



## TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

In 1941 the United States Army Air Corps created a program to train African American men as military pilots. At that time segregation, the practice of separating blacks and whites, was common in the United States. Many people didn't think African Americans were capable of performing jobs requiring training and discipline, such as flying. But the American military needed pilots for World War II, so a program known as the Tuskegee Experiment began. Between 1941 and 1945, more than 1,000 African American men trained at the Tuskegee Army Air Field in Tuskegee, Alabama. The Tuskegee Airmen included not only pilots but also instructors, maintenance crews, and support staff at the airfield.

The airmen earned the nickname Red-Tail Angels, or Red Tails, because of the distinctive red markings on the tails of their airplanes. They completed more than 15,000 successful air missions and destroyed 251 enemy aircraft during the war. None of the bombers escorted by the pilots was lost to enemy action, though 66 of the Tuskegee Airmen gave their lives during combat. By the end of the fighting, they were one of the most highly respected and decorated fighter groups of the war. Their excellent record of protection during combat missions led to the desegregation of the military by President Harry S. Truman in 1948.

Raleigh native Vernon Haywood studied at Tuskegee after training as a civilian pilot at Hampton College in Virginia. In 1942 Haywood was called into the Army Air Corps and became a member of the 332d Fighter Group. He flew approximately 70 combat missions over Italy in a number of different aircraft. After the war Haywood, by then a colonel, was assigned to Williams Air Force Base in Chandler, Arizona, where he became one of the first African American jet pilots and instructors.

Try to find all of the Tuskegee-related words in the word search below. They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards, or backwards.

A	P	K	T	A	B	M	O	C	E	W	Q	T
I	O	J	V	E	N	O	I	S	S	I	M	U
R	P	G	N	K	C	T	U	C	S	T	W	S
M	E	H	A	Y	W	O	O	D	H	P	I	K
E	K	D	M	E	Q	P	M	G	U	N	V	E
N	E	N	A	L	P	R	I	A	F	S	L	G
P	A	N	T	W	B	L	S	B	J	K	P	E
S	D	A	I	R	F	I	E	L	D	O	I	E
Z	N	Y	F	S	A	O	I	T	A	I	L	U
D	E	S	E	G	R	E	G	A	T	I	O	N
D	F	O	L	D	H	N	A	M	U	R	T	K
F	R	M	D	Y	X	G	K	S	O	K	E	Z
A	M	I	L	I	T	A	R	Y	O	Q	Z	T

AIRFIELD  
AIRMEN  
AIRPLANE  
COMBAT  
DESEGREGATION

FLIGHT  
HAYWOOD  
MILITARY  
MISSION  
PILOT

RED  
TAIL  
TRUMAN  
TUSKEGEE