

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

February
16, 2021

Issue 100

**CELEBRATING 100
COMMUNICATIONS!**

Greetings FM,

The month of February is designated as Black History Month. It was first proposed by black educators and the Black United Students at Kent State University in February 1969. Six years later, Black History Month was celebrated across the U.S. It is also recognized and celebrated around the globe with observations in the UK starting in 1986, Canada in 1995, and Ireland as recent as 2010.

When President Gerald Ford recognized Black History Month in 1976, during the celebration of the United States Bicentennial, he urged Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history" ([Source](#)). Keeping with the spirit of his speech, let's take the time to highlight Black Americans throughout U.S. history who have contributed in some way to the work we do as CSU Facilities Management professionals. We owe many inventions, technological breakthroughs, and advancements to Americans of color, and while these inventions have multiple applications all over the world, facilities management and maintenance wouldn't be the same without them.

- Thomas L. Jennings was the first African American person to receive a patent in the U.S., paving the way for future inventors of color to gain exclusive rights to their inventions. He invented an early method of dry cleaning called "dry scouring" and patented it in 1821.
- Computer scientist and engineer Mark E. Dean worked for IBM, where he led the team that designed the ISA bus—the hardware interface that allows multiple devices like printers, modems, and keyboards to be plugged into a computer. He also helped develop the color screen. Imagine doing work without external hardware or color screens on our computers!
- In the 19th century people had to close both sides of the elevator door manually and this could lead to severe accidents. In 1887 Alexander Miles remediated this problem by designing an important safety feature for elevators: automatic doors.
- Marian Croak was inducted into the Women in Technology International's hall of fame in 2013 for her creation and patents on VoIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol), which allows us to make voice calls over the internet. It is hard to imagine that we could have accomplished so much in the pandemic without her valuable tech contribution leading to our ability to meet virtually via Zoom and Teams.

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- If you've heard the phrase "the real McCoy," you might be surprised to learn that the phrase came from the popularity of a railroad invention designed by Elijah McCoy. Often regarded as one of the most famous black inventors, McCoy was credited for 50 inventions over the span of his career. In 1872 he developed a "lubricating cup" that could automatically drip oil when and where needed. It was so popular that when other inventors attempted to steal his idea and sell their own versions of the device, companies insisted on the authentic device, calling it "the Real McCoy."
- Marie Van Brittan Brown invented the first closed circuit security system. Though she was a full-time nurse, she recognized the need for security in her home and even invented an alarm button that notified police directly when activated. We owe much of systems and Facilities monitoring technology to her pioneering work.

Black History Month is an important time to recognize and reflect on our fellow humans who have not received justice, recognition, and equity in their lives. It is also a chance for us to appreciate the advancements in science, technology and society that we would not otherwise have if it weren't for these trailblazing people.



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FM JEDI Team

[SOURCE](#)

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We have reached 100 FM communications! This started as a daily communication allowing us to share information department-wide at the start of the pandemic and evolved into a weekly publication to share new information, highlight department programs, and acknowledge Facilities Management work. It has been quite the year. Thank you for tackling it with us and for reading along.

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