

AMERICA THE GREATEST®

America is the greatest nation in the world because she has allowed her citizens the opportunity to develop their "Potential for Greatness." Citizens such as
ROBERTA FLACK.

Born: February 10, 1940 (Aquarius),
one of four children in Black
Mountain, North Carolina.

Father: Laron Flack, draftsman.

Mother: Irene Flack, cook, domestic.

Education: Howard University.

Accomplishment: Singer, composer.



ROBERTA FLACK

As a child, music was a constant theme in Roberta's house: her father was a self-taught piano player and her mother, benefitting from a few lessons, played piano at the local church. At age 5, Roberta moved to Arlington, Virginia, and by age 9, she was taking music lessons under Mrs. Alma Blackman.

Because her social life was often curtailed due to obesity (in high school she weighed 200 pounds), she devoted herself to the piano; she became a superb pianist, playing everything from concert to popular.

Roberta won a scholarship to Howard University, where she majored in music and became an accomplished opera singer. After graduation, she taught English for a year in a black school in Farmville, North Carolina; then back to Washington, D.C., where she taught music for the next seven years in the Washington public school system.

In 1960, Frederick "Wilkie" Wilkerson, on hearing her play, and sing some popular songs, suggested Roberta do more popular music and less opera.

In 1962, Mrs. Alma Blackman, her former piano teacher, got her a part-time job after school playing and singing at the Old Trivoli Restaurant in Georgetown, accompanying opera singers.

In 1967, Roberta was heard singing in Washington's 1520 Club on K Street by Henry Yaffe, owner of the popular Georgetown club, "Mr. Henry's." He hired her, and she developed a large following of Washington elite. Her friend, jazz pianist Les McCann, was influential in securing her contract with Atlantic Records; her initial album, "First Take," was released in 1970. Roberta's singles, "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face," and "Killing Me Softly With His Song," climbed to the top of the charts. She won the 1973 Grammy for "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face."

A nation is as great as the sum total of the greatness of its individuals. America offers her people more opportunity to develop their "Potential for Greatness" than any other nation on earth. I challenge you to develop yours!

Today we honor **ROBERTA FLACK**. Tomorrow could we honor you?

Dr. Michael R. Loss.

DR. MICHAEL R. LOSS

President, America The Greatest, Inc.®