

More Than 50 Years After Taking the Field, First Black National League Umpire Continues to Inspire

Art Williams' Incredible Story Encourages Others to Be Great in Baseball and Beyond

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, September 7, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Whether you are a fan of History, or Sports, or you simply enjoy stories of courage and inspiration, Art Williams is a name you should know.

“

All of us have talents and it's important for us to find it, I found mine in baseball and I just want to use my platform to help others find theirs.”

Mookie Betts, Major League Baseball MVP and World Series Champion

More than fifty years after taking the field, portions of Arts' incredible story have recently garnered significant accolades. A related news segment received a Daytime Emmy Award, the book "Unbelievable! The Life Journey of Art Williams" has been honored with four distinct awards in four different literary categories, and the associated [documentary short](#) has been selected for twenty-five film festivals in the United States and abroad. Additionally, September 18th has officially been proclaimed Art Williams Day in the City of Bakersfield, California.

Art was born in Arkansas to a family of sharecroppers, and after relocating to California, he was signed to the Detroit Tigers organization right after high school. His pitching career was cut short by an injury, but Art persisted in life and in the sport. Through hard work and determination he ultimately reached his goal of becoming the First Black Umpire in the National League when he officiated the game between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the San Diego Padres on September 18, 1972.

This historic milestone came six years after Emmett Ashford's American League debut, and twenty-eight years before the American and National Leagues were united under the Major League Baseball umbrella in the year 2000.

In the five plus decades since the groundbreaking accomplishments of Art and Emmett, only nine other African Americans have become Major League Baseball umpires; and although Art passed away in 1979 at the age of 44, his younger brother - 82 year old Dr. Audie Williams - is

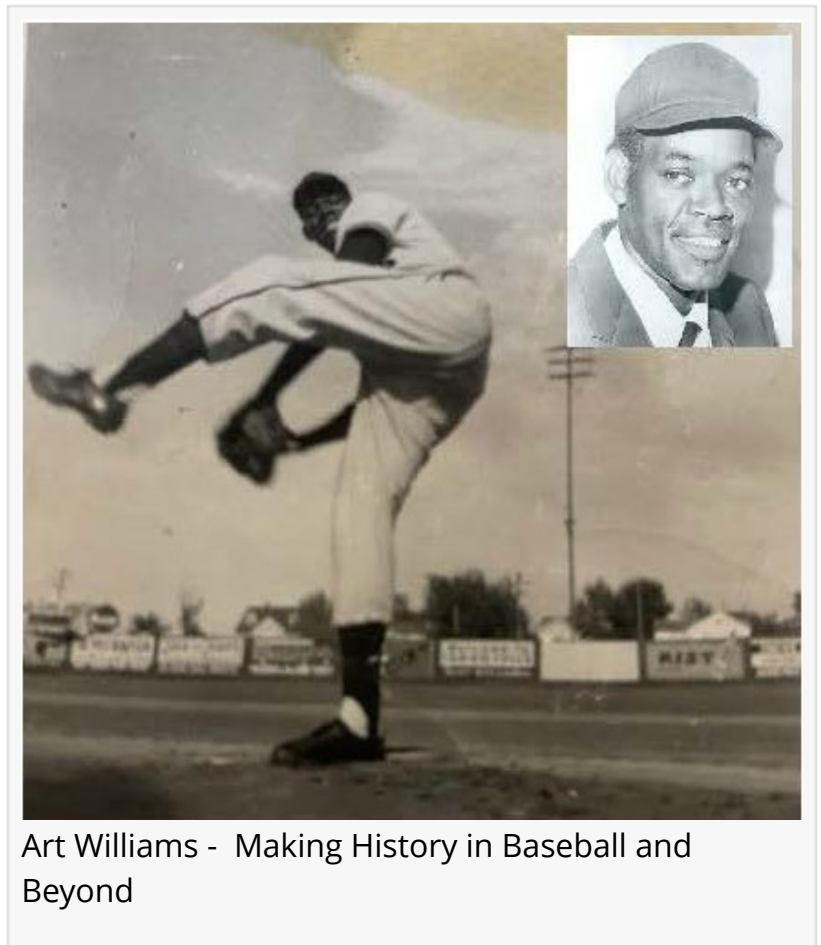
doing everything he can to keep Art's legacy alive.

Mookie Betts - Dodgers outfielder / second baseman, and one of Major League Baseball's most dynamic, well-rounded superstars - has stressed the importance of bringing culture to the game and providing opportunities for everyone to be successful. "The goal I set out to accomplish is getting blacks in baseball, not necessarily on the field, but just around the field and maybe in the front office." "All of us have talents and it's important for us to find it," he said. "I found mine in baseball and I just want to use my platform to help others find theirs."

Dr. Williams, a veteran as well as a retired coach and educator, understands the mission. Through his company, Let's Play Ball! Productions, he will continue sharing his big brother's story, encouraging representation in baseball and beyond, and inspiring anyone with a dream to persevere, [no matter the obstacles](#).

On this and every September 18th, please take a moment to honor Art Williams and his tremendous achievements, and then dedicate some time and attention to setting goals, nurturing specific talents, sharing your gifts with the world, and encouraging others to be great too.

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Art Williams - Making History in Baseball and Beyond

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