

## 411 Connection 1: Black History News

February 2011

### **Dr. Ben Carson**

Neurosurgeon, Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom Award in 2008. Benjamin Solomon Carson was born in Detroit, Michigan, on September 18, 1951. In 2001, CNN and *Time* magazine named Ben Carson as one of the nation's 20 foremost physicians and scientists. In that same year, the Library of Congress selected him as one of 89 "Living Legends. In 2009, actor Cuba Gooding, Jr. portrayed Carson in the TNN television production *Gifted Hands*. In 1987, Carson attracted international attention by performing a surgery to separate two 7-month-old craniopagus twins from Germany.

### **Virginia Hamilton**

Author. Virginia Esther Hamilton was born on March 12, 1934. In her lifetime, Virginia wrote and published 41 books in multiple genres that spanned picture books and folktales, mysteries and science fiction, realistic novels and biography. She won every major award in youth literature.

### **Carter G. Woodson**

Historian, educator, author, and publisher. He was born in 1875 in New Canton, Virginia. He received a doctorate from Harvard University in 1912—becoming one of the first African Americans to earn a Ph.D. at the prestigious institution. After finishing his education, he dedicated himself to the field of African American history, working to make sure that this subject was taught in schools and was studied by scholars. For his efforts, Woodson is often known as the "Father of Black History."

### **Mae C. Jemison**

Astronaut, physician. She was born October 17, 1956, in Decatur, Alabama, the youngest child of Charlie Jemison, a roofer and carpenter, and Dorothy (Green) Jemison, an elementary school teacher. When Jemison was chosen on June 4, 1987, she became the first African American woman ever admitted into the astronaut training program. On September 12, 1992, Jemison finally flew into space with six other astronauts aboard the *Endeavour* on mission STS47.

### **Carol Moseley Braun**

Politician, Senator, lawyer, educator. She was born Carol Elizabeth Moseley on August 16, 1947, in Chicago, Illinois. A leading African American political figure, Moseley Braun's career has been marked by great successes and missteps. She graduated from University of Illinois in 1969 with a degree in political science and then went on to the university's law school. Moseley Braun earned her law degree in 1972.

## **Debi Thomas**

American figure skater, Olympic Gold Medalist. She was born March 25, 1967. She is the 1986 World champion and 1988 Olympic bronze medalist, having taken part in the Battle of the Carmens at those games.

## **Willie O'ree**

Hockey Player. He was born October 15, 1935, Fredericton, New Brunswick. He is the first black player in the National Hockey League. O'Ree played as a winger for the Boston Bruins. O'Ree is referred to as the "Jackie Robinson of ice hockey" due to breaking the color barrier in the sport.

## **Ruby Dee**

Actor, Playwright, Activist. She was born Ruby Ann Wallace on October 27, 1923 in Cleveland, Ohio. The daughter of a train porter and a schoolteacher, Ruby Dee grew up in Harlem and attended Hunter College before joining the American Negro Theatre in 1941. She is also well known for her numerous collaborations with her husband, actor Ossie Davis, whom she married in 1948. In 2008, Dee received her first Oscar nomination for her role as Mama Lucas, the mother of drug lord Frank Lucas, in the hit film *American Gangster*.

## **Kevin Powell**

Activist, Leader. He was born April 24, 1966. Powell has focused his platform on changing the way the world feels about the poor, the suffering, and the uneducated. He is a voice for the people without one. With a tenacious spirit and dedication to helping others, he moved up the ranks to become an international activist who recently ran for Congressional Office in New York's 10th District for the third time. Through his life's work of poetry, essays, and books, he highlights his dedication towards social, economic, and political, change in America.

## **Shirley Clarke Franklin**

She became the first African American female mayor of a major Southern city on

November 4, 2001. A member of the Democratic Party, Atlanta's 58<sup>th</sup> mayor worked as the Commissioner of Cultural Affairs under mayor Maynard Jackson, and as Chief Administrative Officer and City Manager under Andrew Young. Within her first seven years, Franklin has implemented one of the country's strongest ethics reformations. Shirley Franklin is a member of the Mayors Against Illegal Guns Commission, and in October 2005, was named one of the "Best Leaders of 2005" by *U.S. News and World Report*.