
THE COALITION OF UNITED PROGRESSIVES CHARMECK CHRONICLE



Greetings!

We truly appreciate everyone's involvement.
This War on Oppression will only be won as one
mass movement.

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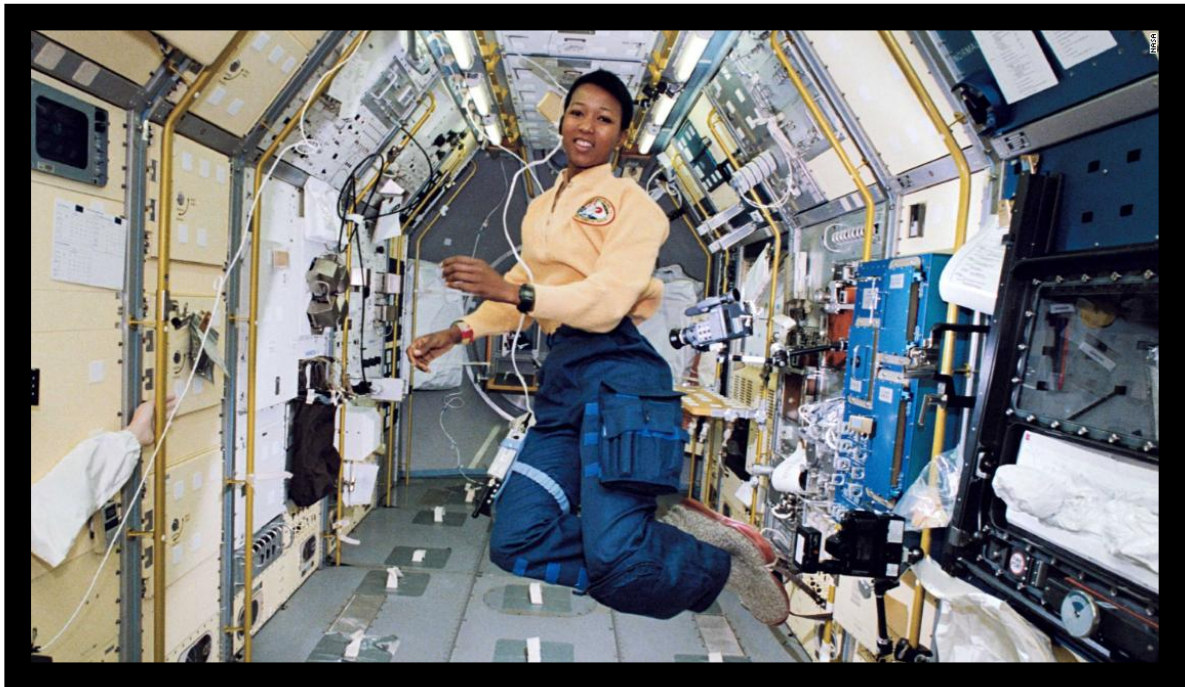
Our Mission Statement

The continual unification of as many organizations as possible, starting at the local level and branching out to both the state of North Carolina and then the entire nation.

Spotlight

Mae Jemison

"First African American Woman in Space"



October 1st, 1956 -

By DonnaMarie Woodson

"Incredible Black Women You Should Know About"



Researching the story of Mae Jemison is so inspiring and one of the reasons I love to write; learning the biographies of remarkable people. Some known and others I didn't realize their impact on our shared history.

Meet Mae Carol Jemison, an American engineer, physician, and former NASA astronaut. Jemison was chosen for NASA's astronaut program in 1987, becoming the first Black woman to travel in space after launching with the Space Shuttle Endeavour crew in 1992. The team made 127 orbits around the Earth and returned to the Kennedy Space Center in Florida on September 20th, 1992. The Associated Press covered her as the "first Black woman astronaut" in 1987.

Afraid of heights, she nevertheless logged 190 hours, 30 minutes, and 23 seconds in space, NASA said.



Baby Mae

Mae Jemison has always reached for the stars. Born in Decatur, Alabama. Her mother was the youngest of three children, an elementary school teacher, and her father was a maintenance supervisor. A few years after she was born, Jemison and her family moved to Chicago, Illinois.



In addition to her love for dance, Jemison knew that she wanted to study science at a very young age. She grew up watching the Apollo airings on T.V., but she was often upset that there were no female astronauts. She later recalled, "everybody was thrilled about space, but I remember being really

irritated that there were no women astronauts." Inspired by African American actress Nichelle Nichols who played Lieutenant Uhura on the Star Trek television show, Jemison was determined to one day travel in space.

Jemison enjoyed studying nature and human physiology, using her observations to learn more about science. Although her mother encouraged her curiosity and both her parents were supportive of her interest in science, she did not always see the same support from her teachers. When Jemison told a kindergarten teacher she wanted to be a scientist when she grew up; the teacher assumed it meant she wanted to be a nurse.



In 1973, she graduated from Morgan Park High School when she was only 16. Once she graduated, Jemison left Chicago to attend Stanford University in California. Jemison graduated in 1977 with a Bachelor of Science degree

in Chemical Engineering and a Bachelor of Arts degree in African and African-American studies.

After graduating from Stanford University, Jemison attended Cornell Medical School. While in medical school, she traveled to Cuba to lead a study for the American Medical Student Association. She also worked at a Cambodian refugee camp in Thailand.

Jemison graduated from Cornell with a Doctorate in Medicine in 1981. Shortly after her graduation, she became an intern at the Los Angeles County Medical Center and practiced general medicine. Fluent in Russian, Japanese, and Swahili, Jemison joined the Peace Corps in 1983 and served as a medical officer for two years in Africa.

Upon returning to the United States after serving in the Peace Corps, Jemison settled in Los Angeles, California. In Los Angeles, she entered into private practice and took graduate-level engineering courses. However, the flights of [Sally Ride](#) and [Guion Bluford](#) in 1983 inspired Jemison to apply to the astronaut program.



Jemison first applied to NASA's astronaut training program in October 1985, but NASA postponed the selection of new candidates after the [Space](#)

[Shuttle Challenger disaster](#) in 1986. Jemison reapplied in 1987 and was chosen out of roughly 2,000 applicants to be one of the fifteen people in the [NASA Astronaut Group 12](#), the first group selected following the explosion of the *Challenger*.

Jemison flew her only space mission from September 12th to 20, 1992, on [STS-47](#), a cooperative mission between the United States and Japan and the 50th shuttle mission. Jemison logged 190 hours, 30 minutes, and 23 seconds in space and orbited the Earth 127 times.



STS-47 carried the Spacelab Japan module, including 43 Japanese and United States life science and materials processing experiments. Jemison and Japanese astronaut [Mamoru Mohri](#) were trained to use the Autogenic Feedback Training Exercise (AFTE), a technique developed by [Patricia S. Cowings](#).

The technique uses [biofeedback](#) and [autogenic training](#) to help patients monitor and control their physiology as a possible treatment for motion sickness, anxiety, and stress-related disorders. (In 1999, Jemison founded BioSentient Corp and obtained the

license to commercialize AFTE, the technique she and Mohri tested on themselves during STS-47.)

The crew split into two shifts, with Jemison assigned to the Blue Shift. Throughout the eight-day mission, she began communications on her shift with the salute "Hailing frequencies open," a quote from *Star Trek*. Jemison took a poster from the [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) along with her on the flight. She also took a West African figurine and a photo of pioneering aviator [Bessie Coleman](#), the first African American with an international pilot license.

Post-NASA Career

Jemison left NASA in 1993 after serving as an astronaut for six years. Jemison served on the World Sickle Cell Foundation board of directors from 1990 to 1992. In 1993, she founded The Jemison Group Inc., a consulting firm that considers the socio-cultural impact of technological advancements and design.

Jemison also founded the Dorothy Jemison Foundation for



Excellence and named the foundation in honor of her mother. One of the foundation projects is *The Earth We Share*, a science camp for students 12 to 16. The camps were founded in 1994 and were held at Dartmouth College, Colorado School of Mines, Choate Rosemary Hall, and other sites in the United States and internationally in South Africa, Tunisia, and Switzerland.

In 2001, she went on to write her first book, *Find Where the Wind Goes*, which was a children's book about her life.

The Dorothy Jemison Foundation sponsors other events and programs, including the Shaping the World essay competition and Listening to the Future (a survey program targeting obtaining opinions from students). Earth Online (an online chatroom that allows students to communicate and discuss ideas on space and science safely), and the Reality Leads Fantasy Gala.

Jemison was a professor of environmental studies at Dartmouth College from 1995 to 2002, where she directed the Jemison Institute for Advancing Technology in Developing Countries. In 1999, she became an [Andrew D. White](#) Professor-at-Large at Cornell University. Jemison advocates strongly in favor of science education and getting minority students interested in science.



Jemison/LeVar Burton (top) Nichelle Nichols/Jemison (bottom)

Levar Burton learned that Jemison was an avid *Star Trek* fan and asked her if she would be interested in being on the show. In 1993, Jemison appeared as Lieutenant Palmer in "[Second Chances](#)," an episode of the science fiction television series [Star Trek: The Next Generation](#), becoming the first real-life astronaut to appear on *Star Trek*.

Currently, Jemison is leading the 100 Year Starship project through the United States Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). This project works to make sure human space travel to another star is possible within the next 100 years.

Jemison is an active public speaker who appears before private and public groups promoting science and technology. "Having been an



astronaut gives me a platform," says Jemison, "but I'd blow it if I just talked about the Shuttle." Jemison uses her platform to speak out

on the gap in health care quality between the United States and the Third World, saying that "Martin Luther King [Jr.] ... didn't just have a dream, he got things done."

In May 2007, she was the graduation commencement speaker and only the 11th person in the 52-year history of Harvey Mudd College to be awarded an honorary D.Eng. degree. And Jemison participated with First Lady Michelle Obama in a forum for promising girls in the Washington, D.C. public schools in March 2009.

Jemison is a member of the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine, inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, National Medical Association Hall of Fame, and Texas Science Hall of Fame. She has received multiple awards and honorary degrees, including the National Organization for Women's Intrepid Award and the Kilby Science Award. She currently lives in Houston, Texas.



"DON'T LET ANYONE
ROB YOU OF
YOUR IMAGINATION,
YOUR CREATIVITY,
OR YOUR CURIOSITY.
IT'S YOUR PLACE
IN THE WORLD;
IT'S YOUR LIFE.
GO ON AND DO
ALL YOU CAN
WITH IT, AND
MAKE IT THE
LIFE YOU WANT
TO LIVE."

Dr. Mae Jemison

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Editorial

The Freedom to Think

**By
Tarik Kiley
4/24/2022**

Let's discuss the ban on books and the attack on the ability to be able to think for oneself. The move to ban books is not new. We can reference the history in the effort to ban books, particularly the Nazi banning and



burning of books as part of their ideological efforts in Germany at the time of their reign. And the Washington Post notes "how the Confederacy banned books such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" for negatively portraying slavery."

Of course, the attempt to ban certain books is not a new phenomenon. More than one political wave of censorship has occurred in world history. In the United States, where we claim to love Freedom, some White conservatives are making a renewed effort to ban certain books. According to the Washington Post, "what sets this latest wave of book banning apart is how much of it is being driven by politicians.

PEN America found that more than 40 percent of the bans were "tied to directives from state officials or elected lawmakers to investigate or remove books in schools." The Post's Annie Gowen chronicled how a Texas county judge personally walked into a local library and took books off the shelves, ignoring the library's procedures. A person is

supposed to fill out a challenge form to be reviewed by librarians." Again, the remarkable thing about our current ban is how much of the decry comes from political officials and political actors. This ban is essential to understand because of the idea of Freedom that is so central to political discourse in the United States.



Freedom of speech and the resulting Freedom of expression are central parts of American political thinking. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), "Freedom of speech, the press, association, assembly, and petition: This set of guarantees, protected by the First Amendment, comprises what we refer to as Freedom of expression. It is the foundation of a vibrant democracy, and

without it, other fundamental rights, like the right to vote, would wither away."

Not only is the Freedom of expression important here, but also the idea of teaching critical thinking to America's youth and testing ideas in the marketplace. Scientific and logical thinking was the bedrock of my education in the k-12 public school system.

There is also the idea that every idea published should be tested in the marketplace of public opinion and not dictated by the political establishment. The idea here is that even if you don't like what your neighbor has to say, your neighbor still has the right to say it. Of course, society still considers specific speech as inflammatory such as hate

speech, but primarily the Freedom of expression is sacred. This Freedom of expression is important to note because, in "freedom-loving" America, politically motivated actors are moving to censor and abolish Freedom of expression.



The conservative push to ban books most recently is vital to understand. Again, according to the Washington Post, "The ALA's list of the most-challenged books lately is telling: At the top is "Gender Queer" by Maia Kobabe, a memoir about coming of age as nonbinary. The second is "Lawn Boy" by Jonathan Evison, about a young biracial man trying to understand race, class, and sexual identity issues in modern America."

We should consider the push to ban books here about racial identity or being non-binary. We should consider the entire motivation to stop anti-racism efforts, such as the cry against teaching critical race theory. Some conservatives don't want to teach the actual history and condition of racism and discrimination in the USA.

One of the most ludicrous examples of the fight to censor by conservatives is the recent banning of topics in math books in Florida. Conservatives rejected Fifty-four math textbooks. According to the Guardian, "The state said it had refused to use the books because of "prohibited topics" including alleged references to critical race theory. On Friday, however, after pressure to explain the decisions, the education department published several images of math problems from the textbook with the offending segments highlighted.

In one example, a colored graph features levels of "racial prejudice" by age. Another example, under the heading "adding and subtracting polynomials," begins with the words: "What? Me? Racist?" and uses the statistical results of a typical survey about unconscious bias as an example for a set of mathematics problems. The other models make references to "social and emotional learning" or "social awareness,"



Florida Governor Ron DeSantis

concepts that conservative education activists say are a gateway to leftwing ideology."

Banning these math textbooks is part of Florida's Republican Governor Ron DeSantis's "culture war." The Governor's

culture war is a supposed effort to fight the indoctrination of the USA's student population. The Guardian mentions that Governor DeSantis also "recently signed the state's controversial "don't say gay" law – officially the Parental Rights in Education bill – that prohibits discussions of sexual orientation or gender identity in elementary classrooms."

Here is a list of the ten most challenged books of 2021, as noted by the American Library Association.



"The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 729 challenges to library, school, and university materials and services in 2021. Of the 1597 books targeted here, here are the most challenged, along with the reasons cited for censoring the books:"

1. Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe

Reasons: Banned, challenged, and restricted for LGBTQIA+ content. And is considered to have sexually explicit images.

2. Lawn Boy by Jonathan Evison

Reasons: Banned, challenged for LGBTQIA+ content, and considered sexually explicit.

3. All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson

Reasons: Banned, challenged for LGBTQIA+ content and profanity, and considered sexually explicit.

4. Out of Darkness by Ashley Hope Perez

Reasons: Banned, challenged, and restricted for depictions of abuse and sexually explicit.

5. The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity and violence, and thought to promote an anti-police message and indoctrination of a social agenda.

6. The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity, sexual references, and use of a derogatory term.

7. Me and Earl and the Dying Girl by Jesse Andrews

Reasons: Banned and challenged. It was considered sexually explicit and degrading to women.

8. The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

Reasons: Banned and challenged for depicting child sexual abuse and considered sexually explicit.

9. This Book is Gay by Juno Dawson

Reasons: Banned, challenged, relocated, and restricted for providing sexual education and LGBTQIA+ content.

10. Beyond Magenta by Susan Kuklin

Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content and considered to be sexually explicit.

I would suggest that no book be banned in the United States, especially when you can read between the lines and see how some books address racism, such as "The Hate You Give." Some books addressing LGBTQIA+ issues, such as "Gender Queer," are being banned for ideological reasons. They also limit students' exposure to ideas considered a form of indoctrination.

Of course, books containing violence should not be taught to students. Still, students need to be exposed to various ideas and need to be allowed to accept or reject them on their merits, not because a politician or a group of politically motivated people told them to think a certain way. Because, even if I think I am right in my opinions, they remain opinions, and I should have the ability to evaluate anyone's thought process critically.

Works Cited

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Announcements



Democrats of North Mecklenburg

Monthly Meeting - IN PERSON

Thursday, May 5th at 7:00 PM

William Amos Hough High School

12420 Bailey Road, Huntersville

RSVP: democrats@demsofnorthmeck.org

Red, Wine, and Blue

Union County Board of County Commissioners

Meeting

May 2nd at 6:00 PM

500 N Main St, Monroe, NC 28112

N. Meck Progressives

Monthly Meeting

Monday, May 9th at 6:00 PM

Speaker: Cameron Pruette,

President of the LGBTQ+ MeckDems

RSVP: michelle.blumenthal.123@gmail.com

Zoom

Announcements



Democratic Women of North Mecklenburg County

Monthly Membership Meeting

Wednesday, May 11th

6:30 PM Candidate/Officials Reception - 7:00 PM Program

Program: "Shining a Light on Mental Health"

County Commissioner Susan Rodriguez McDowell

Moderator

Panel:

- Arielle "Ari" Brown, LCMHC, NCC
- Tonya Brown, MSW, Community Engagement
Manager, Alliance Health
- Anna M. Priester, MA, MSW Crisis Prevention &
Response Manager, CMS

Zoom Link - Facebook Page

Announcements



Mecklenburg County Senior Democrats Monthly Meeting

Friday, May 13th at 11:30 AM

Guest Speaker: Janice Robinson, Red, Wine, and Blue
Zoom Link - Facebook Page

Neighbors on Call

How to Recruit and Retain Volunteers

Sunday, May 22nd at 4:00 PM

(via Zoom)

RSVP: michelle.blumenthal.123@gmail.com



Please submit your group events to donnamarie93@gmail.com
by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the Announcements.

Happenings Gallery!

Mental Health Awareness Month



YOU ARE
NOT
ALONE

Now more than ever, we need to find ways to stay connected with our community. No one should feel alone or without the information, support and help they need.

The Executive Corner:

Executive Director - Jade X. Jackson

Rev Rodney Sadler, Joel Segal, DonnaMarie Woodson

Rev Glencie Rhedrick

Coalition of United Progressives-CharMeck Chronicle

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Contributor: Tarik Kiley