



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).

November 2024



One of the principal messages CAF Rise Above attempts to convey to audiences, especially young persons, is the value of doing what one can with what one has to overcome the adversities they find themselves in. The perseverance of both Tuskegee Airmen and Women Airforce Service Pilots is so in evidence, through their deeds. When challenged throughout the fall portion of the 2024 travel schedule, your Squadron has done their best to 'walk that walk,' and see to it that every adverse circumstance that developed has been overcome. Mechanical issues with the centerpiece of the squadron, the P-51C Red Tail Mustang *Tuskegee Airmen By Request*, were addressed with the assistance of

other vintage Mustang flyers stepping in to bring their aircraft to provide a tangible 'piece of history' to accompany the Exhibit's dedicated documentary films, and illustrate in person a type of airplane both Airmen and WASP would have flown; particular thanks are extended to the pilots of P-51D *Alabama Rammer Jammer*, in this regard. Mechanical issues with the Exhibit trailer itself were overcome by the road crew 'magyvering' some short term solutions in the dust and heat of El Paso, Texas, to make the Exhibit open and ready, on time (though reportedly photos do exist somewhere of them so covered in oils and fluids as to be unrecognizable, the newsletter will respectfully decline to reproduce them here...). Weather, of course, is the constant 'inconstant' of outdoor presentations such as the Squadron's (and air shows in general): the Exhibit's quality engineering proved itself in far Eastern Tennessee as it endured Hurricane Helene without damage, and with only one show day missed despite the torrential precipitation, flooding and power outages that continue to require aid and rebuilding throughout the region. Through all of this, the Rise Above Squadron did not have to cancel any scheduled show stops, and in fact lost only one appearance, when damage from the subsequent Hurricane Milton forced postponement of the Florida International Air Show to 2025 (where the Squadron hopes to return). The CAF Rise Above Squadron believes in the message you support - that reliability and excellence is the best response to challenge - and will continue to strive to embody the principles of the histories it shares.

Respectfully,

Chris Allen

Rise Above Road Exhibit Director

December means ICAS. The International Council of Airshows, annual convention and trade show in Las Vegas December 9 - 12 at the Paris Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada. This is where the airshow industry vendors and performers come together to schedule for education, scheduling the next season, industry training, and fellowship. Our 2025 schedule is already very busy, but we hope to plug the holes and fill up for next year.

We look forward to face-to-face time with not only our CAF family, but other squadrons and air show organizers from across the country. If you happen to be there also, please come by our **booth #212** in the exhibit hall, say hello and be inspired by our Rise Above message. The team would love to meet you!





Calling all students 4th through 12th grade!

Submit your essay for the CAF Rise Above Squadron's essay contest saluting the Tuskegee Airmen or the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)!

Deadline is February 28, 2025

Using the Six Guiding Principles (**Aim High, Believe in Yourself, Use Your Brain, Be Ready to Go, Never Quit, Expect to Win**) describe how the Tuskegee Airmen or the WASP achieved success, or choose a goal for yourself and show how you could use the Six Guiding Principles to achieve that goal.

Entries will be judged on overall content, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Each entry must be an original composition written by the student.

The Essay Contest is open to students in the 4th – 12th grade in an accredited school or home school program during the academic year.

Entries must adhere to the following word count guidelines:

- 4th – 5th grades 250 words
- 6th – 8th grades 350 words
- 9th – 12th grades 500 words

Footnotes, citations, endnotes, and essay titles will not be counted as part of the word count allotment.

Entries must be typed. Each page of the essay must include the author's name, grade level, name of school or home school program, address and telephone number in the upper right-hand corner of each page. This information will not be counted as part of the word count allotment.

Entries become property of the CAF Rise Above Squadron and will not be returned.

Winners will be requested to send their photograph to be featured along with their essay on the CAF Rise Above Squadron website, Facebook page and newsletter.

Entries must be emailed prior to 5:00pm on or before February 28, 2025.

Email your entry to: info@cafriseabove.org

Essay contest winners will be announced on March 21, 2025.

Prizes will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in each grade category as follows

1st place: [Tuskegee Airmen Sculpture](#)

2nd place: [Mustang model kit P-51C "Tuskegee Airmen"](#)

3rd place: Choice of an aviator pin

- [Tuskegee Airman](#)
- [WASP Wing pin](#)

All entries will receive a [Rise Above dog tag](#) and [Triumph Over Adversity booklet](#).

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. Once you have added CAF as a beneficiary in your will, fill out this form, email it to development@cafhq.org, and join our legacy club. If you don't have a will yet, 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.



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.

My 14 year old grandson dreams of being a pilot someday! When Wyatt saw your letter on my table, he became excited. He spent the next few minutes telling me what he knew of the Tuskegee Airmen. "This is important," he said. Can we send a donation? I thought you would like to know that



the Tuskegee Airmen is taught as part of history (at least in our small school)

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



Dear Tuskegee Airmen,
We thank you for what you have done.
Today, I want you to do this:
Aim High, Believe in yourself,
use your Brain, never quit,
Be ready to go, expect to win.

Sincerely,
Scarlett Forbess



Dear Tuskegee Airmen,
Thank you for your Bravery, courage, Support, and also Protecting us from what I heard I think you really did rise above! When I first heard the word Tuskegee Airmen I didn't know what that meant but now I do and I will always remember to Aim High! I'm happy that you all are still living to tell your story.



love, Hailey

EVENT PHOTOS - Warbirds Over Monroe, NC



Gentry joins up! Proudly clutching his Red Tail dog tags at Warbirds Over Monroe in North Carolina!



Sgt. Harris of the Monroe Police Athletic League brought the Monroe Middle School Fighting Redhawks soccer team to see the story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots and Tuskegee Airmen Red Tails at the Warbirds Over Monroe, NC, air show!



Jayce and the Wood Family watched both documentary films.



This young man's destiny appears to be written in his first name - as Pilot experienced the CAF Rise Above Exhibit at Warbirds Over Monroe.



FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

Pierce T. Ramsey
August 7, 1925 - June 15, 2019
Class: 45-F-TE
Graduation date: 9/8/1945
Rank at time of graduation: Flt. Officer
Service # T70430
From: Philadelphia PA

Following his schooling, Ramsey joined the U.S. Army Air Force. A highlight of his life was to be proficient in all written and verbal aptitude tests. This qualified him to train as a B-25 twin-engine light bomber at Moton Field on the grounds of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Although he completed the training with the rank of flight officer in 1945 and stood ready to serve, he never flew in combat.

One of Ramsey's last official duties as an airman was to fly his plane, the "E-Lois," to Iowa, where it was taken apart and recycled, as was the custom of the time. He remembered saluting with tears in his eyes as his plane rolled down the tarmac for dismantlement.

Ramsey served as an early president of the Philadelphia Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen and helped to initiate fundraising projects. An especially proud moment in his life was the award of the Medal of Honor to the Tuskegee Airmen by President George W. Bush in the nation's capital.

After the war Ramsey's career began as a trainee in the Roberts Real Estate Co., where he worked for several years before becoming a licensed real estate broker. He built and opened his own office in West Philadelphia, selling residential real estate for many years.

Through the years, he joined several civic and social groups, including the Commissioners, a club co-founded by his father. That group of African-American men wanted to host social events when segregation precluded their access to public venues. He was also a founding member of the Del Val Golf Club and a member of the Men's Social Club.

[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.

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“You have to believe in yourself. You can do anything you want to do as long as you put in the effort.”

~Tuskegee Airman Robert Ashby

Trained to fly B-25 bomber as part of 477th Bombardment Group



Photo courtesy Scott Stephens

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN: DID YOU KNOW?

On this date, the following Tuskegee Airmen events occurred:

6 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and from Mossbierbaum oil refinery in the Vienna area of Austria (Germany). Captain William J. Faulkner, Jr. of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported missing over Austria on that mission, possibly because of mechanical failure of his P-51C. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 116 and Missing Air Crew Report number 9681)

6 November 1998: President Bill Clinton signed Public Law 105-355, which Congress passed to establish the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site at Moton Field in Tuskegee, Alabama.

(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)



Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots

FEATURED WASP PROFILE

Margaret "Maggie" Gee

August 5, 1923 – February 1, 2013

Class 44-W-9

Planes flown: PT-17, BT-13, AT-6, AT-10, B-17, B-26, P-39

Bases served: Avenger Field (Sweetwater, Tex.) and Las Vegas Army Air Field (Nev.)

Margaret "Maggie" Gee, whose Chinese name was Gee Mei Gue, was born on August 5, 1923 in Berkeley, California, the daughter of a successful Chinese importer and a first generation Chinese-American. Maggie's grandparents (on her mother's side) had been fishermen who immigrated to the United States to escape the Taiping Revolution and settled in Chinatown, where her parents met and married. However, her father did not want to raise his family in Chinatown, so before Maggie was born, he moved his family to Berkley.



When America entered WWII, Maggie passed a drafting test and left her first year of college to work at the Mare Island Naval Shipyards in Vallejo, California. There, she worked as a draftsman for the engineers who were working on classified projects on US Naval ships needing repair.

By 1942/43, Maggie had saved enough money to move to Minden, Nevada, to learn to fly. She paid \$800 for six months of training and fifty hours of flying time. After she soloed and flew the required hours, Maggie applied for the WASP flying training program at Avenger Field, Texas and was accepted into class 44-W-9.

In June, 1944, Maggie left her home in San Francisco and boarded a troop train which was filled with soldiers at Berkley, California. For the next two days, she either sat on her suitcase or stood up -- all the way to Sweetwater, Texas. There 107 women pilots who entered the same class with Maggie; however, only 55 earned their silver wings and graduated as WASP (Women Airforce Service Pilots) on November 8, 1944.

After graduation, Maggie was sent to Las Vegas Army Air Field, Nevada, where she served as a tow target pilot for flexible gunnery training for male cadets until the WASP were deactivated on December 20, 1944. She then returned to Berkley and completed her formal education, after which she traveled to Europe and was in charge of a European Service Club in the early 1950's.

[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.

“When I was growing up, my heroes were Amelia Earhart and Charles Lindbergh. I loved to watch airplanes fly.”
WASP Maggie Gee, Class 44-W-9



While the men were away, WASP pilot Maggie Gee took to the skies.

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

WASP: DID YOU KNOW?

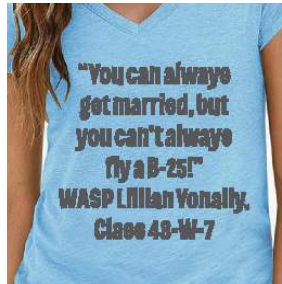
When the training ended up, the women pilots were stationed at 122 air bases across the States. Only those with exceptional skills for aircraft control were permitted to test rocket-propelled planes, pilot jet-propelled planes and work with radar-controlled targets. While serving in the war, 38 WASP pilots lost their lives in accidents.

SHOP WITH WITH A PURPOSE!

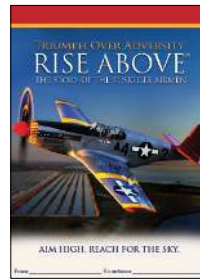
Find great treasures AND honor the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and WASP!
[Visit our online store.](#) *Shipping is included!*



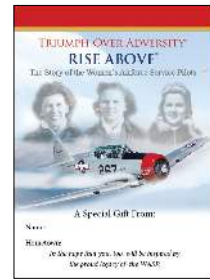
[Apparel -Tuskegee Airmen](#)



[Apparel - WASP](#)



[Books - Tuskegee Airmen](#)



[Books - WASP](#)



[DVDs & Educational Resources](#)



[Gifts](#)



[Sale items](#)

For \$99 you can join the exclusive ranks of the Top Flight Club!

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!

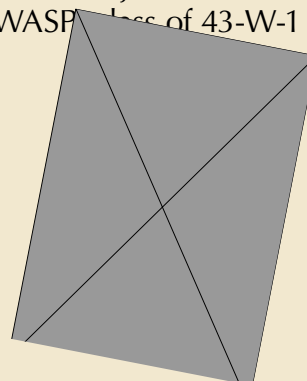
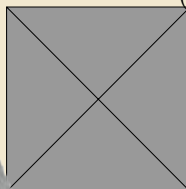
Why 99? *(for each annual membership)*

[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:

CAF RISE ABOVE®
PO Box 416
Red Wing, MN 55066



RISE ABOVE contacts:

LaVone Kay
Marketing Director / Information
info@cafriseabove.org
(888) 928-0188

Doug Rozendaal
Squadron Leader
leader@cafriseabove.org

Kim Pardon
Public Relations/Media
PR@cafriseabove.org

Chris Allen
Traveling Exhibit Director
Exhibit@cafriseabove.org
(802) 371-8838

Melanie Burden
Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@cafriseabove.org

Follow us on Facebook



[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.

[CAF RISE ABOVE: WASP](#) - Share 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.

Follow us on Instagram

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

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



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



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