

Notable North Carolinians ^[1]

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Notable North Carolinians

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ENTERTAINMENT

• Musicians

- [9th Wonder](#) ^[2] (born January 15, 1975 in Winston-Salem)
- [Ryan Adams](#) (born 1974 in Jacksonville), singer/songwriter
- [Tori Amos](#) ^[3] (born 1963 in Newton), singer
- [Jimmy Capps](#) ^[4] (born 1939 in Fayetteville), county music studio guitarist
- [Travis Cherry](#) (born May 17, 1975 in Raleigh), producer, musician, songwriter
- [J. Cole](#) ^[5] (born January 28, 1985 in Germany, moved to Fayetteville at 8 months old)
- [George Clinton](#) ^[4] (born 1941 in Kannapolis), funk musician
- [John Coltrane](#) ^[6] (born September 23, 1926 in Hamlet)
- [Billy "Crash" Craddock](#) (born June 16, 1939 in Greensboro)
- [Charlie Daniels](#) ^[7] (born 1936 in Wilmington), singer/songwriter
- [Roberta Flack](#) ^[8] (born February 10, 1937 in Black Mountain)
- [Ben Folds](#) (born September 12, 1966 in Winston-Salem)
- [Blind Boy Fuller](#) ^[9] (1908–1941, born in Wadesboro), blues guitarist and singer
- [Ben E. King](#) (born 1938 in Henderson), singer/songwriter
- [Del McCoury](#) (born 1939 in Bakersville) bluegrass music legend
- [Ronnie Milsap](#) (born January 16, 1943 in Robbinsville)
- [Thelonious Monk](#) ^[10] (1917–1982, born in Rocky Mount), jazz & blues pianist
- [Petey Pablo](#) (born July 22, 1973 in Greenville)
- [Phonte](#) ^[11] (born in Greensboro)
- [Max Roach](#) ^[12] (1924–2007, born in [Pasquotank County](#) ^[13]), jazz drummer
- [Earl Scruggs](#) ^[14] (born January 6, 1924 near Shelby, [Cleveland County](#) ^[15])
- [Nina Simone](#) ^[16] (1933–2003, born in Tryon), singer
- [Billy Taylor](#) (born July 24, 1921 in Greenville)
- [James Taylor](#) ^[17] (March 12, 1948, moved to Chapel Hill at age 3)
- [Randy Travis](#) ^[18] (born 1959 in Marshville), country music singer
- [Loudon Wainwright III](#) (born 1946, Chapel Hill), songwriter, folk singer, humorist and actor
- [Doc Watson](#) ^[19] (born 1923 in Deep Gap), folk guitarist
- [Link Wray](#) (1929–2005, born in Dunn), Pioneering rock musician and songwriter
- ***American Idol* contestants**
 - [Clay Aiken](#) ^[20] (born November 30, 1978 in Raleigh) runner up
 - [Fantasia Barrino](#) ^[21] (born June 30, 1984 in High Point) winner
 - [Bucky Covington](#) ^[22] (born November 8, 1977 in Rockingham) 8th place
 - [Chris Daughtry](#) ^[23] (born December 26, 1979 in Roanoke Rapids) 4th place
 - [Anoop Desai](#) ^[24] (born December 20, 1986 in Cary; raised in Chapel Hill.) 6th, 7th place
 - [Scotty McCreery](#) ^[25] (born October 9, 1993 in Garner) winner
 - [Kellie Pickler](#) ^[26] (born June 28, 1986 in Albemarle) 6th place

• Actors/Actresses

- [Sandra Bullock](#) (attended East Carolina University in Greenville from 1982-1986)
- [Billy Crudup](#) (born July 8, 1968, graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)
- [Jennifer Ehle](#) (born December 29, 1969 in Winston-Salem)
- [Eileen Fulton](#) (born September 13, 1933 in Asheville)
- [Zach Galifianakis](#) (born October 1, 1969 in Wilkesboro)
- [Ava Gardner](#) ^[27] (born December 24, 1922 in Grabtown, [Johnston County](#) ^[28])
- [Pam Grier](#) (born 1949 in Winston-Salem), actress
- [Andy Griffith](#) ^[29] (born June 1, 1926 in Mount Airy)
- [George Grizzard](#) (1928–2007, born in Roanoke Rapids), Emmy and Tony-winning actor
- [Michael C. Hall](#) (born 1971 in Raleigh) actor
- [Andie McDowell](#) (born April 21, 1958 in South Carolina; summer vacation home was in Arden; lived in Asheville from 1998 to 2011)
- [Julianne Moore](#) (born 1960 in Fort Bragg), actress
- [Soupy Sales](#) (1926–2009, born in Franklinton), comedian

- Amy Sedaris (born March 29, 1961, grew up in Raleigh)
- Ben Vereen (born 1946 in Laurinburg), actor, entertainer
- Evan Rachel Wood (born September 7, 1987 in Raleigh)
- **Media**
 - David Brinkley (July 10, 1920 – June 11, 2003, born in Wilmington) Newscaster
 - Carl Kasell ^[30] (born April 2, 1934 in Goldsboro) National Public Radio
 - Howard Cosell (March 25, 1918- April 23, 1995, born in Winston-Salem) Sportscaster
 - Cecil B. DeMille (1919–1959, born in Washington) film director
 - Gallagher (born 1947 in Fort Bragg), comedian
 - Star Jones (born 1962 in Badin) TV personality
 - Charles Kuralt (September 10, 1934–July 4, 1997, born in Wilmington) TV journalist
 - Doug Marlette (December 6, 1949–July 10, 2007. Born in Greensboro) cartoonist and writer
 - Edward R. Murrow ^[31] (April 25, 1908-April 27, 1965, born in Pole Cat Creek, Guilford County ^[32])
 - Charlie Rose (January 5, 1942, born in Henderson) TV journalist
 - Tom Wicker (June 18, 1926– November 25, 2011, born in Hamlet) journalist
 - Clarence Avant (February 25, 1931- , born in Climax), American music executive, film producer and entertainment icon

SPORTS

- **Baseball**
 - Jim "Cattfish" Hunter ^[33] (April 8, 1946– September 9, 1999, born in Hertford)
 - Gaylord Perry (born September 15, 1938 in Williamston)
 - Jim Perry (born October 30, 1935 in Williamston)
 - Jack Scott (April 18, 1892, born in Ridgeway)
 - Enos "Country" Slaughter ^[34] (April 27, 1916- November 30, 1959 born near Roxboro)
- **Basketball**
 - Phil Ford (born February 9, 1956 in Kannapolis)
 - Bobby Jones (born December 18, 1951 in Charlotte)
 - Michael Jordan (born February 17, 1963 in Brooklyn, moved to Wilmington at age 5)
 - Meadowlark Lemon (born April 25, 1932 in Wilmington)
 - Danny Manning (born May 17, 1966 in Hattiesburg, MS, moved to Greensboro)
 - Pete Maravich (attended Broughton High School in Raleigh)
 - Fred "Curly" Neal (born May 19, 1942 in Greensboro)
 - Jacques Dominique Wilkins (born in Paris on January 12, 1960; moved to Washington)
 - James Worthy (born February 27, 1961 in Gastonia)
- **Boxing**
 - Sugar Ray Leonard ^[35] (born May 17, 1956 in Wilmington)
- **Football**
 - Kelvin Bryant (born September 26, 1960 in Tarboro)
 - Roman Gabriel ^[36] (born August 5, 1940 in Wilmington)
 - Charlie "Choo Choo" Justice ^[37] (born May 18, 1924 in Asheville)
 - Sonny Jurgenson (born August 23, 1934 in Wilmington)
 - Julius Peppers (born January 18, 1980 in Wilson)
- **Racing**
 - Dale Earnhardt ^[38] (born April 29, 1951 in Kannapolis)
 - Junior Johnson (born June 28, 1931 in Wilkes County ^[39])
 - Richard Petty ^[40] (born July 2, 1937 in Level Cross)
- **Running**
 - Marion Jones (born October 12, 1975, 1997 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)
- **Soccer**
 - Mia Hamm ^[41] (born March 17, 1972 in Alabama)
- **Wrestling**
 - Vince McMahon (born 1945 in Pinehurst) Chairman of the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE)

ART AND LITERATURE

- **Pulitzer Prize Winners**
 - Paul Green ^[42] (born 17 March 1894 in Lillington) Pulitzer Prize for Drama 1927
 - Hatcher Hughes ^[43] (12 February 1881 in Polkville) Pulitzer Prize for Drama 1924
 - Vermont Royster (April 30, 1914-July 22, 1996, born in Raleigh) Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Writing 1953
 - Michael Skube (Raleigh News and Observer) Pulitzer Prize for Journalism- Criticism 1989
 - Claude Sitton (Raleigh News and Observer) Pulitzer Prize for Journalism- Commentary 1983
- **Writers**
 - Maya Angelou ^[44] (teaching at Wake Forest University ^[45] in Winston-Salem since 1991) Doris Betts (born June 4, 1932 in Statesville)
 - Orson Scott Card, sci-fi writer (moved to Greensboro in 1983)
 - Thomas Dixon ^[46] (1864–1946, born in Shelby), author of Birth of a Nation
 - Charles Frazier ^[47] (born November 4, 1950 in Asheville)

- [Kaye Gibbons](#) ^[48] (born May 10, 1960 in [Nash County](#) ^[49])
- Allan Gurganus (born June 11, 1947 in Rocky Mount)
- [O. Henry](#) ^[50] (September 11, 1862– June 5, 1910, born in Greensboro)
- Michael Malone (born in 1956 in Durham), author of comedic and mystery novels, and television writer
- Jill McCorkle (July 7, 1958 in Lumberton)
- David Payne (born 1955 in Henderson)
- Reynolds Price (born February 1, 1933, Macon)
- Guy Owen (born February 24, 1925–25 July 1981, born in Clarkton, [Bladen County](#) ^[51])
- Tom Robbins (born 1936 in Blowing Rock), author of the bestselling novel *Even Cowgirls Get The Blues* and others
- David Sedaris (born December 26, 1956, grew up in Raleigh sometime before 1968)
- Betty Smith (lived in Chapel Hill from 1936-1971) wrote *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, 1943
- Lee Smith (born in 1944, grew up in the Blue Ridge Mountains)
- Nicholas Sparks (lived in New Bern since 1996)
- Timothy Tyson (born 1959 in Raleigh) author of *Blood Done Sign My Name*
- [Thomas Wolfe](#) ^[52] (October 3, 1900– September 15, 1938, born in Asheville)
- **Artists**
 - Romare Bearden (1911–1988, born in Charlotte), African-American artist and writer
 - Harvey Littleton (born 1922, opened studio in 1976 in Spruce Pine) glass artist, founder of the American Studio Glass movement

SCIENCE

- **Nobel Prize Winners**
 - [Daniel L. McFadden](#) ^[53] (born July 29, 1937 in Raleigh) The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences 2000
 - [Kary B. Mullis](#) ^[54] (born December 28, 1944 in Lenoir) Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1993
 - [Dr. Oliver Smithies](#) ^[55] (professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill since 1988) Nobel Prize for Medicine or Physiology 2007
 - [Robert F. Furchgott](#) ^[56] (born June 4, 1916. 1937 B.S., Chemistry, University of North Carolina) Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1998
 - [Peter Agre](#) ^[57] (UNC-CH Fellow, hematology/oncology, 1978-1981) Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 2003
 - [Martin Rodbell](#) ^[58] (Former UNC-CH adjunct professor) Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1994
 - [Rudolph Marcus](#) ^[59] (UNC-CH post-doctoral fellow, 1951; UNC-CH faculty, 1951-1952) Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 1992
 - [Gertrude B. Elion and George H. Hitchings](#) ^[60] (adjunct professors at the UNC School of Medicine) Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine, 1988

OTHER

- **Religion**
 - [Billy Graham](#) ^[61] (born November 7, 1918 near Charlotte)
 - Anne Graham Lotz (born May 1948 in Montreat) daughter of Billy Graham
 - Franklin Graham (born July 14, 1952 near Asheville) son of Billy Graham
- **Military**
 - Eugene Gray Payne, Major General, USMC. (graduate of North Carolina State University)
- **Astronauts**
 - Michael J. Smith (April 30, 1945–January 28, 1986, born in Beaufort)
 - Dr. William Thornton, (born April 14, 1929 in Faison)
 - Dr. Ronald Ervin McNair, (October 21, 1950 – January 28, 1986; born in S.C; graduate of N.C. A & T University, 1971; physicist and astronaut, died in the Space Shuttle *Challenger* accident)
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Caleb Bradham (1866–1934, born in New Bern) inventor of Pepsi-Cola
 - [Oscar Scott Woody](#) ^[62] (April 15, 1868-April 15, 1912, born in Roxboro) Mail clerk on board the SS Titanic

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[Biography](#) ^[63]

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