



African American Entrepreneurs

Jim Haskins

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America, always revered as the land of opportunity, is rich in stories about ambitious, determined individuals who worked hard and built businesses of their own. Yet, few people know about the many African American entrepreneurs who helped shape the American dream. This collection brings their stories to life.

In every century, succeeding in business has required courage, ideas, the willingness to take risks, and the desire to succeed. For an African American man or woman, building a business also meant struggling against prejudice and working even harder than many others. Those who succeed are not just good businessmen and -women, they are heroes and heroines.

In this vivid, inspiring collection, you will meet more than thirty fascinating African American entrepreneurs, from the eighteenth century up to the present, who overcame the odds against them. You'll discover little-known facts about their families, and the exciting times in which they lived. Along the way, you'll witness the triumph of talent, ingenuity, and perseverance.

Ranging from cattle ranching to magazine publishing and computers, these stories show you how:

- Marie-Thérèse Metoyer, born into slavery, started her own plantation.
- Pierre Toussaint, born a slave in Haiti, became rich as a hairdresser in New York.
- Granville T. Woods, an engineer, could not find work after the Civil War because he was black. So he started inventing. During his life, he registered more than sixty patents.
- Henry G. Parks, using an old Virginia sausage recipe, built a national food company.
- Alphonse "Buddy" Fletcher Jr., one of Wall Street's most successful stock traders, started his own firm before he was even thirty years old.

This outstanding collection brings to light these and dozens of other exciting and surprising tales of entrepreneurs who lived their dreams.

Meet the black stars who lived their dreams—from the early years to modern times

Richard Henry Boyd

Janet Harmon Bragg

Paul Cuffe

Alphonse "Buddy" Fletcher Jr.

James Forten

A. G. Gaston

Berry Gordy Jr.

Earl G. Graves

Thomas L. Jennings

John H. Johnson

Quincy Jones

Elizabeth Keckley

Shelton Jackson "Spike" Lee

William Leidesdorff

Reginald F. Lewis

"Free Frank" McWorter
Marie-Thérèse Metoyer
Oscar Micheaux
Henry G. Parks
Philip A. Payton Jr.
David Ruggles
Jake Simmons Jr.
Ada "Bricktop" Smith
Charles Clinton Spaulding
Pierre Toussaint
Dempsey J. Travis
Madame C. J. Walker
Maggie Lena Walker
Omar Wasow
Oprah Winfrey
Granville T. Woods

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Harriet White:

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