

For over fifty years, General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.) has devoted his life to public service. Having held senior military and diplomatic positions across four presidential administrations, Powell's deep commitment to democratic values and freedom has been felt throughout the world.

The son of Jamaican immigrants, Powell was born in Harlem in April 1937 and was raised in the South Bronx. He was educated in the New York City public schools and after graduating from Morris High School attended the City College of New York where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology. It was not until he joined the Army ROTC program at CCNY that he discovered his calling and launched his military career. He received a commission as an Army second lieutenant upon graduation in 1958 and went on to serve in the United States Army for 35 years, rising to the rank of Four-Star General.

From 1987 – 1989 Powell served as President Ronald Reagan's National Security Advisor. He served from 1989 – 1993 as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for both President George H.W. Bush and for President Bill Clinton, and was not only the youngest officer and first ROTC graduate to ever serve in the position but also was the first African American to do so. During his time as Chairman, he oversaw 28 crises to include the Panama intervention of 1989 and Operation Desert Storm in the victorious 1991 Persian Gulf War.

Under President George W. Bush, Powell was appointed the 65<sup>th</sup> Secretary of State and was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate. As Secretary of State, he led the State Department in major efforts to address and solve regional and civil conflicts—in the Middle East, Sudan, Congo and Liberia, in the Balkans, Cyprus, Haiti, Northern Ireland, Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere. In all areas, he used the power of diplomacy to build trust, forge alliances and then help transform these unstable regions into areas where societies and cultures have the potential to prosper. He also worked at the forefront of American efforts to advance economic and social development worldwide.

Among the many U.S. Military awards and decorations Powell has received are the Defense Distinguished Service Medal (with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters), the Army Distinguished Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Soldier's Medal, Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. His civil awards include two Presidential Medals of Freedom, the President's Citizens Medal, the Congressional Gold Medal and the Secretary of Energy Distinguished Service Medal. In addition, he has also received awards from over two-dozen countries to include a French Legion of Honor and an honorary knighthood bestowed by H.M. Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain.

Powell is the Chair of the Board of Visitors of the Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership at his alma mater, the City College of New York (CCNY). The Powell School was inaugurated May of 2013 and stands alongside CCNY's other premiere named schools. He is the Founder and Chairman Emeritus of the America's Promise Alliance, dedicated to forging a strong and effective partnership alliance committed to seeing that children have the fundamental resources they need to succeed.

Powell is a strategic limited partner at Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, the renowned Silicon Valley venture capital firm. He serves on the Board of Directors of Bloom Energy, an alternative energy company that provides unique on-site power generation systems utilizing an innovative new fuel cell technology. In March of 2014, he joined the Board of Directors of Salesforce.com, the world's largest provider of Cloud-based customer relationship management software.

He is the Chairman of the Advisory Board of Leeds Equity Partners, a private equity firm focused on investments in the education, training, information and business services industries. He is also Chairman of the Eisenhower Fellowships, a cross-cultural program for emerging international leaders.

Powell is a member of the Board of Directors of the Council on Foreign Relations. He is on the Executive Leadership Cabinet of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial and is the Honorary Chairman of the education center for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. He also serves on the board of the Smithsonian Institute's African American Museum of History and Culture.

His autobiography, *My American Journey*, was a best seller and has been published in more than a dozen different languages. Powell's second book, *It Worked for Me* (May, 2012), was an instant *New York Times* best seller and reveals the lessons that shaped his life and career.

Powell is married to the former Alma Vivian Johnson of Birmingham, Alabama. They live in McLean, Virginia and have three children and four grandchildren.