



Homestead National Monument of America

***Whoopi Goldberg
Comedian, Actress (Winner of Grammy, Tony,
Emmy, and Academy Awards), Great-great
Granddaughter of Homesteaders
1955-
Alachua County, Florida***

Whoopi Goldberg was born Caryn Elaine Johnson in New York City in 1955. Her great-great-grandparents were among a relatively small number of African Americans who received land in Florida under the Southern Homestead Act after the Civil War. Within two generations, her ancestors had migrated north to New York. She began performing as a child and at age 19 moved to California to seek a career in show business. She adopted her stage name while working with the improvisational group Spontaneous Combustion in San Diego.

She met famed film director Mike Nichols in 1983, and the following year he produced her first one-woman show on Broadway. She was then cast in the lead role in Steven Spielberg's acclaimed 1985 film *The Color Purple*. She received an Oscar nomination for this performance, and other film roles soon followed. She also became a regular host of Comic Relief, a celebrity-driven program designed to help the nation's homeless.

Whoopi Goldberg has won nearly every major performance award during her career. She received an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actress for her role in the 1990 blockbuster film *Ghost* and has also won an Emmy (for television work), Grammy (for a comedy album recording), and Tony (for theater). She was the first female and first solo African American to host the Academy Award broadcast. She is currently a co-host on the popular daytime television talk show *The View*.