

CJ Jones

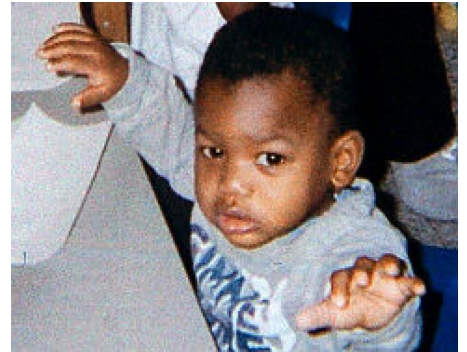
"If that's their passion, that's their dream, they have the right to make their dreams come true."

1950-Present



Early Life

- CJ Jones was a hearing child born to two Deaf parents in St. Louis, MO.
 - However, when he was 7, Jones contracted spinal meningitis, which resulted in his hearing loss.
- Although American Sign Language (ASL) was his native language, he still had some remaining hearing, which disqualified him from attending the Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD).
 - CJ tried an oral education for a brief time, but his father lobbied and eventually succeeded in getting him into MSD.



School Life

- Although he was initially shy, CJ flourished in an all-deaf environment and was involved in many activities, such as student leadership, scouts and sports, while also keeping up with his academics.
- Jones graduated as class valedictorian and continued his education at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) in Rochester, NY.



Starting His Career

- After graduating from NTID, CJ toured with the National Theater for the Deaf (NTD) and Little Theater of the Deaf for a few years.
 - Outside of NTD, Jones joined a touring company of *Children of a Lesser God*, which his cast received a Tony for.
- CJ also developed three one-man shows that have toured both nationally and internationally and also produced an *International Sign Language Theater Festival*, which hosted theater artists from the United States, Mexico and Russia.



Joining the Screen



- CJ Jones recently became the first Deaf actor to have a part in an international blockbuster when he played the role of *Joseph* in the 2017 summer movie hit, *"Baby Driver"*.
 - In the same year, CJ was also the leading part in an independent horror film entitled *"Door in the Woods."*
 - CJ also plays *Odin* in the new show *"Castle Rock,"* which was authored by Stephen King, and is working with director James Cameron on the *Avatar* sequels.
- In the past, CJ has appeared in shows like *"Frasier"* and *"Sesame Street"* as well as a few documentaries.



Branching Into Other Fields



- CJ is also an established writer and speaker, and founded the media company *Sign World Tv* where he co-wrote, directed and acted in a classic fairy tale series called *"Once Upon A Sign."*
 - CJ plans to add more to his company, such as creating TV series, documentaries and cooking shows all done in sign language with voiceovers and captions.
 - The goal of *Sign World TV* is to *"...get both Deaf and hearing people to work together, become more comfortable working as actors, writers, directors, producers."*
- CJ Jones also does work in schools and universities by visiting and speaking, along with fun events like and *ASL Idol* sign language song-singing competitions held at College of Canyons in September 2017.
 - CJ also does work as a stand up comedian.

The Start of His Legacy



- Along with receiving numerous grants, honors and awards, CJ has become a beloved Deaf icon with no intention of slowing down. As he said in an interview, *"We need to educate people, and it's our duty, I think, to always be educating people. I don't know when I'll be able to retire... because I want to work as an actor; therefore I have several hats on my head. I need to be a teacher. I need to be an actor. I need to be an educator."*
- Jones is determined to keep paving the way for others, stating in the same interview that he feels he is breaking barriers and opening up doors for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.



"I can prove that anything is possible. It has nothing to do with being deaf or black or any disability and color, it has to do with passion to do greater things in life!"

CJ Jones
Comedian, Actor,
Producer & Director

Resources

3PlayMedia Web site: <https://www.3playmedia.com/resources/faces-behind-screen/cj-jones/>

CJ Jones Web site: <https://www.cjjones.com/>

Internet Movie Database (IMDB) Web site (biography written by CJ Jones): <https://www.imdb.com>