

# Marjorie Joyner



Marjorie Joyner : October 24, 1896 – December 27, 1994

She was the first African-American woman Inventor to patent a Permanent Hair Wave Machine that is still in use today.

Marjorie Stewart Joyner was born in Monterey, Virginia 1894. Joyner was the granddaughter of a slave and a white slave owner. In 1912, Joyner moved to Chicago, and, studied cosmetology. In 1916, she became the first African American to earn a degree in cosmetology at the prestigious A.B. Molar Beauty School. Joyner, like many successful women before her, opened her own salon and later in 1919 after meeting Madam C.J. Walker, she joined Madam C.J. Walker Beauty Colleges as the national supervisor. While working at Madam C.J. Walker Beauty Colleges, Joyner discovered many things and learned that many techniques and tools used for hair needed a serious update. Before attending Walker College, she learned to work with white hair and at the Walker School she learned about working with Black hair and the methods used to treat and create hairstyles.

From the 1910's to the 1960's, women of all races liked to curl and wave their hair however, in the 1910's and 1920's to do such a process required a lot. To curl or wave one's hair the curling iron at the time looked like dull scissors, and required one curl to be set at a time. It was a long and uncomfortable process. In 1928, Joyner created a solution for the process of hair weaving and curling, her invention called the "Permanent Waving Machine" was a contraption that contained a grouping of hair curling irons inside a helmet, attached to an electrical outlet that hung over a woman's head. The invention was patented in 1929 under the Madam C.J. Walker Manufacturing Company and was very popular not only for black women but also for white women. Joyner later worked for the Madam C.J. Walker board of directors, was the vice president for the Walker Colleges, and in 1940 founded the United Beauty School Owners and Teachers Association. Later in life, Joyner obtained a PhD in Humanities and her work was featured in an exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution.

## Resources:

Adscape International LLC, A. (2009). Marjorie Joyner- great Female Inventors. Image 1. Retrieved February 22, 2021, from <http://www.greatfemaleinventors.com/pages/marjoriejoyner.html>

Lemelson MIT, L., 2021. Marjorie Joyner | Lemelson. (online) Lemelson.mit.edu. Available at: (<https://lemelson.mit.edu/resources/marjorie-joyner>) (Accessed 23 February 2021).

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