



# 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).

August 2022



Oshkosh 2022 is now in the books...As a member of the **CAF RISE ABOVE** Squadron, I join the many others who have work tirelessly over the last decade to bring a message of **TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY** to the forefront. This year was no different, together with our hosts at Air Venture 2022, more specifically "**KID VENTURE**" we saw record crowds and participation from young and old alike.

Making reference to the last decade, our unit has added to the overall efforts of the **Commemorative Air Force** and its partnership to support Air Venture's mission. What I am most proud on is the evolution in our mission, bringing into focus not only the **Tuskegee Airmen** but continuing to recognize the will to succeed by honoring the legendary **Women Airforce Service Pilots**, (WASP). Many thanks go to our Tuskegee

Airman Lt Col George Harding, Lt Col James Harvey and WASP torchbearers Erin Miller, Kate Sharp Landdeck as they allowed the RISE ABOVE experience to not only be immersive but interactive as well. Visitors seen our stories via the exhibit and were able to connect with living history, we appreciate our airmen and women for that.

**Oshkosh** is a great milestone is the airshow season. For many teams like ours it's an aviation homecoming, a place to reunite with many of our collective aviation families. The strength of the RISE ABOVE Squadron selfless dedication put forth by the team, and this year was no different. We had a full complement of staff and volunteers working in lockstep at the exhibit for the entire event proving thousands the chance to be inspired. With that I send out a special thank you to **Kristi Younkin**, our Logistic Coordinator, who has provided years of support putting the team in front of so many people nationwide. Kristi transitions the role to a new member of the team, **Keri Ryan**. I welcome Keri and we all stand to support her as she takes on this important position. With that said, we would like to engage you in our mission! Please take the time to visit our website [www.cafriseabove.org](http://www.cafriseabove.org). Take a deeper dive into our mission, visit our virtual museum, explore the many bio's of the Airmen and WASP. Volunteer and support the mission however you can.

*Bill Shepard*

Bill Shepard  
CAF Rise Above Manager

## *Welcome Keri Ryan, Rise Above Logistics Coordinator*



Keri grew up an Air Force brat, as both her father and brother served as fighter pilots. After completing a B.S. in Journalism at Texas Christian University, Keri started a small publishing company which is still in business today. A relocation to NYC led to butchering apprenticeships, affinage internships, restaurant management and eventually a move to Ireland to manage an organic farm. Her love of travel has taken her from Kazakhstan to Australia and many points in between. Finally settling in an off-grid cabin in central Vermont, she is currently the director of the 2nd largest farmers market in the state. When not working or exploring Vermont, she practices taxidermy and plays the harp. Keri said she is both "honored and absolutely ecstatic" about joining our CAF Rise Above family.

**Thank you to our Team and Ambassadors for being our  
"Boots on the Ground!" at KidVenture, Oshkosh, WI**



Rise Above Manager  
Bill Shepard



Rise Above Marketing  
Director LaVone Kay



Rise Above Driver  
Don Larson



Rise Above Exhibit  
Coordinator Kelly Collin



Volunteer Coordinator  
Melanie Burden



Photographer and Tuskegee  
Airmen escort Ken Mist



Hubert Looney



Milton McGee



Ron McGee



Yvonne McGee



Steve Sorge



Tracy Lynn Sorge



Natalie Kelly



Kevin Parks



George Crawford

**Not shown:**  
Natalie Novak  
Ryan Sterling  
Jim Shryock  
Kevin Sutterfield  
Stephanie Wesson





The Tuskegee Airmen Lt Col James Harvey III and Lt Col George Hardy drew many people for autographs and photo opps at KidVenture, Oshkosh, WI

Photos courtesy Ken Mist



Airmen with Wisconsin Air National Guard senior staff





## WE LOVE HEARING FROM YOU!

Good afternoon LaVone,



My name is Jacob Zika. I talked to you at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh. Per our conversation, here's a picture of my children's flight plans that are hanging up in their rooms.

Their names are Joshua (9) Ellie (6) and Samuel (4) Zika.

Your Tuskegee Airmen booth is always our favorite at Oshkosh. We have gotten autographs every year since 2017. Keep up the good work. It is such a noteworthy purpose!

Have a fantastic day!

***We look forward to seeing their new Flight Plans for Life!***  
***Download the free [Rise Above Resource Kits](#) for your own copy. Be sure to share them with us!***

CAF RISE ABOVE: RED TAIL MY FLIGHT PLAN FOR LIFE		 COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE	
MY NAME: <u>Joshua</u>		MY HERO: <u>Justin Jefferson</u>	
WHEN I GROW UP I WANT TO BE: <u>Football player</u>		<p>"Remember the Tuskegee Airmen, whatever your dream is, work to make it real - and in trying you will succeed." -Brig Gen Charles McGee</p>	
BECAUSE I AM GOOD AT: <u>catching the ball and running</u>			
I NEED TO GET BETTER AT: <u>Throwing a football</u>	TO PREPARE I CAN: <u>practice</u>	WHEN I FEEL LIKE GIVING UP, I WILL TELL MYSELF: <u>keep trying</u>	

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# CAF RISE ABOVE: RED TAIL MY FLIGHT PLAN FOR LIFE



MY NAME:  
Ellie Zika

WHEN I GROW UP I WANT TO BE:  
a ARTIST

BECAUSE I AM GOOD AT:  
ART CLASS

MY HERO:

is mom and Dad

"Remember the Tuskegee Airmen, whatever your dream is, work to make it real - and in trying you will succeed."  
-Brig Gen Charles McGee

I NEED TO GET BETTER AT:

drawing dogs  


TO PREPARE I CAN:

Get Supplies

WHEN I FEEL LIKE GIVING UP:  
I WILL TELL MYSELF:

do not Give up

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# CAF RISE ABOVE: RED TAIL MY FLIGHT PLAN FOR LIFE



MY NAME:  
SPM

WHEN I GROW UP I WANT TO BE:  
Doctor

BECAUSE I AM GOOD AT:  
helping others

MY HERO:

YouTube Ryan and Daddy

"Remember the Tuskegee Airmen, whatever your dream is, work to make it real - and in trying you will succeed."  
-Brig Gen Charles McGee

I NEED TO GET BETTER AT:

Listening

TO PREPARE I CAN:

Study hard

WHEN I FEEL LIKE GIVING UP:  
I WILL TELL MYSELF:

Don't give up!

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*America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen*

## FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

### **2nd Lt Roosevelt Stiger**

March 24, 1919 – October 7, 1944

Class SE-44-C

Graduation Date: March 12, 1944

Unit: 332nd Fighter Group, 302nd Fighter Control Squadron

Service # 0-824842

Roosevelt enrolled in the Tuskegee Aviation Cadet program and in November of 1943, he had completed his training

Stiger graduated from flight training on March 12, 1944, at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. He deployed to Italy with the 302nd Fighter Squadron.

During a bomber escort mission to Vienna, Austria, on Oct. 7, the second lieutenant reported trouble with his plane, a P-51 Mustang nicknamed Nona.

"Lt Stiger was flying my wing in a flight of four," Capt. Milton R. Brooks wrote in a military report. "About 10 minutes inland from the coast of Yugoslavia, he called that his oxygen was low, so I told number three and four men to stay above the overcast and I would take Lt Stiger down from an altitude of 23,000 feet. I went to 13,000 feet near the coast and as I started out over the water the ceiling finally forced us down to about 3,000 feet.

"About 15 minutes from the Italian waterland, the visibility and ceiling were poor. I noticed Lt Stiger turning into me from my left, so I immediately called a right turn to prevent his running into me. He looked as though he was diving into the water, so I told him to pull up. I came up into a slight opening and he came up on my right. A few seconds later his plane went into a straight dive down. This was at an altitude of approximately 600 feet.

"Seeing no possibility of recovery, I switched to Channel D and called 'mayday' in the hopes that he may have got out. Visibility was so poor that in my circles while calling 'mayday' I couldn't see any trace of him." Stiger was not seen again. His name is included on the Tablets of the Missing at the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial in Italy. According to a government database, he was awarded a Purple Heart for his military service. The date of deaths reflects his finding of death, which is a year and a day from the date he went missing.

[Read his complete 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.



**“I wasn’t concerned about what anyone thought about me. Flying was a challenge and something I wanted to do. I wanted to be a valuable asset to our country. I wanted to be a good soldier.”**

**~Tuskegee Airman Yenwith Whitney**



Class SE-44-C graduated March 12, 1944

Order unknown: Henry E. Rohlsen, Fred L. Brower, Roscoe C. Brown, Walter R. Brown, Jr., James Albert Calhoun, Vincent C. Dean, James L. Hall, Jr., Herbert H. Haywood, Elbert Hudson, Andrew D. Marshall, Joseph L. Merton, Jr., Rixie H. McCarroll, Elton H. Nightingale, John H. Porter, William S. Price, III, Gordon M. Rapier, Roosevelt Stiger, William M. Wheeler, Charles L. White, Peter H. Whittaker, Charles T. Williams, Albert L. Young

Class TE-44-C – Payton H. Lyle, Ahemed A. Rayner, Jr., Charles E. Darnell, Reginald W. Hayes, Charles E. Wilson

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



*Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots*

## FEATURED WASP PROFILE

### **Dorothy L. Bancroft Hammett**

January 29, 1910 – March 10, 2003

Class: 44-W-6

Planes flown: PT-17, BT-13, AT-6, B-24, UC-78

Training Location: Avenger Field (Sweetwater, Tex.)

Assigned bases: Frederick Army Air Field (Okla.)

Dorothy Bancroft began training with Class 44-W-2, but due to having appendectomy surgery toward the end of the primary stage, after surgery she then entered ground school with 44-W-5 as well as primary flight training with 44-W-6, graduating with Class 44-W-6

Dorothy was the only WASP to be awarded the Air Medal during WWII. Following the war, medals were awarded to other members.

She earned her private pilot's license and as WWII approached and she heard Pearl Harbor reports over the radio, she wanted to enlist in the Army as a certified lab technician but was only offered a place as a buck private as the Army was not giving commissions to lab technicians. A quote from Dorothy, "That hurt my little old pride."

Dorothy later received a letter from Jacqueline Cochran inviting women with air flight experience to join the WASP. She started with ferrying new planes from the manufacturer to where they were needed, and was later asked to become a flight instructor. She was an instrument flight instructor for the women and men returning from combat who needed to be taught the latest methods. She also evaluated flight performances of men returning from combat, or men grounded and wishing to requalify for flight in the U.S.A. This was sometimes made difficult by men who didn't enjoy being taught or evaluated by a woman. The WASP borrowed a slogan from the English: "A woman taught you to work. A woman can teach you to fly."



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

July 15, 1943

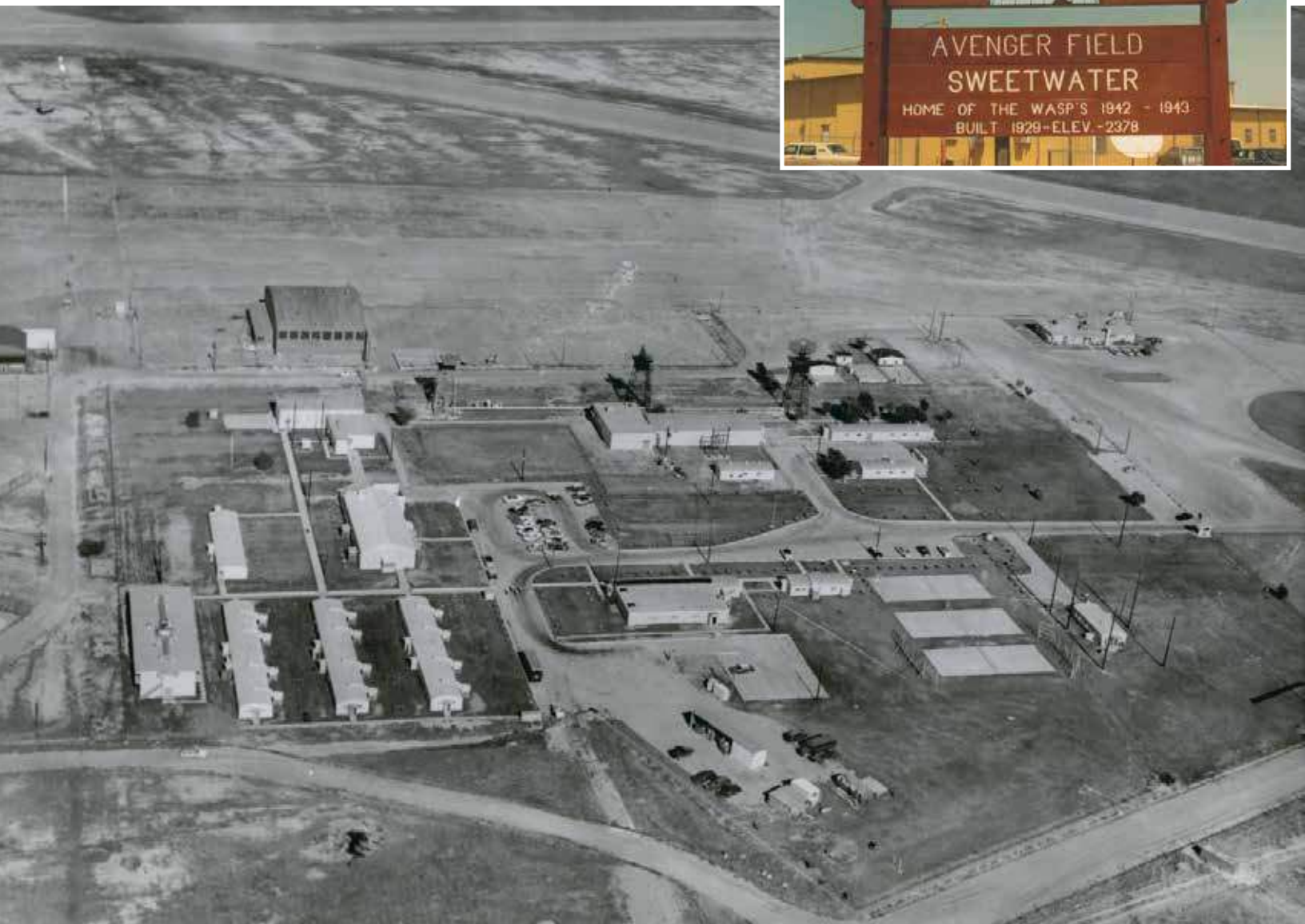
Dearest Sis,

We have been flying for a week. That PT is so different from those cubs I flew at Spartan that I feel as if I had never been in a plane before. Already my big worry is that I might "wash out." It's going to be plenty tough to come up to Army standards. Several from W-7 "washed" today. Everyone gets depressed when they go; tonight the Recreation Room was like a morgue--you just can't help wondering "Will I be next?"

Love, Spook

~WASP Adaline Alma Blank, Class 43-8, Avenger Field, Sweetwater, TX

Photograph of the wooden sign in front of Avenger Field that includes a full-color depiction of Fifinella, the mascot of the Women Airforce Service Pilots.



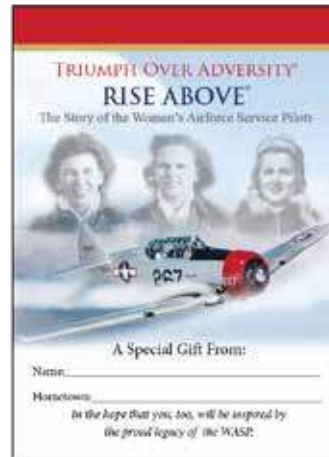
Aerial photograph of a group of buildings at Avenger Field

# Educational resources

Find a wealth of information about the Tuskegee Airmen or WASP, educational resources and more. Look for [RESOURCES](#) in the menu bar!

Our **free, downloadable RISE ABOVE Resource Kits** provides users access to posters featuring the Six Guiding Principles, PowerPoint's, classroom activities and a wealth of material about the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP.

Purchase dog tags featuring the Six Guiding Principles, DVDs, and other materials to enhance your classroom activities in the [online store](#).



## WE NEED YOU!

Please help us ensure that the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and WASP is passed on to future generations, so that their strength of character, courage and ability to triumph over adversity may serve as a means to inspire others to RISE ABOVE obstacles in their own lives and achieve their goals!

### WANT TO MAKE YOUR DONATION TO THE CAF RISE ABOVE GO FARTHER?

Does your employer have a matching gift program? Your donation to the CAF Rise Above may be able to be doubled or tripled. Ask your employer for details.

[Give online](#), or call 888-928-0188, or by mail at:

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PO Box 416  
Red Wing, MN 55066

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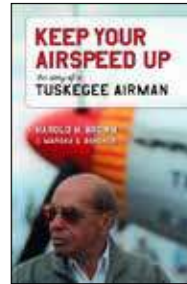
Find great treasures AND honor the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and WASP!  
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There's no better way to support our mission to educate, inspire, and honor through flight and living history experiences than by joining a Top Flight Club!



**Why 99?** *(for each 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: 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.

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

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**RISE ABOVE: Red Tail - Keep an eye on our blog and don't miss out on a single story**

Find an archive of all our best articles, featuring closer looks at original Tuskegee Airmen, the P-51C Mustang *Tuskegee Airmen*, and many more in-depth stories in our blog. [Check it out!](#)



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Join the conversation [@cafredtail on Twitter!](#) There's a lot going on here and you don't want to miss it. Want to help educate others about the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen? Retweet to spread the word!

