

**NOTE:** The information below was gathered to serve as a resource for you and your students. It can be printed out for older students to read and refer to. For younger students, I suggest reading, simplifying and discussing key facts that they can understand and in turn use in their writing.

### **KATHERINE JOHNSON**

Source of information: <https://www.nasa.gov/content/katherine-johnson-biography>

**DATE OF BIRTH** August 26, 1918

**HOMETOWN:** White Sulphur Springs, WV

**EDUCATION:** B.S., Mathematics and French, West Virginia State College, 1937

**EMPLOYMENT:** She was hired by NACA in 1953 and retired from NASA in 1986.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** Katherine completed calculations of orbital mechanics as a NASA employee that were critical to the success of the first and subsequent U.S. manned spaceflights. During her career, she earned a reputation for mastering complex manual calculations and helped the space agency pioneer the use of computers to perform the tasks.

**AWARDS:** President Barack Obama awarded Johnson the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The movie Hidden Figures was made to show her story.

### **ZENA HOWARD**

Source of information: <https://perkinswill.com/people/zena-howard>

Zena is an award-winning architect, strategist, mentor and team builder, she is known for her success leading visionary, complex, and culturally-significant projects including the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC, several libraries for Durham County in Durham, NC and the New Brooklyn Village development initiative in Charlotte, NC. Zena is an advocate for diversity within the architecture profession. She is a founding member of Perkins+Will's Diversity + Inclusion Council, an associate professor of architecture at North Carolina State University College of Design, and is a member of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. public service sorority.

### **MYRON and TIERA FLETCHER**

Source of information: <https://medium.com/thrive-global/this-african-american-couple-is-working-on-the-first-rocket-ship-to-go-to-mars-3dbc53d0c31>

Myron and Tiera Fletcher are working on the biggest challenge of their engineering careers—designing the first rocket-ship to go to Mars.

Tiera holds a degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from MIT.

Additionally, Myron holds a double degree in Aerospace Engineering and Physics from Tuskegee University as well as a Masters in Engineering Management from Duke University. The Fletchers have already worked at Boeing and NASA.

The Fletchers are passionate about impacting the next generation of STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics) enthusiasts!

Currently, the Fletchers are working on their biggest challenge yet as some of the engineers behind the Space Launch System (SLS)-the first rocket ship that will go to Mars.

### **SHAQUEM GRIFFIN**

Source of information: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaquem\\_Griffin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaquem_Griffin)

**DATE of BIRTH:** July 20, 1995, less than 2 minutes after his twin brother Shaquill

**LEFT HAND:** Shaquem's left hand didn't grown properly. He had to have it amputated at the age of 4. :

**SPORTS:** He played track, baseball and football alongside his brother.

**COLLEGE:** He played football at University of Central Florida with his brother.

**CAREER:** In April 2018, Shaquem was picked to play professional football for the Seattle Seahawks. He was reunited with his brother. He is the first one handed player to be drafted into the NFL