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Duke Kahanamoku King of the Waves

August 24, 1890–January 22, 1968

Duke Kahanamoku came to be known as the father of international surfing, but the Hawaiian native made his first splash as a swimmer at the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. Born in Honolulu in 1890, Kahanamoku struck gold by setting a world record in the 100-meter free-style and earned a silver medal in the 200-meter relay. He won two more golds at the 1920 Antwerp Olympics, a silver at the 1924 Paris Olympics, and a bronze at the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics. Kahanamoku's swimming and surfing talents caught the attention of Hollywood, and over the course of nine years, he appeared in nearly 30 movies. Kahanamoku went on to serve as sheriff for the City and County of Honolulu for 26 years. When the legendary swimmer and surfer died at the age of 77, he was remembered for his athletic talent and sportsmanship.



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Dr. Feng Shan Ho A True Lifesaver

September 10, 1901–September 28, 1997

Dr. Feng Shan Ho single-handedly saved thousands of Austrian Jews during the Holocaust. When Dr. Ho arrived in Vienna in 1937 as a Chinese diplomat, Austria had the third largest Jewish community in Europe. Just one year later, however, the Nazis took over Austria and began persecuting Jews. Although they tried to flee, Austrian Jews had nowhere to go because most of the world's nations would not accept Jewish refugees. Against all odds, many would survive thanks to Dr. Ho. As Chinese General Consul in Vienna, he went against his boss' orders and began issuing Jews visas to Shanghai, China. These lifesaving documents allowed thousands of Jews to leave Austria and escape death. After 40 years of diplomatic service that included ambassadorships to Egypt, Mexico, Bolivia, and Colombia, Dr. Ho retired to San Francisco, California. At age 89, he published his memoirs, "Forty Years of My Diplomatic Life." Dr. Ho died in 1997, an unknown hero of World War II.



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Flossie Wong-Staal Scientist

Born August 27, 1947

Flossie Wong-Staal, née Wong Yee Ching, is a Chinese-American virologist and molecular biologist. She was the first scientist to clone HIV and determine the function of its genes, which was a major step in proving that HIV is the cause of AIDS.

She was co-founder and, after retiring from UCSD, she became the Chief Scientific Officer of Immusol, which was renamed iTherX Pharmaceuticals in 2007 when it transitioned to a drug development company focused on hepatitis C, and where she remains as the Chief Scientific Officer.



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Chinese Railroad Builders Men of Steel

In 1863, construction began on the transcontinental railroad—1,776 miles of tracks that would form a link between America's West and East coasts. While thousands of European immigrants worked on the westbound Pacific Union rail, there was not enough manpower to build the Central Pacific line, which snaked through the rugged Rocky and Sierra Nevada Mountains. In 1865, Central Pacific officials hired 50 Chinese laborers to lay down a section of track. Their work was so well done, they decided to recruit more Chinese men. In the end, nearly 12,000 Chinese railroad workers were hired to perform dangerous work that white men refused to do. They dammed rivers, dug ditches, and blasted tunnels through mountain ranges. Hundreds of men died on the job. The Chinese also faced discrimination because they looked different from the white workers. Although they often outperformed other laborers, they were paid less. Despite all of the hardships, the Chinese laborers never quit. Thanks to their hard work, America became the first continent to have a coast-to-coast railroad.



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Yo-Yo Ma A Magnificent Musician

Born October 7, 1955

One of the world's great musicians, Yo-Yo Ma began studying the cello at the age of four. As a toddler, he and his parents moved from Paris, France, to New York. At age nine, Ma made his musical debut at the famed Carnegie Hall in New York City. Since graduating from the Julliard School and Harvard University, Ma has played as a soloist with orchestras around the world. Along the way, he has recorded 50 albums and collected more than a dozen Grammy Awards. He is also dedicated to bringing music into the lives of young people through education programs and family concerts. Ma plays two instruments—a 1733 Montagnana cello and a 1712 Davidoff Stradivarius.



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Maya Lin A Monumental Archtech

Born October 5, 1959

Maya Lin rose to fame in 1981. Just 21 years old and still an architectural student at Yale University, Lin won a contest to design the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Her design beat out more than 1,400 entries. The Memorial's 594-foot granite wall features the names of the more than 58,000 U.S. soldiers who died during the Vietnam War. Each year, four million people visit the wall to pay their respects to these war heroes. Less than a decade later, Lin designed another famous structure—the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama. The monument outlines the major events of the Civil Rights Movement. Today, Lin's designs can be found in several American cities and continue to inspire the entire nation.



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Amy Tan A Writing Pro

Born February 19, 1952

Amy Tan was born in Oakland, California, the daughter of Chinese parents who had immigrated to the United States three years earlier. As a teenager, Tan and her family moved to Europe, where she attended high school in Switzerland. Tan later returned to the U.S. to attend college. She gained international attention in 1989 with the publication of her first novel, *The Joy Luck Club*, a story about Chinese women and their Chinese-American daughters. The book has been translated into 25 languages and has been made into a movie. In addition to her best-selling novels, Tan has also written two children's books, *The Moon Lady* and *Sagwa*. Besides writing, Tan plays in a rock 'n roll band called *The Rock Bottom Remainers* with several other famous writers, including Stephen King and Scott Turow.



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Jerry Yang
Web Wizard

Born November 6, 1968

A native of Taiwan, Jerry Yang came to America at age 10, knowing a single English word—shoe. After arriving in Los Angeles, Yang's family settled in San Jose, California. Although he admits to having had a short attention span in school, Yang aced his studies and was accepted to one of the nation's top colleges—Stanford University. As a graduate student at Stanford, Yang and classmate, David Filo, created the Yahoo! directory to help their pals hunt down cool web sites. Today, Yahoo! is the world's most frequently visited Web site, with 237 million loyal surfers. Yahoo's kid site, Yahoooligans, is popular with young webmasters as well. When he's not tracking down web links, Yang is hitting the links. He is an avid golfer and sumo-wrestling fan.



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Michelle Kwan Perfection on Ice

Born July 7, 1980

For nearly a decade, Michelle Kwan had been skating circles around the competition. The California native bounced back from a disappointing finish at the 2002 Winter Olympics to win her seventh U.S. women's figure skating title in January and her fifth world title in March. Her career 37 perfect scores are the most of any skater in history. When competing, Kwan always wears a Chinese good luck charm around her neck. The charm was a gift from her grandmother. Kwan began skating at age five and won her first competition two years later. Now, at age 22, she is a skating legend, who is admired for both her athleticism and grace on the ice.



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Alfredo Alcala Artist, Illustrator

August 23, 1925–April 8, 2000

Alfredo Alcala is one of the most disciplined and perceptive artists inking in comics. The years of distinguished work have earned Alfredo a special place in comics history.” — Gil Kane.

In the late 1960s, an extremely talented group of Filipino illustrators took the American comic book industry by storm — and the late Alfredo Alcala led the way, working for both Marvel and DC on such popular characters as Conan the Barbarian and Batman. This unique work is loaded with amazing art and pointers on observational methods, composition, and other techniques. In addition to insightful interviews with Alcala, the book features pages from his groundbreaking masterwork, *Voltar*, which was hailed as a new concept in comic book form, an epic in narrative art, and a milestone in sequential art illustration. Students, professionals, teachers, and fans will treasure this inspiring volume and its insider’s look at comic book artistry.

“A wonderful look at the thought process of one of the best artist/inkers in comic book history and should be read, not just by comic book fans, but by anyone who appreciates great art.” — Rushford Public Library



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Ellison Shoji Onizuka Astronaut

June 24, 1946–January 28, 1986

Ellison Shoji Onizuka was an American astronaut and engineer from Kealahou, Hawaii, who successfully flew into space with the Space Shuttle Discovery on STS-51-C. He died in the destruction of the Space Shuttle Challenger, on which he was serving as Mission Specialist for mission STS-51-L. He was the first Asian American and the first person of Japanese ancestry to reach space.

Onizuka was assigned to the mission STS 51-L on the Space Shuttle Challenger that took off from Kennedy Space Center at 11:38:00 EST (16:38:00 UTC) on January 28, 1986. It was destroyed when a flame jet leaking from a solid rocket booster ruptured the liquid hydrogen fuel tank 73 seconds after launch. All seven crew members were killed.

Following the Challenger disaster, examination of the recovered vehicle cockpit revealed that three of the crew members Personal Egress Air Packs were activated: those of Onizuka, mission specialist Judith Resnik, and pilot Michael Smith. The location of Smith's activation switch, on the back side of his seat, means that either Resnik or Onizuka could have activated it for him. This is the only evidence available from the disaster that shows Onizuka and Resnik were alive after the cockpit separated from the vehicle. However, if the cabin had lost pressure, the packs alone would not have sustained the crew during the two-minute descent.



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Grace Lee Boggs Activist

June 27, 1915–October 5, 2015

Grace Lee Boggs enrolled in Barnard College in 1931 at age 16 to study philosophy. She stayed until she received a Ph.D. in 1940. She moved to Chicago and became involved with tenant organizing and various socialist causes. In 1953 she met, and later married, Jimmy Boggs, an autoworker and black activist in Detroit while working on the Socialist Workers Party newsletter. Lee became involved in the black power movement and was a founding member of Detroit's Asian Political Alliance. She has since continued her work as a writer, speaker, and civil rights activist.



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George Takei
Actor

Born April 20, 1937

George Hosato Takei is an American actor, director, author, and activist. He is best known for his role as Hikaru Sulu, helmsman of the USS Enterprise in the television series Star Trek. He also portrayed the character in six Star Trek feature films and one episode of Star Trek: Voyager.

As of April 2018, his Facebook page has over 10 million followers since he joined in 2011, and the account frequently shares photos with original humorous commentary. Takei is a proponent of LGBT rights and is active in state and local politics. He has won several awards and accolades in his work on human rights and Japan–United States relations, including his work with the Japanese American National Museum.

Takei's work on the Broadway show Allegiance, as well as his own internment in a US-run internment camp during World War II, has given him a platform to speak out against government rhetoric about immigrants and immigration policies.



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George Katsutoshi Nakashima Woodworker, Architect, Furniture Maker

May 24, 1905–June 15, 1990

George Katsutoshi Nakashima was an American woodworker, architect, and furniture maker who was one of the leading innovators of 20th century furniture design and a father of the American craft movement. In 1983, he accepted the Order of the Sacred Treasure, an honor bestowed by the Emperor of Japan and the Japanese government.

Nakashima's home, studio, and workshop near New Hope, Pennsylvania, was listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places^[4] in August 2008; six years later the property was also designated a National Historic Landmark. In June 2015, the site received a "Keeping It Modern" grant from the Getty Foundation to create a solid conservation plan as a model approach for the preservation of historic properties.^[5] One of Nakashima's workshops, located in Takamatsu City, Japan, currently houses a museum and gallery of his works. The Nakashima Foundation for Peace, currently housed in the Minguren Museum in New Hope, had its beginnings in 1984. In 1984, George Nakashima had the opportunity to purchase the largest and finest walnut log he had ever seen and sought to use the immense planks to their fullest potential. He dreamed then that if Altars for Peace were made for each continent of the world, as centers for meditation, prayer, and activities for peace, the world would be a better place. Over the past decade, his furniture has become ultra-collectible and his legacy of what became known as the "free-edge" aesthetic influential. Today the Nakashima business makes standard wooden furniture and continues to create more peace altars,^[6] soon to complete Nakashima's legacy. To do so the company has procured yet another extremely valuable walnut log that almost matches the size and magnificence of the original.



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Bruce Lee Martial Artist and Action Superstar

November 27, 1940–July 20, 1973

Bruce Jun Fan Lee (Lee Siu Loong) was born in 1940 in San Francisco, CA while his parents were on tour with the Chinese Opera. Ultimately raised in Hong Kong, Bruce Lee was a child actor appearing in more than 20 films. At the age of 13, Bruce took up the study of wing chun gung fu under renowned wing chun master, Yip Man.

Bruce left Hong Kong at the age of 18, came to the United States and made his way to Seattle, Washington where he worked in the restaurant of a family friend. He soon enrolled in the University of Washington where he pursued a degree in philosophy. Bruce began to teach gung fu in Seattle and soon opened his first school, the Jun Fan Gung Fu Institute. Two more schools followed in Oakland and Los Angeles. Concurrently Bruce married his wife, Linda and had his two children, Brandon and Shannon. In the mid sixties, Bruce was discovered while doing an exhibition at the Long Beach Internationals and a role as Kato in the tv series The Green Hornet soon followed. During this time, Bruce was also developing his own martial art, which he ultimately named Jeet Kune Do (translated: the way of the intercepting fist).

Bruce's art was steeped in a philosophical foundation and did not follow long held martial traditions. Instead it had at its core the ideas of simplicity, directness and personal freedom. After The Green Hornet series was canceled, Bruce encountered resistance while working in Hollywood and so headed to Hong Kong to pursue a film career. In Hong Kong he made 3 films, which consecutively broke all box office records and showcased martial arts in an entirely new way. Hollywood took notice and soon Bruce was making the first Hollywood / Hong Kong coproduction with a film called Enter the Dragon. Unfortunately, Bruce Lee died in 1973 before this film was released. This film catapulted him to international fame. Today Bruce Lee's legacy of self expression, equality, and pioneering innovation continues to inspire people all around the world.



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Sessue Hayakawa

Actor, Producer, Author, Martial Artist, Monk

June 10, 1886–November 23, 1973

During Hollywood's silent screen era Japanese screen star Sessue Hayakawa rivaled Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin and John Barrymore in popularity with film audiences. Hayakawa was one of the highest paid Hollywood stars of his time, making over \$5,000 a week in 1915, then \$2 million a year through his own production company in 1920s. He was handsome and flamboyant and gave some of Hollywood's legendary parties. Hayakawa was also Paramount's first choice for the role of The Sheik that launched Rudolph Valentino's career in 1918.

Not bad for a student from Japan who stumbled into acting during a vacation in Los Angeles.

Hayakawa was a remarkable man who lived a remarkable life. He was an actor, producer, author, martial artist and an ordained Zen monk. He starred in over 80 movies and achieved stardom on three continents. In one night during the peak of his success, he gambled away \$1 million at Monte Carlo, shrugging off the loss while another Japanese gambler who lost a fortune committed suicide. From the gaudy heights of Hollywood in the early 20s, to occupied France in the 30s and 40s, to his academy-award nomination in 1957, Hayakawa's movie-like life brimmed with extraordinary adventures and accomplishments.



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