

## The Tuskegee Airmen

### Who we are?

In spite of adversity and limited opportunities, African Americans have played a significant role in U.S. military history over the past 300 years. They were denied military leadership roles and skilled training because many believed they lacked qualifications for combat duty. Before 1940, African Americans were barred from flying for the U.S. military. Civil rights organizations and the black press exerted pressure that resulted in the formation of an all African-American pursuit squadron based in Tuskegee, Alabama, in 1941. They became known as the Tuskegee Airmen.

\*<http://www.tuskegeeairmen.org/>

The new George Lucas action film "[Red Tails](#)" tells the story of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, a celebrated group of African-American fighter pilots in World War II.

Under the command of [Benjamin O. Davis](#), an Army Air Force officer who eventually was promoted to general, the pilots battled racism and countless obstacles when their first squadron began flying combat missions in 1943.

Eventually the top brass realized the value of the pilots, and more squadrons of Tuskegee Airmen were trained and began flying missions over Europe. The pilots compiled an impressive service record, winning many medals and distinguishing themselves as bomber escorts, bravely engaging in dogfights with German fighter pilots.

\*<http://afroamhistory.about.com/b/2012/01/20/the-tuskegee-airmen.htm>

