

**Wanting to Fly an Airplane**

We were living in Mansfield, Ohio. I was about five or six years old I guess. And I saw an air circus put on by uh colored pilots. They called themselves the Blackbirds. And uh I went to this field with my father and not knowing anything about aviation at age of five. But I see these things up in the air you know like birds circles and turning and diving and all that stuff. And they are up there around the clouds and that to me just and then they come out and land and these people get out and walk around. That really is just the most fantastic thing ever. You know. So from that time on I wanted to uh you know fly an airplane.

**Study on Utilization of Black Troops**

You know in 1925 the United States Army War College the Carlisle barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania they put out a uh report supposedly a study a utilization of colored troops and every negative that you can think of that you would apply to a person is in that report being applied being applied to Black males.

**Segregation in the Army**

Well the Army was rigidly segregated. Uh Blacks and whites were just never never together. Even in our infantry basic training Black soldiers trained one place and white soldiers trained uh you know in another group. And um of course you grow up knowing that there is racism and segregation in the country so you just know this is more of the same stuff. We were happy to uh get a chance to be uh in flying training. Because this was the uh well first of all the guys that wanted to fly just wanted to fly period. But then this was the ultimate in um in proving that we had the same skills and uh you know mental ability and knowledge as the white guys. And this was a great chance to prove that.

**The Tuskegee Airmen**

Well the term Tuskegee Airmen really didn't start until um 1972 when we had a reunion and decided to form a veteran's formal veteran's organization. And we took the name Tuskegee Airmen because all Black pilots were trained at Tuskegee. That was the only place in the entire country where a Black man could go for flight training.

**Recollections of Happy Valley**

Yes here at Penn State I received principalship certification and uh my doctor's degree. That was in 1973. And I recall we're Happy Valley. I guess I can understand why It's we

just found it very peaceful and none of the problems that existed in the cities and um that to me could be sort of a model that you could uh hope would be carried on elsewhere in other communities.

### **Knowing About Achievements**

I head the speaker's bureau for the Philadelphia chapter of Tuskegee Airmen. And I think it's extremely important for young people to know what uh you know their ancestors have done and for white people to know what Black people have done.

### **People are People**

Every way we can possibly every vehicle we can possibly use to let the world know that people are people. Because they've had different experiences because they come from different environments doesn't make them any different. They still have the same basic needs and the same basic desires. And we need to help people realize that.