



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2023



[2023 North Carolina Black Heritage Festival \(Concord, NC\)](#)

[African American Heritage Festival \(Charlotte, NC\)](#)

[Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts+Culture \(Charlotte, NC\)](#)

[America's Black Holocaust Museum \(Charlotte, NC\)](#)

[Black History Month Celebration \(Charlotte, NC\)](#)



Dr. Shirley Jackson
THEORETICAL PHYSICIST

Major Developments:
touch-tone telephone, caller ID,
fiber-optic cable

CONTRIBUTIONS IN TECHNOLOGY BY BLACK INVENTORS

Jackson joined the Theoretical Physics Research Department at AT&T Bell Laboratories in 1976, examining the fundamental properties of various materials. She began her time at Bell Labs by studying materials to be used in the semiconductor industry. She worked in the Scattering and Low Energy Physics Research Department from 1978 and moved to the Solid State and Quantum Physics Research Department in 1988. At Bell Labs, Jackson researched the optical and electronic properties of two-dimensional and quasi-two-dimensional systems.

Jackson served on the faculty at Rutgers University in Piscataway and New Brunswick, New Jersey from 1991 to 1995, in addition to continuing to consult with Bell Labs on semiconductor theory. Her research during this time focused on the electronic and optical properties of two-dimensional systems.

Although some sources claim that Jackson conducted scientific research while working at Bell Laboratories that enabled others to invent the portable fax, touch-tone telephone, solar cells, fiber optic cables, and the technology behind caller ID and call waiting, Jackson herself makes no such claim. Moreover, these telecommunications advancements significantly predated her arrival at Bell Labs in 1976, with these six specifically enumerated inventions occurring by others in the time frame between 1954 and 1970.

[Wikipedia](#)

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