



# The Motivator

HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

*A Publication to Support the COACH Program*

*Special Edition February 2005*

## **FOCUS OF THE MONTH:** **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

In 1926, the first Black History Month was recognized. This special edition of The Motivator honors past and present African-American men and women whose accomplishments are great and historical. Highlighted in this issue are Biographies of past and present social rights activists, leaders, scientists, actors/actresses, athletes and writers. See also in this issue the Civil Rights Time Line and Websites for obtaining more information about many past and present African American leaders around the world.

## **PAST**

### **Social Rights Activist:**

#### **Mary McLeod Bethune (1975-1955)**

Born in Mayesville, South Carolina, Mary McLeod Bethune was a child of former slaves and began her life picking cotton. She was awarded a scholarship in 1888 to Scotia Seminary that started her distinguished career as an educator and activist. She served in the Roosevelt administration as advisor to the President on Minority Affairs and was the Director of the Division of Negro Affairs within the National Youth Administration from 1936-1944.

### **Leader:**

#### **William Edward Bughardt (W.E.B.) DuBois (1868-1963)**

Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, W.E.B. DuBois graduated from high school as valedictorian in 1884 and went on to receive his bachelor's degree from Fisk University in Nashville Tennessee. In 1888 he entered Harvard and graduated cum laude in 1890 and

was one of six commencement speakers. He was among the founder of the NAACP and wrote 21 books, edited 15 and published over 100 essays and articles.

### **Scientist:**

#### **Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806)**

Born near Baltimore, Maryland. While attending elementary school Banneker showed a great talent for mathematics and science. Published an almanac (1792-1802) and was hired by Thomas Jefferson to assist the surveyors laying out the new capital and the District of Columbia.

### **Actress:**

#### **Josephine Baker: 1906-1975**

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Baker was a great lover of life and humanity. She was sometimes referred to as the glamorous "Josephine." When she was 13, she joined a group of street performers and her first appearance was at the Booker T. Washington Theater. In 1925, she performed in *La Revue Negre*, which opened in Paris, where she would live for many years. By the fall of 1926, "Josephine" dolls and other merchandise were made and Baker was adored and famous throughout Europe. In 1942, she performed for French, British and American soldiers and became a sub-lieutenant in the Women's Auxiliary of the French Air Force.

### **Athlete:**

#### **Hank Aaron (Born in 1934 )**

Born in Mobile, Alabama, Aaron was brought up during the Great Depression and grew up without plumbing and electricity. Aaron made a name for himself in high school and played for local amateur and semi-pro leagues. In 1952 Aaron joined the Milwaukee Braves and was sent to the minor leagues. He was voted League

Most Valuable Player in 1953 and joined the Braves in 1954. In 1970, Aaron became the first player to combine 3000 career hits and 500 home runs. He retired in 1976 with a record of 755 home runs and 2,297 runs batted in. He soon became the Director of Player Development for the Braves and later became Senior Vice President.



### **Literature:**

#### **Zore Neale Hurston (1903-1960)**

Born January 7, 1903, Zora Neale Hurston was a talented, energetic young woman with a powerful desire to learn. At the age of 16, she left home to perform with a theatrical company and attended Howard University from 1921-1925. She went to New York City and became a central figure in the Harlem Renaissance. Her first novel, *Jonah's Gourd Vine* was published in 1935. She also published *Their Eyes Were Watching God* in 1937. Hurston worked for Warner Brothers movie studio and was on the staff of the Library of Congress. In 1960 she had published more books than any other black woman in America.

## **PRESENT**

### **Social Rights Activist:**

#### **Julian Bond (Born 1940)**

Born in Nashville, Tennessee, Julian Bond led a relatively sheltered life from discrimination throughout his childhood. In 1960, as a student at Morehouse College, Bond participated in a sit-in at an Atlanta cafeteria and was arrested. In 1960, he helped to found the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Bond was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives (1965). He was denied his seat because of his objections to the US involvement in the Vietnam War, but in 1966, the Supreme Court ruled that he must be seated. He served from 1966-1976 and then served in the Georgia Senate from 1975 to 1987. He helped found the Southern Poverty Law Center in 1971 and

hosted a television program, *America's Black Forum*.

### **Leader:**

#### **Colin Powell (Born 1937)**

Born in Harlem, New York City, Colin Powell attended the City College of New York and joined the ROTC. Powell graduated in 1958 and served in West Germany in 1962 and then in South Vietnam where he was wounded in action. He received his Master's degree in Business Administration at George Washington University in 1971 while rehabilitating and became the Secretary of Defense in 1983 during the Ronald Reagan administration. In 1987, Powell became the National Security Advisor under the same administration and was nominated by President Bush in 1989 to become Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the first black officer to hold this position. Powell was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his part in the Persian Gulf War and in 2000, President George W. Bush nominated Powell to become the 65<sup>th</sup> Secretary of State, a position from which he retires in 2005.

### **Scientist:**

#### **Mae Jemison (Born 1956)**



Born in Decatur, Alabama, Mae Jemison later moved to Chicago, Illinois and spent considerable time in her school library reading about science, especially astronomy. In high school she decided to pursue a career in biomedical engineering and after graduation, she entered Stanford University on a National Achievement Scholarship. In 1977 Jemison received a B.S. in chemical engineering and a B.A. in African and African-American Studies. She entered Cornell University Medical College and received her MD in 1981. Jemison was chosen in 1987 to become the first African American woman ever admitted into the NASA astronaut training program. She flew into space on the Endeavour mission STS47. In 1988, she was awarded the Essence Science and Technology Award and in 1992 an alternative

public school in Detroit Michigan, the Mae C. Jemison Academy was named after her.

**Actor:**

**Morgan Freeman (Born 1937)**

Born in Memphis, Tennessee, Morgan Freeman was raised in Chicago and Mississippi and lived with his grandparents while his parents worked in Chicago. His favorite thing to do as a little boy was to go to the movies, and he enjoyed films with airplanes. Freeman joined the air force and thought about becoming a fighter pilot but stuck with acting and moved to LA to pursue his dream. He attended Los Angeles College and made his acting debut in 1967 in the hit Broadway show *Hello, Dolly*. Later he moved to New York City and played characters in movies such as *Street Smart*, *Glory*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Robin Hood*, *The Shawshank Redemption*, *Seven*, *Kiss the Girls*, *The Sum of All Fears* and many more.



**Athlete:**

**Tiger Woods (Born 1975)**

Born in Orlando, Florida, Tiger Woods began playing golf at a very early age. When he was eight, he won the first of six Optimist International Junior World Titles. Woods turned pro in the summer of 1996. At the age of 21, Woods became the youngest player ever to win the Masters and the first person of African or Asian descent to win a major golf championship. His first year on the tour, Woods became the Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year and ESPN Male Athlete of the Year. He was the youngest player ever to hold the No. 1 ranking in professional golf. At the age of 24, he was the youngest player ever to win all four major titles: the PGA Championship, the Masters, the U.S. Open and the British Open.

**Literature:**

**Maya Angelou (Born 1928)**

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Maya Angelou was a victim of sexual abuse, which led her to stop

speaking when she was seven years old. Five years later, she began to study writing, literature and music. She began speaking again and won a scholarship in dance and drama to the California Labor School. In the 1950s, Angelou worked as a dancer in a touring production of George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. She started attending meetings of the Harlem Writers Guild in 1957 and began developing an interest in politics and civil rights. Later, Angelou moved to Europe and worked as an editor at an English-language publication, the Arab Observer. She published her first book, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, in 1970. She was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for her first volume of verse, entitled *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Diiie*. In 1997, Angelou had three books on the New York Times bestseller lists for ten consecutive weeks with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, *The Heart of a Woman* and *Even the Stars Look Lonesome*.

**CIVIL RIGHTS TIMELINE**



**1865**

December 6, 1865: Ratification of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution officially abolished slavery in the United States.

**1870**

February 3, 1870: The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified by Congress. It declared the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by any state on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

**1920**

August 18, 1920: The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was enacted declaring the right of citizens to vote shall not be denied because of ones gender.

**1954**

May 17, 1954: The Supreme Court rules on the case Brown vs. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas, unanimously agreeing that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional.

### 1954

December 1, 1954: Rosa Park, a member of the NAACP, refuses to give up her seat at the front of the “colored section” of a bus to a white passenger and was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama.

### 1963

August 28, 1963: Over 200,000 people join the March on Washington in Washington, D.C. and listen to Martin Luther King, Jr. deliver his “I Have a Dream” speech.

### 1964

July 2, 1964: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 made racial discrimination in public places such as theaters, restaurants and hotels illegal and required employers to provide equal employment opportunities. The legislation stated that uniform standards must prevail for establishing the right to vote everywhere, specifically in the South.

### 1965

August 6, 1965: The Voting Rights Act of 1965 allowed the federal government to oversee voter registration and elections in counties that had used tests to determine voter eligibility. The law also banned discriminatory literacy tests.

5. This high school in Dayton, Ohio was named after Paul Laurence Dunbar.
6. The man who discovered the modern processes for preserving blood transfusions.

A	C	S	U	P	E	R	V	I	S	E	T
R	H	A	L	R	B	O	M	H	B	J	O
M	A	B	C	E	P	S	A	F	D	T	N
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T	L	E	V	E	L	E	K	E	M	H	H
R	E	L	D	X	R	I	E	L	O	N	O
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U	W	Q	R	E	S	I	G	N	E	D	O
A	A	V	R	T	E	G	L	D	I	T	N

#### Learn More With Online Resources:

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Provides historical information, quizzes and publications
- [www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld)  
Guide to African American history and culture
- [www.biography.com/blackhistory](http://www.biography.com/blackhistory)  
For interesting facts and biographies



### WHO AM I? SEEK AND FIND PUZZLE

Use the following clues to find names in the puzzle:

1. This International Boxing Hall of Fame member was named after Ray Charles, because his mother wanted him to be a singer.
2. The last name to the musician whose nickname was “Stachmo” and “Pops.”
3. The last name of the woman that guided hundreds into the “Underground Railroad.”
4. The first name of the woman who wrote *The Bluest Eye*.

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