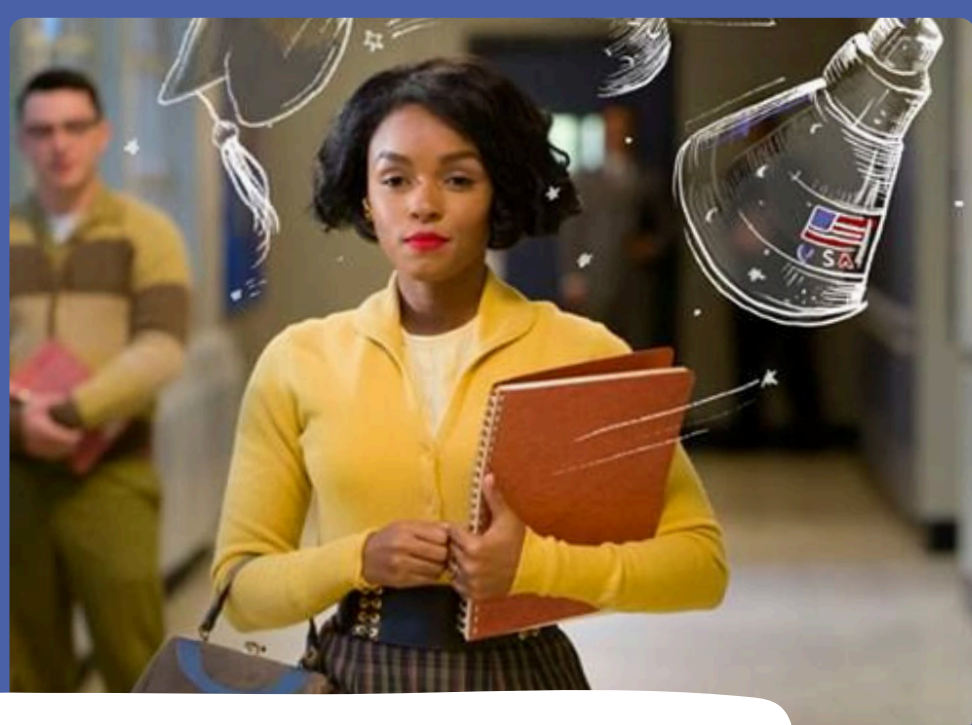


# MARY W. JACKSON

Mathematician and Aerospace Engineer

## Early Life

Mary Jackson was born on **April 9th, 1921 in Hampton, Virginia**. She grew up in Hampton along with her ten siblings, graduating from an all Black high school, with a passion for maths. She wanted to persue her **favourite subject (mathematics and science)** in post-secondary, so she applied to and attended the Hampton Institute to further this dream.



Janelle Monae - The actress who portrayed Mary Jackson in the film "Hidden Figures"



## Overcoming Adversity - The First Female Black Engineer at NASA

Mary Jackson began her career already facing adversity as the **only black female** aeronautical engineer in the field. At this time, she was still **segregated to coloured bathrooms and dining spaces**, regardless of her position at NASA.

She had a **productive two-decade** long career, but was frustrated with the **lack of promotions** she was offered and her inability to become management level in the company.

In 1979, she made a drastic career change, leaving engineering and **taking a demotion** to work as **Langley's Federal Women's Program Manger**. There, she focused on changing the hiring and promotion of the next generation of NASA female mathematicians and scientists.

## Contributions To Field

Mary Jackson was extremely successful and made many impressive contributions to the field of aerospace engineering. The **very same year** she finished her training education in math and physics, she **co-authored her first report**, and went on in her career to co-author **over a dozen reports**. She received the **NASA Apollo Group Achievement Award**. This recognizes her **contributions to NASA's mission**. Jackson was also a true leader in ensuring **equal opportunities** for future generations.



## Education

**High school:** Mary Jackson attended the all-Black George P. Phoenix Training School where she graduated with the **highest honors** in 1937.

**University:** She enrolled in the Hampton Institute graduating in 1942 with a **bachelor's in Maths and Physical Science**.

During her time in university, she was a **member of a sorority called Alpha Kappa Alpha - the first sorority founded by African American women**.



## Fun Facts

- Mary Jackson had **several other jobs** after university, including **engineer, teacher, secretary, bookkeeper and receptionist**.
- She said the famous quote, **"Doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will."**
- She was a **member of the National Technical Association - the oldest African American technical organization in the US**.
- Was depicted in the award winning movie **Hidden Figures** where her story is told along with two other African American women at NASA.

