

HISTORY



# Tuskegee Airmen



Central 70





**IN 2006, I-70 BETWEEN YORK AND PEORIA STREETS** was named the Tuskegee Airmen Memorial Highway in honor of the first Black military aviators in the U.S. Army Air Corps, a precursor of the U.S. Air Force. The Tuskegee Airmen were founded in 1941 and ceased operation in 1946 after flying more than 15,000 missions during World War II.

Today, signs along I-70 at Dahlia Street and I-270 serve as reminders of the sacrifices these men made protecting our country, along with the equality they fought for. These brave pilots flew during a time when the Army was still deeply segregated, yet they triumphed, winning awards ranging from the Distinguished Flying Cross to the Purple Heart. The Tuskegee Airmen, unfortunately, returned home to racism and prejudice, but represented important progress in preparing the United States for the racial integration of the military. On July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman issued Executive Order 9981 that officially desegregated the U.S. Armed Forces and mandated equality of opportunity and treatment.

Many of the Tuskegee Airmen eventually made their homes in Colorado and are honored here to this day.





SCAN THE QR CODE to your left with your smartphone camera to view the video: "Remembering the Tuskegee Airmen."

*Video and photo courtesy of the National Department of the Interior*







## **DID YOU KNOW?**

The Tuskegee Airmen's national historic site is at their former training facility in Tuskegee, Alabama.

In 2006, Colorado lawmakers passed a resolution naming I-70, between Peoria and York streets, the Tuskegee Airmen Memorial Highway.