

53rd IAA HISTORY OF ASTRONAUTICS SYMPOSIUM (E4)  
History of US Contribution to Astronautics Post WWII (2)

Author: Ms. Viva Miller

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), United States, vivamiller@gmail.com

BEYOND HIDDEN FIGURES: AN EXPLORATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN SPACE  
AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SPACE ENDEAVOR

**Abstract**

The movie Hidden Figures has attracted national attention. Based upon the non-fictional book of the same name, the book and movie told the story of African-American women mathematicians working at NASA who were instrumental to the success of the United States space program. The story of African American women, and their contributions to the space endeavor does not end there. This paper will specifically explore the contributions and technical achievements of African American women in all arenas of the space program. From amazing mathematicians like Katherine Johnson who contributed to the success of the first and subsequent U.S. manned spaceflights, to the first African American woman to go into space, Mae Jemison, this paper will delve into their lives and the challenges and hardships they had to overcome as being a double minority. This paper will also examine the current state of African American women's contributions to the space program and they will become a part of history.