



## Condoleezza Rice

- **Why is Condoleezza Rice important?**
  - She was confirmed **Secretary of State** on January 26, 2005; the first African American woman to hold this position.
  - In 2001, she was the first woman to be appointed National Security Advisor to President George W. Bush.
- **When and where was she born?**

Condoleezza Rice was born in Birmingham, Alabama, on November 14, 1954.
- **Who were her parents?**
  - Her father, John Wesley Rice, was a school guidance counselor and a Presbyterian minister. He died in 2000.
  - Her mother, Angelena, was a schoolteacher. She died in 1985.
- **Does she have brothers or sisters?**

No. She is an only child.
- **What does Condoleezza Rice's name mean?**

Her name comes from an Italian musical term *Con Dolcezza* that means with gentleness, or more literally, with sweetness.
- **What was her early family life like?**
  - She began piano lessons at age 3, could read by 5, and skipped the first and seventh grades. She attended public schools before enrolling at Birmingham Southern Conservatory of Music in 1964.

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- **Where did she receive her education?**
  - Secretary Rice received a BA in political science from the University of Denver at age 19
  - MA in political science from the University of Notre Dame in 1975
  - PhD from the Graduate School of International Studies at the University of Denver in 1981.
- **Important influences in Condoleezza Rice's life.**
  - Her parents taught her that she could achieve anything if she believed in herself.
  - She grew up in Birmingham, Alabama in the 1960s at a time when the city was torn apart by racial tensions. Her parents tried to protect her from the hatred and prejudice caused by racism but they could not shut out the ugliness completely.
  - One of her girlfriends was killed in the 1963 bombing of a black church in Birmingham.
  - Josef Korbel, the father of former Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright gave a lecture on Stalin while she was a 15 year old student at the University of Denver. After that lecture, she became fascinated with Soviet politics and decided to major in political science.
- **What are some of her interests?**
  - She is a concert pianist. Her mother taught her to play the piano at an early age.
  - She was playing Bach and Beethoven even before her feet could reach the piano's pedals. She has a special fondness for Brahms. In 2002 she played the piano at Constitution Hall accompanying cellist, Yo-Yo Ma.
  - She is a champion-level ice skater.
  - She loves sports, especially football. She sees similarities in football and the battlefield rivalries between nations. Her dream job would be as a Football Commissioner. Her favorite team is the Cleveland Browns.
  - She likes to cook.
- **What languages does she speak?**
  - Russian, French, Spanish, Latin.
- **What type of work has she done?**
  - 1977 - Intern with the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C.
  - 1980 - Intern, Rand Corporation.

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**1981** - An expert on Russia and Eastern Europe, she began teaching political science at Stanford University. She was the first woman, first African American and the youngest person, at age 38, to hold the position in the school's history.

**1989-1991** - President George H.W. Bush named her director of Soviet and East European Affairs on the National Security Council. She advised the Bush administration on foreign policy and military issues, including the unification of Germany and the breakup of the Soviet Union.

**1993** - Returned to Stanford, and named provost, the university's budget and academic official. She became the youngest and first black chief academic and budget officer at Stanford, making her second in command at the institution.

**1999**- Took a leave of absence to advise Texas Governor George W. Bush, who was then mounting a campaign for the presidency.

**2000**- During the presidential race, served as one of Bush's team of foreign policy advisers and as a member of Bush's campaign response team.

**2001** - Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon she was featured prominently as a government official, dealing with the "war on terrorism."

**2001 - January 2005** - National Security Advisor under the Bush administration.

**January 2005** - Confirmed as first African American woman Secretary of State.