



## COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **CAF P-51C Tuskegee Airmen to Debut at EAA AirVenture 2009**

MIDLAND, TEXAS (July 24, 2009) –Join the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) in celebrating the Red Tail Project P-51C *Tuskegee Airmen*'s return to the skies at a press conference Wednesday, July 29 at 9:45 AM in Aero Shell Square, at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh.

Following five years of hard-work through the CAF's Red Tail Project, the *Tuskegee Airmen* achieved first flight just days before the premier aviation event of the year. Representatives from the CAF and the Red Tail Project of the CAF's Minnesota Wing will be on hand in Oshkosh to share with AirVenture attendees the plans for the future of the P-51 and the new CAF education program, Rise Above.

"This unique P-51 celebrates a group of men who offered their lives to preserve our freedom," said CAF President and CEO, Stephan Brown. "There is no better place to share such an important piece of history than at AirVenture Oshkosh, where aviation enthusiasts from around the world will have the opportunity to join us in honoring this extraordinary project."

The P-51C *Tuskegee Airmen* is dedicated to telling the story of the Tuskegee Airmen, the World War II fighter group composed of African-American pilots and support personnel who fought discrimination and prejudice in order to serve their country. This aircraft will be used once again to spread that message and expose people to the extraordinary gentlemen who set such an inspirational example. CAF's Rise Above education program is the next step sharing the story with the American people.

Fundraising will soon begin on behalf of the Rise Above educational program to create a travelling exhibition that will precede the P-51 to different venues. A 53-foot trailer will house exhibits to further tell the incredible story of the great American heroes known as the Tuskegee Airmen.

In May 2004, the P-51C *Tuskegee Airmen* suffered a catastrophic engine failure near Red Wing, Minnesota. The resulting accident claimed the life of the project's leader and pilot Don Hinz. In the years following the devastating accident, the CAF Red Tail Project volunteers have worked tirelessly to honor Hinz's memory by restoring the project that he helped to create. The return of the P-51C *Tuskegee Airmen* to the skies is a product of the dedication of many CAF members, volunteers and worldwide financial supporters.

Collecting, restoring and flying vintage historical aircraft for more than half a century, the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) ranks as one of the largest private air forces in the world. The CAF is dedicated to Honoring American Military Aviation through flight, exhibition and remembrance. A non-profit educational association, the CAF has approximately 9,000 members and a fleet of 156 airplanes representing more than 60 different types – including airplanes from several foreign countries and military conflicts since World War II. For more information, visit [www.commemorativeairforce.org](http://www.commemorativeairforce.org) or [www.redtail.org](http://www.redtail.org) or call (432) 563-1000.