



# Ben's Story

*Ben Carson had a childhood dream of becoming a physician.*

But growing up poor in a single-parent household in Detroit with bad grades and a horrible temper, the statistics were certainly not in his favor.

Fortunately, Ben's mother, having only completed third grade herself, challenged her two children to reach beyond their meager circumstances through reading and building their knowledge of the world.

As he began to appreciate reading, Ben's grades improved dramatically and he started to develop what would become a life-long love affair with learning. Young Ben excelled in high school and upon completion, went on to attend college at Yale University where he met Candy, the young lady who would become his wife.

## **A CAREER OF SERVICE**

After graduation, Ben would work as an X-ray technician, a bank teller, a school bus driver, a supervisor for highway cleanup crews, and a crane operator in a steel factory, before being accepted into The University of Michigan School of Medicine. Ben and Candy were married, and after graduating medical school, Ben moved his family to Baltimore where he performed his residency training at the Johns Hopkins University Medical Center.

Little did he know at the time, but Johns Hopkins and Baltimore, Maryland would become his home for most of his career, as Dr. Carson went on to direct pediatric neurosurgery at the Johns Hopkins Children's Center for 29 years.

Some of Dr. Carson's career highlights include the first and only successful separation of craniopagus (Siamese) twins joined at the back of the head in 1987, the first completely successful separation of type-2 vertical craniopagus twins in 1997 in South Africa, and the first successful placement of an intrauterine shunt for a hydrocephalic twin.

## **HONORS & AWARDS**

In 2001, Dr. Carson was named by CNN and TIME Magazine as one of the nation's 20 foremost physicians and scientists. That same year, he was selected by the Library of Congress as one of 89 "Living Legends."

He is also the recipient of the 2006 Spingarn Medal, the highest honor bestowed by the NAACP. In June, 2008, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which is the highest civilian honor in the land.

Dr. Carson holds more than 60 honorary doctorate degrees, is a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, the Institute of Medicine/National Academy of Science, the Horatio Alger Society of Distinguished Americans, and many other organizations.

He sat on the board of directors of numerous entities, including Kellogg Company, Costco Wholesale Corporation, the Academy of Achievement, and is an Emeritus Fellow of the Yale Corporation, the governing body of Yale University. He was appointed in 2004 by President George W. Bush to serve on the President's Council on Bioethics, and has spoken twice during the National Prayer Breakfast, in 1997 and again in 2013.

## **GIVING BACK**

As a strong believer in the power of education, and alarmed by studies showing America's students falling behind the rest of the world, Ben and Candy Carson founded the Carson Scholars Fund in 1994.

Built to reward young people of all backgrounds for exceptional academic and humanitarian accomplishments, the Carson Scholars Fund now operates in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, having awarded over \$6.2 million dollars to more than 6,200 scholars.

The program also establishes Carson Reading Rooms in schools across the country to encourage young students and their families to discover the pleasure of reading and to recognize the true power of learning. To date the program has established over 100 reading rooms in 14 states across the U.S.

## **AUTHOR & THINKER**

Dr. Carson is a prolific writer and author, having published eight books, including his autobiography, *Gifted Hands*, and two titles that were New York Times Bestsellers, *America the Beautiful*, *Rediscovering What Made This Nation Great*, and *One Nation, What We All Can Do to Save America's Future*, which was on the New York Times Best Sellers List for twenty weeks, five of those weeks at #1. *Gifted Hands* was the subject of the award-winning, made-for-television movie under the same title as the book in which Cuba Gooding, Jr., played Dr. Carson in the leading role.