



# Black Legacy Our Past, Present and Future.



## The First Black Brigadier General

### PAST

**General Benjamin O. Davis, Sr.**  
Born: July 1, 1877  
Contribution: Military



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Benjamin O. Davis, Sr. entered the military service on July 13, 1898. He served in three wars and in dozens of positions and capacities, including Professor of Military Science and Military Sciences at Tuskegee Institute. In October of 1940 he became the first Black Brigadier General of the U.S. Army and the United States. He retired on July 14, 1948, after a distinguished military career of over 50 years. General Davis' military decorations included the Bronze Star Medal, the Distinguished Service Medal, Croix de guerre from France and the Grade of Commander of the Order of the Star of Africa from Liberia.



## The Air Force's 1st Black General

### PAST

**Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.**  
Born: December 18, 1912  
Contribution: Military



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Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., son of this country's first Black General, shared more than just a name with his father. Born in 1912, he entered the West Point Military Academy in 1932. He endured much discrimination and various injustices, the least of which not being a "code of silence", where none of his co-cadets and many of his instructors would speak directly to him. However, he persevered and graduated 35th in his class in 1936. The 99th Pursuit Squadron, the first all Black flying unit was created in 1941. Davis, Jr. earned his wings in 1943 thus becoming the first Black Military Pilot and assumed command of the 99th, which was based at Tuskegee Air Field. In 1943, at the rank of Lt. Colonel, he met with a Pentagon review board and personally stopped a recommendation to dissolve the 99th and prohibit all future Black squadrons from combat duty, thereby securing the role of Blacks in the Army Air Corps. His inspiring commands were highly instrumental in proving that combat performance could not be judged on race. He was promoted to Brigadier General in 1954, becoming the Air Force's first Black General.



## She Flew Amongst The Stars!

### PRESENT

**Mae Jemison**  
Born: October 17, 1956  
Contribution: Military



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Mae Jemison earned a BS degree in Chemical Engineering from Stanford University, a BA in African American Studies and her MD from Cornell University. In 1987, while practicing as a physician in LA, California, Jemison applied for admission and was accepted to the NASA astronaut program. In 1988, upon Jemison's completion of the astronaut training program, she became the first black female astronaut. On September 12, 1992, Jemison became the first black woman to go into space. She served as a Science Mission Specialist on the Space Lab J mission. She's also the founder the Jemison Group, Inc., a Houston, Texas based research group and serves as a technical consultant.

**What Will You Contribute To The Legacy?**