

## African-Americans in Red Cross Leadership



Dr. Charles Drew, renowned pioneer in blood plasma and medical director of the first American Red Cross blood bank. Dr. Drew led the way for African-Americans to support the collection, processing and distribution of blood and blood products.



Jesse O. Thomas, first professional African-American hired by national headquarters in 1943 to bridge the gap between the American Red Cross and the African-American community.



Dr. Charles W. Orr, former member of the Red Cross Board of Governors and recipient of the Harriman Award for Distinguished Volunteer Service.



Dr. Jerome H. Holland, Chairman of the American Red Cross from 1979 to 1985. Dr. Holland played a major role in consolidating laboratory operations of the American Red Cross Blood Services program. The world-renowned Holland Research Laboratory is named after him.



Gwendolyn Jackson, appointed Red Cross National Chairman of Volunteers in 1988.

## African-Americans have played a vital role in the development of the American Red Cross.

Through pioneering blood plasma research, assisting victims of disaster, teaching Red Cross health and safety courses, offering services to our men and women in the armed forces and providing strong and insightful volunteer leadership, the service of the African-American community has been invaluable.

For more information about how you can donate blood to help save lives, please call or visit:

**1-800-RED CROSS | [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org)**



### American Red Cross

**The need is constant.  
The gratification is instant.  
Give blood.™**

### We are the American Red Cross

Governed by volunteers and supported by giving individuals and communities, the American Red Cross is the single largest supplier of blood products to hospitals throughout the United States. While local hospital needs are always met first, the Red Cross also helps ensure no patient goes without blood no matter where or when they need it. In addition to providing more than 40 percent of the nation's blood supply, the Red Cross provides relief to victims of disaster, trains millions in lifesaving skills, serves as a communication link between U.S. military members and their families and assists victims of international disasters or conflicts.

## African-Americans in Red Cross History



### American Red Cross



**Joe and Rosey**  
American Red Cross  
blood donors since 2003

**The need is constant.  
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# African-Americans in Red Cross History

African-Americans have always proudly shared in the humanitarian work of the American Red Cross. From the early days of Clara Barton to the Persian Gulf War and beyond, African-Americans have steadily increased their commitment to the time-honored

tradition of Red Cross service. The photographs you see here speak to that tradition. They tell a story of African-American involvement in an American Red Cross that today, more than ever, is committed to serving all Americans.



A group of African-Americans helps to feed flood victims after the Sea Island Hurricane in 1893.



Dr. Charles Drew with mobile unit used for the 'Plasma for Britain' program in 1940.



Representatives of 13 leading African-American organizations discuss World War II - related problems and programs of the American Red Cross at a 1942 conference.



Red Cross worker comforts a disaster victim. African-Americans have been serving as Red Cross caseworkers since the Mississippi Valley Floods of 1927.



D.W.D. Hector, Chairman of the Near South Side Red Cross in Chicago, donates blood in 1942 for wounded soldiers and sailors.



Red Cross workers with troops of the 27th Chemical Company in France shortly after the end of World War II.



Girl Scouts are awarded Red Cross certificates after completing a special Red Cross course conducted by the New Orleans chapter in 1950.



Edythe H. Coleman, vice chairman for the District of Columbia Volunteer Motor Service, was celebrated as a heroine after she drove 200 pints of blood through a dark, rainy night in 1956, to help treat burned victims of a Baltimore church fire.



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