

# Captain William “Bill” Pinkney

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## **ADVENTURER**

## **AUTHOR**

## **LECTURER**

### **Background**

Born in Chicago’s “Bronzeville” September 15, 1935. Educated in the Chicago Public School System. An eight –year U.S. Navy veteran (Hospital Corpsman) Pinkney’s love for the sea started at an early age He became a U.S. Coast Guard licensed Master in 1986 on the Great Lakes, and moved to Oceans in 1990 with a solo circumnavigation of the world via the five great capes. He conceived and lead the “*Middle Passage Voyage*” a project in 1999 that took teachers by sail on the route of the “Middle Passage Slave Route” to South America and West Africa. The program was provided to 160 schools nation-wide via the internet

### **Achievements**

First Black man to solo-circumnavigate the earth under sail via the “Southern Ocean Route” (under Cape Horn). He was the 4<sup>th</sup> American of the five who have done it. Currently he is the Master of the 129-foot reproduction of the Freedom Schooner *AMISTAD*. The vessel’s mission is travel the nation’s waterways as the symbol of Human Rights and racial cooperation and tell the story of the “*AMISTAD Incident*”

Author of the first grade reading text by SRA-McGraw/Hill: “Captain Bill Pinkney’s Journey”. The book is in over 5000 schools nation-wide.

He was the subject of the Peabody Award winning documentary “*The Incredible Voyage of Bill Pinkney*”, this video special also won the CableAce, Iris and Gabriel “Awards. His Solo voyage was featured in three segments of “**Good Morning America**”

Documentary “**Setting Sail**” about preparation for the Middle Passage Voyage won an Emmy Award

A PBS special about the Middle Passage Voyage: “**Voyages Home**” is in release to PBS stations across the country.

Profiled on the Fox Family Channel program “**Courage**” produced and hosted by actor Danny Glover.

A segment of “**CBS Sunday Morning**” about the Middle Passage Voyage and Pinkney’s participation in OpSail 2000 was a salute to the “Tall Ships Parade in which *AMISTAD* appeared.

### **Recognition**

Former President of the United States: George Bush, Premier and Parliament of Bermuda, Lord Mayor of Hobart (Tasmania, Australia) Senators Kennedy (MA) Simon (IL) Braun (IL) Kerry (MA)

Accounts of his feat were read into the Congressional Record (1992) Acknowledged by the Governors and Legislatures of: Illinois, Delaware,

California, Massachusetts, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania, Mayors and City Councils of Chicago, Boston, Detroit, Wilmington, DE, Jacksonville, FL, Kansas City, Sacramento, and Cleveland.

Doctor of Humane Letters (hc) –Becker College Worchester, MA 2001  
Doctor of Public Service (hc) Southern Connecticut State University - 2002

Featured in:

- The African Americans by Collins & Cohen
- How the Great got Great – Dennis Kimbro
- Black Lights - Walter Duke
- Great Chicago Stories – Tom Mayday

Text books referring to his exploits include:

- Mathematics by Mc Graw-Hill
- Literature by Glencoe

Written about in over 85 National & International publications including:

People  
Sail  
Sailing  
Sports Illustrated  
New York Times  
Los Angeles Times  
USA Today  
Cruising World  
Soundings  
Weekly Reader  
Scholastic  
In Focus  
American Legacy  
Chicago Tribune

**Professional  
memberships  
And Boards**

Member of the New York Yacht Club

Past Commodore of the Belmont Yacht Club (Chicago)

Trustee – Mystic Seaport Museum

Director- American Sail Training Association

Director - Chicago Maritime Museum

Director – Boys to Men, Inc. (Mentor program)

Advisor – Campfire Boys and Girls

Advisor – Wisconsin Schooner Project

International - Advisory Board of the Bermuda Underwater Exploration

Institute Hamilton, Bermuda

### **Awards received**

Chicagoan of the Year 1999 (Chicago Magazine)

Yachtsman of the Year - Chicago Yacht Club 1992

Sailor of the Year – Milwaukee Community Sailing Center 1996

Governor's Distinguished Achievement Award – Illinois

African-American History Makers Award- DuSable Museum of African American History Chicago

National Spokesperson for the Village Foundation (Kellogg Foundation)

Choice Champions Award (Choice Hotels)

Lifetime Achievement Award - M. L. King Boy's & Girl's Club (Chicago)

Omni Youth Services *LifeModels award*

### **Speaking (partial)**

IBM

PNC Mortgage Corp.

Abbott Laboratories

American Express

Museum of Science and Industry (Chicago)

FBI

Baxter Laboratories

USCG Academy

U.S. Navy

U. S. Army

Exeter Academy

Northwestern University

Elmhurst College

1<sup>st</sup> Interstate Bank

Lexmark

IRS

Sprint PCS

ROLM Corp.

National Bankers Association

University of Hartford

Bermuda Underwater Institute

Urban League

International Reading Association

Children's Hospital (Chicago)

Educational Trust, Inc.

Pitney-Bowles

Navy League

American Bar Association

Connecticut Historical Society

American Sail Training Association

Over 1000 Elementary, Middle and High Schools Nationwide