

# Margot Lee Shetterly

**Margot Lee Shetterly** (born June 30, 1969) is an American non-fiction writer who has also worked in investment banking and media startups. Her first book, *Hidden Figures: The Story of the African-American Women Who Helped Win the Space Race* (2016), is about African-American women mathematicians working at NASA who were instrumental to the success of the United States space program. She sold the movie rights while still working on the book, and it was adapted as a feature film of the same name, *Hidden Figures* (2016).<sup>[1]</sup> For several years Shetterly and her husband lived and worked in Mexico, where they founded and published *Inside Mexico*, a magazine directed to English-speaking expats.

## Contents

- Biography
- Works
- Honors
- References
- External links

## Biography

Margot Lee was born in 1969 in Hampton, Virginia. Her father worked as a research scientist at NASA-Langley Research Center,<sup>[2][3]</sup> and her mother was an English professor at the historically black Hampton University.<sup>[4]</sup> Lee grew up knowing many African-American families with members who worked at NASA. She attended Phoebus High School and graduated from the University of Virginia's McIntire School of Commerce.

After college, Lee moved to New York and worked several years in investment banking: first on the Foreign Exchange trading desk at J.P. Morgan, then on Merrill Lynch's Fixed Income Capital Markets desk. She shifted to the media industry, working at a variety of startup ventures, including the HBO-funded website Volume.com. She married writer Aran Shetterly.

In 2005, the Shetterlys moved to Mexico to found an English-language magazine called *Inside Mexico*.<sup>[5]</sup> Directed to the numerous English-speaking expats in the country, it operated until 2009. From 2010 through 2013, the couple worked as content marketing and editorial consultants to the Mexican tourism industry.

Shetterly began researching and writing *Hidden Figures* in 2010. In 2014, she sold the film rights to the book to William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins, and it was optioned by Donna Gigliotti of Levantine Films.<sup>[6][7]</sup> The Fox 2000 feature film was released in 2016, and stars Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer, Janelle Monáe, and Kevin Costner.

Margot Lee Shetterly



Shetterly in 2016

<b>Born</b>	June 30, 1969 <div>Hampton, Virginia</div>
<b>Occupation</b>	Writer
<b>Nationality</b>	American
<b>Alma mater</b>	University of Virginia
<b>Subject</b>	Black history, women's history
<b>Notable awards</b>	Sloan Fellowship, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities Fellow
<b>Website</b>	
<div>www.margotleeshetterly.com (http://www.margotleeshetterly.com)</div>	

In 2013, Shetterly founded The Human Computer Project, an organization whose mission is to archive the work of all of the women who worked as computers and mathematicians in the early days of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).<sup>[8]</sup>

In 2018, Shetterly published the picture book, *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race*, which is geared towards children four to eight years old. The book was illustrated by Laura Freeman.<sup>[9]</sup>

## Works

---

- *Hidden Figures: The Story of the African-American Women Who Helped Win the Space Race*. William Morrow/HarperCollins, 2016. ISBN 9780062363596.
- NASA-Langley Women's History Month 2014 Keynote: "Hidden Figures: The Female Mathematicians of NACA and NASA"
- *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race*. HarperCollins, 2018. ISBN 978-0062742469.

## Honors

---

Shetterly received a 2014 Book Grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation<sup>[10]</sup> for her book *Hidden Figures*. This first nonfiction work went on to win the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award.<sup>[11]</sup>

Shetterly has received two grants from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities for her work on The Human Computer Project.<sup>[12]</sup>

She also won the 2017 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work, Nonfiction.<sup>[13]</sup>

On May 12, 2018, Shetterly was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Worcester Polytechnic Institute at its 150th Commencement exercises.<sup>[14]</sup>

## References

---

1. Buckley, Cara (May 20, 2016). "Uncovering a Tale of Rocket Science, Race and the '60s" ([https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/22/movies/taraji-p-henson-octavia-spencer-hidden-figures-rocket-science-and-race.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/22/movies/taraji-p-henson-octavia-spencer-hidden-figures-rocket-science-and-race.html?_r=0)). *The New York Times*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.
2. Epstein, Sonia. "NASA Mathematician Katherine Johnson Receives Presidential Medal" (<http://www.scienceandfilm.org/articles/2617/nasa-mathematician-katherine-johnson-receives-presidential-medal>). *Sloan Science and Film*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.
3. Mirk, Sarah (May 23, 2016). "In 'Hidden Figures,' NASA'S African American Mathematicians Will Land on the Big Screen" (<https://bitchmedia.org/article/hidden-figures-nasa-african-american-mathematicians-will-land-big-screen>). *Bitch Media*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.
4. Atkinson, Joe. "From Computers to Leaders: Women at NASA Langley" (<http://www.nasa.gov/larc/from-computers-to-leaders-women-at-nasa-langley>). *NASA Langley*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.
5. Johnson, Reed (February 14, 2007). "Speaking the Same Language" (<http://articles.latimes.com/2007/feb/14/entertainment/et-mexpaper14>). *LA Times*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.
6. Deahl, Rachel (March 10, 2014). "Book Deals: Week of March 10, 2014" (<http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/book-deals/article/61357-book-deals-week-of-march-10-2014.html>). *Publishers Weekly*. Retrieved July 14, 2016.
7. Fleming Jr., Mike (July 9, 2015). "Ted Melfi & Fox 2000 in Talks For 'Hidden Figures'; How A Group of Math-Savvy Black Women Helped NASA Win Space Race" (<http://deadline.com/2015/07/ted-melfi-hidden-figures-black-women-mathematicians-help-nasa-win-space-race-fox-2000-1201473028/>). *Deadline*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.
8. Atkinson, Joe. "From Computers to Leaders: Women at NASA Langley" (<http://www.nasa.gov/larc/from-computers-to-leaders-women-at-nasa-langley>). *NASA Langley*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.

9. Ha, Thu-Huong. "A children's picture book of "Hidden Figures" is coming" (<https://qz.com/1074141/hidden-figures-margot-lee-shetterly-will-publish-a-childrens-picture-book-adaptation/>). *Quartz*. Retrieved October 9, 2017.
10. Epstein, Sonia. "NASA Mathematician Katherine Johnson Receives Presidential Medal" (<http://www.scienceandfilm.org/articles/2617/nasa-mathematician-katherine-johnson-receives-presidential-medal>). *Sloan Science and Film*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.
11. <http://www.anisfield-wolf.org/books/hidden-figures/>
12. Bearinger, David. "The Human Computer Project" (<http://virginiahumanities.org/2015/01/the-human-computers-project/>). *Virginia Foundation for the Humanities*. Retrieved July 13, 2016.
13. Lewis, Hilary and Arlene Washington (2/10/2017). "2017 NAACP Image Award Winners: Complete List" (<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/lists/2017-naacp-image-award-winners-televised-966471/item/outstanding-literary-work-fiction-955879>). *The Hollywood Reporter*. Check date values in: |date= (help)
14. <https://www.wpi.edu/news/margot-lee-shetterly-author-hidden-figures-delivers-address-worcester-polytechnic-institute> (<https://www.wpi.edu/news/margot-lee-shetterly-author-hidden-figures-delivers-address-worcester-polytechnic-institute>). Retrieved May 12, 2018. Missing or empty |title= (help)

## External links

---

- Margot Lee Shetterly website (<http://www.margotleeshetterly.com>)
  - The Human Computer Project (<https://web.archive.org/web/20160806120505/http://www.thehumancomputerproject.com/>)
  - *Hidden Figures* (<https://www.harpercollins.com/9780062363596/hidden-figures>), HarperCollins site
  - "Margot Lee Shetterly Wants To Tell More Black Stories" ([https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/18/magazine/margot-lee-shetterly-wants-to-tell-more-black-stories.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/18/magazine/margot-lee-shetterly-wants-to-tell-more-black-stories.html?_r=0)). Interview by Ann Marie Cox, *The Telegraph*, 13 September 2016.
  - Appearances (<https://www.c-span.org/person/?margotshetterly>) on C-SPAN
- 

Retrieved from "[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Margot\\_Lee\\_Shetterly&oldid=921204502](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Margot_Lee_Shetterly&oldid=921204502)"

---

**This page was last edited on 14 October 2019, at 14:30 (UTC).**

Text is available under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License](#); additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](#), a non-profit organization.