



**Secretary of State Colin L. Powell**  
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Colin L. Powell was nominated by President Bush on December 16, 2000 as Secretary of State. After being unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate, he was sworn in as the 65<sup>th</sup> Secretary of State on January 20, 2001.

Prior to his appointment, Secretary Powell was the chairman of America's Promise - The Alliance for Youth, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to mobilizing people from every sector of American life to build the character and competence of young people.

Secretary Powell was a professional soldier for 35 years, during which time he held myriad command and staff positions and rose to the rank of 4-star General. His last assignment, from October 1, 1989 to September 30, 1993, was as the 12<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the highest military position in the Department of Defense. During this time, he oversaw 28 crises, including Operation Desert Storm in the victorious 1991 Persian Gulf war.

Following his retirement, Secretary Powell wrote his best-selling autobiography, *My American Journey*, which was published in 1995. Additionally, he pursued a career as a public speaker, addressing audiences across the country and abroad.

Secretary Powell was born in New York City on April 5, 1937 and was raised in the South Bronx. His parents, Luther and Maud Powell, immigrated to the United States from Jamaica. Secretary Powell was educated in the New York City public schools, graduating from the City College of New York (CCNY), where he earned a bachelor's degree in geology. He also participated in ROTC at CCNY and received a commission as an Army second lieutenant upon graduation in June 1958. His further academic achievements include a Master of Business Administration degree from George Washington University.

Secretary Powell is the recipient of numerous U.S. and foreign military awards and decorations.

Secretary Powell's civilian awards include two Presidential Medals of Freedom, the President's Citizens Medal, the Congressional Gold Medal, the Secretary of State Distinguished Service Medal, and the Secretary of Energy Distinguished Service Medal. Several schools and other institutions have been named in his honor and he holds honorary degrees from universities and colleges across the country.

Secretary Powell is married to the former Alma Vivian Johnson of Birmingham, Alabama. The Powell family includes son Michael; daughters Linda and Anne; daughter-in-law Jane; and grandsons Jeffrey and Bryan.