

Katherine G. Johnson

Born August 26th, 1918 in White Sulphur Springs West Virginia, Katherine earned a degree in French & Mathematics from Virginia State College, graduating summa cum laude. She started her career as a high school teacher in the Virginia School district. Katherine soon transferred to Langley Research Center where she worked as a mathematician. While at Langley, she participated in a variety of projects with NASA. She examined space navigational issues, analyzed data gathered during lunar orbital missions, and studied a new navigational procedure that tracked space missions. Although she is now retired, Johnson is considered a pioneer in the field of Aerospace Engineering. Honored as the first African American woman in her field, she has also received an Honorary Doctorate of Law, Outstanding Alumnus of the Year from West Virginia State College (1999), and was the recipient of the Group Achievement Award from NASA's Lunar Spacecrafts Operations.