



# "A Customer First Company"

## April 2017

### Welcome to the April 2017 Edition of "On the Move"

#### The "Hidden" Story Behind Margaret Johnson

Margaret Johnson is one of our fellow K&K riders. Recently, Ms. Johnson, along with two other IRS employees, were recognized at a National Press Club luncheon by Commissioner Koskinen.



Commissioner Koskinen invited three employees to join him at his last National Press Club address, (l-r) Carolyn Tavener, Commissioner Koskinen, Margaret Johnson, and Mike Lin. [photo credit: Marshall H. Cohen, NPC photographer]

Ms. Johnson, currently works as an IT Specialist and has been with the IRS for over 30 years. She says computer programming is self-rewarding "because you can see your accomplishments when others do not." Outside of work, she mentors elementary and middle school girls. Koskinen remarked that she seemed destined for success, following her mother's inspiring footsteps in public service.

Margaret's mother, Willianna Smith, was one of several 1960s-era female mathematicians featured in the movie "Hidden Figures." "Margaret's mother is a wonderful role model for public service, and the IRS is lucky

Margaret decided to follow her mother into government work. When you step beyond the stereotypes of the IRS, the employees reflect the can-do nature of the agency.", remarked Commissioner Koskinen.



Willianna W. Smith (far right), c. 1967, stands with other staff members at a greeting of U.S. astronauts. Read more in the article, "When the Computer Wore a Skirt: Langley's Human Computers 1935-1970," on NASA's website

"My mom's work was top-secret and confidential, and at the time, none of us would have understood it," says Margaret. "What's more, even when people knew these ladies worked at NASA, they would never have known what they did or how close they were to making monumental 'hidden' history -- articles and television only showed white faces when it came to the space program.

"She did tell me she used FORTRAN programming language and worked on the re-entry and landings of space crafts. I remember her bringing home used green bar computer paper for us to draw and color on. The lines in the paper helped me learn to write. When she would take me to work, unconsciously teaching me, I remember sitting on the floor seeing the computer lights flashing and clicking behind the tinted glass wall. I knew to be quiet and not ask to go to the bathroom. But I also knew that if I was quiet, I could tag along and see more of the world.



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"Where we lived in Hampton (Virginia), Dorothy Vaughan (portrayed in the movie by Octavia Spencer) was our neighbor. Others mentioned in the book, like Ms. Katherine Land, lived one street in front of us, and Ms. Ophelia Taylor lived in the neighborhood next to us. And when my mom bought an old, beat-up station wagon, she carpooled with these ladies to work. One of the opening scenes of the movie is a flashback of the ladies riding in the car together. The picture was a perfect match for their neat look, their pleasant attitudes and badges. They were excited to be using their math skills and proud of it.

"They did all this while working under signs that read 'Colored Computers' and a bathroom labeled 'Colored Girls.' And, when she was assigned to the East Campus, she had to go all the way back to the West Computer to use the bathrooms as there were no 'Colored' bathrooms at the East Campus.

"When my mother died, I looked through her SF-50s and saw that she carried the title 'clerk-typist' until affirmative action laws gave her the titles she was qualified for – 'statistician' and then 'mathematician.' "All these ladies, including my mother, lived behind the scenes even to families and neighbors, and they never wanted to appear

to be more than ordinary folks. But to me, they were such good role models.

Margaret Johnson continued on to say, "They loved their children and wanted them to go to college, and they cared about their communities and wanted to help where they could. This was an honor and a privilege for them, not to be mistaken with vanity or pride, but as capable mathematical matches for the task at hand."

### K&K Connections April Birthdays

We would like to wish everyone born in April a very special HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Kent Alldredge  
Anita Anderson  
Emmanuel Anum  
Christopher Brown  
Beth Ann Cordova  
Jerry Gordon  
Ronnie Holmes  
Rudolph Mendoza  
Christopher Norman  
Stenovia Roberts  
Kevin Puryear  
Vernon Robinson  
Daniel Russell  
Shepherd White  
Carl Yamnitz  
John Baggett

Nikisha Bailey  
Rhoan Burnard  
Mary Davis  
Patrick Cinak  
Philip Fickes  
April Higgs  
Jerry Mori  
Cathy Mosser  
Mayank Patel  
Eric Peters  
Peter Rodman  
James Roots  
Michael Troyer  
Kisha Wilkins  
Krystle Yozzo

### Welcome to K&K Connections

We would like to say a BIG welcome to all our new riders. We are so privileged that you have decided to make K&K your vanpool company of choice.

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