



Tuskegee Airmen National Museum Announces Grand Opening with Virtual 80th Anniversary Celebration

- The Tuskegee Airmen National Museum will celebrate its new home in Detroit and mark the 80th anniversary of the legendary WWII fighter squadron on March 22, 2021
- Former Detroit Mayor Coleman Young was a Tuskegee Airmen and the museum will be housed inside the Coleman A. Young Gallery of the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History
- Ford Motor Company Fund has long supported the Tuskegee Airmen, the first Black aviators in the U.S. armed forces, known as the famed “Red Tails”

DETROIT, March 11, 2021 – The Tuskegee Airmen National Museum (TANM) has a new home in Detroit thanks to support from Ford Motor Company Fund – the philanthropic arm of Ford. The expanded museum, which includes exhibits and historic artifacts, is now housed inside the Coleman A. Young Gallery at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, located at 315 E. Warren in Detroit. Coleman Young, Detroit’s first African American mayor, was a second lieutenant in World War II who served as a bombardier and navigator in the Tuskegee Airmen.

A virtual grand opening celebration is scheduled for 7 p.m. EDT on March 22, commemorating the 80th anniversary of the formation of the legendary “Red Tails.” On March 22, 1941, the all African American 99th Pursuit Squadron (later renamed the 99th Fighter Squadron) was activated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

“As we observe the 80th anniversary of the Tuskegee Airmen, we honor their courage, remember their sacrifice and celebrate their amazing feats and contributions,” said Dr. Brian Smith, president, Tuskegee Airmen National Museum. “Support from the Ford Motor Company Fund will allow us to continue the preservation of this rich and robust history. We are grateful for this partnership and look forward to sharing the Airmen's legacy with generations to come.”

The virtual event, hosted by Kevin Frazier of “Entertainment Tonight,” includes a ribbon-cutting, museum tour, remarks by Airmen Lt. Col. Harry Stewart Jr. and Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson and a special rendition of the Tuskegee Airmen fight song performed by the Detroit Youth Choir.

“We’re honored to have this important display of American and African American history here in the heart of Detroit,” said Pamela Alexander, director of community development, Ford Motor Company Fund. “Ford Fund has been a long- time supporter of the Tuskegee Airmen and we are proud to continue to preserve and celebrate their legacy.”

In 2007, Ford sponsored a celebratory reception when the Tuskegee Airmen received the Congressional Gold Medal in the nation’s capital. In 2019, the Ford Fund documentary, [“Our Voices: Our Stories — The Tuskegee Airmen”](#) debuted, telling the stories of Lt. Col. Harry Stewart Jr. and Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson who served in the U.S. military as pilots in the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II.

The Tuskegee Airmen National Museum’s historic aircraft and youth programming will continue to operate at the Coleman A. Young International Airport located at 11499 Conner St. in Detroit. Visit www.tuskegeemuseum.org to learn more.

Admission to the Tuskegee Airmen National Museum is free with general admission to the Wright Museum. Hours are Thursday-Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 12-5 p.m. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, reservations are required.

The virtual grand opening and 80th anniversary celebration is free and open to the public. The event will be streamed on Monday, March 22 starting at 7 p.m. EDT. RSVP at www.eventbrite.com/e/80th-anniversary-celebration-and-museum-grand-opening-tickets-139538472327.

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About the Tuskegee Airmen

The Tuskegee Airmen were the first Black military aviators in the U.S. Army Air Corps, a precursor to the U.S. Air Force. Trained at the Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama, they flew more than 15,000 individual sorties in Europe and North Africa during World War II. They were responsible for safely escorting and protecting bombers in combat so that they could successfully complete and return safely. Their impressive performance earned them more than 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses and helped encourage the eventual integration of the U.S. armed forces.

About Ford Motor Company Fund

As the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company, Ford Fund's mission is to strengthen communities and help make people's lives better. Working with dealers and nonprofit partners in more than 50 countries, Ford Fund provides access to opportunities and resources that help people reach their full potential. Since 1949, Ford Fund has invested more than \$2.1 billion in programs that support education, promote safe driving, enrich community life and encourage employee volunteering. For more information, visit www.fordfund.org or join us at @FordFund on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#). For more information on Ford’s programs that support the African American community, go to Fgb.life.

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