**Notable African Americans**

**Scientists**

* **Benjamin Banneker** (1731–1806). Mathematician and astronomer. He constructed the first striking clock to be made in America.
* **George Washington Carver** (1864–1943). Agricultural chemist. He advocated innovative agricultural methods and developed applications for agricultural products.
* **Charles Drew** (1904–1950). Physician, surgeon, medical researcher.
* **Percy Julian** (1899–1975). Chemist, known for being a pioneer in the synthesis of medicinal drugs such as cortisone and the birth control pill.

**Inventors**

* **Thomas Jennings** (1791–1856). The first known African American to hold a patent.
* **Louis Latimer** (1828-1948). Engineer and member of Thomas Edison’s team.
* **Granville T. Woods** (1856–1910). Known for contributions to the street car and the telephone.

**Writers/Poets/Intellectuals**

* **Maya Angelou** (1928– 2014). American author and poet who has been called “America’s most visible female autobiographer.”
* **James Baldwin** (1924–1987). Novelist, playwright, poet, and essayist. .
* **Frederick Douglass** (1818–1895). Civil rights activist and writer.
* **W.E.B. Du Bois** (1868–1963). Historian, civil rights activist, and writer.
* **Paul Laurence Dunbar** (1872–1906). Poet.
* **Ralph Ellison** (1914 –1994). Novelist, critic, and scholar.
* **Langton Hughes** (1902–1967). Poet and social activist, known for his work during the Harlem Renaissance.
* **Zora Neale Hurston** (1891–1960). Folklorist, anthropologist, and author during the Harlem Renaissance.
* **Toni Morrison** (1931– ). Nobel Prize and Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist.
* **Alice Walker** (1944– ). Author and poet who wrote The Color Purple and won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.
* **Booker T. Washington**. (1856–1915). Writer and political leader.

**Politicians/Activists**

* **Edward William Brooke III** (1919–1915 ). U.S. senator.
* **Julian Bond** (1940– ). Founder of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, first president of Southern Poverty Law Center, and former chairman of NAACP.
* **Ralph Bunche** (1903–1971). Diplomat and winner of the 1950 Nobel Peace Prize.
* **Shirley Chisholm** (1924–2005). First African American woman elected to Congress.
* **Marian Wright Edelman** (1939– ). Activist for the rights of children.
* **Marcus Garvey** (1887–1940). Black nationalist; encouraged African Americans to migrate back to Africa.
* **Jesse Jackson Sr**. (1941– ). Civil rights activist and Baptist minister.
* **James Weldon Johnson** (1871–1938). Author, known for his leadership within NAACP.
* **Barbara Jordan** (1936–1996). Congresswoman, educator and constitutionalist.
* **Alan Keyes (1950– ).** Political activist, served as President Reagan’s assistant secretary of state for international organization affairs.
* **Martin Luther King Jr**. (1929–1968). Prominent leader of the civil rights movement.
* **Barack Obama** (1961– ). Current U.S. president.
* **Rosa Parks** (1913–2005). Civil rights activist, known for refusing to give up her seat on a bus in 1955 and sparking the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
* **Colin Powell** (1937– ). Statesman and retired four-star general of the U.S. Army. He also served as secretary of state under President George W. Bush.
* **Hiram Rhodes Revels** (1827–1901). First African American to serve in the U.S. Senate.
* **Condoleezza Rice** (1954– ). Foreign policy expert who served as national security adviser and then secretary of state under President George W. Bush.
* **Carl Burton Stokes** (1927–1996). Elected mayor of Cleveland in 1967, he was the first African American mayor of a major U.S. city.
* **Sojourner Truth** (1797–1883). Abolitionist and women’s rights activist.
* **Harriet Tubman** (1820–1913). Abolitionist, humanitarian, and Union spy during the Civil War.
* **Malcolm X** (1925–1965). Muslim religious leader and human rights activist.

**Notable Members of the Judicial and Legal Fields**

* **Charles Hamilton Houston** (1895–1950). Dean of Howard University Law School, NAACP lawyer, and mentor to Thurgood Marshall.
* **Thurgood Marshall** (1908–1993). Civil rights lawyer and the first African-American justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.
* **Constance Baker Motley** (1921–2005). Civil rights activist, lawyer, judge, and state senator.
* **Judith Ann Wilson Rogers** (1939– ) First African American female on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit.
* **Clarence Thomas** (1948– ). Associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

**Athletes**

* **Muhammad Ali** (1942– ). Heavyweight champion boxer, philanthropist, and social activist.
* **Arthur Ashe (1943-1993). Tennis champion**
* **Michael Jordan** (1963– ). Professional basketball player.
* **Jesse Owens** (1913–1980). Track and field star.
* **Jackie Robinson** (1919–1972). Civil rights leader and the first African-American Major League Baseball player.
* **Wilma Rudolph** (1940-1994). Three-time Olympic Gold medalist.

**Entertainers**

* **Louis Armstrong** (1901–1971). Jazz trumpeter and singer from New Orleans.
* **Ella Fitzgerald** (1917–1996). Known as the “First Lady of Song.”
* **Billie Holiday** (1915–1959). Jazz singer and songwriter.
* **BB King** (1925– ). Blues guitarist and singer-songwriter.
* **Sidney Poitier** (1927– ). Actor, film director, author, and diplomat.
* **Oprah Winfrey** (1954– ). Entertainer and business leader.