



# 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).

October 2024



The road crew was approached, on the final day of a recent tour stop in southern Kansas, by a career Naval Aviator. He and his spouse had driven from a neighboring state to see the Rise Above documentaries, and he had two observations he wished to share.

The first thing he complimented was the manner in which both documentary films distinguished between 'relevant and irrelevant data:' race and gender mattered to both histories, of course - but he was strongly supportive of the core concept of Rise Above, that the examples of excellence lived by the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP in overcoming the biases they faced because of the 'irrelevant data' of their races and genders, was the 'relevant data' he hoped viewers, especially the young, would take away from experiencing the Exhibit.

The second thing he observed was the prevalence of young viewers in attendance - and this was a general public/ weekend day, not one of the earlier weekdays which had been dedicated to area schools.

I share his appreciation of both truths, and wanted to share them with everyone who continues to value the 'relevant data' inherent in both of these still under-acknowledged stories...and to value the work of delivering those stories, especially to the next generation.

The 2024 season is coming to its end - but exciting effort is being expended to buff both Exhibit and Mustang, and see them to places to tell their story which Rise Above has been too long away from (or may never yet have been!).

Your support - to ensure the relevant data reaches the most important audience - has never been more necessary.

Respectfully,  
Chris Allen  
Rise Above Road Exhibit Director



## 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](mailto:logistics@cafriseabove.org) for more information.



Granny and Grandpa prove a [mustang](#) and [dog tags](#) for young Atlas while enjoying Green Mountain Aviation Field Days in Vermont!



Levi's parents helped him battle the unseasonable sun and warmth in northern Vermont with a [Rise Above Squadron hat](#) displaying the patches of Tuskegee fighter and bomber squadrons.



Muriel 'Mel' Bloom and Bob Sheppard joined the Rise Above Exhibit in Burlington, Vermont.



The Ladies For Liberty gave an impromptu concert outside the CAF Rise Above Exhibit in Burlington, Vermont!



# THUNDER OVER COLUMBUS, MS



Alabama Rammer Jammer with Rise Above



P-51D Alabama Rammer Jammer joined the CAF Rise Above Exhibit in Columbus, Mississippi, courtesy of pilot Shannon Elliott!



First Lieutenant Savannah 'Sista' Raskey embodies both the WASP and Airmen legacies as a next-generation F-35 pilot flying for the 100th 'Red Tails'!



Ambassadors Terry and Jeanette Hollis at Columbus



Line around the block in Columbus MS





Alabama Rammer Jammer with Rise Above in the Smoky Mountains



The Careers In Aviation class from Elizabethton High School in East Tennessee experienced the CAF Rise Above Traveling Exhibit stories and the P-51D Alabama Rammer Jammer at Tri-Cities Airport.



With host Pauline Douglas of LEADs (and about the only sun we saw!





Coffeyville KS 3-5 Graders



Future Pilot



Oklahoma Union High crossed the Kansas border  
to see CAF Rise Above in Coffeyville!



Mayor Alec Kendricks and family



Rising Above in Coffeyville



## FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

*America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen*

**Sergeant/Lieutenant Ludovic F. Audant**  
**October 12, 1911 - September 23, 1974**

**Class: 44-B-SE**

**Graduation date: 2/8/1944**

**Unit: 301st Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group**  
**From: Port au Prince Haiti**

Born October 12, 1911 in Jérémie, his father was General Chenier Audant and his mother was Marguerite Lestage. Ludovic was only three years old when he, his seven siblings, and parents witnessed the invasion and occupation of Haiti on July 28, 1915. Because of concerns of German influence in the unstable political region, President Woodrow Wilson authorized the occupation of Haiti, which lasted until August 15, 1934.

On May 10, 1937, Ludovic arrived in New York, he had been accepted as a student at the Brooklyn Floyd Bennet Field, earning his private pilot's license during 1939 which had been his dream.



Both to aid its relationship and the stabilization of Haiti, and because of its need for good, trained pilots, the United States Army Air Force began running notices in Haitian newspapers looking to recruit 40 pilots for the Tuskegee Army Air Field training program. The U.S. had established the Aviation Corps of the Haitian Guard with that goal in mind. Wishing to be a combat pilot and to serve, Ludovic returned to Haiti with the hopes of joining the Haitian military and then becoming part of the Aviation Corp. December 31, 1941, Ludovic and other Haitian officers arrived in the United States to become aviation mechanic students at the Newark, New Jersey Casey Jones School of Aeronautics. On February 15, 1942, while a student at the Casey School, Ludovic registered for service with the United States military. He was accepted to the Tuskegee training program, graduating on February 8, 1944, with class 44-B-SE.

After earning his military wings, 2nd Lt. Audant returned to Haiti and given patrol service, flying on the Haitian coats. He also helped train new pilots for the Aviation Corps. During this service, instrument failure on an airplane he was flying caused Ludovic to crash into a Léogane mountain. Luckily, he survived, but had a scar that lasted his entire life because of it.

After the war, now Lt. Audant continued to serve as an Aviation Corps pilot.

[\*\*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.



**"A patriot from any nation grows up feeling a love for their country in spite of its imperfections."**

**~ Tuskegee Airman, Herbert Carter**



Class 44-B graduated from flight training on Feb 8, 1944, at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. Order unknown: Thomas P. Braswell, Robert C. Chandler, Emile G. Clifton Jr., Roger B. Gaiter, Thomas L. Gay, Cornelius P. Gould Jr., Joseph E. Gordon, Alfred M. Gorham, Richard S. Harder, Wilbur F. Long, Richard D. Macon, Frank H. Moody, Thomas G. Patton, Marion R. Rodgers, Shelby F. Westbrook, Cohen M. White, Leonard R. Willette, Kenneth I. Williams, Henry A. Wise Jr. and Ludovic F. Audant of the Haitian

*Photo courtesy Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell, AFB, Alabama*

### TUSKEGEE AIRMEN: DID YOU KNOW?

In the early 1940s, an ad appeared in a Haitian newspaper recruiting 40 pilots for training at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. There were several Haitians who went for training at the Tuskegee Institute, and most of them were in the Haitian army or air force.

Following each name is their class number, graduation date, rank held at Tuskegee, serial number, and hometown.

1. Audant, Ludovic F. 44-B-SE 2/8/1944 Port au Prince Haiti
2. Cassagnol, Raymond 43-G-SE 7/28/1943 Unknown Haiti
3. Guilbaud, Eberle J. 44-D-TE 4/15/1944 Port au Prince Haiti
4. Nicolas, Pelissier C. 44-B-TE 2/8/1944 Port-au-Prince Haiti
5. Pasquet, Alix 43-H-SE 8/30/1943 Haiti



*Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots*

## FEATURED WASP PROFILE

**Elizabeth “Betty” Whitlow Smith**

**December 29, 1920 -June 16, 2011**

**Class: 43-W-2**

**Training Location: Houston Municipal Airport (Tex.)**

**Planes flown: B-24, P-40, P-47, P-51,, PT-19, BT-15, AT-6, PT-17, A-24**

**Assigned bases: Love Field (Dallas, Tex.)**

Betty Whitlow Smith was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas in December 1920. From as early as she could remember, airplanes fascinated her. She felt drawn to the sense of freedom and space she felt when she looked up. As a young girl, Betty covered her bedroom walls with aviation pictures, including a magazine ad featuring an airplane silhouette along with a bottle of perfume.

During her sophomore year at the University of Tulsa, the 19-year-old psychology major, was given the opportunity to fly in the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CTPT). Betty became one of two women surrounded by 18 men in the government sponsored program, eventually earning her pilot's license.



Once she soloed, Betty's first passenger was her mother, Mary. Soon, Betty became 1/4 owner of a Piper Cub and continued flying while working at Douglas Aircraft in Tulsa, inspecting equipment on modified B-24's.

Once she had accumulated the required 200 hours, she was accepted into the WASP training program and entered training at Houston Municipal Airport (now Houston Hobby) as a member of the second class. After graduation she was stationed with the 5th Ferrying Group, ATC at Love Field in Dallas.

While serving as a WASP, Betty started out ferrying PTs, BTs, and AT-6s. Graduating from pursuit school was her next accomplishment, which led to ferrying the P-51, P-40 and P-47. With Betty's passion for aviation and a challenge, it's no surprise that she also completed Officers Training School in Orlando, FL.

[Read her profile online!](#)

Learn more about the [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

**“You either had a chance of doing it or go home. Those who wanted transfers went home!  
We did what we were assigned to do...with no regrets!”**

**Ruth Thomason Florey, 43-W-4**



Whitlow Smith in an AT-6, 5th Ferrying Group, Love Field, Dallas, Texas

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

## WASP: DID YOU KNOW?

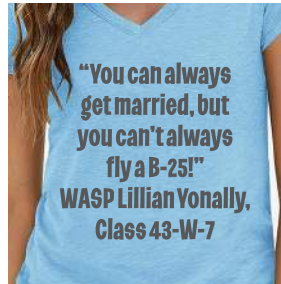
WASP adopted many of WAFS requirements, but added one other. Recruits still had to be between 21 and 35 years old, in good health, in possession of a pilot's license and 500 hours of flight time. Additionally, women were also required to be at least five feet and two inches tall.

## SHOP WITH WITH A PURPOSE!

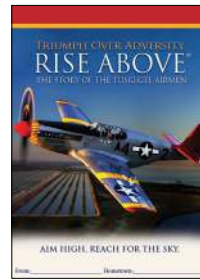
Find great treasures AND honor the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and WASP!  
[Visit our online store.](#) *Shipping is included!*



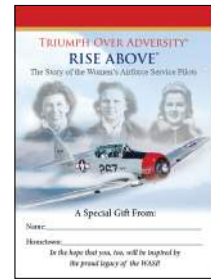
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There's no better way to support our mission to educate, inspire, and honor through flight and living history experiences than by joining a Top Flight Club!

**Why 99?** *(for each annual membership)*

### [Join RISE ABOVE: RED TAIL](#)

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.





Please mail correspondence or donations to our home office at:

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**[CAF RISE ABOVE: Red Tail](#)** - Share 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.

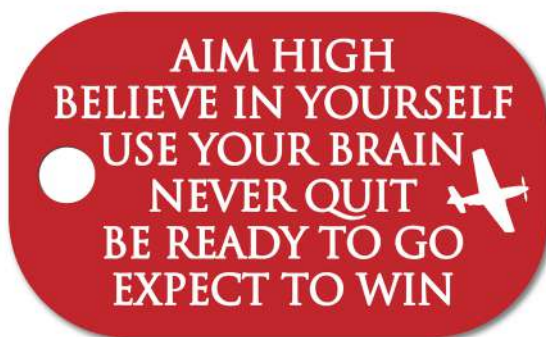
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Check out archived photos and highlights as we tour the country!

**[RISE ABOVE: Red Tail](#)**  
**[RISE ABOVE: WASP](#)**



**[You can order these inspirational dog tags here!](#)**