

## L. Douglas Wilder, J.D.

**Distinguished Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University's L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Affairs  
Former Mayor, Richmond, Virginia  
Former Governor, State of Virginia  
Sergeant First Class, U.S. Army Infantry (Retired)**

*Richmond, VA*

When L. Douglas Wilder was drafted into the Army infantry during the Korean War, he believed there were no solutions to the social and racial problems in America. His outlook changed, however, once he experienced the newly integrated military.

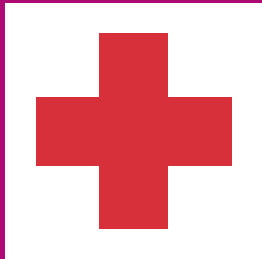
“The military was my first exposure to integration. It was so much different than civilian life,” said Wilder. “It came as a welcome relief to me to get to know individuals from other races. I was uplifted. It made me believe I could help produce meaningful resolutions for some of our country’s problems.”

Wilder returned from Korea and began a historic career in public service that has spanned 40 years. During that time, he was elected Virginia’s first African American state senator since Reconstruction. Later, he broke barriers when he became the first African American in the U.S. to be elected governor. He made history again when he was sworn in as Richmond, Virginia’s, first elected African American mayor.

Throughout his career, Wilder has made it his mission to represent those who did not have a voice in politics. He is known for his message of fiscal prudence, racial healing and caring for others. Today, he relays this message to his students as a distinguished professor at the school that bears his name.

“I have always tried to be a bridge between people who are black and white, young and old, rich and poor,” Wilder said. “It’s still my goal. It’s a continuing bridge.”

# 1918



**1918**  
Aileen Cole Stewart is called to duty as one of the first African American nurses in the Army Nurse Corps. She served during the Spanish influenza epidemic.



**1922**  
Joseph H. Ward is appointed the first African American to head a Veterans Administration (VA) hospital. He is named officer-chief of the VA hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama.

# MARCH 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 1914: Ralph W. Ellison, author and educator, born.	<b>2</b> 1867: Congress enacts charter to establish Howard University.	<b>3</b> 1865: Freedmen's Bureau established by federal government to aid newly freed slaves.	<b>4</b> 1965: Bill Russell of the Boston Celtics honored as NBA's most valuable player for fourth time in five years.	<b>5</b> 1770: Crispus Attucks becomes one of the first casualties of the American Revolution.	<b>6</b> 1857: Supreme Court issues Dred Scott decision.
<b>7</b> 2006: Photographer-filmmaker Gordon Parks, who captured the struggles and triumphs of black America, dies.	<b>8</b> 1945: Phyllis M. Daley becomes first black nurse sworn in as a Navy ensign.	<b>9</b> 1841: Amistad mutineers freed by Supreme Court.	<b>10</b> 1869: Robert Tanner Freeman becomes first black to receive a degree in dentistry.	<b>11</b> 1959: Lorraine Hansberry's <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> opens at Barrymore Theater, New York; the first play by a black woman to premiere on Broadway.	<b>12</b> 1932: Andrew Young, former U.N. ambassador and former mayor of Atlanta, born.	<b>13</b> 1773: Jean Baptiste Pointe Du Sable, black pioneer and explorer, founded Chicago.
<b>14</b> 1956: Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott ends when municipal bus service is desegregated. Daylight Saving Time Begins	<b>15</b> 1947: John Lee, first black commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy, assigned to duty.	<b>16</b> 1827: <i>Freedom's Journal</i> , the first U.S. black newspaper, is founded.	<b>17</b> 1890: Charles B. Brooks patents street sweeper. St. Patrick's Day	<b>18</b> 1822: The Phoenix Society, a literary and educational group, founded by blacks in New York City.	<b>19</b> 1971: The Rev. Leon Sullivan elected to board of directors of General Motors.	<b>20</b> 1883: Jan E. Matzellig patents shoemaking machine.
<b>21</b> 1965: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. leads march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, for voting rights.	<b>22</b> 1898: J.W. Smith patents lawn sprinkler.	<b>23</b> 1873: Slavery abolished in Puerto Rico.	<b>24</b> 1907: Nurse and aviator Janet Harmon Bragg born.	<b>25</b> 2009: John Hope Franklin, a prolific scholar of African American history who influenced thinking about slavery and Reconstruction, dies.	<b>26</b> 1872: Thomas J. Martin patents fire extinguisher.	<b>27</b> 1924: Jazz singer Sarah Vaughan, "The Divine One," born.
<b>28</b> 1870: Jonathan S. Wright becomes first black state Supreme Court justice in South Carolina. Palm Sunday	<b>29</b> 1918: Pearl Bailey, singer and actor, born. Passover Begins (sundown)	<b>30</b> 1870: Fifteenth Amendment ratified, guaranteeing voting rights to blacks.	<b>31</b> 1988: Toni Morrison wins Pulitzer Prize for <i>Beloved</i> .			