

# EAST COAST CHAPTER

## Tuskegee Airmen Inc.

November 2004



### From The President

Dear ECCTAI Member,

My heart and soul go out to the Tuskegee Airmen community. Without you as role models, and your constant nurturing, I would not have had the honor of representing you as your President, nor would I have had the determination and wherewithal to obtain the rank of colonel. I look forward to giving back to our youth, the same way our current Tuskegee Airmen have given back to me! To the ECCTAI, the D.C. National Guard, and my family, I THANK YOU all, for your faith and trust in my abilities.

Sincerely,

Taro Jones, Col, DC Air National Guard  
PRESIDENT@ECCTAI.COM



*Taro K. Jones, DC Air National Guard, being promoted to colonel. Pictured with Taro are LtGen Daniel James and MGen David F. Wherley, Jr., Commanding General of the DCNG. Colonel Jones is presently the 113<sup>th</sup> Mission Support Group Commander in the District of Columbia Air National Guard. He also serves on the Mayor's Advisory Board on Veterans Affairs for the District of Columbia.*

### Highlights of Recent Activities

- The Youth In Aviation Program announced that students, Cosby Washington and Wayne Tompkins have soloed. The new Level 1 class began on October 16th with 15 students enrolled.
- The Fourteenth Annual General B.O. Davis, Jr. Golf Classic was held at Andrews AFB Golf Course on 2 June 2004. Sixty-four players participated. The proceeds will benefit the Youth In Aviation Program.

### Important Message on Membership and Dues

From the Treasurer, Walter Jackson

2005 dues are requested from now until May 31. Receipt by ECCTAI Treasurer will ensure that your name is listed in the 2005 National Directory. Dues must be paid and processed through the local chapter, ECCTAI.

Regular membership dues are \$100; Life Members \$50; active duty military \$45. Don't forget to send the Form 2 with your payment to: ECCTAI, PO Box 62404, Washington, DC 20029. Your 2005 membership card will be mailed from National Headquarters.

**"Enriched By Our Past – Prepared For Our Future"**

## ECCTAI Speakers' Bureau

The ECCTAI Speakers' Bureau becomes more active each year. A few of its speaking engagements are listed below:

ECCTAI members **Sam Rhodes, Hank Henry and Bill Peterson** were guests of area Girl Scouts at the Udvar-Hazy Center, Smithsonian Museum, Dulles Airport.

Boeing Corporation hosted our Tuskegee Airmen, with presentations made by **Walter McCreary and Woodrow Crocket**.

The Banneker Farm and Museum welcomed **Herb Jones and George A. Henry**, who were honored, respectively, for operating an airfield during segregation, enabling African Americans the opportunity to fly and to Col. Henry for his distinguished combat service during the Vietnam Conflict, earning him the Distinguished Flying Cross.

**Bob Owens and Bill Peterson** attended the opening of "Ridgeway Hall" at the Army War College, Carlisle, PA.

**Bill Wilson and Bill Peterson** provided an official video and oral presentation to model plane builders and collectors in Gaithersburg, MD.

**George A. Henry, Bill Peterson, William Wilson, Cicero Satterfield, Sam O'Dennis, and Hamp Johnson**, spoke at the Virginia Aviation Museum's Lecture Series.

**Spann Watson** spoke at Fort Detrick, MD, Mitchell Field Long Island's Cradle of Aviation program, the Senior Citizens of Westbury, Westbury, NY schools, and the US Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases on their Brown v. Board of Education 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event.

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## Reaching Out to Heritage Members

We're reaching out for Heritage Members (relatives of original Tuskegee Airmen) to become active in our Chapter. Just as the Tuskegee Airmen are a special group of men, the Heritage Group is also unique. Currently, we have close to 400 Heritage Members on our National Roster; we have over 40 known members in the Washington, DC area, and we welcome more.

The ECCTAI Heritage Group would like to keep in touch through periodic gatherings, and if you have any ideas to make us stronger and more active, we welcome them.

Please contact Roslyn Marchbanks-Robinson, [rmarchbanks@msn.com](mailto:rmarchbanks@msn.com) or Rosemary Crockett, [crockettrf@earthlink.net](mailto:crockettrf@earthlink.net).



*Heritage members (row 1) Robin Alexander, Robert Higginbotham, II, Yvonne McGee; (row 2) Rosemary Crockett, Roslyn Marchbanks; (row 3) Diane Mohr, Ava Hancock.*

## ECCTAI Members' Special Recognition

**Ira James O'Neal, Jr.** was recognized by the National Capital Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America, Roots of Scouting, Inc. for his 70 years (since 1934) of service and honor to scouting.

**William Broadwater** was awarded the C. Alfred "Chief" Anderson Award by the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees for his pioneering spirit and inspirational courage fighting for equality in aviation.

**CMSGT Clarence Turner** was recognized as a Bolling Icon Awardee for serving 20 years demonstrating selflessness, a strong commitment to the military family and loyalty to the Bolling AFB community.

**LTC (Ret) Spann Watson** was honored by the Long Island Urban League as a "Living Legion of Long Island".

**Dr. Nancy Leftenant-Colon** was recognized by the Coalition of 100 Black Women, Long Island Chapter, Inc., honored, for her outstanding contributions as a nurse and nurse administrator, USAF Nurse Corps, and her continued public service as a school nurse.

**DEDICATION CEREMONY:** The Davis Conference Center, MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, FL, opened in February 2004, dedicated to General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., in honor of his lifetime of courage, commitment and leadership as a US military pioneer.

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## Spotlight On Dr. Alan Gropman



Dr. Alan Gropman has been a long-standing and active member of ECCTAI, lending support and credibility that has enhanced our organization, and he is a recognized expert and authority on the history of Tuskegee Airmen. Dr. Gropman is the Chairman, Grand Strategy Department, National Defense University, Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

On April 3, 2004, Colbert I. King, columnist for the Washington Post, wrote an article on Dr. Gropman, following the senseless killing of 21 year old Terrence Gathers in Washington, DC. Dr. Gropman is founder and director of a 13-year-old tutoring and mentoring program at Van Ness Elementary School in Washington,

DC, and has supplied Van Ness with computers, computer instructors, other necessary school supplies, equipment, and thousands of dollars.

The latter may seem a bit unusual for a man with Dr. Gropman's professional credentials, "a distinguished professor of national security policy," states King. Yet, Terrence Gathers was one of Dr. Gropman's students, guided through the mentoring programs. The article goes on to say that Dr. Gropman is "heartsick" about the killing.

The East Coast Chapter shares his feeling since many of our members work with the area's youth in our aviation program and other endeavors. We applaud your work, Dr. Gropman, and are proud to have you as a member of our Chapter.

## Fundraising

If you belong to an organization that gives charitable contributions, please consider requesting them for an ECCTAI donation.

## 2004 Education Assistance Grants

### Tuskegee Airmen National Scholarship Recipients

Mark James Johnson, Blue Springs South High School, Blue Springs, MO  
Dayvie J. Paschall, Dunbar High School, Washington, DC

### East Coast Chapter - Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. Education Assistance Grants

Blair C. Hamilton, Dunbar High School, Washington, DC  
Tameika Scott, Dunbar High School, Washington, DC  
Larese M. Anderson, Dunbar High School, Washington, DC  
Sean A. Nickols, Charles H. Flowers HS, Springdale, MD  
Lauren Hutcherson, Charles H. Flowers HS, Springdale, MD  
ShaNai K. Jones, Fairmont Heights HS, Fairmont Heights, MD

### Vernon and Anna Hamilton Memorial Grants

Aja A. Page, University of Maryland, College Park, MD  
Abdalla A. Stewart, No. Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, NC

### ECCTAI Continuing Grant Recipients

James McClelland, No. Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, NC  
Anthony Charles Gregory, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN  
Vani Dewnandan, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, FL



Blair Hamilton



Larese Anderson



Tameika Scott

Contributions To The ECCTAI Education Assistance Fund Are Tax Deductible.  
Contributions can be mailed to East Coast Chapter, Tuskegee Airmen, Inc, PO Box 62404,  
Washington, DC 20029-2404.

## Letters/E-Mail From Our Scholarship Awardees

We continue to hear from our scholarship awardees.

**Erin Callahan** has received our scholarships for the past four years, and she keeps us apprised of her progress. She graduated this year from Eastern University with a BA in Psychology and a minor in Anthropology, Magna Cum Laude. "Your financial support has meant the world to me, and it has been a tremendous blessing to my family. Going to college has opened so many doors," she writes. Erin plans to attend graduate school, working towards a Master's Degree in Family Counseling.

**Anthony C. Gregory**, one of our scholarship awardees since his freshman year, is

beginning his senior year at Purdue University in the Aviation/Flight Technology program. He is one of four students selected to participate in Purdue's Beechjet program; he will be flying second-in-command in Purdue's Beechjet 400A aircraft. He also serves as Chairman for the Purdue United Way campaign and is Alumni Chair for Mortar Board, a member in Iron Key Honor Society, Aviation Student Council, and School of Technology Student Council.

**Dayvie Paschall** is a first semester student at FAMU majoring in architecture. Dayvie is one of the TASF awardees for 2004-05.

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## 2004 Autumn Gala



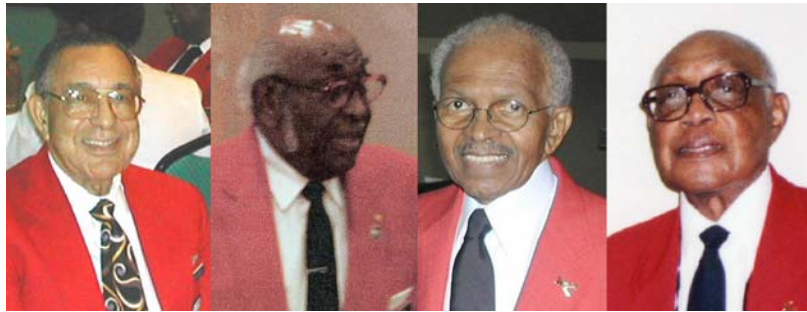
*Joy Branham-Pryde,  
Chair, Autumn Gala*



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The ECCTAI Autumn Gala, our annual fundraiser for the Education Assistance Fund was a big success, and the most successful fundraiser we have had, raising thousands of dollars for the Fund. It was a sell-out of 250 people, with a wonderful time had by all. We danced, we caught up with old friends, made new ones, and ate well!

Mark your calendars, because we will gather again on October 16, 2005, at the Kellogg Conference Hotel. We'll be looking for you.



*Original Tuskegee Airmen: Gus Palmer, Ira O'Neal, Wylie Seldon and Woody Crockett*



*Original Tuskegee Airmen: Leo Gray, Bill Broadwater, Howard Baugh, Spann Watson and Elmer Jones*

Autumn Gala pictures by Nelson Evans and William Holton

**“Enriched By Our Past – Prepared For Our Future”**

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## 2004 Autumn Gala



Recently soloed YIA student, Wayne Tompkins



Lt Dennis Jackson, USAF and Nelson Evans, Chair YIA

We were also fortunate to have LT Dennis Jackson, USAF, as an honored guest. LT Jackson was the first Youth in Aviation (YIA) student to graduate from our ECCTAI flight program and is a combat ready qualified KC-10 pilot. We wish for him the very best during his Air Force tour. We are encouraged and proud to see the success this young man has made.

The Education Assistance Committee recognized three (3) Chapter members for their faithful, untiring and invaluable service to the Chapter...George (Hank) Henry, Jr., Walter Jackson, III, and Taro K. Jones.



**George A. (Hank) Henry, Jr.**, 20 years as Chairman of the Speakers' Bureau. For promoting the legacy of the Tusgee Airmen and their contribution to World War II and for the numerous books and computers he has provided to schools, churches, senior and day care centers, throughout Washington, DC Metropolitan area.



**Walter Jackson, III**, 10 years as Chapter Treasurer. For providing meticulous and continuous efforts of ensuring that our Chapter funds, tax exempt status, scholarship endowments, and all fiscal aspects of our financial records are accurate and timely.



**Taro K. Jones**, 8 years as President, Vice President, and Executive Board member. For continuous dedication, leadership, and constant effort and liaison to promote East Coast Chapter activities throughout the active and retired military community.

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## Aviation Career Day

The annual Aviation Career Day was held on April 30, 2004, at Hangar 8 of the DC Air National Guard. Its purpose is to encourage an interest in aviation among the youth in the area. ECCTAI takes an active part in this annual event under the coordination of Maj. (Ret) George Smith. Over 1,000 students attended, coming from schools located in the Washington, DC, Virginia, and Maryland areas. Aircraft was displayed, and universities and aviation-related organizations were represented. Special guest speaker was Gustavus A. McLeod, who discussed his air trip to the North Pole.

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## Record of the Past: June 1937 - A Race with Death

The following excerpt was taken from the *Amityville (NY) Record* in celebration of their Centennial Year:

12:25 pm, Dr. Paddock, of Greene Avenue, present and requested the ambulance to take one Nancy Leftenant, of North Washington Avenue, Amityville, to Southside Hospital, at Bay Shore. A Welfare case. Communicated with Capt. Schlosser at 12:40 pm, and he refused permission to use ambulance.”

The ambulance did, eventually, pick up the young Miss Leftenant, who was in grave condition suffering from a ruptured appendix and under Dr. Paddock’s care. However, she did not go to Southside Hospital where the ambulance should have taken her because they refused to accept her, as did three other hospitals, who reported crowded conditions. She was taken to Reed General Hospital, a private hospital, where she was accepted without question...however 27 hours had elapsed. An investigation by *The Record* disclosed that the facts warranted no criticism of the manner of regulating the use of the Amityville ambulance and non-acceptance by three area hospitals.

“Our Nancy” recounts that she weighed 110 pounds when she entered the hospital that afternoon and was discharged, three weeks later, weighing 85 pounds. The family was not on welfare because her father was a firm believer that his children were his responsibility. The surgeon, Dr. Reed, who accepted Nancy’s case, charged nothing for the operation in his hospital. “It was a 2-story house,” states Nancy, “with no elevator. He had a giant of a man who carried the patients from their room to the operating room. It’s amazing how far we have come since 1937.”

Editor’s note: For those of you who have not had the pleasure of knowing Dr. Nancy Leftenant-Colon, she served in the US Air Force Nurse Corps, working closely with many of the Tuskegee Airmen flight surgeons. She has been a member of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., ECCTAI, since 1973, serving as National President from 1989-1991.

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## Herb Jones, Aviation Pioneer



Herbert H. Jones was recognized at College Park Museum for his 60+ years of contributions to the aviation community. His flight school, Cloud Club

II, has conducted flight training for Morgan State University, the Tuskegee Airmen Youth in Aviation (YIA) Program, and orientation flights for the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees. His alumni now include commercial airline and Air Force pilots.

Herb took his first airplane ride in 1935 and began flight training in 1943 in the Civilian Pilot

Training program in Chicago, IL. He took advanced flight training at Moten Field in Tuskegee, AL. After serving in WWII, Herb received his commercial license and Certified Flight Instructor rating. He then had a distinguished career with the US Department of Commerce Patent Office.

A devoted member of his community, Herb has worked to make the dream of aviation a reality for hundreds of youth. “Watching them (African American youngsters) solo for the first time,” Herb says, is one of the biggest thrills in his life.

### ECCTAI Telephone Tree:

It has come to our attention that some of our Washington area members are not receiving Telephone Tree messages. Walt Brown, Telephone Tree Coordinator, is going to run a test message on Monday December 13.

If you do not receive an ECCTAI message on that day, please call Walt Brown.

## They Also Served: The Japanese American Connection

by Rosemary F. Crockett

There we were seated among more than a thousand Japanese Americans from babes in arms to elders using walking canes. My father, Woody Crockett, had been invited by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to share his experiences serving in a segregated army unit during World War II at *Camp Connections: A Conversation about Civil Rights and Social Justice in Arkansas*. The conference was organized by UALR and the Japanese American National Museum. Although the central focus was on Japanese American internment during the war, especially at the two camps in Jerome and Rohwer, Arkansas, the conference also included the experiences of African Americans and Arab Americans.

Daddy spoke about his experiences as a Tuskegee Airman on a panel with Edward H. Ichiyama, Esq., a veteran of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team and the 522<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion. Mr. Ichiyama participated in the celebrated "Lost Battalion" campaign in which the 442<sup>nd</sup> suffered more casualties than the number of persons they were ordered to rescue. He was also instrumental in researching documents needed to upgrade Distinguished Service Cross medals to Medal of Honor for a number of Japanese American veterans.

Senator Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) was present for the entire conference and was praised by the organizers and participants for his efforts and accomplishments on behalf of Japanese Americans, American Indians, and African Americans. During his keynote address, Sen. Inouye spoke movingly of how he joined the army from relative freedom in Hawaii, while many others joined from the internment camps, fighting while their families were still confined under armed guard in the U.S. Throughout the conference, voices tremored with suppressed anger, shame, outrage, and determination, an emotional reminder that injustice is not restricted to any one group of people.

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## A Visit to Ramitelli Headquarters

Bill and Judy Holton spent several days in April exploring the historic site of Colonel B. O. Davis' 332nd Fighter Group Headquarters that was established in May 1944 at Ramitelli Air Field on the east coast of Italy, near the municipality of Campomarino.



*Bill and Judy Holton on lower staircase.*



*Col. Davis' office was to the left on the upper floor. Staff offices were to the right.*



*The door at the top of the stairs was Col Davis' office*

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## Liberty Ship Tour

ECCTAI members toured the World War II Liberty Ship - John W. Brown that is berthed in Baltimore, MD.

The John W. Brown is a Memorial Museum Ship dedicated to the men and women who built, sailed and defended the Wartime Liberty Fleet. Pictured: Hank Henry, Bill Peterson, Cicero Satterfield, Sam Rhodes, *ship staffer*, Cyril Byron, *ship staffer*, and Hamp Johnson.

## Fundraising

In order to contribute more to The Educational Assistance Fund and to support our Youth in Aviation Program, ECCTAI will have to put more effort into fundraising. The following suggestions have come before the Executive Board:

- Sponsor a concert
- Request support from a restaurant to donate a percentage of an evening's receipts toward our community endeavors.

If you have any suggestions, know of a fundraiser who can work with us, or would like to volunteer, please contact an Executive Board Director.



## ECCTAI LONELY EAGLES

Joe-boy Higginbotham  
Attral M. Platte  
Arthur G. Worrell  
Ruth Bates McKenzie  
Elnora Davis McLendon

## 2004-2005 Officers

Taro K. Jones	President
Louise Mohr	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President
Bruce C. Alexander	2nd Vice-President
Walter Jackson, III	Treasurer
Tanya Suggs	Secretary
James R. Coles, Jr.	Parliamentarian
Oliver C. Carter	Immediate Past Pres.
William F. Holton	Historian

## Directors

George A. Henry  
J. Byron Morris  
William F. Peterson  
Roslyn Marchbanks-Robinson

*The telephone numbers of all members mentioned in this newsletter can be found in the TAI National Directory.*

If you have a news item for the ECCTAI Newsletter, please mail it to ECCTAI Newsletter, PO Box 62404, Washington, DC 20029 or e-mail us at [newsletter@ecctai.com](mailto:newsletter@ecctai.com). Include your name and phone number. We will be happy to work with you to get your news item published in the next ECCTAI Newsletter.

The ECCTAI Newsletter Editors,  
Roslyn Marchbanks-Robinson and Patricia Lightfoot

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**East Coast Chapter  
Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.  
PO Box 62404  
Washington DC 20029-2404**

## Membership Meeting Dates

The ECCTAI General Membership meetings are now being held during the day, which is turning out to be a more convenient time for our members to attend, as the turnout has shown! The following Saturdays at 12:00 pm at the Bolling AFB Officers' Club have been reserved for our meetings:

2004	2005	
November 13	January 15	March 12
December 11	February 12	April 16

Electronic mail, for many of us, is the fastest and most efficient way to communicate these days. If you would like to give us your e-mail address, please send it to [members@ecctai.com](mailto:members@ecctai.com). Be sure to include your name and address. Your e-mail address will only be used by the ECCTAI Board for Chapter business. It will not be listed in the ECCTAI membership directory without your permission.

**WE ARE ON THE WEB  
[WWW.ECCTAI.COM](http://WWW.ECCTAI.COM)**

This newsletter can be accessed at [www.ecctai.com](http://www.ecctai.com). If you have a news item for the ECCTAI Newsletter, please mail it to ECCTAI Newsletter, PO Box 62404, Washington, DC 20029; include your name and daytime phone number. If you want to publish an article in the next newsletter; send us your pictures and text.

**#7721 IS OUR COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN NUMBER.**  
If you are eligible to participate, please consider designating the ECCTAI as a recipient of your donation.

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