

Jacqueline Mims

Unhidden Figure

The movie *Hidden Figures* highlights the historical women of color whose meticulous calculations helped the U.S. catch up in the “space race” and send John Glenn into orbit around Earth. But NASA had many such "hidden figures," and one of the most notable is engineer and rocket scientist Jacqueline Mims, who was the first African-American civil servant to be certified as a spacecraft ground controller for NASA- Goddard Space Flight Center’s unmanned spacecraft.

Mims developed an early love affair with NASA, becoming an administrative assistant in NASA's co-op program while still in high school. After she earned an Honors Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Business Administration from Towson University, she worked at NASA as a Aerospace Technologist, programming data telemetry processing systems on board in-orbit satellites, which enabled the world to see graphical images of outer space; and later as a spacecraft controller of the Transition Region and Coronal Explorer (TRACE), a satellite devised to deepen understanding of our dynamic sun's activity. Mim's last mission at NASA was on the Wide Field Infrared Explorer (WIRE), attempting to determine how stars are formed.

Mims has received numerous awards for her achievements, including the prestigious Trumpet Award (2001) and the Government Leadership Award by *US Black Engineer* (1999). She was named Most Promising Engineer– Government at the Black Engineer of the Year Awards (2000) and one of the Top Ten Minority Women in Science and Engineering by the National Technical Association (1998). She is the proud mother of two highly successful young adults.