



# James Harris



“**James Harris**’s humility made him one of the most respected Managers in the history of the Los Angeles Division of the United States Postal Service.” This is a direct quote from the National Mail Handlers Union Local 303 when they honored him as Citizen of the Year in 1989.

James was born on November 17, 1935 in Arkadelphia, AR, graduated from Peake High School in 1953, then moved to the state of California. He received an AA degree in Journalism from Los Angeles City College in 1955. He also earned credit hours from California State University, Los Angeles.

James entered the United States Army in 1955 and trained at Fort Ord, CA and Fort Lee, VA. (Fort Ord is a former United States Army post on Monterey Bay of the Pacific Ocean coast in California, which closed in 1994.) He was trained as an Information Specialist and served at the Toul Engineering Depot in Toul, France. He received an honorable discharge in 1957.

In 1958 he secured a job as a Distribution Clerk at the Los Angeles Post Office. By 1966 Harris was one of the few African Americans promoted to a high profile position of Foremen Mails. Later he was promoted to General Foremen Mails, Assistant Tour Superintendent, then Tour Superintendent. By 1980, he had been promoted to Distribution Manager which gave him charge of three shifts – 24/7, 365 days a year. Harris had to manage over 3,000 employees! The highest point of his career was the opening of the Los Angeles General Mail Facility, the largest postal facility on one-level in the world. Mr. Harris officially retired from the USPS on November 30, 1990.

Even as James was experiencing a great deal of success in his career, he volunteered as one of the coordinators of the Arkadelphia Banquet held in Los Angeles, CA for over 20 years. The banquet was a social event for Arkadelphians and their friends to mingle and socialize. The entertainment was often a speaker from Arkadelphia. This group collected and donated over \$11,000 for the Peake High School Museum.

Harris married his childhood sweetheart, Thelma Bryant in 1959. They have two sons, Michael and Kenneth, a daughter-in-law Lisa, and four grandchildren: Lana, Cydney, Samatha and Marcus James. Harris enjoys his retirement by traveling from Culver City to Oceanside to spend quality time with his children and grandchildren.