

If you look at the periodic table today, you will see more than 100 elements, specifically 118 elements. If you look at the transition metals, you will see two elements, Rutherfordium and Dubnium. The person to thank for these two elements is African-American Nuclear Chemist James Andrew Harris. You might be wondering who James Andrew Harris is and what happened to him. We will now dive deeper into his life to really understand what he went through as an African-American Nuclear Chemist during the 1960s when racism was a big obstacle.

If we were to summarize James Andrew Harris' contributions and why James Andrew should win the Time Person of the Year Award with two words, it would be perseverance and intelligence. First of all, we should address his perseverance. James Andrew Harris has always been through and felt the impacts of systemic racism across the country, a notable example of this was the interview that was degraded to be as simple as if elementary school students could solve it. It is safe to assume that this was something that happened throughout his career. Even with these setbacks, James Andrew Harris was able to focus and persevere through all of it and grasp success in terms of finding two different new elements. This brings me to my next point, his intelligence. James Andrew Harris graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree and never went back to get a PhD unlike most of his colleagues, despite this setback, his intelligence was still awe-inspiring, he managed to do his job better than most of his colleagues, one piece of evidence that we can conclude this from is that Albert Ghiorso, who was James Andrew Harris' partner in finding new elements, was quoted as saying that Harris' target was "the best ever made for heavy element research", this was in major part due to his proficiency and intelligence in executing difficult chemical separations.

In combination with his childhood, his early life, his career, and his accomplishments, by now you can see why James Andrew Harris is deserving of Time's Person of the Year award, Right now would be the perfect time to gift him this award as this generation or this decade is widely recognized as the most impactful time in terms of stopping racism across our nation, we can also spread awareness about people like James Andrew Harris that have made a lot of contributions to science but still continue to be disregarded and ostracized due to racism. One other reason that James Andrew Harris should receive Time's Person of the Year is inspiration, he inspired countless people with his work and his story of overcoming racism. He also went to elementary schools and high schools to discuss his work and encourage many individuals to become nuclear chemists.

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