



Post Convention Edition  
Nov 2006  
Volume 1, Issue 3

Editor In Chief  
Jennifer Myers

**Inside this Issue:**

**Tuskegee Airmen's  
MISSION STATEMENT**

**STAFF NEWS**

**MESSAGE FROM THE  
PRESIDENT**

**TA PERSPECTIVE**

**CONVENTION**

**"Blue Skies"  
Keeping in the know!  
Events around the Regions**

**Announcements**

**Tuskegee Airmen's  
Mission & Strategy  
Statement**

Mission: To inspire youth to outstanding achievement and leadership by improving their academic, business, technology and life skills, through mentorship.

Theme: Developing visionary youth through education, scholarship and service.

Strategy: To support youth empowerment by providing training in alternatives to violence; to provide leadership skills while fostering awareness of social and economic justice issues in their own lives and in their communities.

From TAI's Strategic Plan adopted 31 July 2006

# FROM THE

# FLIGHT

# DECK

*The Official Newsletter*



## Staff News

**The purpose of this periodical is to keep the valued members of Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated informed of events and basic information regarding this distinguished organization.**

**Your TAI Newsletter TEAM is looking for members who are interested in serving on the Newsletter Staff.**

**If you are interested please contact Jennifer Myers at [tailegacy@yahoo.com](mailto:tailegacy@yahoo.com)**

## Message From The President



Dear Members of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.:

Once again I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all of the Officers, Board members and other members, plus the supporters, who gave tremendous to this great organization over the past few years and I also look forward towards your continued unwavering support as we enter into a new chapter for TAI.

Our TAI Board of Directors (TAI BOD) is a key component to the execution and implementation of TAI's policies and procedures. The newly adapted "Strategic Plan" which was accomplished at the 35<sup>th</sup> Convention will set the course for TAI in the upcoming years. The purpose of TAI remains the same and Strategic Plan tells us how we will get our business done. The BOD and serving officers are committed to the fiduciary duty of loyalty and care of TAI. As we continue the transition process, we will continue to face many challenges that will hopefully enhance our day to day operation and strengthen us as a viable non-profit organization.

I am hopeful that the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal (CGM) to our beloved Airmen will take place in the very near future. The TAI-CGM Committee under the very able

**2006 Post Convention Edition**

leadership of Denis Mills, 1st Vice President, continues to meet frequently, addressing issues relative to the upcoming formal award presentation, fundraising, and press releases. We will continue to keep you informed as we enter the next phase of planning the presentation, as well as the reception that follows. Undoubtedly, this will be a key moment in our organization's history as well as a significant event in the lives of those men and women who not only answered the call but changed a nation and the World.

As Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., moves forward, I encourage you to not only renew your membership for 2007, but reflect and recommit yourselves to this organization by offering your talents and expertise to your chapter. Your commitment and involvement ensures the Legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen will not fade.

Members and friends, I look forward to continue working with you during the next two years while serving as your president and for many more afterwards.

*Russell C. Davis*

President, Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.



**What Nonprofit Transparency Means to You: October Question of the Month Results**

The October Question of the Month asked, "What does 'nonprofit transparency' mean to you?" The responses fell into two categories: (1) financial accountability and (2) openness about missions and programs.

**Financial Accountability**

Aimee LaBrake of the Tackle Marketing Group, which provides services to nonprofits, defined nonprofit transparency as "a clear view into where the donations/gifts given to the non-profit are distributed, as well as the overall costs of running the non-profit organization." Judith Tomlinson of Those Against Drunk Driving agreed: "When working with communities, community donors need to know where their money is going."

John C. McGee of Family Relations Program, Inc. elaborated, "A willingness to provide information about the nature and activities of your organization including but not limited to governance, finance, program, outcome measures to your funders and the general public. In addition, you should be willing to answer reasonable questions about the information and be able to explain the material to those who have a need to know." Along the same lines, Donna Valente of the Christopher Reeve Foundation maintained, "Nonprofit transparency means that the organization's finances, operations and programs are absolutely ethical and open to inspection."

Other participants mentioned adherence to federal and state regulations, annual financial audits, timely submission of reporting documents, and clear accounting methods and record keeping.

**Openness about Mission and Programs**

Several participants pointed to the importance of ensuring that all activities support an organization's mission. As one anonymous participant wrote, "There is nothing to hide. The mission is clear and organizational activity reflects that."

For Dr. Anthony A. Adamo, chief development officer of the Children's Home, Inc., "nonprofit transparency" means that "everything we do must be clearly understood and open to review and thoughtful discussion by all stakeholders to gain their complete confidence and respect."

**A Holistic View**

For many participants, "nonprofit transparency" encompasses every aspect of an organization. As an anonymous participant said: "I think of the acronym DWYSYWD (do what you say you will do). Do the actions of the organization reflect the core values and mission it promotes? Is there genuine evidence of the agency's high regard for integrity across all core aspects of the

agency—from program operation and hiring practices, to evaluation and communications as well as the financial practices (where most media attention often gravitates). Examples of evidence may include recognizing and abiding to all applicable state and federal laws, exploring appropriate accreditation opportunities, completing regular annual reports/audits and making that information readily available to funders, using independent researchers to conduct program evaluations, maintaining open lines of communication between donors and the like."

We couldn't have said it better ourselves.

Suzanne E. Coffman, November 2006  
© 2006, Philanthropic Research, Inc.  
(GuideStar)

**The future of TAI as well as the Legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen depends on how much we value the organization as well as the me who sacrifices and paved the way!**

# ELECTIONS

**Results from the 2006 National Elections**

**National Officers are as follows:**

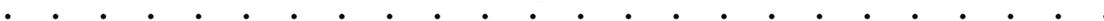
- Russell C. Davis, President
- Denis Mills, 1st Vice President
- Roosevelt Mercer Jr., 2nd Vice President
- Barbara Knighten, Treasurer
- Lynda H. Murray-Jackson, Financial Secretary
- Lynda "Sunnye" D. Simpson, Exec. Recording Secretary
- Lisa Bratton, Gen. Corresp. Secretary
- Henry Moore, Parliamentarian

**Region Presidents:**

- John Patterson, Eastern Region
- Bob Rose, Central Region
- Lynda Watson, Western Region

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!!**

Note: Cora M. "Tess" Spooner, Immediate Past President



# 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Tuskegee Airmen National Convention

Tuskegee Airmen joined the International Black Aerospace Council (IBAC) holding the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention in tandem with:

Bessie Coleman Foundation, Black Pilots of America, Inc., NAI-Black Wings in Aviation, National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees, Organization of Black Airline Pilots, Inc., and U.S. Army Black Aviation Association.

This year's convention was held in the "Valley of the Sun", Phoenix, AZ from July 31 – August 5, 2006, at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa in Phoenix, Arizona.

## Events Included:

The first ever, General B. O. Davis, Jr., Leadership Development Institute was held Aug 1- 2. This in-service training provided key information on policies, procedures and direction to present & future TAI Leaders!

On August 2, 2006, members and friends of Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated paid tribute and honored over 50 members who have joined the sacred Lonely Eagle Chapter. Immediately following the ceremony, several members attended an unveiling of the Tuskegee Airmen Memorial Air Park, located on Luke Air Force Base. This event was co-hosted by the 94<sup>th</sup> & 56<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wings and Southwest Airlines. Special Thanks to the members of the Archer Ragsdale Arizona Chapter for coordinating this grand affair.

President Spooner hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual "Spouse's Tea" on Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>. Over 40 spouses of original Tuskegee Airmen had a chance to fellowship in

the Tuscany Lounge, located in the JW Marriott.

Unfortunately, TAI is unable to provide a financial close-out of the 2006 Convention, to its members, at this time. We are hopeful that all reports relative to the fiscal close-out will be completed in time for our Dec Board of Directors meeting.

## National Awards Program

National Awards were awarded as follows:

The **Brigadier General Noel F. Parish Award** was presented to Member Cora M. "Tess" Spooner. This award is given to those members whose actions honor and perpetuate the memory of the former Commander of Tuskegee Army Airfield for his intrepid stand against racial barriers in the United States armed forces.

**Heritage Awards** were given to Member(s) Lucius Theus and Theopolis W. Johnson. This award was bestowed upon individuals who shared in the "Tuskegee Experience" and participated in a historical significant act.

**Distinguished Service Awards** were given to Member(s) Ron Brewington and Victoria White for their exceptional performance and extraordinary contributions, that demonstrate deep devotion and commitment to our organization.

**Distinguished Achievement Award** was given to Member Bob Rose for his historic and significant contribution(s), that support our organizational goals and objectives.

The **Presidential Award** was presented to Member(s) Zellie Orr and Jennifer Myers for participating in a significant act that exemplifies the true spirit of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.

**Region Awards** are presented to those members who sustain superior performance benefiting their chapter

and the entire organization. The following members were honored for their service to TAI:

- Leonard Hunter**  
Eastern Region
- Sonya Harper**  
Central Region

- William Holloman, III**  
Western Region

**Military Awards** were given as follows:

Major Michael C. Lawrence received the **General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Award**

1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Jonathan M. Murray received the **Captain Robert W. Williams Award**

Senior Master Sergeant Nathan J. Peachy received the **Chief Master Sergeant Fred Archer Award**

Technical Sergeant Tommy L. Brooks received the **Senior Master Sergeant Francis Barbour Award**

## 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Tuskegee Airmen National Convention



"Deep in the Heart of  
Texas!"

From August 21 – 25, 2007, the Dallas/Ft Worth "Metroplex" area will

**2006 Post Convention Edition**

*open its arm and hearts in grand Texas Style and welcome attendees from all over for our National Convention.*

*The spacious Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center, located in Grapevine, TX has been selected as the site for the upcoming convention.*



*Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Ctr Grapevine, TX*

In addition to the annual business meetings and training sessions, there will be several activities hosted throughout the city during the week to honor the Tuskegee Airmen. The kick-off is a grand "Welcome" hosted by Southwest Airlines at Love Field, later followed with a street naming ceremony on Carswell Naval Air Station, the Tuskegee Airmen Celebrity Golf Classic and much, much more!

Registration packages will be available after January 1, 2007 at [www.tuskegeeairmen.org](http://www.tuskegeeairmen.org) and via mail.

This is one convention you don't want to miss!!

## "Blue Skies"

By staying above the clouds, you have clear visibility and can see far beyond that which is right in front of you. Thank You for your assistance and participation to ensure we teach America's youth about the accomplishments and rich legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen.

## Maxwell AFB OTS Incorporates Tuskegee Airmen into New Curriculum

**MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. (AFP)** -- Trainees attending Officer Training School to become future leaders of the Air Force will now get a chance to visit where the Air Force's first black pilots attended training more than 60 years ago.



*Retired Col. R. J. Lewis speaks with Air Force Officer Training School students Oct. 19 at Robert Moton Field in Tuskegee, Ala. More than 85 officer trainees visited various historic sites in Tuskegee as part of an expanded curriculum to enhance trainees knowledge in the Air Force's history and heritage -- particularly the service's first black aviators, the Tuskegee Airmen. (U.S. Air Force photo)*

Officials at the school recently approved a curriculum plan that includes tours to facilities where the Army Air Corps' first black aviators, the Tuskegee Airmen, made history.

The plan also includes classroom instruction, movie presentations and briefings from distinguished Tuskegee aviators such as retired Col. R.J. Lewis, who took the first 86 trainees through the historic sites at Tuskegee University and Robert Moton Field in Tuskegee on Oct. 19. Colonel Lewis also shared some of his personal experiences with other legendary Tuskegee Airmen such as Generals Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. and Daniel "Chappie" James.

"This partnering of the Air Force's OTS and Tuskegee 's historic Robert Moton Field is a direct response to the Air Force Chief of Staff's call for all airmen to learn more about and embrace their proud heritage," said Lt. Col.

Hans Palaoro, 24th Training Squadron commander. "We are expanding the OTS history curriculum to do just that."

Officer Trainee Gerry Thompson, an 11-year Air Force veteran, said the visit to Tuskegee inspired him both professionally and personally.

"Before going out there, all I really knew about the Tuskegee Airmen was what I saw in Hollywood (movies)," explained the former technical sergeant. "Listening to Colonel Lewis was inspirational and motivational because despite all the prejudice and discrimination, the Tuskegee Airmen had the strength and perseverance to maintain a standard of excellence that was truly amazing."

Trainee Thompson said he was so impressed that he plans to come back to Tuskegee with his family.

"The Tuskegee Airmen made history and opened doors of opportunity for minorities," he said. "I'm definitely coming back when (the renovations are) done and I'm bringing my family so they can see where black aviation first started."



*-Courtesy Staff Sgt Jason Lake, Air University-*

In addition to bringing the history lesson to life, the visit also shared "real-world" stories and mentorship from people like Colonel Lewis to reinforce lessons and theories of leadership taught in the classroom, Col. Palaoro said.

Incorporating Tuskegee's proud history into the curriculum without cutting other course material took some creative thinking, but they were still able to develop a successful plan for implementation, said Maj. George Scheers, 24th Training Squadron director of operations.

Capt. Arnold Bowen, 24th TRS assistant director of operations, added that students will now have a standardized training schedule instead of weekly schedules that varied for each class due to holidays. This allows officials to focus more on courses such as history and heritage, cultural awareness and Air Expeditionary Force skills as outlined by the Air Force Chief of Staff.

OTS officials said some of the new curriculum changes will be added gradually until a new expanded syllabus is implemented in fiscal year 2008.

-by Staff Sgt. Jason Lake,  
Air University Public Affairs

# Announcements

End of Year Board of Directors Meeting will be held December 1 – 3, 2006 at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center. If you are interested in attending, please make your hotel reservations at the Spring Hill Suites by Marriott by calling 972-580-1120. For additional information, contact Jennifer Myers at [tailegacy@yahoo.com](mailto:tailegacy@yahoo.com).

January 1<sup>st</sup> marks the start of the new year, and that means it is time to renew your membership. Please contact your chapter membership chair and or treasurer to ensure you are financial for the upcoming calendar year.

All Chapters are required to conduct an internal audit by January 31, 2007. Please ensure this is completed and all information is forwarded Barbara Knighten, Treasurer .

# Wanted

Articles, pictures, newsworthy information to share with the members and friends of the TAI Family.

Submissions are highly encouraged from all regions for publication. Please send your information to your Regional Public Relations Officers:

Eastern Region  
VACANT

Central Region  
Ron Albers

[ziggy\\_mo@wowway.com](mailto:ziggy_mo@wowway.com)

Western Region  
VACANT

Ron Brewington



The sun shines right, when things are bright; when the wind blows strong and free.

The challenge was great and the terms were harsh.

Go down there, black boy ...way down to Alabama. Sweat out your days and sit out your nights. And show me ...black boy ...show me you can fly.

The challenge was met by hearts that were strong. From hamlets, towns and cities ...from States like Oregon, Maine, California and Georgia ...came Jones, Smith, Richards, Washington; in a long steady procession they came to Tuskegee. The days were long. Hup, hup, hup, ho.

Hold that nose down, Mister. Dammit, get that wing up. Can't you see that horizon, Mister? Quit holding that rudder in turns.

But the journey was swift.

From plane to plane, from light to heavy ...from Stearman to Bee Tee Aye Tee to Thunderbolt ...from Tuskegee to Italy.

Could a Negro fly military planes? Well, here they were in Italy and there sat their P-40s cooling on the ramp.

Pretty good, black boy, p-r-e-t-t-y g-o-o-d. But wait a minute. That's not all. Can you FIGHT in planes? Will you come scudding home with the first burst of fire? Better take it easy for a while, black boy ...right now, better just fly over yonder and shoot up some trains.

Then Anzio. LSTs rolled up to the beaches and dropped out Americans. The going was rough. Blood everywhere. Enemy planes pounding strafing ...pushing us back. Suddenly, swiftly and surely ...out of nowhere came the friendly whine of P-40s. Down, down, down went Jerry. On the beaches, Americans moved forward and slept peacefully that night.

O tell me, lad, of that day long ago; of the "black boy" from Tuskegee over Anzio.

The rest is a matter of record...a thrill-packed saga of the men who fought in the skies over Europe to save a seemingly ungrateful Nation. But these men are not whole ...not full; the best of them lies buried. For were they not given escort by an invincible ghost-like squadron of planes? And where are those who won't come back? Remember "Red" Dawson, "Big" Davis and Sindat-Singh?

"When shall we three meet again? In thunder, lightning or in rain?"

Heroes? Men are heroes ...these are more than me. They are the valiant, the brave ... the "black boy" tried and true. They are the

**2006 Post Convention Edition**

exploited, the expendable ...the birds with  
clipped wings. They are the noble, the  
greatest...these are our finest.

Hats off to the men who tried. Hats  
off to the men who cried. Hats off ... to the men  
who died.

*EDITORIAL TEAM*

*Ron Brewington, H. Christopher Myers,  
Roslyn Robinson, Lynda Watson*

*"FROM THE FLIGHT DECK," the official  
newsletter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., (TAI), is  
published quarterly. The name "Tuskegee  
Airmen" and associated image logo is registered  
as the sole property of TAI. The reproduction or  
any usage of the name "Tuskegee Airmen" or the  
associated logo is expressly prohibited unless  
given permission by TAI.*

