

# THE RESILIENT

**TUSKEGEE AIRMEN, INC.**  
P.O. Box 830060  
Tuskegee, AL 36083  
Vol 20210412

## **PRESIDENT'S NOTES TO CHAPTERS**

### **National Office**

Ms. Aletha Howard is currently performing all the Administrative duties at the TAI National Office. The core operating hours of Ms. Howard are Monday-Friday; 9am – 5pm Central. Moving forward, I am asking members to observe the following protocol when seeking TAI general information or problem solving – Chapter President, Regional Representative, Regional President, Committee Chairperson/Member, and finally Email National Office with full request and information, or Call National Office. You can find your Regional Representatives and Committee Chairpersons listed on the TAI website at <https://www.tuskegeeairmen.org/about/board-and-officers>.

Primary TAI National Office Email is [infospecialist@tuskegeeairmen.org](mailto:infospecialist@tuskegeeairmen.org)  
Primary TAI National Office Phone -334-725-8200

### **2021 Convention – Save the Date**

The 2021 TAI Convention/Annual Meeting has been postponed and tentatively scheduled for 18 September 2021. The whole convention event will be virtual and the event will have multiple days that will include training, guest presentations, fundraising, and some surprises. Save the Date!!

### **Lonely Eagle Report (Form 7)**

The Form 7 should be completed and returned to TAI National Office within seven (7) days of an Original Airmen or TAI Financial Member joining the Lonely Eagle Chapter. This is vital to update records and provide the appropriate amenities to family members.

### **Chapter Elections/Officers (Form 5)**

This form should be completed and returned to the TAI National Office and the Regional President immediately following elections or placement of chapter officers. Delay in providing this form will affect the notifications to the chapters.

### **Congressional Gold Medal – 101**

Chapters, Family members, and news outlets need your help when asked to provide information about the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal. Remember there is **only one** Tuskegee Airmen Congressional Gold Medal.

*In a unique action early in 2006, Congress honored the **Tuskegee Airmen collectively** with a single Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of their unique military record, which inspired revolutionary reform in the Armed Forces. The presentation ceremony was held in the Capitol Rotunda on Thursday, March 29, 2007. Following presentation by the President, the medal was given to the Smithsonian Institution, where it was to be displayed. See pg.10 [Congressional Gold Medals, 1776-2016 \(fas.org\)](https://www.fas.org/medals/1776-2016)*

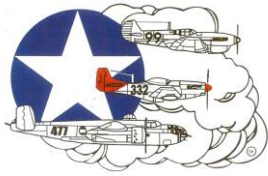
No individual Airmen was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal and all requests for information should reflect the facts. I ask that you correct all draft publications with the above statement before they go final to help us eliminate confusion and embarrassment.

### **National Aeronautic Association**

The National Aeronautic Association announced April 5 that the Tuskegee Airmen have been selected as the recipient of the 2021 Clifford Henderson Trophy.

The Henderson Trophy, which is in the collection of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, was established in 1960 to honor the creator and Managing Director of the world-renowned National Air Races from 1928-1939. Henderson's work stimulated a generation's interest in aviation and challenged the state of the art in aviation development.

<https://www.aerotechnews.com/blog/2021/04/06/tuskegee-airmen-to-receive-2021-clifford-henderson-trophy/>



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## Recent Donation Solicitation

Many of you, members and friends of TAI, have recently received letters and emails from an outside source requesting financial support for a museum in Michigan. Let me first clarify, Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. is not sending any such solicitation to individuals, TAI Chapters, corporations, community partners, or government officials. The following disclaimer was disseminated in 2011 and remains in effect.

The National Museum of the Tuskegee Airmen in Detroit Michigan is not part of or in any way affiliated with Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated (TAI). All funds donated to the National Museum of the Tuskegee Airmen are retained and used for their programs and projects. Any original Tuskegee Airmen, surviving family members of deceased Tuskegee Airmen or members of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. who appear in their videos, literature or solicitations do so as compensated or uncompensated individuals and not as members of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. and should not be considered to be an endorsement by Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. While both organizations efforts are in support of preserving the heritage and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen there is no financial or business relationship between the National Museum of the Tuskegee Airmen and Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. For information about or to make a donation to support Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. go to our website at [www.TuskegeeAirmen.org](http://www.TuskegeeAirmen.org) or call the national office.

## STUDENT LETTER TO THE MACON-THOMAS CHAPTER

My name is Afi Setut A-Alkebu-Lan, I am a fourth-year Aviation Engineering Technology student at Bowling Green State University (BGSU) and graduating class of 2021. I joined the Macon Thomas Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen in 2013 while attending High school at Cass Tech. I served as a youth member within the chapter, an experience that has led me to the career path I am embarking upon.

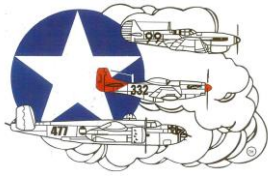


Since early childhood, I have had a fascination for planes and engineering. I always had a passion to learn about aviation and aerodynamics. My participation in the chapter led me to pursue aviation in my college studies. One of my happiest memories was when I traveled to Texas to attend the Midwest Youth Aviation Seminar in 2014. I had the opportunity to connect with fellow peers in the aviation field and learned a lot about the different areas in aviation. In essence, this opportunity helped me solidify my focus on Aviation Engineering Technology.

I have received several honors from various school organizations and maintained a 3.6 GPA throughout my entire college education. I am a member of the Presidents Leadership Academy and the Founding President of the Women in Technology organization at Bowling Green State University. I say all of this because it all started with the Tuskegee Airmen Macon-Thomas

Chapter. This chapter has always been very supportive and encouraging in shaping my future. I attribute much of my success to them planting the seed and my pursuit into Aviation and Technology. Throughout my college career, I can say I have become a stronger leader than I could have ever imagined. Therefore, I am where I am today because of the support, guidance, love,





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and leadership of the Macon Thomas Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen.

On May 1, 2021, I will be graduating from BGSU with honors and a B.S in Aviation Studies. This is all possible because of the standards set by the Tuskegee Airmen. I want to particularly thank Maj William Burnett, president of the Tuskegee Airmen Macon Thomas Chapter for his encouraging words and support over the years, nominating me to attend the Aviation Seminar, and for providing support throughout my educational and professional endeavors.

I am a very talented and bright young woman who aspires to be great and settle for nothing less. This passion and dedication of hard work led me to become a member and woman of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. This organization solidified my passion for caring for others and the community by responding to call, action and service. This is the essence of the chapter, where excellence is our guide and sustainable service as our focus.

In closing, I would like to share that I am a believer, achiever, and leader. If I believe it, I can achieve it. The same goes for everything in life. Life will never be easy and yes there will be obstacles along the way, but at the end of the day, anything is possible as long as you put your mind to it and stay focus and determined. Last but not least, if you don't remember anything about me, remember the motto I lead by is: "Be the change you wish to see in this world."

**Reverse side of Tuskegee Airmen Quarter by the US Mint. Also, get the National Historic Site 2021 Uncirculated Five Ounce Silver Coin**

at <https://catalog.usmint.gov/tuskegee-airmen-national-historic-site-2021-uncirculated-five-ounce-silver-coin-21AJ.html>



## 100-YEAR-OLD VETERAN RECEIVES COVID-19 VACCINE, DESIGNATED AS "LIVING LEGEND"

A 100-year-old veteran received her COVID-19 vaccine on Saturday, March 27, 2021. She was also recognized as a "Living Legend" at the Staff Sergeant Alexander W. Conrad Veterans Affairs Health Care Clinic in Gilbert, AZ. Air Force Maj. (Ret) Fannie Griffin McClendon, who turned 100 in September, was presented with the Women in Military Service for America Living Legend Proclamation in addition to getting her vaccine. Among the more than two million vaccinated Arizonans, very few are 100 years old and served during World War II. But that's just part of

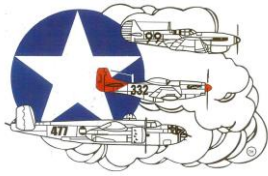


retired Major Fannie Griffin McClendon's story. McClendon served for almost 30 years in the military. She first enlisted in the United States Army at 19 years old and was commissioned as an officer in the only all-Black, Women's Army Corps (WAC). Her unit was known as the Six Triple Eight (6888TH) Central Postal Battalion was and sent to Europe during World War II.

McClendon and her unit sorted more than 17 million pieces of mail to U.S. troops throughout Europe. The mail had been piling up for two years in Birmingham, England, and Rouen, France. She later joined the Air Force and served in England and Spain. She was also the first woman commander of an all-male squadron with the Strategic Air Command. After serving honorably, upon retirement McClendon opened an antique store in Mesa in 1971.

After getting the shot, Fannie said, "I didn't even feel it. I'm surprised. I want to be able to take that lady with me when I go to the hospital. Wow!" And when asked what she's thinking now that she's partially vaccinated? She said, "I better not get sick!"





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**Col. (Ret) Wanda Wright, Director of Arizona Department of Veterans' Services, congratulates Major (Ret) Fannie Griffin McClendon for receiving the Living Legend Proclamation from the Military Women's Memorial on March 27, 2021, at the Alexander W. Conrad Veterans Affairs health Care Clinic in Gilbert, AZ.**



Major McClendon remains engaged in the military community as a longtime member of the Archer-Ragsdale Arizona Chapter, Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (ARAC/TAI). Col. Wright is a founding member and served as the Vice President of the chapter.

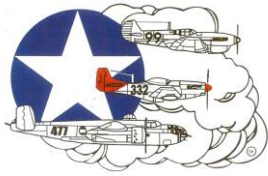
Article by Col. Richard "Dick" Toliver, USAF, Retired; President, Archer-Ragsdale Arizona Chapter

## DOTA ROBERT ASHBY JOINS LONELY EAGLES 14-MAR-21

Here's his narrative: I Robert Ashby graduated as a B-25 Pilot with the Rank of 2nd Lt, November 1945 at Tuskegee Army Airfield. The War was over and reduction in the Armed Forces was instigated. I was given the opportunity to continue active duty, I enjoyed flying and accepted to continue in a career field that I enjoyed. I was assigned to the task force that was completing the closing of Tuskegee Army Airfield; Pilots returning from overseas were also assigned to this project. Our first project was to ferry all of the B-25's to Kingman Army Airfield, AZ. On one of the flights we stopped at El Paso Field, TX, observed German POW Officers had free run of the Officers Club, even though Black Officers were not allowed to enter. Orders finally arrived,

but to my surprise the orders were to Ft Monmouth, NJ, not Godman Field. I thought all would be clarified once I arrived at Ft Monmouth. It was more confusing when I found out that I was being assigned to Yokota Airfield in Japan, as a 2nd Lt., I had little say in the matter. There were other Black Officers waiting to depart, heading to Army Camps in Japan, we all traveled together by train to Seattle, WA. It was a beautiful trip, seeing parts of this country that I had never seen. The flat plains of the mid-Country, Colorado Rocky Mountains, the Cascade Mountains of the west coast. Upon arrival at Seattle, WA, I called one of my Classmates (Norman Proctor) that was discharged during the downsizing at Tuskegee, who lived in Seattle. We spent many enjoyable days running around the City, riding in his old car that did not have brakes was a little nerve racking, we would sail down the hills coming to a cross street if no cars were approaching, we would cross, if cars were present, we would turn and join traffic. Good thing at that time there was not much traffic. Even attend one of the Huskies Football games. Finally, it was time to board the Transport to begin the journey to Japan.

As a 2nd Lt, I was assigned the worst job on the ship, Police and Sanitation Officer, which entail keeping the Ship clean with half of the personnel throwing up frequently, including me. Making inspection with the Colonel, going up and down the stairs my biggest problem was not to throw up all over him. After each inspection I would hurry back to bed and lie down until the next inspection, after three days I was able to survive the sea sickness. It was a long trip to Alaska, Korea then Japan, 21 days. Arriving at Yokohama, Japan, observing the Japanese unloading the ship my thoughts turned to wondering about the reception we would have with the Japanese this was right after the War, what hostility await. Observing the dress of the Japanese, many wore on their feet wooden clogs or socks with a section for toes, the women with their everyday kimono style wrap around, it was a new experience. At the Replacement Depot I received orders to go to Nagoya by train, it was an overnight trip so I had a sleeper, this was a very old train and the sleeper was crudely constructed of wood, only about 5' 6" long, so I could not stretch out. The toilet was a hole in the floor with a handle to hold onto while squatting, it was a miserable trip. Upon arrival at Nagoya Airfield and reporting in, it was evident that they were not going to accept me, I was right



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they immediately cut orders sending me back to the Replacement Depot, another miserable trip. No one would listen to me, so orders was cut sending me to Tachikawa Airfield which was only a short distance from Yokohama and Tokyo, but the result was the same, I was sent back to the Replacement Depot It finally dawn on them so they looked around for a Black outfit, there was the Tokyo Quartermaster Depot, I sent a letter to FEAF Headquarters asking for Airfield assignment for flying requirements to maintain my proficiency which required at least 4 hours flying each month. Orders came back taking me off Flying status, so I sent another letter requesting reassignment back to the States to the 32nd Fighter Wing; it was denied and stated that I would have to serve the 3 years overseas tour.

Looking back at the experience that I obtained, I learned so much more than flying an Airplane that helped me so much in my career. I was assigned to one of the Black Trucking Company as an Adjutant, where I learned how to operate a Company that included everything, even a Mess hall. Performed duties such as Officer of the Guards, Commander of Army Band that performed at all Military functions around the Tokyo area, regular events at the Famous Ernie Pyle Theater, served two years as Assistant Judge Advocate and conducted Special Court Marshalls, even acted as Defense for Special Court Marshall. Found out there was another Tuskegee Airmen with the Infantry in Japan, 2nd Lt James Harrison who was two Classes ahead of me at Tuskegee, he went through the same problems I had.

After three years I was assigned to the 332nd Fighter Wing at Lockbourne AFB, OH, January 1949, after a vigorous flight check by Maj, "Bull" Knox on my flying skills was returned to flying status. I was assigned to the 332nd Group to utilize my skills in addition to flying; one of my great mentors was Lou Hill. It was great being back with the Wing and the Officers that I knew, but this was short lived because in July 1949 the Black Air Force was no more. I went on with my career with assignments to Air Training Command, Air Defense, Tactical and Strategic Air Command flying everything from Single and twin engine props to single, Twin, Four and Six Engine Jets, and Spot promoted to Lt Col after 3 1/2 years as a Major. Retired October 1965.

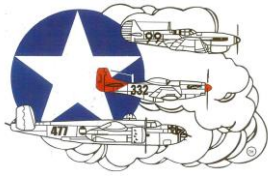
### FORMER WESTERN REGION PRESIDENT PASSES 13-MAR-21

Leslie Orticke was a native of Los Angeles. Upon graduation from UCLA, Leslie did an internship with the United Negro College Fund for several years learning about various forms of fundraising that include large and small-scale events, public employee payroll deduction campaigns, corporate solicitation and gift fulfillment while working full-time. During her tenure with UNCF, she managed over 20 volunteers, handled the Clubs & Organizations and Church Campaigns. Leslie coordinated the Silent Auction for the annual "Midsummers Night Magic" event hosted by Earvin "Magic" Johnson and the Lou Rawls Parade of Stars Golf Tournament. Ms. Orticke returned to UCLA to work for the Alumni Association. She managed six Ethnic and Gender based Alumni Outreach groups managing their special events.



Ms. Orticke has served as President of the Inglewood Pacific Chapter of The Links, Incorporated; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. – Century City Alumnae; Marketing Chair for Junior League of Los Angeles and served 7 years as President of the Commission on the

Status of Women for the City of Los Angeles. Leslie also served as Treasurer of the Los Angeles Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc (5 years). Her greatest accomplishment was providing successful fundraising in the Chapter. [Provided by L. Sunnye Simpson]



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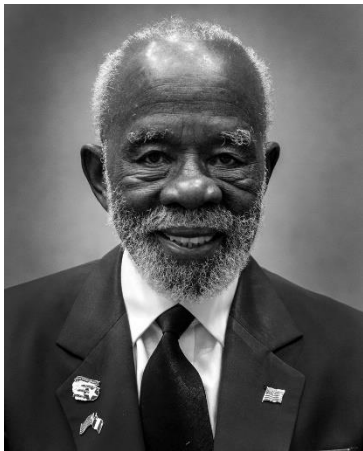
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### **DOTA THEODORE G. LUMPKIN, JR. JOINS LONELY EAGLES 26-Dec-20**

As recounted by his daughter, “Like a lot of WWII veterans, Dad didn’t talk about his wartime experiences,” his youngest son Ted Lumpkin III said. “He was the only Black person in his officer class, but never gave the sense that he was persecuted. Instead, he told us that we needed to stand on our own two feet and keep moving forward.”



Born and raised in Los Angeles not far from the USC University Park campus, Lumpkin, BA '47, MSW '53, was a 21-year-old junior majoring in math at UCLA when he was drafted into the military. He was called up just six

months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Sent to Fort MacArthur in San Pedro, California, Lumpkin remembers sitting in a room with hundreds of other draftees, taking a series of tests measuring aptitude and knowledge. Once testing was completed, the men were called out in groups and given their assignments. “They kept calling out names and taking groups out of the room until there were just four of us left,” he said. All four were black, and they were told they would be sent to Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama for special U.S. Army Air Corps training.

Lumpkin’s father had moved to Los Angeles from Georgia in 1902, and when he heard that his eldest son would be shipped off to Alabama for training, he warned him to be careful. “Things are different in the South,” his father had told him.

The four men took the train from Southern California to Alabama. “We had a whole compartment to ourselves and the run of the train until we crossed the Mason-Dixon line,” Lumpkin

said. Once in the segregated South, they were restricted to their private compartment except for taking meals in the dining car behind drapes set up to conceal them from white passengers.

Though Lumpkin had seen his share of racial discrimination in Los Angeles, he had not experienced the overt and aggressive racism that came with segregation until then. His father was right. It was different in the South and it felt terrible. Lumpkin prefers not to dwell too much on the experience, other than to describe it as a “real down time.”

After receiving basic and radar training, Lumpkin was selected for officer training at US Army Air Corps Candidate School in Miami Beach, Florida in October 1942. He graduated three months later as a 2nd lieutenant with the US Army Air Corps and was assigned to the 100th Fighter Squadron in Tuskegee, Alabama. He served as an air intelligence officer during his overseas combat tour to Italy in the Western Europe Theater from 1944–1945. During WWII, he was a member of the 332nd Fighter Group which consisted of the 99th, 100th, 301st and 302nd Fighter Squadrons.

For Lumpkin, his day-to-day work as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Army Air Corps was important work in defeating Hitler, and that was good enough. Yes, he knew that many white Americans, including the military top brass, did not think African Americans were as capable as their white counterparts. They believed that having black and white men working closely together would be disruptive. But if Lumpkin could prove otherwise through his performance, he thought, so much the better.