



# 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).

September 2024



The Rise Above Traveling Exhibit \*generally\* accompanies the Red Tail P-51C Mustang; as representatives of the Commemorative Air Force, that means you will find both at Air Shows throughout the season - large and small, military and commercial, urban and rural. We just completed examples of both, at Offutt Air Force Base outside Omaha, Nebraska then at Clarinda, Iowa, site of this year's Fly Iowa celebration which is held to promote aviation in the state at a different facility every year - and will travel to examples of both in the month upcoming, from the Green Mountain Aviation Days in Burlington, Vermont to Thunder Over Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi to ending September amid the spectacular foliage of the Smoky Mountains in fall at the SOAR Tri-Cities in eastern Tennessee, a school-oriented event completely emphasizing the Rise Above messages about the heroic Tuskegee Airmen and Women Airforce Service Pilots.

The message translates, regardless of show size or location or even if it is strictly-speaking an Air Show; at a huge military show there is a larger context for what the pioneers whose stories we are entrusted to preserve built, at a smaller show more attention to the entirety and detail of their histories can often be shared...and at those events where Rise Above represents the WASP, the Airmen and the CAF alone, personal connections - especially with students, whose interests in service and/or aviation we've been fortunate enough to see sparked, on consistent occasion - can be inspired.

There are even occasions where the Exhibit displays without the Mustang, taking advantage of its status as a unique CAF teaching tool not restricted to airfields with runways. While it definitely serves most effectively in direct support of the P-51, we are never reluctant to bring history to places aircraft cannot go.

The Squadron is scheduling for 2025 as this reaches you. If you have an Air Show, an airfield, or simply a special occasion or school parking lot the Traveling Exhibit can reach - let us know. We are all of those things, in support of keeping alive the history of the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP!

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 (888) 928-0188 or email [logistics@cafriseabove.org](mailto:logistics@cafriseabove.org) for more information.



Lt. Colonel Julius Clemmer, who flew P-51C, P-51D and A-36 Mustang variants in World War II, reconnects with the rare C model via the CAF Rise Above Squadron's *Tuskegee Airmen By Request* at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska - where the Lt. Colonel was first sworn in when it was Ft. Crook, in 1943.



Photo courtesy David Bentley



CAF Red Tail pilot Matt Quy gives Paul Carter a ride in the P-51 at Fly Iowa.  
[Contact us](#) if you are interested in purchasing a ride!



The Road Crew, Don Larson and Chris Allen with Volunteer Ambassador Terry Loudermill in Clarinda, Iowa.



## FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

*America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen*

**James T. Wiley**

**August 7, 1918 – May 3, 2000**

**Class: 42-F-SE**

**Graduation Date: 7/3/1942**

**Unit: 332nd Fighter Group, 99th Pursuit Squadron**

**Service # 0790469**

One of the United States' military's first African American combat fighter pilots, Wiley was the first African American military combat pilot ever to land on foreign soil during combat readiness in North Africa.

In 1942, he joined the Corps' Advanced Flight Training at the Tuskegee Army Airfield. On July 3, 1942, Wiley graduated from the program's four-ever Cadet Class Single Engine Section SE-42-F, earning his wings and a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant. Wiley's parents attended the graduation ceremonies. He was assigned to the 332nd Fighter Group's 99th Fighter Squadron.

While logging flight training hours at an air field in Tallahassee, Florida without his normal African American ground crew, Wiley crashed his aircraft after a racist white crew person likely affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan tampered and sabotaged his aircraft.

In April 1943, Wiley and his squadron were sent to North Africa in Casablanca. Wiley became the 99th Squadron's flight leader. On May 5, 1943: Wiley and Graham Smith were the 99th Fighter Squadron's first two P-40 pilots to land in North Africa, at Oued N'ja in French Morocco. In late 1943, Wiley and his squadron moved from North Africa to Sicily.

As flight leader, Wiley led squadron planes on ground attacks upon a German troop train with 500 enemy soldiers. Wiley destroyed the train's engine and boiler, causing the German soldiers to scurry off the train. Wiley flew 101 combat missions during World War II.

[\*\*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

**“Everything went the same as in training except for the real bullets... Until then, the danger of the mission had never occurred to me.”**

**~ Tuskegee Airman Lt. C. D. “Lucky” Lester**



***Tuskegee Trigger Time*** by Robert Bailey Tuskegee P-51 Mustangs of the 301st

### TUSKEGEE AIRMEN: DID YOU KNOW?

On this date, the following Tuskegee Airmen event occurred:

11 September 1943: Advance elements of the 99th Fighter Squadron landed on a beach at Battapaglia in Italy, under enemy fire. For several days, enemy forces strafed the advance echelon by day and bombed it by night, after it retreated to a site near Paestum, Italy, where the 33rd Fighter Group was based. The main body of the 99th Fighter Squadron remained in Sicily. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

11 September 1945: Forty-one students graduated from primary flight training at Moton Field, in class 46-A. Eighty-three had begun the class on 28 June. (History of 2164th AAFBU at Moton Field, AFHRA call number 234.821, Sep-Nov 1945).

(The above information was taken from the “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

**Frances Ellis Winter Brookings**

**July 2 1917 – April 12, 2018**

**Class 44-W-7**

**Planes flown: PT-17, BT-13, AT-6, AT-10**

**Assigned bases: Columbus Army Air Field (Miss.)**

Frances was born in DuBois, Pennsylvania, on July 2, 1917, the fourth child and third daughter of Maude Elizabeth Baker Winter and Francis Ellis Winter. At an early age her family moved to Erie, Pennsylvania, where she lived until 1934 when she moved to Hot Springs, Arkansas.

She was educated at Hendrix college, Conway, Arkansas; Oklahoma College for Women (now known as Oklahoma University of Arts and Sciences at Chickasha, Oklahoma); and Louisiana State University where, at age 59, she earned a Master's degree in Library Science. She lived in Shreveport, Louisiana for over six decades and in 2008 moved to Springfield.

During World War II Fran earned a pilot license and, completing all requirements, was accepted as one of the 103 trainees in WASP class 44-7. September 8, 1944, after successfully completing over seven months of Army Air Force flight training, Fran and 58 of her classmates graduated, earned their silver WASP wings and became Women Airforce Service Pilots -- the first women in history to fly America's military aircraft.

Following graduation, Fran's official Army orders sent her to Columbus Army Air Field, Columbus, Mississippi as part of the Flying Training Command's 30th Army Air Force - 2112th AF Base Unit. While there, she would have flown AT-10 flight testing missions as well as ferrying, utility and administrative missions. For that service, Fran and her WASP sisters were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2010. It is the highest civilian honor Congress can bestow.

[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

**“I loved sitting under the wing of a plane hot as it was with the black top of the ramp sticky, waiting for my turn to fly.”**

**WASP Ethel Meyer Finley, Class W-43-5**



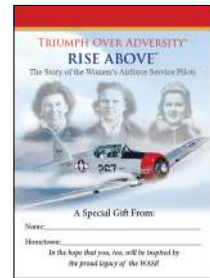
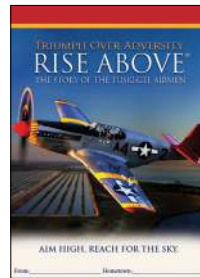
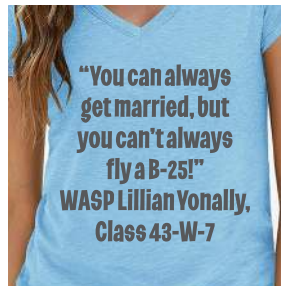
*Photo courtesy of The WASP Archive, The TWU Libraries' Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX*

## WASP: DID YOU KNOW?

Jacqueline Cochran, a pioneering aviator at the time, was the head of the WASP program. She was aiming to develop the women air force to an equal level with the “regular, male”, and to save the scarcity of women pilots. After the war, Jacqueline became the first woman pilot who broke the sound barrier.

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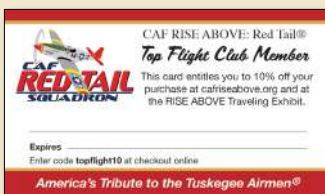
### Why 99? *(for each annual membership)*

#### [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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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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