



CAF RISE ABOVE®

Inspiring young people to RISE ABOVE adversity using the lessons and stories of the Tuskegee Airmen and the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).

July 2025



The CAF RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit is a unique Commemorative Air Force asset. Although air shows are a common place to find it set up for display - it is not restricted to a ramp or runway, as our many historic aircraft are. We enjoy hearing from our members about air shows where you would like to see us (keep sharing)... but if you wanted the Exhibit into your vicinity, what are some other options?

Museums. Typically possessed of the large open parking lot necessary for set-up, Museums often view sponsorship of the Exhibit as a way to drive attention to similar displays they may offer. As the Exhibit is at its most impactful when our P-51C Mustang is alongside, local museums may partner with a nearby airport to host (as will be the case in Manchester, New Hampshire in August).

Schools. The Exhibit can set up in a local school parking lot and become, in effect, a 'field trip' without the complexities and expense of travel. On occasion, we can partner with an air show to get into a local campus in the week prior to an air show on the weekend, driving the educational component of the show (and often attracting positive pre-event media attention).

Special Events. The Exhibit has set up as an attraction for Aviation Days (as will be the case this month on the shores of Lake Erie at Lorain County Regional Airport), to celebrate historic dates (the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII in Dayton, Tennessee in September, or the longest continuously running celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation at Rio Grande University in Ohio), to help raise funds (in September in Smyrna, Tennessee) or dedicate facilities (especially in honour of Tuskegee Airmen or WASP).

There are many ways to bring these stories to your local community, and the Exhibit offers flexibility aircraft alone do not have. If you would like to see us, reach out - we can get creative in ensuring heroic history does not go untold.

Respectfully,

Chris Allen

Rise Above Road Exhibit Director

2025 RISE ABOVE TOUR SCHEDULE

[Check online for updates and more information!](#)

Jul 11-13	OH - Lorain County Discover Aviation Airplane & Car Show
Jul 21-27	WI - EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh, WI
Aug 15-17	NH - Aviation Museum of New Hampshire
Aug 22-24	OH - Columbus Air Show
Aug 30-31	MO - Wings of Pride Air Show
Sep 6	TN - Wings on Display
Sep 13-14	TN - Smyrna Rotary Intl Wings of Freedom
Sep 27-28	CO - Wings of Pride Air Show
Oct 2-5	VA - Dinwiddie RISE ABOVE
Oct 9-12	VA - Chesterfield
Oct 16-19	VA - MELFA
Nov 1-2	MS - Thunder Over The Sound



Visit the CAF RISE ABOVE WASP Virtual Museum to see [The Silent Ascension](#) and other items of interest!

Dear CAF Rise Above Team,

Our names are Ikksha Das (Kiekie) and Rachel Kwak. As part of our AP U.S. History class's service project at Van Nuys High School, we decided to create a memorial dedicated to honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).

To recognize their legacy and the injustice they faced, we created a memorial statue and research paper titled *The Silent Ascension*, which we've attached to this email. Our project reflects not only the WASPs' undeniable skill and courage, but also the way their service was erased from national memory for decades. What struck us most was the injustice these women faced: performing the same duties as military men, flying over 60 million miles in wartime aircraft, and still being denied military benefits, honors, and even funeral rites. The quote that most powerfully reflected this injustice was from a WASP herself:



"If a man died, they wrapped his body in a flag. If a woman died, they sent her home at her family's expense." It reminded us why remembering their legacy is so important and taking down the gender barrier was crucial.

Our memorial, *The Silent Ascension*, is meant to be located at Minter Field, California, one of the WASP training sites, and symbolizes both remembrance and justice. A cracked runway base honors their fractured legacy, with etched names like Elizabeth Maxine Chambers and Violet Cowden paying tribute to their service. A clay plane lifts off from the broken surface, symbolizing the rise of their long-overdue recognition, while surrounding pebbles and a Tunnel of Forgotten History beneath the base reflect the hardship, sacrifice, and silence they endured for decades. We hope that this symbolism showcases the WASPs in an enlightening manner as a part of our memorial.

Thank you for the work CAF Rise Above continues to do in preserving and sharing the stories of these pioneering women. We hope our project adds to the conversation and honors their legacy in a meaningful way.

Warm regards,

Ikksha Das (Kiekie) & Rachel Kwak
Van Nuys High School

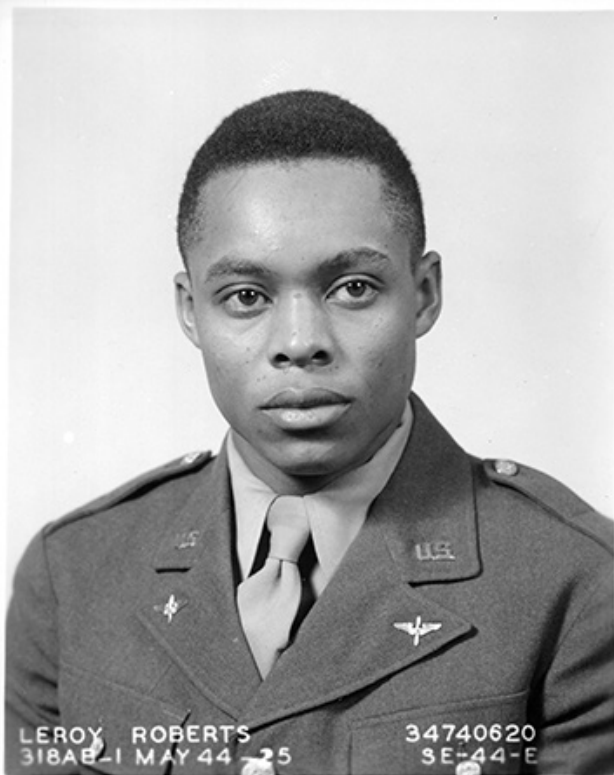
AIM HIGH
BELIEVE IN YOURSELF
USE YOUR BRAIN
NEVER QUIT
BE READY TO GO
EXPECT TO WIN

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[Tuskegee Airmen Profiles](#)



FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen



Leroy, Roberts Jr.

1921 - August 13, 2008

Class: 44-E-SE

Graduation date: 5/23/1944

Rank at time of graduation: 2nd Lt

Service # 0830794

From: Toccoa GA

As a boy growing up in rural Georgia, LeRoy Roberts Jr. would stop whatever he was doing to watch the twice-daily mail plane pass overhead. As a young man, he persuaded a European pilot to give him flying lessons — even though his skin color prevented him from holding a pilot's license.

But thanks largely to first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Lt. Col. Roberts and hundreds of other black men became distinguished aviators, fighting both the Nazis and the racist policies of a still-segregated U.S. Army.

Prior to his civilian career, LeRoy retired from the U.S. Air Force as a Lieutenant Colonel and was one of the distinguished aviators

in World War II, known as the Tuskegee Airmen. He flew 42 missions against the enemy and served as a fighter pilot with the 332nd Fighter Group in Italy.

As a flight commander in the Korean War, he led 106 missions against the enemy in support of the United Nations' effort. His decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross with one (1) cluster, the Air Medal with eleven (11) clusters and the Air Force Commendation with one (1) cluster. In May of 2007, the Tuskegee Airmen received the Congressional Gold Medal for their exemplary service and bravery in World War II.

Leroy was a gifted speaker who provided insight into the historic contribution and sacrifices the Tuskegee Airmen made for the freedom we all enjoy as Americans. As the first President of the Sam Bruce Chapter, Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., he championed the Tuskegee Airmen National Scholarship Foundation as well as the chapter's college scholarship program, which provides graduating high school students funds to pursue STEM educations.

[Read his profile online!](#)

Learn more about the [CAF Red Tail Squadron](#), whose mission is sharing the inspiring legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen, America's first black military pilots and their support personnel. Their strength, courage, and ability to triumph over adversity during WWII can serve to inspire others about how to succeed today.

**“Fighter pilots are like athletes. And I was a pretty good pilot.”
~ Tuskegee Airman Dr. Roscoe Brown**



[Dr. Roscoe C. Brown, Jr.](#) served as squadron commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group. While escorting B-17s over Berlin, he became the first 15th Air Force fighter pilot to shoot down a Me 262 jet fighter. The 332nd Fighter Group received the Presidential Unit Citation for this mission, the highest honor bestowed upon a combat unit.



Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots

FEATURED WASP PROFILE



Ann Ross Kary Anderson

March 6, 1920 – July 2, 1996

Class: 43-W-2

Training Location: Houston Municipal Airport (Tex.)

Assigned Bases: Love Field (Dallas, Tex.)

Planes flown: AT-6, PT-19 and UC-78

Anna “Ann” Ross Kary Anderson was born in 1920 on her family’s homestead in Mellette County in South Dakota. Following high school, she attended the University of South Dakota. After her military service “Kary,” as she was known to her students, went on to instruct hundreds of future pilots and was one of the first female FAA inspectors. By the time she retired she had logged over 20,000 flight hours.

(From the 09-04-2010 Minot SD Daily News)

A former Minot pilot will be inducted in the South Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame in Spearfish, S.D., today. The late Anne Ross Anderson, who many knew as Kary Anderson when she lived in Minot, was born in 1920 in Mellette County, S.D., raised her family in Minot and gave flight instructions at the Minot airport for many years. In the 1940s, she was a member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots, better known as WASPs, a distinguished group of female pilots who flew military aircraft during World War II. The female pilots flew noncombat missions so their male counterparts could be deployed for combat.

Anderson lived in Minot for 20 years, leaving in 1964 when she moved to Grand Forks where she taught ground school and flight instructions. She also was the first woman FAA inspector and was stationed in Grand Rapids, Mich. She also lived in California. She died July 2, 1996, in Idaho.

In March, Anderson and other WASPs were honored with the Congressional Gold Medal, one of the nation’s highest civilian awards, for their outstanding service to this country. Patricia McBride, Anderson’s daughter of St. Paul, Minn., accepted the honor on behalf of her mother at the ceremony in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. McBride will be in Spearfish for the induction ceremony. McBride said the state of South Dakota this year dedicated

[Read her profile online!](#)

Learn more about the **[CAF RISE ABOVE: WASP](#)**, whose mission is sharing the story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots in order to inspire others, especially girls and young women, to RISE ABOVE expectations and find a greater appreciation of their potential.

WASP QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I was crazy about flying and as a little kid, even through grade school, I built model planes."

WASP Roby Anderson, Class 44-W-4



Four WASP view an aerial chart on the wing of an AT-6 trainer



WASP at Avenger Field, Sweetwater, Texas

Photos courtesy of The WASP Archive, The TWU Libraries' Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX

The qualifications Cochran and Love set for a woman just to be an applicant for the WASP were stringent: Potential recruits had to be between 21 and 35 years old, in good health, already possess a pilot's license, and 200 hours of prior flight experience!

In the sixteen months that the WASP squadron existed, more than 25,000 women applied for training. Only 1,830 of them (spread over eighteen training classes), were accepted as candidates. In the end, 1,074 of those candidates successfully completed the grueling four-month (Army way) training program at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas.

In addition to learning the superfluous - like marching and close order drill - they also spent roughly twelve hours a day at the airfield. Half the day was spent doing stalls, spins, turns, take offs, and landings – and all of it in very crowded airspace. The other half of the day was spent in what they called “ground school.”

By graduation, all WASP had 560 hours of ground school and 210 hours of flight training (in addition to the 200 hours required for them just to apply). They also knew Morse code, meteorology, military law, physics, aircraft mechanics, and navigation (and, of course, how to march).

Their previous level of flying experience allowed a large number of these pilots finished their WASP training with such stellar marks that they qualified to go on for specialized flight training. Many of them, by the end of their time as WASP, had flown every single plane in the American arsenal – including jets!

Despite the stiff entrance requirements and all of the additional training these female pilots endured, the WASP were still considered just “civil service employees”. Cochran, director of the WASP, and General Henry “Hap” Arnold, who was now the head of the U.S. Army Transport Command, pressed for full militarization of these female pilots, and for the WASP to be commissioned directly as service pilots, a procedure the Air Transport Command used routinely with male civilian pilots. But because of the considerable opposition to the program, both in Congress and in the press, Cochran's and Arnold's requests were denied.



On this date, the following Tuskegee Airmen events occurred:

9-10 July 1943: The 332d Fighter Group moved from Oscoda, Michigan, back to Selfridge Field, Michigan, but the 96th Service Group, which maintained the airplanes, remained at Oscoda (Maurer, Air Force Combat Units of World War II; 96th Service Group organization record card). At the same time, the 403rd Fighter Squadron moved from Oscoda to Selfridge. (Maurer, Air Force Combat Units of World War II)

9 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew its first mission to Ploesti, escorting B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing on a raid on important petroleum refining facilities (332d Fighter Group mission report number 21). The same week, the XV Air Force Service Command was busy modifying P-51s to use P-47 fuel tanks and bombs. (XV Air Force Service Command, weekly activity report dated 9 Jul 1944).

The above information was taken from the current “Tuskegee Airmen Chronology,” written by Daniel L. Haulman, PhD, Chief, Organization History Division, Air Force Historical Research Agency



Front Row – Kneeling (L-R) Laurence D. Wilkens Brown... ? William W. Green, George A. Taylor, William J. Faulkner, Luther H. Smith, Roy M. Spencer

Back Row – Standing (L-R) Spurgeon N. Ellington, Vernon V. Haywood, Harry A. Sheppard, Samuel L. Curtis, Carol S. Woods, Virgil J. Richardson, Freddie E. Hutchins, Lowell C. Steward, Wendell D. Pruitt, Lawrence B. Jefferson, Willard L. Woods, Robert B. Tresville, Jr., Armour G. McDaniel, Melvin T. Jackson, Starling B. Penn



Wall Art Tinker AFB



Volunteer Coordinator
Milton McGee



Volunteer Sharon Watson



Jameson Signs Up!



The Carothers family and friends arrived in force to assist at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma



The Squadron at Tinker. Don Larson, Doug Rozendaal and Chris Allen with Tinker AF base sponsor Allison Smith and Red Tail!



Next Generation Ambassadors

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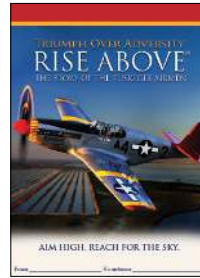
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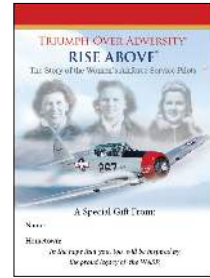
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There's no better way to support our mission to educate, inspire, and honor through flight and living history experiences than by joining a Top Flight Club!

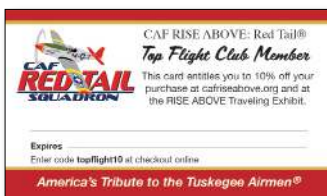
Why 99? *(for each annual membership)*

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The 99th was originally formed as the U.S. Army Air Forces' first African American fighter squadron, then known as the 99th Pursuit Squadron. The personnel received their initial flight training at Tuskegee, Alabama earning them the nickname Tuskegee Airmen.

[Join RISE ABOVE: WASP](#)

The Ninety-Nines was founded November 2, 1929, at Curtiss Field, Valley Stream, Long Island, New York. All 117 women pilots at the time were invited to assemble in mutual support of the advancement of women in aviation. In 1942 members of the Ninety-Nines were asked to join the Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) class of 43-W-1 in Houston, Texas.



WASP WINGS



TUSKEGEE WINGS





Be A Hometown Hero

Bring The RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit To Your Community!

The CAF RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit could be available to make a stop in your hometown. Imagine the draw an exhibit like this would be at your airshow, community event or festival!

Contact the CAF Rise Above Squadron at (802) 371-8838 or email logistics@cafriseabove.org for more information.

We Need Your Support!



The CAF RISE ABOVE is a part of the Commemorative Air Force (CAF), a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.

The mission of CAF RISE ABOVE is to educate audiences across the country about the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP - so their strength of character, courage, and ability to triumph over adversity may serve to inspire others to RISE ABOVE obstacles in their own lives and achieve their goals.

The operation of the P-51 C Mustang Tuskegee Airmen and the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit are dependent on the generous support from people like you!

Here's how you can help:

[Make a one-time or recurring donation online.](#) Dedicate your gift in the following ways:

- Make a memorial gift to the Squadron to honor someone's memory. For donations of \$50 or greater the names will be listed on the online [Honorary Flight Log](#).
- [Join the Top Flight Club: Red Tail!](#)
- [Join the Top Flight Club: WASP!](#)

Purchase memorabilia, books and gifts from our [online store](#)

Join [The Heritage Club](#): The Heritage Club is made up of CAF supporters who have included CAF in their estate planning. Email development@cafhq.org for more information.

Check out [FreeWill](#), a **free** estate planning tool which is provided as a benefit for our CAF members and supporters. Gifts from your estate may be designated as unrestricted or restricted to a specific aircraft, unit, or the CAF's endowment.

Do you need to make a charitable gift from your IRA before the end of the tax year?

Check out [Smart Giving from Your IRA](#) on the CAF website or contact your IRA administrator **TODAY** to arrange a QCD before the end of the year.

Please mail correspondence or donations to our home office at:

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