charting female group in U.S. history, as well as one of the all-

time [best-selling girl groups](#) in the world. The group released a record-setting twelve number-one hit singles on the [Billboard Hot 100](#), ten of which Wilson sang [backing vocals](#) for.

Wilson remained with the group following the departures of other original members, [Florence Ballard](#) in 1967 and [Diana Ross](#) in 1970, though the group disbanded following Wilson's own departure in 1977. Wilson later became a [New York Times best-selling author](#) in 1986 with the release of her first autobiography, [Dreamgirl: My Life as a Supreme](#), which set records for sales in its genre, and later for the autobiography *Supreme Faith: Someday We'll Be Together*.

Continuing a successful career as a concert performer in [Las Vegas](#), Wilson also worked in activism, fighting to pass [Truth in Music Advertising](#) bills and donating to various charities. Wilson was inducted along with Ross and Ballard (as members of the Supremes) into the [Rock and Roll Hall of Fame](#) in 1988.



Wilson first met [Florence Ballard](#) at an elementary school in Detroit. The duo became friends while singing in the school's talent show. In 1959, Ballard asked Wilson to audition for Milton Jenkins, who was forming a sister group to his male vocal trio, the Primes.

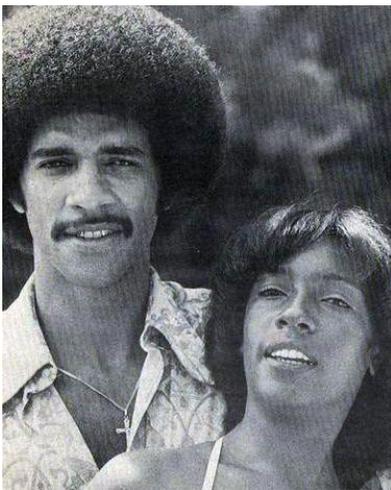
Wilson was soon accepted in the group known as The Primettes, with [Diana Ross](#) and [Betty McGlown](#). Wilson graduated from Detroit's Northeastern High School in January 1962. Despite her mother's insistence she go to college, Wilson instead focused on her music career.

The Primettes signed to [Motown Records](#) in 1961, changing the group's name to [The Supremes](#). In between that period, McGlown left to get married and was replaced by [Barbara Martin](#). In 1962, the group was reduced to a trio after Martin's departure. The Supremes scored their first hit in 1963 with the song, "[When the Lovelight Starts Shining Through His Eyes](#)", and reached No. 1 on the pop charts for the first time with the hit, "[Where Did Our Love Go](#)", becoming their first of 12 No. 1 singles. (Though Wilson sang background on all of their hits before 1967, it was later revealed that Motown used in-house background singers, [The Andantes](#), for the hits "[Love Child](#)" and "Someday We'll Be Together").

By 1964, the group had become international superstars. In 1967, Motown president [Berry Gordy](#) changed the name of the group to *Diana Ross & The Supremes*^[5] and, after a period of tension, Florence Ballard was removed from the Supremes that July. [Cindy Birdsong](#) was chosen to take her place. The new lineup continued to record hit singles, although several stalled outside the top 20 chart range. Ross left the group in early 1970, and at her farewell performance [Jean Terrell](#) was introduced as the replacement for Ross. According to Wilson in her memoirs, Berry Gordy told Wilson that he thought of having [Syreeta Wright](#) join the

group in a last-minute change, after Terrell had already been introduced as lead singer, to which Wilson refused. With Terrell, the Supremes recorded seven [top-40](#) hit singles in a three-year period. One [River Deep/Mountain High](#) was a collaboration with the Four Tops. Other recordings by the trio which charted included; "[Up the Ladder to the Roof](#)", "[Stoned Love](#)", "[Nathan Jones](#)", and "[Floy Joy](#)". Of these releases, only Stoned Love reached a No. 1 status (R&B Chart). Unlike the latter years with Ross, however, all but one of the hits, "[Automatically Sunshine](#)", succeeded in reaching the top 20 charts, with two breaking into the top 10. During this period, Wilson contributed lead or co-lead vocals to several Supremes songs, including the hits "Floy Joy" and "Automatically Sunshine", and the title track of the 1971 album [Touch](#).

Wilson found major success once more with her memoir: [Dreamgirl: My Life as a Supreme](#) in 1986. The book remained on the national best-seller list for months and established a sales record for the genre. The book focused on the early career of the Supremes and its success during the 1960s. Four years later, in 1990, Wilson released her second memoir: [Supreme Faith: Someday We'll Be Together](#), also a best seller, which focused on the Supremes in the 1970s.



Wilson married Pedro Ferrer in [Las Vegas, Nevada](#) on May 11, 1974. Their union produced three children: Turkessa, Pedro Antonio Jr. and Rafael. Wilson and Ferrer divorced in 1981. Wilson is also adoptive mother to her cousin, Willie. In January 1994, Wilson and her 14-year-old son Rafael were involved in an accident on Interstate 15 between Los Angeles and Las Vegas when their Jeep Cherokee veered off the highway and overturned. Wilson sustained moderate injuries; Rafael's injuries were fatal.

As of September 2019, Mary has 10 grandchildren and 1 great granddaughter, which she revealed during the 2nd episode of season 28 of *Dancing with the Stars*.

In 2001, Wilson received an associate degree from [New York University](#).

Wilson has received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from [Paine College](#) in Augusta, Georgia.

In 2020, Wilson received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the [National Newspaper Publishers Association](#). Wilson was also, along with The Supremes, inducted into National Rhythm & Blues Hall of Fame class 2013. Wilson also served as the master of ceremonies for the National Rhythm & Blues Hall of Fame from 2016-2019 and a board member.



Diana Ross is paying tribute to **Mary Wilson**. In an exclusive statement to ET, Ross remembers her late friend, with whom she performed as The Supremes, along with Florence Ballard, in the '60s. Wilson died on Monday, February 8th at age 76. Ballard died back in 1976.

"I remember Mary's joy and love during happier times and our love and years together," Ross tells ET. "I recall 'the good old days' with a smile in my heart and a song in my heart during these changing times. I'm happy to have known her. Love and condolences to her family."

Ross, Wilson and Ballard's Motown group created over a dozen No. 1 singles during its time, including hits like "Where Did Our Love Go," "Baby Love," "Come See About Me," "Stop! In the Name of Love" and "Back in My Arms Again."

Ross also released a statement on Twitter, writing, "I just woke up to this news, my condolences to you Mary's family, I am reminded that each day is a gift, I have so many wonderful memories of our time together 'The Supremes' will live on in our hearts."



Motown founder Berry Gordy said he was "extremely shocked and saddened" by the news of her death and said Wilson was "quite a star in her own right and over the years continued to work hard to boost the legacy of the Supremes." Together, they made history. More than 60 years on, The Supremes still reign supreme. They were Motown's most successful act of the 1960s, scoring 12 No. 1 singles, including five in a row from 1964-1965.



Wilson is survived by her daughter, son, several grandchildren, a sister and brother.



*Thank you for your gifts of talent and
being our Trailblazing "Diva" & "Legend"
over the years... We Love You!*



*May you Rest in Heavenly & Supreme
†Peace†*



Today in Black History we salute the journey of Whoopi Goldberg



Whoopi Goldberg

The first Black American to win an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony Awards.

From comedian to actress to talk show host, there's nothing Whoopi Goldberg can't do. The EGOT title holder (meaning she's won an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony Award)

has led one of the most successful careers in Hollywood, starring in major box office hits of the late '80s and early '90s, including *The Color Purple*, *Ghost*, and *Sister Act*. Today, she is most famously known as a co-host of *The View* where she unabashedly shares her opinions on current events. To celebrate her talent and legacy on the entertainment industry on her birthday, *CR* looks back at some of her best quotes about life, art, and how to get ahead.



Whoopi Goldberg Is the Mom of One Amazing Daughter! Meet the 'View' Star's Only Child Alex Martin



Today in Black History we salute the journey of Muhammad Ali

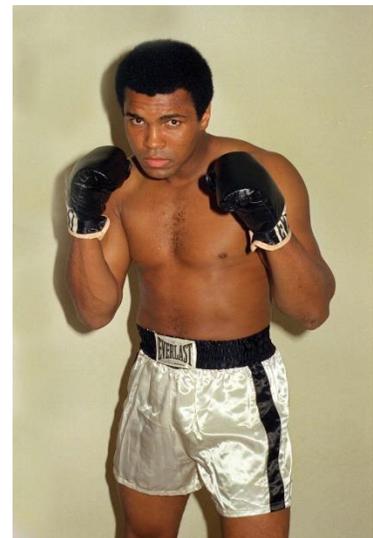


Muhammad Ali born **Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr.**; January 17, 1942 – June 3, 2016) was an American professional boxer, activist, entertainer and philanthropist. Nicknamed **The Greatest**, he is widely regarded as one of the most significant and celebrated figures of the 20th century and as one of the greatest boxers of all time.

Ali was born and raised in [Louisville, Kentucky](#). He began training as an amateur boxer at age 12. At 18, he won a gold medal in the [light heavyweight](#) division at the [1960 Summer Olympics](#) and turned professional later that year. He became a [Muslim](#) after 1961. He won the world [heavyweight](#) championship from [Sonny Liston](#) in [a major upset](#) on February 25, 1964, at age 22. On March 6, 1964, he announced that he no longer would be known as **Cassius Clay** but as Muhammad Ali. In 1966, Ali refused to be drafted into the military, citing his religious beliefs and ethical opposition to the [Vietnam War](#). He was found guilty of draft evasion so he faced 5 years in prison and was stripped of his boxing titles. He stayed out of prison as he appealed the decision to the Supreme Court, which [overturned his conviction in 1971](#), but he had not fought for nearly four years and lost a period of peak performance as an athlete.^[1] Ali's actions as a [conscientious objector](#) to the Vietnam War made him an icon for the larger [counterculture](#) generation, and he was a very high-profile figure of racial pride for [African Americans](#) during the [civil rights movement](#) and throughout his career. As a Muslim, Ali was initially affiliated with [Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam](#) (NOI). He later disavowed the NOI, adhering to [Sunni Islam](#), and supporting [racial integration](#) like his former mentor [Malcolm X](#).

Ali was a leading heavyweight boxer of the 20th century, and he remains the only three-time [lineal champion](#) of that division. His joint records of beating 21 boxers for the world heavyweight title and winning 14 unified title bouts stood for 35 years. He is the only fighter to have been ranked as the world's best heavyweight by [BoxRec](#) twelve times. He has been ranked among BoxRec's ten best heavyweights seventeen times, the third most in history.^[11] He won 8 fights that were rated by BoxRec as 5-Star, the third most in the history of the heavyweight division. Ali is the only boxer to be named [The Ring magazine Fighter of the Year](#) six times. He has been ranked the greatest heavyweight boxer of all time, and as the greatest athlete of the 20th century by *Sports Illustrated*, the Sports Personality of the Century by the BBC, and the third greatest athlete of the 20th century by ESPN *SportsCentury*. He was involved in several historic boxing matches and feuds, most notably his fights with [Joe Frazier](#), such as the [Fight of the Century](#) and the [Thrilla in Manila](#), and his fight

with [George Foreman](#), known as [The Rumble in the Jungle](#), which has been called "arguably the greatest sporting event of the 20th century" and was watched by a record estimated television audience of 1 billion viewers worldwide, becoming the world's [most-watched live television broadcast](#) at the time.



Outside the ring, Ali attained success as a musician, where he received two Grammy nominations.^[24] He also featured as an actor and writer, releasing two autobiographies. Ali retired from boxing in 1981 and focused on religion, philanthropinism and activism. In 1984, he made public his diagnosis of [Parkinson's syndrome](#), which some reports attribute to boxing-related injuries,^[25] though he and his specialist physicians disputed this.^[26] He remained an active public figure globally, but in his later years made fewer public appearances as his condition worsened, and he was cared for by his family. Ali died on June 3, 2016.

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Dianne Durham

Dianne Durham, First Black National Gymnastics Champion

Durham was a pioneer in American gymnastics

Published February 4, 2021 • Updated 2 hours ago

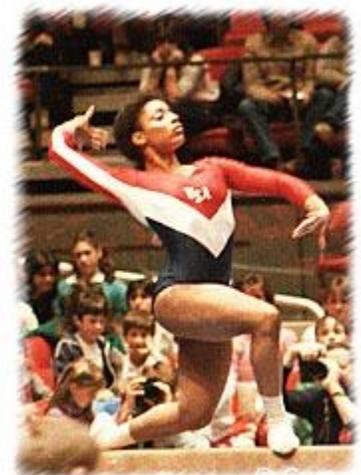


DIANNE DURHAM

2017 Region 5 Hall of Fame

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Dianne Durham, the first Black woman to win a USA Gymnastics national championship, died Thursday in Chicago following a short illness, her husband said. She was 52.



In this June 5, 1983, file photo, Dianne Durham, right, of Gary, Ind., gives autographs after winning the women's title at the McDonald's.



Durham was a pioneer in American gymnastics. Her victory in the all-around at the 1983 national championships as a teenager was the first by a Black woman in the organization's history.

"I think between her and Mary Lou Retton, they felt they introduced more of a power gymnastics," said Durham's husband, Tom Drahozal. "Dianne was a pioneer for Black gymnasts as well ... She paved the way for others."

That group includes Olympic champions Simone Biles and Gabby Douglas as well as Dominique Dawes, a gold medalist on the storied 1996 U.S. Olympic team.

"The door was open by Dianne," Drahozal said.

Durham claimed not to have thought about the importance of her victory.

"People said, you're the first Black — *I'm using Black because African American wasn't a term in my era* — national champion. Do you know that didn't go through my head one time?" Durham told ESPN.com last year. "Not one time. Do you know how many people had to tell me that? I could not understand why that was such a humongous deal."

Durham and Retton were the first star American pupils of Bela and Martha Karolyi, who moved from Romania to the United States in the early 1980s. Durham moved to train with the Karolyis in Texas and appeared to be on the fast track to a spot on the 1984 U.S. Olympic Team. She won the McDonald's International Invitational in Los Angeles in 1983, a meet held at Pauley Pavilion, the site of the Olympic gymnastics competition a year later.

Injuries, however, slowed her momentum. Durham missed the 1983 world championships and was sixth after the first day of the 1984 Olympic trials. An ankle injury on vault — her signature

event — led Karolyi to scratch her from the uneven bars. The confusion in the moment and the ensuing fallout ended with Durham missing an opportunity to be on the Olympic team.

While Retton went on to become an Olympic champion and a gymnastics icon while leading the U.S. to team gold at the 1984 games, Durham stepped away from competition.

“Unfortunately, she didn’t get into the Olympics because of politics,” Drahozal said. “I think she’d come to terms with it. She was doing professional shows (when we met in 1992). But she had told me, ‘It was what it was, I can’t go back and redo it again.’”

Durham later went into judging and did some freelance coaching. Her husband said he hopes USA Gymnastics will honor her by inducting her into the organization’s Hall of Fame.

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Katherine Johnson

Katherine Johnson, Mathematician Broke Barriers at NASA



Katherine Johnson, part of a small group of African-American women mathematicians who did crucial work at NASA, in 1966. Credit...NASA/Donaldson Collection, via Getty Images

They asked Katherine Johnson for the moon, and she gave it to them.

Wielding little more than a pencil, a slide rule and one of the finest mathematical minds in the country, Mrs. Johnson, who died at 101 on Monday at a retirement home in Newport News, Va., calculated the precise trajectories that would let Apollo 11 land on the moon in 1969 and, after Neil Armstrong's history-making

moonwalk, let it return to Earth.

A single error, she well knew, could have dire consequences for craft and crew. Her impeccable calculations had already helped plot the successful flight of Alan B. Shepard Jr., who became the first American in space when his Mercury spacecraft went aloft in 1961.



The next year, she likewise helped make it possible for John Glenn, in the Mercury vessel Friendship 7, to become the first American to orbit the Earth.

Yet throughout Mrs. Johnson's 33 years in NASA's Flight Research Division — the office from which the American space program sprang — and for decades afterward, almost no one knew her name.

Mrs. Johnson was one of several hundred rigorously educated, supremely capable yet largely unheralded women who, well before the modern feminist movement, worked as NASA mathematicians.

But it was not only her sex that kept her long marginalized and long unsung: Katherine Coleman Goble Johnson, a West Virginia native who began her scientific career in the age of Jim Crow, was also African-American.

In old age, Mrs. Johnson became the most celebrated of the small cadre of black women — perhaps three dozen — who at midcentury served as mathematicians for the space agency and its predecessor, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics.

In 2015, **Barack Obama** awarded **Johnson** the **presidential** medal of freedom. In November 2019, she was selected to receive the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor presented by Congress to a civilian. Darden, 77, is now the only living Hidden Figure.



Their story was told in the 2016 Hollywood film “Hidden Figures,” based on Margot Lee Shetterly’s nonfiction book of the same title, published that year. The movie starred Taraji P. Henson as Mrs. Johnson, the film’s central figure. It also starred Octavia Spencer and Janelle Monáe as her real-life colleagues Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson.

Katherine Johnson, the extraordinary NASA mathematician who helped to boost astronauts out of the earth’s atmosphere and into the stars with numerical precision, has died at the age of 101.

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Rebecca Davis Lee Crumpler



Rebecca Lee Crumpler (Feb. 8, 1831—March 9, 1895) is the first Black woman to earn a medical degree and practice medicine as a physician in the United States. She was also the first Black woman to author a medical text, "A Book of Medical Discourses," which was published in 1883. Though she faced both intense racial and gender discrimination, Crumpler attended to the medical needs of thousands of formerly enslaved people in Richmond, Virginia—the former capital of the Confederacy—just after the Civil War, and earned the respect of many in the medical profession.

Early Life and Education

Rebecca Davis was born on February 8, 1831, in Christiana, Delaware, to Matilda Webber and Absolum Davis. However, Davis was actually raised in Pennsylvania by an aunt who provided care for sick people. Her aunt's work in the medical field would have an abiding influence on Davis for the rest of her life, as she later wrote in "A Book of Medical Discourses":

"It may be well to state here that, having been reared by a kind aunt in Pennsylvania, whose usefulness with the sick was continually sought, I early conceived a liking for, and sought every opportunity to relieve the sufferings of others."

In 1852, Davis moved to Charlestown, Massachusetts, married Wyatt Lee, and took his last name, changing her name to Rebecca Davis Lee. That same year, she was also hired as a nurse. In Charlestown and nearby communities, Davis Lee worked for several doctors, whom she greatly impressed. Indeed, the doctors were so taken with her abilities that they recommended her for the New England Female Medical College—one of the few in the United States accepting women at the time, let alone a Black woman. As Davis Lee described it:

"Later in life I devoted my time, when best I could, to nursing as a business, serving under different doctors for a period of eight years (from 1852 to 1860); most of the time at my adopted home in Charlestown, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. From these doctors I

received letters commending me to the faculty of the New England Female Medical College, whence, four years afterward, I received the degree of doctress of medicine."

The school had been "founded by Drs. Israel Tisdale Talbot and Samuel Gregory in 1848 and accepted its first class, of 12 women, in 1850," according to Dr. Howard Markel, in his 2016 article, "Celebrating Rebecca Lee Crumpler, First African-American Woman Physician," published on the PBS Newshour website. Markel noted that there was strong opposition in the medical community to the school, particularly from male doctors:

"From its inception, many male physicians derided the institution, complaining that women lacked the physical strength to practice medicine; others insisted that not only were women incapable of mastering a medical curriculum and that many of the topics taught were inappropriate for their 'sensitive and delicate nature.'"

Even 10 years later in 1960, when Davis Lee enrolled in the New England Female Medical College, there were only 300 female physicians out of nearly 55,000 medical doctors in the United States, Markel noted. Davis Lee "was not always treated fairly by her professors, but she worked hard and completed her courses," according to Sheryl Recinos in her book, "Dr. Rebecca Lee Crumpler: Doctress of Medicine." Recinos further wrote of Davis Lee's experience in medical school:

"(She) knew that she had to work harder than her peers, a lot harder than white men, to become a physician. In those days, white men could take one or two classes at college and call themselves a doctor. But (Davis Lee) knew that she needed a lot more training to be taken seriously."

The curriculum included classes in chemistry, anatomy, physiology, hygiene, medical jurisprudence, therapeutics, and theory, Recinos explained in her book, noting that Davis Lee "encountered racism throughout her studies."

Additionally, Davis Lee's husband, Wyatt, died of tuberculosis in 1863, while she was still in medical school. She found herself a widow and short on funds to continue her education. Fortunately, she won a scholarship from the Wade Scholarship Fund, an organization funded by North American 19th Century anti-enslavement activist Benjamin Wade. Despite all the

difficulties, Davis graduated from medical school after four years, becoming the first Black woman to earn a Doctor of Medicine degree in the United States.

Dr. Crumpler

After graduating in 1864, Davis Lee established a medical practice in Boston for poor women and children. In 1865, Davis Lee married Arthur Crumpler, a formerly enslaved man who had served in the Union Army during the Civil War and who worked as a blacksmith during and after the war. When the Civil War ended in 1865, Davis Lee—now known as Rebecca Lee Crumpler after her marriage in May of that year—relocated to Richmond, Virginia. She argued that it was “a proper field for real missionary work and one that would present ample opportunities to become acquainted with the diseases of women and children. During my stay there nearly every hour was improved in that sphere of labor. The last quarter of the year 1866, I was enabled...to have access each day to a very large number of the indigent, and others of different classes, in a population of over 30,000 colored.”

Soon after her arrival in Richmond, Crumpler began working for the Freedmen’s Bureau as well as other missionary and community groups. Working alongside other Black physicians, Crumpler was able to provide health care to formerly enslaved people. Crumpler experienced racism and sexism. She describes the ordeal she endured by saying, “men doctors snubbed her, druggist balked at filling her prescriptions, and some people wisecracked that the M.D. behind her name stood for nothing more than 'Mule Driver.'”

By 1869, Crumpler had returned to her practice in Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood, where she provided medical care to women and children. In 1880, Crumpler and her husband relocated to Hyde Park, located in the southern part of Boston. In 1883, Crumpler wrote “A Book of Medical Discourses.” The text was a compilation of the notes she had taken during her medical career and gave advice on treating illnesses in infants and young children and women of childbearing age—but it also included a few brief autobiographical notes about Crumpler's life, some of which are quoted in previous sections of this article.

Death and Legacy

Crumpler died on March 9, 1895, in Hyde Park. It is thought that she did not practice medicine during her last 12 years of life in Hyde Park, though records are scarce, particularly on this part of her life.

In 1989, physicians Sandra Maass-Robinson and Patricia Whitley established the Rebecca Lee Society. It was one of the first Black medical societies exclusively for women. The purpose of the organization was to provide support and promote the successes of Black women physicians. Also, Crumpler's home on Joy Street has been included on the Boston Women's Heritage Trail.

In July 2020, Crumpler—who had lain in an unmarked grave in Hyde Park since she died in 1895 and next to her husband's unmarked grave since he died in 1910—finally received a headstone honoring her legacy. During what was described as a "poignant" ceremony 125 years after Crumpler's death, Dr. Joan Reede, Harvard Medical School's dean of diversity and community partnership, proclaimed:

“She navigated a threshold and wall that continues to challenge us. Dr. Crumpler was a dreamer who showed a fortitude and belief in self, a belief that she could and should make a difference in the world.”

But, perhaps Crumpler's gravestone, itself, best describes her legacy:

"(On the front of the headstone:) Rebecca Crumpler 1831-1985: The First Black Woman to Earn a Medical Degree in the U.S. 1864. (On the backside of the headstone:) The Community and the Commonwealth's four medical schools honor Dr. Rebecca Crumpler for her ceaseless courage, pioneering achievements and historical legacy as a physician, author, nurse, missionary and advocated for health equity and social justice."

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Charles Richard Drew



Charles Richard Drew (June 3, 1904 – April 1, 1950) was an [American surgeon](#) and medical researcher. He researched in the field of [blood transfusions](#), developing improved techniques for blood storage, and applied his expert knowledge to developing large-scale [blood banks](#) early in [World War II](#). This allowed medics to save thousands of lives of the [Allied](#) forces. As the most prominent [African American](#) in the field, Drew protested against the practice of [racial segregation](#) in the donation of blood, as it lacked scientific foundation, and resigned his position with the [American Red Cross](#), which maintained the policy until 1950. Out of Drew's work, he was **appointed director of the first [American Red Cross Blood Bank](#) in February 1941.** The blood bank being in

charge of blood for use by the U.S. Army and Navy, he disagreed with the exclusion of the blood of African-Americans from plasma-supply networks. In 1942, Drew resigned from his posts after the armed forces ruled that the blood of African-Americans would be accepted but would have to be stored separately from that of whites.

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Alvin Francis Poussaint



Alvin Francis Poussaint, M. D. is an American [psychiatrist](#) well known for his research on the effects of [racism](#) in the black community.^[1] He is a noted author, public speaker, and television consultant, and Dean of Students at Harvard Medical School. His work in psychiatry is influenced greatly by the civil rights movement in the South, which he joined in 1965. While living in the [South](#), Poussaint learned much about the racial dynamics.^[2] Most of Poussaint's work focuses on the [mental health](#) of [African Americans](#).

Poussaint is Professor of Psychiatry, Emeritus. He served as Faculty Associate Dean for Student Affairs at Harvard Medical School until his retirement in 2019 and was the founding **Director** of the Office of Recruitment & Multicultural Affairs in 1969.

For his outstanding contributions to the medical field, he has been honored with numerous awards and honorary degrees. Poussaint was one of the founding members of Operation PUSH, and today lends support to the NAACP, Urban League, and many community organizations.

Today in Black History we salute the journey of First Black Gospel Choir

The first gospel choir was started in 1931 at Chicago's Ebenezer Baptist Church under choral director Theodore Frye. The immediate popularity of the choir inspired Rev. J. C. Austin to form one at Pilgrim Baptist Church with Thomas Dorsey as its director.



Thomas Dorsey



From Riots to Renaissance: Dorsey's Gospel: Chicago was the birthplace of gospel music and Thomas Andrew Dorsey (1899 - 1993) is widely known its "father." The prolific composer wrote more than 1,000 songs, including the well-known gospel staples "Precious Lord Take My Hand," "There'll Be Peace in the Valley (For Me)," and "Say A Little Prayer for Me." Dorsey's musical training started in Atlanta where his father was a Baptist preacher and his mother played the organ. At an early age, Dorsey decided he wanted to be a professional musician and practiced diligently. His family encouraged a life in religious music, but Dorsey had other ideas. At the age of 17, he joined the large number of other African Americans leaving the South during the Great Migration and ultimately landed in Chicago. Dorsey soon found work and gained a reputation as a strong blues piano player. He married, and while on the road with the famed blues singer Ma Rainey, Dorsey received a telegraph that his wife had died in childbirth. His baby died soon after. Lost in mourning and grief, Dorsey turned to his piano for comfort and the words for "Precious Lord" "just dropped into the music." Dorsey started writing religious lyrics for his songs, but they were carried by a blend of religious music and the sound of secular blues. He called his new music "gospel music," because he said it was music of good news. But using the sound of gin joints and dance halls in church music was offensive to some and Dorsey's early promotional efforts proved difficult. Many ministers rejected gospel as being sinful or "devil's" music. For his efforts, Dorsey said he was "thrown out of some of the best churches in America." Eventually, the gospel music genre which Dorsey started and nurtured in Chicago became an integral part of worship in African American churches. Dorsey's influence continues to be heard in the recordings of today's gospel singers.

Today in Black History we salute the journey of the Tuskegee Airmen



The Tuskegee Airmen are best known for proving during World War II that Black men could be elite fighter pilots. Less widely known is the instrumental role these pilots, navigators and bombardiers played during the war in fighting segregation through nonviolent direct action. Their tactics would become a cornerstone of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s.

The Tuskegee Airmen's most influential moment of collective civil disobedience came in the spring of 1945, in what became known as the Freeman Field Mutiny. After enduring years of inadequate training facilities, discriminatory policies and hostile commanders in the Army Air Force, 101 officers of the all-Black 477th Bombardment Group—who had initially trained at the Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama—were arrested at Indiana's Freeman Field base when they refused to sign a base regulation requiring separate officers' clubs for Black and white soldiers. The order came after 61 Black officers were arrested trying to enter the white officers' club.

They weren't alone. After the War Department ordered military bases to integrate all recreational facilities in 1944, Black officers across the country were eager to test the new policy. Most cases—including an earlier incident with the 447th—involved Black servicemen “entering post exchanges and asking to be served, or entering the theater and seating themselves in the white section,” said Alan M. Osur, a former history professor at the Air Force Academy and the author of *Blacks in the Army Air Forces During World War II: The Problems of Race Relations*. Nothing had yet occurred on the scale of the Freeman Field Mutiny.

Issued in 2021 America the Beautiful



Quarter Coins Tuskegee Airmen Alabama

<https://www.usmint.gov/coins/coin-medal-programs/america-the-beautiful-quarters/tuskegee-airmen-national-historic-site>

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Ruby Hurley



Ruby Hurley, a civil rights activist, helped organize Marian Anderson's 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial. She served the NAACP as national youth secretary, opening the first permanent office of the NAACP in the South, and was later named Regional Secretary, then Director.

Hurley investigated and compiled reports on the assassination of Medgar Evers, the murder of Emmett Till, and other lynchings across the South. She went undercover dressed as a cotton picker in order to travel to different plantations and interview eyewitnesses about Till's death.

In 1956, she left Birmingham for Atlanta after Alabama barred the NAACP from operating. In 2009, she appeared on a postage stamp alongside Ella Baker.

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Barrington Irving



Barrington Irving is a Jamaican-born American pilot who previously held the record for the youngest person to pilot a plane around the world solo, a feat he accomplished in 2007. He is also the first black person and first Jamaican to accomplish this feat.



Today in Black History we salute the journey of historian Ibram X. Kendi

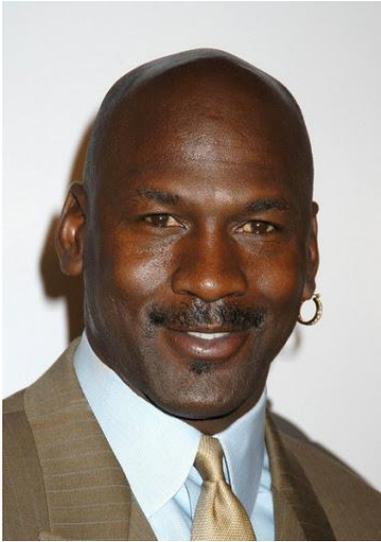


A writer and a teacher who has written many books (award winning) including: [“Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racists Ideas in America”](#), [“How To Be An Antiracists”](#), “STAMPED: Racism, Antiracism, and You” He is the founder of the Antiracists Research and Policy Center at American University (now it’s at Boston University) after the racial reckoning of 2020, historian Ibram X. Kendi penned the article in Time Magazine The Renaissance is Black , “We are living in the time of a new renaissance—what we are calling the Black Renaissance—the third great cultural revival of Black Americans, after the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, after the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

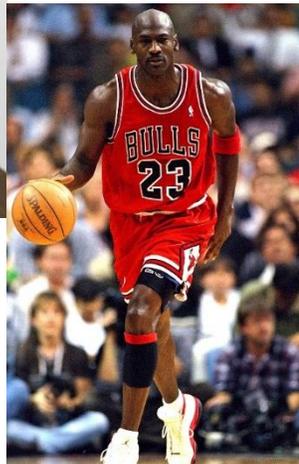
Black creators today were nurtured by these past cultural revivals—and all those brilliant creators who sustained Black Arts during the 1980s and 1990s. But if the Harlem Renaissance stirred Black people to see themselves, if the Black Arts Movement stirred Black people to love themselves, then the Black Renaissance is stirring Black people to be themselves. Totally. Unapologetically. Freely”. Ibram X. Kendi (From Time’s Magazine new cover: Amanda Gorman in conversation with Michelle Obama, Ibram X. Kendi on the Black Renaissance

<https://ti.me/3tsV3Te>)

Today in Black History we salute the journey of Michael Jordan



Michael Jeffrey Jordan, also known by his initials MJ, is an American businessman and former professional basketball player. He is the principal owner and chairman of the Charlotte Hornets of the National Basketball Association and of 23XI Racing in the NASCAR Cup Series.



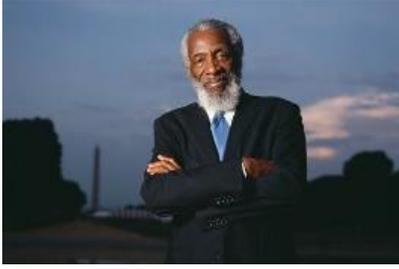
Today in Black History we salute the journey of Willy T. Ribbs



William Theodore Ribbs Jr. is a retired American race car driver, racing owner, and sport shooter known for being the first African-American man to have tested a Formula One car and to compete in the Indianapolis 500.



Today in Black History we salute the Trailblazers of Stand-Up Comedy



Dick Gregory, Civil Rights Activist and Trailblazer of Stand-Up Comedy

Moms Mabley, Icon and one the most successful entertainers of the Black vaudeville stage, also known as the Chitlin Circuit, was Jackie "*Moms*" Mabley.



Redd Foxx & Wanda Sykes



Richard Pryor & Eddie Murphy



Chris Rock & Dave Chappelle



Today in Black History we salute Carl Brashear, Dr. Freeman Hrabowski & Langston Hughes



Carl Brashear, the first African American U.S. Navy Diver who was also the first amputee U.S. Navy diver. Brashear joined the Navy in 1948 and became a Navy diver the following year. In March of 1966, a salvage operation accident resulted in Brashear's left leg being amputated. Two years later, he was re-certified as a diver and in 1970 he became the U.S. Navy's first African-American master Diver. He passed away June 2006.



Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski, President of UMBC (University of Maryland, Baltimore County) since 1992, is a consultant on science and math education to national agencies, universities, and school systems. He was named by President Obama to chair the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for African Americans. He also chaired the National Academies' committee that produced the report, *Expanding Underrepresented Minority Participation: America's Science and Technology Talent at the Crossroads* (2011). His 2013 TED talk highlights the "Four Pillars of College Success in Science." Named one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World by *TIME* (2012) and one of America's Best Leaders by *U.S. News & World Report* (2008), he also received TIAA-CREF's *Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership Excellence* (2011), the Carnegie Corporation's *Academic Leadership Award* (2011), and the *Heinz Award* (2012) for contributions to improving the "Human Condition." More recently, he received the American Council on Education's *Lifetime Achievement Award* (2018), the University of California, Berkeley's *Clark Kerr Award* (2019), and the *UCSF Medal* from the University of California San Francisco (2020). UMBC has been recognized as a model for inclusive excellence by such publications as *U.S. News*, which for more than 10 years has recognized UMBC as a national leader in academic innovation and undergraduate teaching. Dr. Hrabowski's most recent book, *The Empowered University*, written with two UMBC colleagues, examines how university communities support academic success by cultivating an empowering institutional culture.



Langston Hughes was an esteemed novelist and poet who made his mark during the Harlem Renaissance, a period African American cultural and artistic growth that took place in Harlem, New York. Langston Hughes' first book of poetry, *The Weary Blues*, and subsequent works, helped outline the economic situation of lower-class African Americans. Hughes was a major influence on his contemporaries, which included Zora Neale Hurston and Wallace Thurman, among others.

Today in Black History we salute Kizzy Corbett, Gordon Parks, Michael Steele & Kevin Chenault



Dr. Kizzmekia "Kizzy" Corbett an American viral [immunologist](#) at the Vaccine Research Center (VRC) at the [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases](#), [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIAID NIH) based in [Bethesda, Maryland](#). Appointed to the VRC in 2014, she is currently the scientific lead of the VRC's Coronavirus Team, with research efforts aimed at propelling novel coronavirus vaccines, including a [COVID-19 vaccine](#). In December 2020, the Institute's Director [Anthony Fauci](#), said: "Kizzy is an African American scientist who is right at the forefront of the development of the vaccine. Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett found herself on the frontlines at a time when her community and nation needed her most. [The young doctor](#) played a pivotal role in developing a vaccine to stop a virus that is disproportionately killing Black Americans. Representation matters especially for a community where centuries of racism has led to medical mistrust and in a field where Black scientists are still underrepresented.



Gordon Parks was an American photographer, musician, writer and film director, who became prominent in U.S. documentary photojournalism in the 1940s through 1970s particularly in issues of civil rights, poverty and African-Americans and in glamour photography. Parks was the first African American to produce and direct major motion pictures developing films relating the experience of slaves and struggling black Americans, and creating the Blaxploitation genre. He is best remembered for his iconic photos of poor Americans during the 1940s for his photographic essays of Life magazine, and as the director of the 1971 film Shaft.



Michael Stephen Steele is an American conservative political commentator, attorney, and former [Republican Party](#) politician. Steele served as the seventh [lieutenant governor of Maryland](#) from 2003 to 2007; he was the first African-American elected to statewide office in [Maryland](#). As lieutenant governor, Steele chaired the [Minority Business Enterprise](#) task force, actively promoting an expansion of [affirmative action](#) in the corporate world. Steele also served as chairperson of the [Republican National Committee](#) (RNC) from January 2009 until January 2011; he was the first African-American to serve in that capacity. In the 1990s, Steele worked as a partner at the international law firm of [LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae](#) and co-founded the [Republican Leadership Council](#), a "fiscally conservative and socially inclusive" [political action committee](#).^[4] Steele also made numerous appearances as a political pundit on [Fox News](#) and other media outlets prior to running for public office. He made an unsuccessful run in the [2006 U.S. Senate election in Maryland](#), losing to Democrat [Ben Cardin](#). From 2007 to 2009, Steele was chairman of [GOPAC](#), a [527 organization](#) that trains and supports Republican candidates in state and local elections. After serving one term as RNC Chairperson from 2009 to 2011, he lost his bid for a second term and was succeeded by [Reince Priebus](#). Since 2011, Steele has contributed as a regular columnist for online magazine [The Roof](#) and as a political analyst for [MSNBC](#). In 2018, he became a Senior Fellow at [Brown University's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs](#).



Kevin Chenault is the first black CEO to helm American Express (number 86 on the Fortune 500). He is also one of four black CEOs on the list. That's already down from January, when Xerox CEO **Ursula Burns** stepped down from her post, leaving no black women among the country's largest companies by revenue.