

The Inspiring Black Journey in Tech: From Humble Beginnings to Global Innovators

Technology has undoubtedly transformed our world, and the narrative of the black community's journey in this field is one of resilience, determination, and brilliance. From overcoming systemic barriers to becoming global innovators, black individuals have made significant contributions to the ever-evolving tech landscape. This article takes you on a captivating exploration of their inspiring stories, showcasing their accomplishments and the immense impact they have had on shaping the digital era.

Breaking Barriers and Paving the Way

The black journey in tech begins with a history that is marred by inequality and racial discrimination. Early pioneers like Dr. Mark Dean, the co-inventor of the personal computer, and Jerry Lawson, the creator of the video game console, Atari, faced immense challenges to break into the industry. They defied the odds, becoming trailblazers and setting the stage for future generations.

In the face of adversity, black tech entrepreneurs and industry professionals have continuously displayed an unrivaled level of determination. Their stories serve as inspiration for aspiring innovators and highlight the importance of representation in an industry that has historically lacked diversity.

A Black Journey in Tech: (From humble beginnings) by Riddhi Sanyal(Kindle Edition)

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Empowering Communities and Driving Change

Black individuals in tech understand the critical role technology plays in empowering marginalized communities. Through initiatives like Black Girls Code, led by Kimberly Bryant, young black girls are given access to coding and tech-related skills. Such initiatives not only bridge the gender gap in the industry but also foster a sense of community and empowerment.

Furthermore, social entrepreneurs like Arlan Hamilton have emerged as change-makers. Hamilton founded the venture capital fund Backstage Capital, with the mission of investing in underrepresented founders, including black and LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs. By providing them with financial support and resources, Hamilton is actively dismantling barriers and fostering inclusivity in the tech startup ecosystem.

Innovative Minds, Revolutionary Ideas

The black community has made significant contributions in various fields of technology, constantly pushing boundaries and introducing groundbreaking ideas. One shining example is the legendary Katherine Johnson, a mathematician

instrumental in NASA's space program. Her calculations were vital to the success of the Apollo 11 mission, earning her the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015.

Moreover, engineering genius Frederick McKinley Jones revolutionized the refrigeration industry with his invention of mobile cooling units. His creation played a crucial role in preserving blood, vaccines, and food, impacting countless lives worldwide. Jones' story emphasizes the incredible impact diverse voices can have on technological advancements.

From Humble Beginnings to Global Influencers

Today, black individuals continue to excel across various tech sectors, making significant contributions to cutting-edge innovation. Take, for instance, tech entrepreneur and philanthropist Tony F. Wells, who co-founded Black in Technology, a platform dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion in the industry.

In addition, trailblazers like Dr. Ayanna Howard have made groundbreaking strides in robotics and artificial intelligence. Her work in developing socially assistive robots has the potential to revolutionize healthcare and support individuals with disabilities.

Impacting the Future: A Call for Greater Diversity

While the black journey in tech has come a long way, the battle for true equality continues. The industry as a whole must actively work towards greater diversity, inclusivity, and equal representation. Embracing fresh perspectives and amplifying underrepresented voices will undoubtedly foster a more innovative, equitable, and prosperous future for all.

, the black journey in tech is a testament to the indomitable spirit and unwavering determination of a community that refused to be limited by societal barriers. Their contributions have shaped the digital era we live in today and serve as a constant reminder of the power of diversity in building a better future for all. By championing the stories and accomplishments of black individuals in tech, we take a step forward in creating a more inclusive and representative industry.



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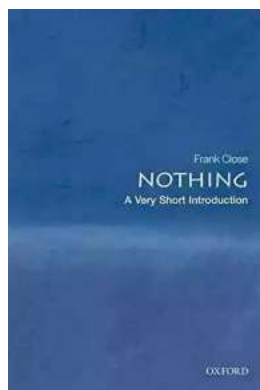


My objective is to encourage anyone one, but more specifically the next generation of technologist particularly Black people by sharing my story.

There is an underrepresentation of Blacks in technology also referred to as the digital divide. However, the truth of the matter is that Black people throughout history have always contributed to technical advancement. The problem I want to solve is that the numbers of Blacks in technical jobs today are despairingly low. I believe that this is in part due to the contributions of Black people in tech being obfuscated. When you cannot see yourself in a role, you make the assumption that there is not place in tech for me. As a result, Black people are largely missing out on the opportunity and benefit that working in high tech is providing to the

world. Did you know that the VoIP technology that allows us to meet in Zoom or Teams calls, the Electek microphone in your computer and mobile device and the first digital cell phone were contributions by Black inventors? I believe this message and many other similar stories including my own could be the genesis of an idea that could propel or encourage the next generation to their success in technology

When I started in technology on my late father's birthday March 3rd, 1986, I was an assistant 3rd shift computer operator making \$7 an hour. This career choice has opened so many doors and provided a path where I have led or contributed to world changing innovations across multiple industries. From those humble beginnings to a career that has made me a millionaire. More importantly a career that has taken me from the low bar set for my existence to traveling the globe and leading highly technical initiatives for one of the top technology companies in the world. I am a pioneer and building a legacy for others like me that were and are marginalized. The journey is not easy, and there were bumps and setbacks along the way, but yes it was worth it. Today my wife and four of my six children are Microsoft full time employees. I coach and mentor as many as I can, because I believe that there is no ceiling and no limits in technology. We just need to understand that there is space for all and if I could do it, so can you.



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