

African American Inventors Patent List

Note: This list is not comprehensive in terms of African American inventors or the patents for each inventor. This is meant to serve as a resource for educators who wish to include patents in their lessons on African American inventors. Patents located through Google Patents at www.google.com/patents).

1. Granville T. Woods (1856–1910)

- a. See supplemental materials for several of Woods' patents
- b. List of patents issued to Granville T. Woods:
<https://webfiles.uci.edu/mcbrown/display/gwpatents.html>
- c. U.S. Patent 299,894, "Steam Boiler Furnace," June 3, 1884,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US299894>.
- d. U.S. Patent 315,368, "Apparatus for Transmission of Messages by Electricity," April 7, 1885, <http://www.google.com/patents/US315368>.
- e. U.S. Patent 509,065, "Electric Railway Conduit," November 21, 1893,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US509065>.
- f. U.S. Patent 678,086, "Electric Railway System," July 9, 1901,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US678086>.
- g. U.S. Patent 371,241, "Telephone System and Apparatus," October 11, 1887,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US371241>.
- h. U.S. Patent 373,383, "Railway Telegraphy," November 15, 1887,
<http://www.google.com/patents/373383>.
- i. U.S. Patent 639,692, "Amusement Apparatus," December 19, 1899,
<http://www.google.com/patents/639692>.

2. Lewis Latimer (1848–1928)

- a. U.S. Patent 147,363 "Water closets for railway cars," February 10, 1874,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US147363>.
- b. U.S. Patent 247,097 "Electric lamp" (with Nichols, Joseph V.), September 13, 1881,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US247097>.
- c. U.S. Patent 252,386 "Process of Manufacturing Carbons," January 17, 1882,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US252386>.
- d. U.S. Patent 255,212 "Globe supporter for electric lamps" (with Tregoning, John), March 21, 1882, <http://www.google.com/patents/US255212>.
- e. U.S. Patent 334,078 "Apparatus for cooling and disinfecting," January 12, 1886,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US334078>.
- f. U.S. Patent 557,076 "Locking rack for hats, coats, and umbrellas," March 24, 1896,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US557076>.
- g. U.S. Patent 968,787 "Lamp fixture" (with Brown, Charles W.), August 30, 1910,
<http://www.google.com/patents/US968787>.

3. Garrett Morgan (1877–1963)

- a. U.S. Patent 1,113,675 "Breathing Device," October 13, 1914,
<https://www.google.com/patents/US1113675>.
- b. U.S. Patent 1,475,024 "Traffic Signal," November 20, 1923,
<https://www.google.com/patents/US1475024>.

4. Elijah McCoy (1844–1929)

- a. U.S. Patent 129,843 “Improvement in lubricators for steam-engines,” July 23, 1872, <http://www.google.com/patents/US129843>.
- b. U.S. Patent 614,307 “Oil Cup,” November 15, 1898, <http://www.google.com/patents/US614307>.
- c. U.S. Patent 470,163, “Lubricator,” March 1, 1892, <http://www.google.com/patents/US470163>.
- d. U.S. Patent 460,215, “Dope Cup,” September 29, 1891, <http://www.google.com/patents/US460215>.
- e. U.S. Patent 270,238, “Lubricator,” January 9, 1883, <http://www.google.com/patents/US270238>.
- f. U.S. Patent 383, 745, “Lubricator,” May 29, 1888, <http://www.google.com/patents/US383745>.
- g. U.S. Patent 68,725, “Rubber Heel,” November 10, 1925, <http://www.google.com/patents/USD68725>.
- h. U.S. Patent 39,542, “Eraser,” September 15, 1908, <http://www.google.com/patents/USD39542>.
- i. U.S. Patent 1,127,789, “Tread for Tires,” February 9, 1915, <http://www.google.com/patents/US1127789>.

5. Jan Ernst Matzeliger (1852–1889)

- a. U.S. Patent 421,954, “Nailing Machine,” February 25, 1890, <http://www.google.com/patents/US421954>.
- b. U.S. Patent 423, 937, “Tack Separating and Distributing Mechanism,” March 25, 1890, <http://www.google.com/patents/US423937>.
- c. U.S. Patent 274,207, “Lasting Machine,” March 20, 1883, <http://www.google.com/patents/US274207>.

6. George Washington Carver (1864–1943)

- a. Note: Carver did not file patents for the vast majority of his inventions.
- b. U.S. Patent 1,632,365, “Process of Producing Paints and Stains,” June 14, 1927, <http://www.google.com/patents/US1632365>.
- c. U.S. Patent 1,522,176, “Cosmetic and Process of Producing the Same,” January 6, 1925, <http://www.google.com/patents/US1522176>.

7. Otis Frank Boykin (1920–1982)

- a. U.S. Patent 3,304,199, “Electrical Resistance Element,” February 14, 1967, <http://www.google.com/patents/US3304199>.
- b. U.S. Patent 3,348,971, “Method of Making a Thin Film Capacitor,” October 24, 1967, <http://www.google.com/patents/US3348971>.
- c. U.S. Patent 2,891,227, “Wire Type Precision Resistor,” June 16, 1959, <http://www.google.com/patents/US2891227>.

8. Patricia Era Bath (1942 –)

- a. U.S. Patent 6,733,491, “Cataract Extraction Apparatus and Method,” May 11, 2004, <https://www.google.com/patents/US6733491>.

- b. U.S. Patent 6,083,192, "Pulsed Ultrasound Method for Fragmenting/Emulsifying and Removing Cataractous Lenses," July 4, 2000, <https://www.google.com/patents/US6083192>.
 - c. U.S. Patent 6,544,254, "Combination Ultrasound and Laser Method and Apparatus for Removing Cataract Lenses," April 8, 2003, <https://www.google.com/patents/US6544254>.
 - d. U.S. Patent 7,182,759, "Cataract Extraction Apparatus and Method with Rapid Pulse Phaco Power," February 27, 2007, <https://www.google.com/patents/US7182759>.
- 9. Marie van Brittan Brown (1922–1999)**
- a. U.S. Patent 3,482,037, "Home Security System Utilizing Television Surveillance," December 2, 1969, <https://www.google.com/patents/US3482037>.
- 10. Mark E. Dean (1957 –)**
- a. U.S. Patent 4,437,092, "Color Video Display System having Programmable Border Color," March 13, 1984, <https://www.google.com/patents/US4437092>.
- 11. Charles Richard Drew (1904–1950)**
- a. U.S. Patent 2,301,710, "Apparatus for Preserving Blood," November 10, 1942, <https://www.google.com/patents/US2301710>.
- 12. Kenneth J. Dunkley (1939 –)**
- a. U.S. Patent 4,810,057, "Three-dimensional viewing glasses," April 18, 1986, <https://www.google.com/patents/US4810057>.
 - b. U.S. Patent 6,598,968, "3-Dimensional Movie and Television Viewer," July 29, 2003, <https://www.google.com/patents/US6598968>.
- 13. Betty Harris (1940 –)**
- a. U.S. Patent 4,618,452, "Rinsing to remove explosives, contacting with strong base suspension," October 21, 1986, <http://www.google.com/patents/US4618452>.
- 14. Lonnie G. Johnson (1949 –)**
- a. For a full list of patents held by Lonnie G. Johnson and/or Johnson Research and Development, see <http://www.johnsonrd.com/ie/lj/ljprofile.html>.
 - b. U.S. Patent 4,591,071, "Squirt gun," May 27, 1986, <http://www.google.com/patents/US4591071>.
 - c. U.S. Patent 6,679,155, "Projectile Launcher," January 20, 2004, <https://www.google.com/patents/US6679155>.
 - d. U.S. Patent 5,332,120, "Water Arrow Projecting Bow," July 26, 1994, <https://www.google.com/patents/US5332120>.
- 15. Frederick McKinley Jones (1893 – 1961)**
- a. U.S. Patent 2,475,841, "Air Conditioning Unit," July 12, 1949, <https://www.google.com/patents/US2475841>.

16. Valerie Thomas (1943 –)

- a. U.S. Patent 4,229,761, “Illusion Transmitter,” October 21, 1980,
<https://www.google.com/patents/US4229761>.

17. Henry Blair (1807 – 1860)

- a. U.S. Patent X8447, “Seed Planter,” October 14, 1834,
<https://www.google.com/patents/USX8447>.

18. Thomas L. Jennings (1791–1856) The First African American to Hold a U.S. Patent

- a. U.S. Patent 3,306X, “Dry Scouring of Clothes,” March 3, 1821.

19. George Edward Alcorn, Jr. (1940 –)

- a. U.S. Patent 4,472,728, “For providing imaging and energy resolution,” September 18, 1984, <https://www.google.com/patents/US4472728>.
- b. EP0207018 A1, “Method of fabricating an imaging x-ray spectrometer,” December 30, 1986, <https://www.google.com/patents/EP0207018A1>.

20. Shelby J. Davidson (1868–1930)

- a. U.S. Patent 884,721, “Paper-rewind mechanism for adding-machines,” April 14, 1908,
<https://www.google.com/patents/US884721>.

21. James Edward Maceo West

- a. U.S. Patent 3,573,399, “Directional Microphone,” April 6, 1971,
<https://www.google.com/patents/US3573399>.
- b. U.S. Patent 3,118,022, “Electroacoustic Transducer,” January 14, 1964,
<https://www.google.com/patents/US3118022>.

22. Robert Flemmings, Jr. (very little information exists about Flemmings, Jr.)

- a. U.S. Patent 338,727, “Guitar,” March 30, 1886,
<https://www.google.com/patents/US338727>. (While Flemmings, Jr. did not invent the guitar, he seems to be the first to patent it)

23. Norbert Rillieux (1806 – 1894)

- a. U.S. Patent 3,237A, “Vacuum Pan – Improvement in sugar-works,” August 26, 1843,
<https://www.google.com/patents/US3237>.
- b. U.S. Patent RE439E, “Evaporating Pan – Improvement in sugar-works,” March 17, 1857,
<https://www.google.com/patents/USRE439>.
- c. U.S. Patent 4,879, “Evaporating Pan – Improvement in sugar-works,” December 10, 1846, <https://www.google.com/patents/US4879>.