

Exclusive Photo: Nichelle Nichols, Uhura in Original 'Star Trek'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 27, 2018 - 5:37pm

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CHICAGO – There is nothing like the original, and Nichelle Nichols is certainly in that category. Nichols portrayed Uhura in the original 1960s “Star Trek” series, and broke barriers for African American performers by being an equal member of the ground-breaking Starship Enterprise crew during the civil rights era.



Live Long and Prosper: Nichelle Nichols on August 23rd, 2018

Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

Nichelle Nichols was born Grace Dell Nichols in Robbins, Illinois. Her family was living in Chicago when she began her career, where she appeared in "Kicks and Co.," a musical that never got out of the Windy City... but it did get the attention of Hugh Hefner, who booked Nichols in his Chicago Playboy Club. She also appeared on TV in Gene Roddenberry's "The Lieutenant" (1964), and the eventual producer of "Star Trek" was in a relationship with the actress when he cast her as Uhura (the Enterprise Communications Officer) in 1966. She played the role until the series went off the air in 1969, and then in the subsequent 1970s/80s movies series. After the first season, she wanted to leave the original show, but no less than Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. convinced her to stay, saying that she "was making history." She also shared television's first interracial kiss, with William Shatner as Captain Kirk, 50 years ago in November of 1968.

Her post Trek years lived up to the legacy of Uhura, as she briefly worked for NASA recruiting women astronauts. She did a couple of notable films in the 1960s, "Mr. Buddwig" and "Doctor, You've Got to Be Kidding," and even did a "blaxploitation" film in 1974, "Truck Turner." Her popularity as Uhura got her roles on TV's "Heroes," "Futurama" and the film "Are We There Yet?" (2005). She is currently in a dispute with her son, as she wants to continue to work despite a diagnosis of dementia.

Photographer Joe Arce of HollywoodChicago.com took this Exclusive Photo of Nichelle Nichols at the Wizard World Comic Con in Rosemont, Illinois, on August 23rd, 2018.

The next Wizard World Comic Con is in Madison, Wisconsin, on November 30th through December 2nd, 2018. For details and tickets, [click here](#). [18] Source for this article from Wikipedia.



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Source URL (retrieved on Jul 18 2019 - 8:35pm):

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