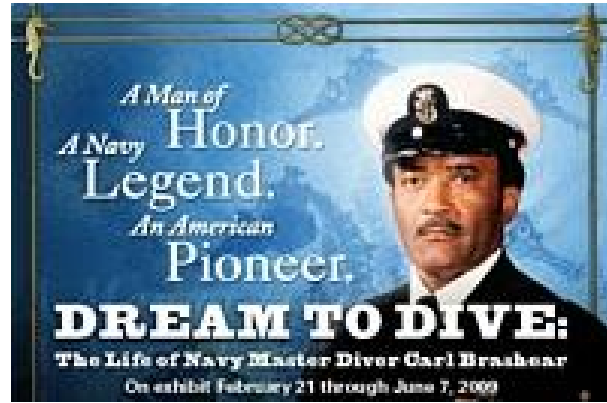




0. REMINISCENCES OF CARL BRASHEAR - Story Preface

1. HUMBLE BEGINNINGS
2. RACIAL PREJUDICE IN THE NAVY
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4. DEEP SEA DIVING LEGENDS
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13. REMINISCENCES OF CARL BRASHEAR

Carl Brashear (follow this link to see him in later years) retired from the Navy in 1979 - a shining example of what a person can achieve despite great obstacles.

He experienced all kinds of incredible events in the Navy, despite early widespread discrimination against him and other African-American Navy personnel.

From looking out of a Mark V diving helmet, to looking up at nuclear-test mushroom clouds, Carl saw the world below and above the sea. His journey included some momentous events:

- At Quonset Point Naval Air Station (in Rhode Island), he was President Eisenhower's naval escort for six months (while Ike spent time on the Presidential Yacht, the Barbara Ann - later named the Honey Fitz by President Kennedy).
- Before the USS Arizona (BB-39) Memorial was erected, Carl and his team dove the Arizona to determine her degree of list. (It is two degrees.) Diving on the famous battleship, where so many men lost their lives during the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Carl experienced the most unique dive of his career. He recalls, "Of all the diving I did in my time, this gave me a different feeling. I got down and thought about those 1,100 shipmates down there that didn't make it out."
- Stationed on the USS Coucal (ASR-8) in 1962, Carl participated in Joint Task Force Eight's Operation Dominic (scroll down to view a government film clip) "as a diver for nuclear testing." He witnessed some of the first U.S. atmospheric nuclear weapons tests since 1958 (at Christmas Island and Johnston Island in the South Pacific).
- While based at the Naval Safety Center in Norfolk, Virginia, he flew around the world, investigating hundreds of diving-related incidents.

Only a handful of enlisted people have been honored with Oral Histories from the U.S. Naval Institute. Carl - a role model to many - is one of them. He learned, during his Naval career and afterward, that trust and confidence in one's own abilities is a key ingredient to achieving one's goals and dreams.

But Carl Brashear never forgot he could not "do it" on his own. Along the way he experienced the power of a supportive team, working together as one unit to accomplish unbelievable goals. The sign on his diving locker summarizes one of the driving forces of his extraordinary life:

There's no one of us smarter than all of us.

NOTES:

Master Chief Petty Officer Brashear died at the Naval Medical Center of Portsmouth on the 25th of July, 2006. His son, who was serving in Iraq at the time, was summoned home because his father was suffering from respiratory problems and heart failure. Despite the seriousness of his condition, Carl - age 75 - held on until his son could be at his side.

All quotes in this story are from the U.S. Naval Institute's *The Reminiscences of Master Chief Boatswain's Mate Carl M. Brashear, U.S. Navy (Retired)*. You can obtain a copy from the U.S. Naval Institute in Annapolis, Maryland.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/REMINISCENCES-OF-CARL-BRASHEAR-Men-of-Honor-Story-of-Carl-Brashear>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/REMINISCENCES-OF-CARL-BRASHEAR-Men-of-Honor-Story-of-Carl-Brashear>

Questions 2 Ponder

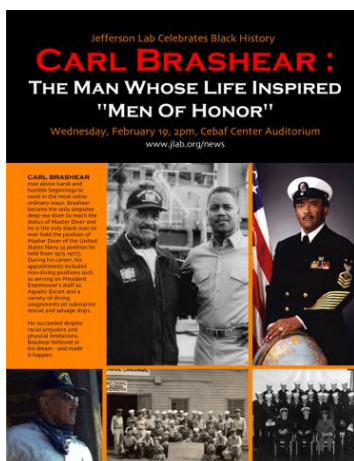
Is It True that “There’s No One of Us Smarter Than All of Us?”

Carl Brashear, the U.S. Navy’s first African-American master diver - and - America’s first amputee diver - once said: “There’s no one of us smarter than all of is.”

What does Brashear’s comment mean to you?

What does the U.S. Navy's selection of Carl Brashear, to provide an oral history, tell us about how the Navy viewed Carl and his career?

Media Stream



Carl Brashear: The Man Who Inspired Men of Honor

Image online, courtesy jlab.org.

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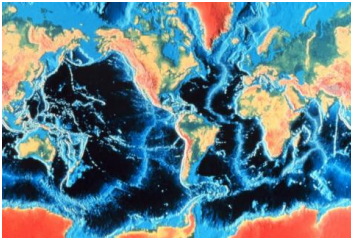


Nuclear Explosion Mushroom Cloud

Image online, courtesy [The Nuclear Weapons Archive](#).

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World Below the Sea Surface

Image, described above, online courtesy NOAA.

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Christmas Island - Disaster Scene in 2010

Map online, courtesy CIA World Factbook.

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