



50 YEARS AFTER

THE LANDMARK CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

IMPACT ON THE NATION AND NASA

1

00:00:00,030 --> 00:00:05,620

All members of the public should have an equal chance to vote for public officials,

2

00:00:05,620 --> 00:00:11,820

and to send their children to good public schools and to contribute their talents to

3

00:00:11,820 --> 00:00:12,820

the public good

4

00:00:12,820 --> 00:00:24,930

[Music]

5

00:00:40,140 --> 00:00:28,890

I am NASA

I am NASA

6

00:00:40,140 --> 00:00:44,829

I am the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

7

00:00:44,829 --> 00:00:51,809

I started here at JPL NASA in nineteen eighty-nine, January nineteen eighty nine so I've been

8

00:00:51,809 --> 00:00:54,649

here about 25 years now.

9

00:00:54,649 --> 00:01:02,219

I began working for NASA at Johnson Space Center...in gosh in nineteen sixty-nine.

10

00:01:02,219 --> 00:01:05,339

I first came to NASA the summer of nineteen eighty.

11

00:01:05,339 --> 00:01:08,360

When I was selected second group of space shuttle astronauts

12

00:01:08,360 --> 00:01:13,100

I started working at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in nineteen sixty four

13

00:01:13,100 --> 00:01:19,810

I started working for NASA at the John F. Kennedy Space Center in September of nineteen

14

00:01:19,810 --> 00:01:21,520

seventy three

15

00:01:21,520 --> 00:01:27,110

I started working for NASA at the Johnson Space Center in Houston Texas in nineteen

16

00:01:27,110 --> 00:01:28,110

eighty one

17

00:01:28,110 --> 00:01:32,759

I've had numerous jobs and numerous activities that have supported in the last twenty-five

18

00:01:32,759 --> 00:01:39,090

years or so

I began as a thermal analysts looking at going

19

00:01:39,090 --> 00:01:40,890

to Mars back in nineteen ninety

20

00:01:40,890 --> 00:01:44,240

Working for NASA has kinda always been a dream of mine.

21

00:01:44,240 --> 00:01:49,310

I'd study distant galaxies using the Hubble telescope and so to be able to Goddard and

22

00:01:49,310 --> 00:01:50,690

work there.

23
00:01:50,690 --> 00:01:55,520
not only in studying astronomy but also in
working on the James Webb Space Telescope

24
00:01:55,520 --> 00:01:56,679
has been really great

25
00:01:56,679 --> 00:02:06,729
When I came to KSC there were very few African
Americans employees of any sort, the Civil

26
00:02:06,729 --> 00:02:13,110
Rights Act of nineteen sixty four was rather
new on the horizon of course as with any new

27
00:02:13,110 --> 00:02:16,310
legislation there was some resistance to it.

28
00:02:16,310 --> 00:02:24,680
When I first started you have to realize that
was when the Civil Rights Act was first enacted

29
00:02:24,680 --> 00:02:29,790
and things were different at that time like
in the sixties things were much different.

30
00:02:29,790 --> 00:02:34,490
At that time minorities specifically African
Americans were the ones that were included

31
00:02:34,490 --> 00:02:42,150
in the Civil Rights Act of nineteen sixty
four it was later on that amended to include

32
00:02:42,150 --> 00:02:47,530
other minorities groups Asians, Hispanic Americans
and women

33
00:02:47,530 --> 00:02:54,530
There was quite a jump in the number women
in the professional areas around nineteen

34
00:02:54,530 --> 00:02:55,750
sixty-five.

35
00:02:55,750 --> 00:03:02,040
NASA... was part of the Women's Movement generally
and made a determined effort to bring in more

36
00:03:02,040 --> 00:03:03,599
women professionals

37
00:03:03,599 --> 00:03:13,379
When I started working for NASA I was the
only engineer in our division that was female

38
00:03:13,379 --> 00:03:21,400
and one of the few blacks and it was really
funny because the fellas didn't know quite

39
00:03:21,400 --> 00:03:24,850
know exactly what to do with the one woman
in the group

40
00:03:24,850 --> 00:03:32,269
I started off in electrical engineering and
moved into mechanical engineering unknowing

41
00:03:32,269 --> 00:03:35,189
that I was a minority at the time.

42
00:03:35,189 --> 00:03:41,350
I guess I didn't discover that until I started
working here at Glenn Research Centers that

43
00:03:41,350 --> 00:03:47,379
being a Native American woman engineer was

a minority

44
00:03:47,379 --> 00:03:53,920
Discrimination is where a person is ostracized and marginalized or just is not treated fairly.

45
00:03:53,920 --> 00:04:01,500
The common theme is, they're treated differently because of reasons beyond their control.

46
00:04:01,500 --> 00:04:10,519
The focusing was initially on African American there were very few African Americans at KSC

47
00:04:10,519 --> 00:04:19,680
at the time and those who were here were consecrated in clerical positions and administrative position

48
00:04:19,680 --> 00:04:21,850
there were very few engineers

49
00:04:21,850 --> 00:04:28,320
Everything's changed I mean American cultures change, NASA cultures change it's funny when

50
00:04:28,320 --> 00:04:34,430
you see those movies about Apollo 13 and see a bunch of white guys in white shirts smoke

51
00:04:34,430 --> 00:04:36,530
cigarettes sitting in the control room...

52
00:04:36,530 --> 00:04:42,090
From the time that i first knew about NASA it has changed exceptionally dramatically

53
00:04:42,090 --> 00:04:46,580
because when I first learned about NASA in the days of Mercury, Gemini and Apollo it

54

00:04:46,580 --> 00:04:51,040

was almost all white at least that was the only part of NASA anybody saw.

55

00:04:51,040 --> 00:04:59,190

I believe that there was a time when people of color color or ethnic diversity was were

56

00:04:59,190 --> 00:05:07,300

not believed to have the leadership skills believe to not be intelligent enough or organize

57

00:05:07,300 --> 00:05:09,720

enough do those things.

58

00:05:09,720 --> 00:05:19,050

there was resistance because there had been no African Americans and in the space program

59

00:05:19,050 --> 00:05:30,120

and of course they weren't greeted openly they were perceived as a necessary evil in

60

00:05:30,120 --> 00:05:34,580

order to comply with the Civil Rights Act of nineteen six four

61

00:05:34,580 --> 00:05:37,081

So I had a few strokes against me here.

62

00:05:37,081 --> 00:05:42,330

I was too young to be a principal investigator, I was too brown to be a principal investigator

63

00:05:42,330 --> 00:05:46,130

and I was way too female to be principal investigator.

64

00:05:46,130 --> 00:05:51,220

Well I figured the age thing would go away

with time and it sorta did.

65

00:05:51,220 --> 00:05:56,319

I'm still a woman and I'm still brown woman
black woman.

66

00:05:56,319 --> 00:06:04,050

At first I was sort of a curiosity people
would invite me to parties "Look we have one"

67

00:06:04,050 --> 00:06:11,979

and that sorta thing
but there were people who were genuinely sure

68

00:06:11,979 --> 00:06:16,250

that I didn't belong there that I didn't deserve
to be there

69

00:06:16,250 --> 00:06:22,180

so I kinda made it my duty to prove that I
did deserve to be there by doing good work.

70

00:06:22,180 --> 00:06:29,009

You know there's really three pieces to change
the first one of course is legal

71

00:06:29,009 --> 00:06:33,490

Legal changes the Civil Rights Act again is
fifty years ago.

72

00:06:33,490 --> 00:06:39,960

The second is diversity, which is having a
very diverse work that represents the diversity

73

00:06:39,960 --> 00:06:41,110

that's in America

74

00:06:41,110 --> 00:06:48,050

We have changed a lot in that sense it mean
in the nineteen sixties they were mostly white

75
00:06:48,050 --> 00:06:52,289
males now we're much more diverse workforce

76
00:06:52,289 --> 00:06:58,300
However there are still changes to be made
in the third area which is inclusion we're

77
00:06:58,300 --> 00:07:01,770
beginning to be more inclusive but we have
a lot more work to be done in that area.

78
00:07:01,770 --> 00:07:08,860
Gender equality is a big issue and equal pay
and all the complex issues that go along with

79
00:07:08,860 --> 00:07:09,860
it

80
00:07:09,860 --> 00:07:13,460
Those are difficult issues but NASA is really
good at doing difficult things

81
00:07:13,460 --> 00:07:20,910
When we talk about things like diversity and
discrimination and things like that sometimes

82
00:07:20,910 --> 00:07:25,890
we lose sight of the bigger picture that we're
all in this together

83
00:07:25,890 --> 00:07:31,020
Who are we to judge other people we should
humble our self and understand each other

84
00:07:31,020 --> 00:07:39,259
and try to come to a common ground respect
our differences and build on our commonalities

85

00:07:39,259 --> 00:07:45,190

and that's what really make us a whole as
a better community a better society a better

86

00:07:45,190 --> 00:07:46,190

nation of course.

87

00:07:46,190 --> 00:07:51,970

When you start to create you want to have
those multiple perspectives to give the concept

88

00:07:51,970 --> 00:07:59,900

to give the the program you're working on
a wide variety of looks so that it can have

89

00:07:59,900 --> 00:08:02,740

it's best chance of being successful.

90

00:08:02,740 --> 00:08:10,210

Women make up half the population or so and
there certainly as intelligent as men so why

91

00:08:10,210 --> 00:08:12,650

shouldn't it be half the working force.

92

00:08:12,650 --> 00:08:17,729

I still believe NASA and when ever I have
a student in my lab they leave believing in

93

00:08:17,729 --> 00:08:19,069

NASA too.

94

00:08:19,069 --> 00:08:24,800

NASA is a wonderful example of civil rights
in action at Goddard Space Flight Center we

95

00:08:24,800 --> 00:08:30,850

have advisory councils for every organization
or every group of people that is discriminated

96

00:08:30,850 --> 00:08:31,850

against.

97

00:08:31,850 --> 00:08:34,510

NASA has done things right.

98

00:08:34,510 --> 00:08:38,040

The way NASA has approached this has been really good so far.

99

00:08:38,040 --> 00:08:44,280

I'm excited to see the future to see more women coming up and into employment at NASA

100

00:08:44,280 --> 00:08:48,630

and coming up through the fellowship programs and just working their way up.

101

00:08:48,630 --> 00:08:55,050

It's not unnoticed we have we've now added several center directors who has been women

102

00:08:55,050 --> 00:08:58,420

we have had African American center directors.

103

00:08:58,420 --> 00:09:03,540

so the diversity in the senior leadership in the agency

104

00:09:03,540 --> 00:09:05,570

I'm here

105

00:09:05,570 --> 00:09:10,860

Speaks I think speaks loads to the way NASA in many ways has lead other organizations

106

00:09:10,860 --> 00:09:17,840

I grew up in Alabama where we had separate but unequal

107

00:09:17,840 --> 00:09:23,590

I don't think those students those civil rights
leaders and those activists if they were to

108

00:09:23,590 --> 00:09:28,160

look now fast forward
They'd never some of them who didn't get to

109

00:09:28,160 --> 00:09:32,610

see the fruits of their labors.

110

00:09:32,610 --> 00:09:39,340

Civil rights is for all of us not just one
set of us I think in order to have a sense

111

00:09:39,340 --> 00:09:46,910

of fairness it's that we all recognize that
regardless of color or creed or religion and

112

00:09:46,910 --> 00:09:55,210

others we have an obligation to support the
civil rights acts of nineteen sixty four

113

00:09:55,210 --> 00:10:00,520

We are senior research scientists
We are mechanical engineers

114

00:10:00,520 --> 00:10:05,570

We are administrators
We are the engineers of NASA

115

00:10:05,570 --> 00:10:09,670

We are human capital experts
We are researchers

116

00:10:09,670 --> 00:10:13,250

We are astronomers
We are center directors

117

00:10:13,250 --> 00:10:16,780

We are scientists

We are Mathematicians

118

00:10:16,780 --> 00:10:19,640

We are Astronauts

We we are

119

00:10:19,640 --> 00:10:23,690

We are we are

We are we are NASA