

The Tuskegee Airmen

Years leading up to World War 1, there had never been an African American man serving as a pilot for the Army. Nonetheless, the Tuskegee Airmen changed this as they became the first African American pilots in the U.S. military, challenging the harsh stereotypes that kept them from serving as one. In this paper, I will discuss further more on who the Tuskegee Airmen were and their six guiding principles that led to their remarkable success.

In today's U.S. military, the aviation fields are filled regardless of gender or race, however, they have not always been this open-minded. In 1941, less than a year before Pearl Harbor, the army corps finally accepted African Americans to become pilots. Meanwhile, America was still a segregated society, therefore they served in segregated units apart from white servicemen. Here, the first in these units was the 99th Fighter Squadron and later with the 332nd Fighter Group, who were trained at the Tuskegee Institute, to which they soon became what we remember today: the Tuskegee Airmen. These airmen became part of the 15th Air Force as they were responsible for protecting larger bombers from German fighter planes.

Throughout the braveness and courageous acts these airmen held, they were also faced with many challenges by racism, segregation, and limited opportunities. But no matter, they always *aimed high* to fulfill their dream of flying and to serve our country, even when everyone told them it was impossible. At one point, the U.S. military refused to give the opportunity to train African American men to be pilots. However, war was approaching and President Roosevelt quickly changed that. During this time, the Tuskegee Airmen were constantly judged solely by the color of their skin and that they weren't smart enough. They still *believed in themselves* and *worked hard* through the judgement, and at the end, became heroes. They knew

they had the power within to make a difference and *used their brain* into work, realizing their full potential. These airmen became skilled pilots from *working hard* and always *being ready to go*. Still, they endured racism and judgement. But that never made them quit. They kept going and going to be better than they were the day before, with the mindset of no matter what everyone believed, they *expected to win*.

In conclusion, the Tuskegee Airmen fought and sacrificed their lives for a country that wouldn't do the same for them because of their skin color. They fought hard in missions and when the world needed them, the airmen were there. The world still struggled to accept that African Americans could do everything and anything the same as white servicemen. Sometimes you have to separate the best from the ordinary, and the Tuskegee Airmen proved with the remarkable acts that they were extraordinary.

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