

## Stories in Stone: Major Julian Warren Calloway, Jr., USAF

3 Mar 1924 – 23 Jan 2012

Lakeview Mausoleum Lot 2 Part 23 Range D

By Alexandra Luken, Cave Hill Heritage Foundation

The Tuskegee Airmen were the first-ever African Americans to be trained as pilots for the Army Air Corps. The military services were strictly segregated and opportunities for black people in the military were few. Black airmen flew in one-man fighter planes instead of multi-engine bombers because military authority thought a flight crew would not take commands from a black flight leader. Their prowess flying the legendary P-51 Mustangs on bomber escort missions led to the reputation that they never lost a bomber they were escorting to enemy fire – a unique accomplishment in WWII where some fighter escort groups lost as many as 34% of the bombers they were escorting.

Training for black pilots came about through public pressure from the black press, the NAACP, Senator Harry S. Truman, and Eleanor Roosevelt. The airfields at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama became the training ground for 994 young men accepted into the program, which included college preparatory classes in algebra, physics, and trigonometry. Pilots in the program showed remarkable aptitude as pilots, with 96 being the lowest score among all their flight tests – there were no “wash outs.” However, trained black pilots were excluded from flying in combat until after Eleanor Roosevelt visited the Tuskegee Institute and flew as a passenger with a Tuskegee-trained pilot.



Maj. Julian Calloway c. 1944

Calloway, the son of a World War I veteran and postman, Julius W. Calloway, Sr. and Nathalee (Whitlock) Calloway, was raised in Louisville, KY. After graduation from Central High School in 1942, he volunteered for the Army pilot training program. After completing basic training in Biloxi, MS, he was sent to Tuskegee Institute as a cadet trainee. He received his wings as a single-engine pilot in November, 1944 and trained as a replacement for the 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group, but the war ended before he deployed. Julius W. Calloway was part of the 477<sup>th</sup> Composite Group which trained at Godman Army Field at Ft. Knox, KY. The 477<sup>th</sup> was slated to be sent to Japan.

Following his discharge from the army in 1946, Calloway joined the Air Force Reserves, and continued to fly military aircraft. Following WWII, airline company hiring policies excluded hiring black veterans as commercial pilots. Calloway established Calloway Flying Service at Bowman Field in Louisville, and trained black veterans as pilots at Bowman Field under the GI bill. In 1953, he

volunteered for active duty in the Korean War and trained pilots on jet aircraft – T-33, F-8s, F-105 and F-111s. He served overseas in Korea, Morocco and Thailand before retiring as an Air Force major in 1970.

In 1997, Calloway was inducted into the Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame. He was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Public Service degree from Tuskegee University in 2006, and the Congressional Gold Medal, which honors individuals whose achievements have an impact on American history and culture, in 2007.

<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69761850/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69763177/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69707751/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69707751/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69764934/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69765392/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69766269/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69769464/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69769976/the-courier-journal/>  
<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/69770227/the-courier-journal/>