



1020 O Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • [www.californiamuseum.org](http://www.californiamuseum.org)  
(916) 653-7524 • fax: (916) 653-0314

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**Contacts:** Brenna Hamilton  
(916) 651-0934  
[bhamilton@californiamuseum.org](mailto:bhamilton@californiamuseum.org)

Fahizah Alim  
(916) 651-4026  
[Fahizah.Alim@sen.ca.gov](mailto:Fahizah.Alim@sen.ca.gov)

# **“Tuskegee Airmen: Journey to Flight” to celebrate Black History Month at The California Museum**

***Developed by the California African American Museum, exhibit reveals Tuskegee Airmen’s roles in both WWII and civil rights history***

**SACRAMENTO, CALIF.** — Feb. 2, 12: The California Museum announced “Tuskegee Airmen: Journey to Flight” will open on Tues., Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> in honor of Black History Month and to celebrate the achievements of the gallant African Americans who broke barriers as aviation heroes during WWII. Sponsored by the California Legislative Black Caucus and initially developed by the California African American Museum, this exhibition will include additional personal artifacts for The California Museum installation on loan from Sacramento-area Tuskegee Airmen and their families.

Although well-known for their heroic military battles during WWII, the Tuskegee Airmen are often overlooked for their significant achievements in the fight against discrimination. Before 1940, African Americans were barred from flying for the U.S. military. Civil rights organizations and the African American media exerted pressure that resulted in the formation of the all African-American squadron who came to be known as the Tuskegee Airmen.

“The brave men and women involved in the Tuskegee Experiment overcame segregation and prejudice to become one of the most highly respected fighter groups of World War II,” said Senator Curren D. Price, Jr., Chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus. “They proved without a doubt that African Americans could fly and maintain sophisticated aircraft. Thanks to the hard work of the men and especially women who made their mission possible as nurses, mechanics and support personnel, the Tuskegee Airmen paved the way for integration of the U.S. military.”

“The California Museum is proud to pay tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen with the California Legislative Black Caucus for Black History Month,” said Dori Moorehead, Executive Director at The California Museum. “Their heroic stories detailing the fight for Allied victory abroad and equality at home ultimately reveals their place in history doesn’t end with WWII. By paving the way for desegregation of the military, the Tuskegee Airmen also paved the way for the civil rights movement in the 1960s and equality for all Americans.”

Through personal stories and experiences, this exhibit reveals how these courageous men and women not only fought for Allied victory abroad, but also fought for equality on the home front as an early chapter of civil rights history. Artifacts on display include aircraft and military memorabilia, along with original letters, journals and other personal mementos.

Developed by the California African American Museum in association with The California Museum, the exhibit is presented by the California Legislative Black Caucus and will continue through August 5, 2012.



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### **ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA MUSEUM**

The California Museum — a self-supporting 501(c)3 non-profit — engages, educates and enlightens people about California's rich history and unique contributions to the world through ideas, innovation, the arts and culture. Official home of the California Hall of Fame, the Museum seeks to inspire men, women and children to dream the California dream and to make their own mark on history. Open Mon.-Sat. 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Sun.: 12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Admission: Adults \$8.50; College Students & Seniors \$7.00 with valid ID; Youth 6-17: \$6.00; Children 5 & under free. For more information, visit: [CaliforniaMuseum.org](http://CaliforniaMuseum.org)

### **ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS**

Since the formation of the California Legislative Black Caucus in 1967, the core mission has been to close and to ultimately eliminate, disparities in a wide variety of areas that stagnate the growth of the African-American community. The Caucus represents and advocates for the interests of African Americans throughout California. It seeks to increase African American participation and representation in all levels of government.

### **ABOUT CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM**

The California African American Museum (CAAM) researches, collects preserves and interprets for public enrichment the history, art and culture of African Americans. Chartered by the California State Legislature in 1977, CAAM is a state supported institution and a partner with the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization Friends, the Foundation of the California African American Museum. In addition to its permanent collection, CAAM hosts specially mounted exhibitions curated through loans and its own collection, and tours CAAM exhibitions throughout California and the nation. For more information, visit [CAAM.org](http://CAAM.org)

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*Press images available online at <http://www.californiamuseum.org/about/press/images>  
Interviews available by request.*