

Commemorative Air Force Red Tail Project Education Outreach

Who does your organization serve?

The mission of the Red Tail Project is to

- (1) provide for teachers and school districts information and materials that document the challenges and accomplishments of the Tuskegee Airmen,*
- (2) serve the teaching community by helping educators develop innovative ideas to inspire students from all walks of life to triumph over adversity and hardship, and*
- (3) recognize students and teachers for their academic and personal accomplishments,*
- (4) generate positive public awareness of and interest in the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen.*

What is your organization's service area?

At present, the Red Tail Project functions in the continental United States, with European members of the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) in Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, France and Italy expressing interest in the Project's progress. In addition, recent press releases have resulted in kindling interest and support from Santiago, Chile, and London, England. These contacts will be pursued as time, resources and manpower allows.

What does your organization (or program) do?

The Red Tail Project offers teachers, the general public, and the media a variety of materials and proven, innovative ideas that use the Tuskegee Airmen as role models to demonstrate how to overcome obstacles and achieve academic and personal success. Given the advancing age of the original Tuskegee Airmen, the Red Tail Project also strives to include them in its planning and public functions whenever possible.

What is the key issue or need that is being addressed?

American youth today are hungry for authentic heroes to emulate. The Red Tail Project addresses this need by presenting as role models the Tuskegee Airmen, individuals whose determination, dignity and persistence during World War II successfully stared down fascism and racism, earning the respect of their fellow combatants and stateside countrymen. Their personal and professional accomplishments in the arenas of civil rights and social equality after the war also are suitably inspiring for young people today.

What will change as a result of your efforts? Explain what will be accomplished and who will benefit.

The Red Tail Project already is documenting how the story of the Tuskegee Airmen is touching the lives and changing the attitudes of Americans of all ages. Refer to responses given under **What results can you report?**

Evaluation: how will results be measured and sustained?

Each element of the Red Tail Project's efforts will be measured and sustained in the following ways:

- (1) The number of requests made by teachers asking for educational resources, materials and ideas to introduce the Tuskegee Airmen's story into their classrooms,*
- (2) by the number of quality academic projects that use the Tuskegee Airmen as their primary source of inspiration as evaluated by the Red Tail Education Advisory Board. (Note: to view the evaluation rubrics, go to Education Rubric.doc.)*
- (3) The impact of the Red Tail Project's traveling education exhibit on the Tuskegee Airmen will be measured by the number of people who visit the exhibit.*

- (4) *The success of the P-51C's flying exhibit at air shows and public events will be measured by published attendance results.*
- (5) *The Red Tail Project's education outreach, restored aircraft and rolling museum will continue to draw media attention to promote and sustain long term partnerships with corporate and private contributions.*

What results can you report?

- *From May of 2001 through May of 2004 the Red Tail Project's restored P-51C Mustang attended on average 24 air shows and events per season and was viewed by approximately 40 million people.*
- *At the 2004 Tuskegee Airmen National Convention, President Dr. Brian Smith stated that "the Red Tail Project has done more to tell the story of the Tuskegee Airmen in the four years that it flew than the Tuskegee Airmen have accomplished since WWII."*
- *Vivian Glover, a NBC news producer saw the airplane fly and heard our story at an air show in Columbus Ga. She said, "For the first time in my life, I realized I was an American, not an African American."*
- *At the present time, the Red Tail Project is using as an exemplar for academic projects the work done by students and teachers at Central Alternative High School in Dubuque, Iowa.*

After becoming inspired by corresponding with Airmen across the nation and learning of their wartime trials and triumphs, the students conducted their own research and published an original 230-page book about what they had learned.

These students then educated their community about the Tuskegee Airmen by making speeches to civic groups, writing articles in the local paper, and giving interviews on radio and television. In turn, the citizens of Dubuque helped defray the expenses of organizing an unprecedented public seminar that drew over 900 people who came out to hear four Tuskegee Airmen the students had invited to town as special guest speakers.

Over \$10,000 from the sale of the students' research book was presented to the Red Tail Project to help restore the P-51C Mustang.