



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 2021

AirVenture is over and the sunburns on our necks and blisters on our feet have healed. It's time to reflect.

AirVenture 2021 marked 20th anniversary of the first appearance of our P-51C "Tuskegee Airmen" at Oshkosh in 2001 and the 10th anniversary of our RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit premier in 2011. Both are major milestones and all on our team should be incredibly proud of what we have accomplished in the last 20 years.

We were especially excited to host Brig Gen Charles McGee and Lt Col. George Hardy. At 102 and 96, they are the oldest and youngest Tuskegee Airmen combat pilots that remain with us.

Both are great supporters of the CAF Rise Above Squadron and great ambassadors of what young people can accomplish. The public response to these Rock Stars was incredible, and their support of our program is something that makes us very proud.

Another highlight of the week was the CAF RISE ABOVE WASP program in our exhibit. We had a private screening at AirVenture 2019, and being able to show the WASP program at Airventure was a highlight, and the public response was overwhelming.

Anniversaries are a great time to reflect, but they are also a great time to look forward. Twenty years ago when the Mustang made its first appearance I am certain there were over 100 Original Tuskegee Airmen still living and the WASP tent on the main ramp was full of WASP pilots. Today their numbers are fading quickly. That means going we must work even harder to keep their stories of overcoming obstacles and seeking opportunities to achieve their goals in the forefront. It is rewarding work.



Tail Winds,

Doug Rozendaal

CAF RISE ABOVE Leader

Since the debut of the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit® over 280,000 visitors have experienced the RISE ABOVE® program and over 142,00 children have received a free inspirational dog tag featuring the Six Guiding Six Principles© – **Aim High, Believe In Yourself, Use Your Brain, Be Ready To Go, Never Quit, Expect to Win.**

The CAF RISE ABOVE Squadron also offers innovative resource materials for teachers, youth leaders and parents to help bring the lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen alive in the classroom. We have distributed over 244,000 free downloadable RISE ABOVE Resource Kits and affordable supplemental resources in our online store!

WASP Nell Bright was able to join the Airmen via Zoom in the Skyscape Theatre!

USAF General Jackie Van Ovost, commander of the Air Mobility Command, stopped by to visit the Airmen, as did hundreds of others!!!



Good afternoon. I just thought it was necessary to let you know how wonderful the RISE ABOVE Exhibit was. The whole setup was very well done. The WASP presentation was done perfect. It told the story and made it relatable. I was very impressed. Thank you for taking the time/thought and expenses to put together this traveling exhibit. I will definitely steer my future donations to the CAF to the RISE ABOVE campaign. Thanks again.

Oh, and I appreciate the wheelchair access. Thank you for thinking of everyone.

Alan Earl



Ian, great-grandson of BG McGee, experienced a life-time experience when pilot Kevin Sutterfield took him up for a ride in the P-51C Mustang!





Back-to-School Campaign

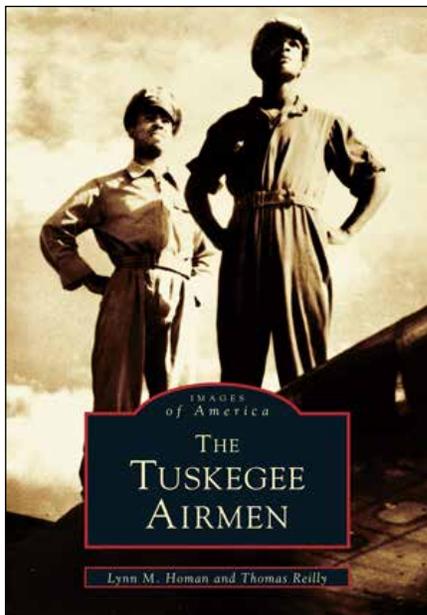
During difficult times it is instructive to look back and learn from others who have triumphed in the face of adversity. For education leaders, it is especially important to support the social-emotional health of students, families, and staff.

Download the **free** Toolkits featured in the [Commemorative Air Force® RISE ABOVE® Back-to-School Campaign](#) and watch the introduction featuring video interviews. with Lt Col Harold H. Brown, USAF, Ret, Tuskegee Airman.

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

Featured items, visit our [online store](#) to see more!

[The Tuskegee Airmen](#) \$24.00



There are 200 images in this 128 page paperback book!

In 1941, Tuskegee, Alabama, was selected as the site of an important new development in military training. For the first time, black Americans were to be allowed to serve their country as members of the United States Army Air Corps.

[Fifinella T-shirt](#) \$25.00



This inspiring t-shirt showcases the iconic image of Fifinella, a female gremlin designed by Walt Disney for a proposed film from Roald Dahl's book *The Gremlins*. During World War II, the Women Airforce Service Pilots asked permission to use the image as their official mascot, and the Disney Company granted them the rights.



The Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame is pleased to present the first video in their mini documentary series. This series will focus on interviews with inductees of the Hall of Fame sharing some of their life's experiences. They hope that you will find these educational stories to be informative as well as inspirational.

The first video features [Tuskegee Airmen Dr. Harold Brown](#). He discusses his aviation and wartime experiences and his transition into civilian life after the war. We hope that his perspective on life as a child growing up in Minneapolis during the thirties, his experiences in overcoming numerous obstacles as an original Tuskegee Airman and his views as an educator after the war, will enlighten our youth as to the critical importance of education in their lives.

These mini documentaries will be available on their YouTube Channel with the following link [Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame - YouTube](#).

Dr. Harold Brown, will be inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame on Oct 30, 2021. Learn more at [mnaviationhalloffame.org](#).

Brown and his wife, Dr. Marsha Bordner, also received recognition as Writers of the Year for their book, "[Keep Your Airspeed Up: The Story of a Tuskegee Airman](#)," a detailed account of Brown's experience as one of the country's first black military aviators.



Our mission in action!

David Spengler is a donor who loves to buy the [Red Tail Inspiration Packs](#) (3 so far this year) and hand out the dog tags and RISE ABOVE booklets to people he encounters. Please read the letter from a gentleman who was deeply affected by receiving them :)

JOHNSON FAMILY CHRONICLES

“Triumph Over Adversity”

First off let me start by saying it’s been a pretty shitty week....sorry. I was in Wisconsin for business and let’s just say it took a brotha out. Issues coming at me left and right and it just overwhelmed me.

The boy and I like to race Hot Wheels, a fun hobby we picked up during the pandemic. I learned there was an antique store nearby that had a big inventory. So before I headed back home I wanted to pick up a few. Trust me it gets better, this is not about little cars LOLOL

Whenever I see a Veteran, I always try to acknowledge them and thank them for their service. Well, this gentleman walked in the store and he had on his Veteran hat with the Korean War on it and I also saw his Navy Anchor. I thanked him, then he asked, “did you serve?” I responded back with “Yes sir, Corpsman, Persian Gulf War.” He thanked me then quickly walked off. I didn’t think it was odd as he was leaving and I was paying for my cars.

Then out the corner of my eye, I saw him approaching me with something in his hand. He then said, “I have something for you. You’re familiar with the Tuskegee Airmen aren’t you?”Of course, you know I said I do with a curious look on my face..Why would a white Veteran be asking me about them?

He then hands me a pamphlet on the story of the Tuskegee Airman and a dog tag that reads on the back, “AIM HIGH. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF. USE YOUR BRAIN. NEVER QUIT. BE READY TO GO. EXPECT TO WIN”

I was speechless for a minute as he spoke highly of the airmen and their missions and support during World War 2. He spoke on how respected they were by white Veterans that they protected and saved even during those troubling times for African American men.

I thanked him, paid for my cars, and left. When I got in my car, I just thought of the kind gesture and this is how America should be. I got out, went back in, and asked if I could take a photo with him because our paths would never cross again but I wanted to share this moment with others because it turned my whole week around. It also lets me know that maybe one day, even if I won’t live to see it, that there is hope that we can just love one another for who we are.

I needed this because with all of the challenges and adversity I’m having at work I wasn’t sure how I was going to make it. This was the message that will help me RISE ABOVE to accomplish my goals with this position.

Aaron AJ Johnson Sr.





America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen

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.

FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

Weldon K. Groves

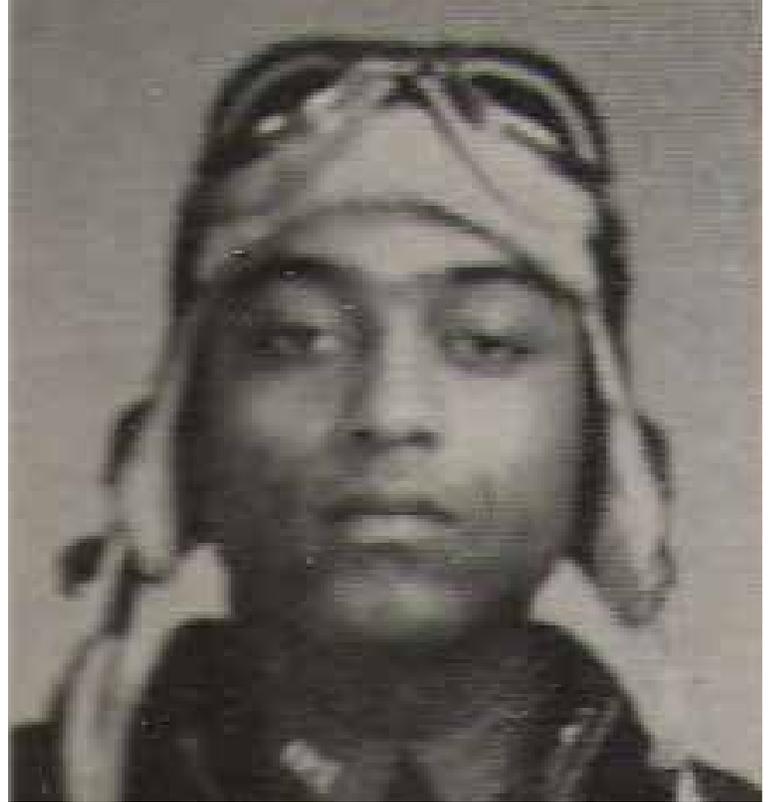
May 22, 1917 - May 12, 2008

Class 43-F-SE

Unit: 302nd Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group

Groves served as an advanced instructor pilot and chief instrument examiner. In 1948 he served as a flight commander at Lockbourne Air Base in Columbus, Ohio. According to historians, he was believed to be one of the last known World War II Tuskegee Airmen to train as a weather officer. He cross-trained in weather in 1949 after his unit, the 332nd Fighter Group, was deactivated.

[Read the profile of Weldon Groves online!](#)



TUSKEGEE AIRMEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“The main thing is you must have a goal. You must want to do something and you strive for it, and you must have some determination to get there,” Hardy said. “You may have an obstacle, but you must overcome them.”

~Tuskegee Airman Lt Col George Hardy, offering his advice to the youth, stressing education.

1st Lt. Ramon F. Noches with other two Tuskegee Airmen, assigned to the 477th Bomb Group Godman Field, Fort Knox

Photo courtesy Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell, AFB, AL





Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots

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.

FEATURED WASP PROFILE

Vivian Cadman Eddy

June 8, 1921 - April 29, 2013

Class 43-W-5

Planes flown: BT-13, PT-17, AT-6, B-26 ,C-47, B-25, P-39, PT-22

Training Location: Avenger Field (Sweetwater, Tex.)

Assigned Bases: Love Field (Dallas, Tex.) and Palm Springs Army Air Base (Calif.)

At 19 Vivian was already licensed to fly airplanes – but didn't yet have a license to drive an automobile. In 1943 the shortage of male pilots for the World War II effort gave 22-year-old Vivian the shot of a lifetime. She was one of only 1000, out of an applicant pool of 25,000+, tapped to join the elite Women Airforce Service Pilots (the WASP). Her job was to ferry aircraft from the point of manufacture to locations where they were shipped overseas. A qualified pursuit pilot, Vivian flew 17 different aircraft, including the P-51 Mustang, her favorite.



[*Read the profile of Vivian online!*](#)

WASP QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“I got checked out as pilot in the C-47 and co-piloted in the B-17, B-25 and got my instrument rating flying a B-24 from California to Florida. My instructor told me that I flew better than 95 percent of the male pilots he checked out.”

~WASP Adeline Ellison, Class 43-W-6



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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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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