

The Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc (BCF)

"Yes – I Can" Essay/Poem/Video Contest



Dear Community Leader,

Please join the Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc as we recognize the talents and abilities of Atlanta/Macon youth to succeed with our Essay/Poem/Video Contest - "Yes-I Can!" Our 44th USA president Barack Obama's message of "Yes We Can" encourages us to understand that change comes from within. If we want change, then we must change ourselves.

That is exactly what our shero Bessie Coleman did in the early 1900's! Her greatest ambition was change "Uncle Tom's cabin into a hangar by establishing a flying school." She wanted the opportunities in aviation to be free of discrimination. So she changed herself! She changed her financial status by disciplining herself to save money and by gaining the respect and support of people like Robert Abbott (Chicago Defender). She exchanged her educational environment from a society (USA) that refused to allow her to fly, for ones (France and Germany) that proudly taught her to pilot the new contraptions called aeroplanes. She improved her ability to communicate by learning French!

On June 15, 1921, she changed the prevailing belief that an aeroplane would not respond to her because she was a woman and her skin was brown by earning an international pilots license. She changed the unfair laws of segregation by refusing to perform unless all spectators were allowed the same access. She ignored and thus changed existing ideas about race relations when she earned the mutual admiration and support of so-called whites like chewing-gum heir Edwin M. Beeman, aircraft designers Anthony Fokker and Glenn Curtiss, founder and president of the International Airline Pilots Association David L. Behncke, and pilot/mechanic William D. Wills who died with her in an old army surplus aircraft. Because she changed herself, she diversified the color of the faces of future aviators. **Yes - she did!**

Please share this Essay/Prose/Video Contest opportunity with all of the Atlanta area youth. Together we can honor Bessie Coleman's dream of and her achievement of multicultural participation in all aspects of aviation, aerospace and other careers.

Help show our youth that if they look inside themselves they will find that "YES - I Can!" Feel free to download the attached flyer, frequently asked question form and sponsorship request. Feel free to call me - I would love to hear from you!

It looks like a good day to fly,

Thelma Rudd, BCF President
901-219-7544

"Because of Bessie Coleman –
We have overcome that which was worse than racial barriers.
We have overcome the barriers within ourselves and dared to dream
"Lieutenant William J. Powell (1897-1942)

ESSAY/POEM/VIDEO CONTEST

Have you ever wondered what was going through Bessie Coleman's mind when she decided to learn to fly this new contraption called an airplane when most people around her told her that she could not. On June 15, 1921, the twenty-four year old Queen Bess, a beautiful, "fly", brown skinned woman, became the first American citizen to receive an International Pilot's license from the Federation Aeronautique Intenationale (F.A.I.). This license gave her authority to pilot an aircraft anywhere **in the world!**

- Why do you think Bessie Coleman set a goal to learn to fly an airplane?
- What goals have you set for yourself? Why?
- What would Bessie Coleman suggest that you have to start doing, or stop doing, in order to accomplish your goal?

* *The contest is open to Atlanta/Macon Georgia youth between the ages of 10 and 21.
For more information contact Thelma Rudd - TRUDD@WeAreTheLegacy.com*

The Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc (BCF)

"Yes – I Can" Essay/Poem/Video Contest



Frequently Asked Questions

Who Can Enter? - *The contest is open to Atlanta/Macon Georgia youth in each of three categories:*

Ages 10-13
Ages 14-17
Ages 18-21

How Do I Enter? - Write an essay or poem or create a video that answers all of the three questions above. There is no single correct answer so be creative and think carefully about how you may be like Bessie Coleman. Be sure to stay within the one page, single spacing or three minute video limit.

Entries must be submitted via email to (celika@alum.mit.edu) and must include the following information:

Name
Age
Address
Email Address
Phone Number

When Is the Deadline? *Entries must be received via email (celika@alum.mit.edu) by 6:00 p.m. (EST) on July 17, 2009.*

When will the Winners be Notified? - *The winners will be notified via email by July 28, 2009.*

What are the Awards? - *All winning entries will be published on the BCF website (www.WeAreTheLegacy.com). In addition, all winners will be recognized at the Fly-Sister-Fly Empowerment Breakfast on Wednesday, August 5, 2009 at the Marriott-Buckhead. They will also receive the prize noted below.*



- ✚ Four winners will be awarded a 40 minute "Bi-Plane Ride Over Atlanta" on Tuesday August 4, 2009 at Peachtree Dekalb Airport. The Bi-Plane is the type of aircraft that Bessie Coleman flew.
- ✚ An additional "Overall" winner will also read their essay during the Empowerment Breakfast.
- ✚ Fifty of the participants will have free admission to the Fly-Sister-Fly Empowerment Breakfast on Wednesday, August 5, 2009 at the Marriott-Buckhead. This venue will honor the Atlantic Southeast Airline's crew who made history in February 2009 as the first all black female commercial flight crew in the U.S. (Captain Rachelle Jones, First Officer Stephanie Grant and flight attendants Diana Galloway and Robin Rogers)

✚ Prizes of books, model airplanes, etc will also be awarded to other winners!

What are the Contest Guidelines?

Entrants will be judged on the basis of organization, depth of detail, and use of language by the author. Be sure to stay within the one page, single spacing or three minute limit.

All entrants must be the original work of the author submitting the entry and must not have been published anywhere else. A contestant may enter only one entry. All entries will be read/viewed by a panel of judges, whose selections will be final.

Entry in the contest grants the BCF non-exclusive rights to publish winning entrants in full or in part on the www.WeAreTheLegacy.com website and/or in other BCF files.

* *The contest is open to Atlanta/Macon Georgia youth between the ages of 10 and 21.
For more information contact Thelma Rudd - TRUDD@WeAreTheLegacy.com*

The Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc (BCF)

"Yes – I Can" Essay/Poem/Video Contest



Have you ever wondered what was going through Bessie Coleman's mind when she decided to learn to fly this new contraption called an airplane although most people around her told her that she couldn't. On June 15, 1921, the twenty-four year old Queen Bess, a beautiful, "fly", brown skinned woman, became the first American citizen to receive an International Pilot's license from the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (F.A.I.). This license gave her authority to pilot an aircraft anywhere in the world!

- ✚ Why do you think Bessie Coleman set a goal to learn to fly an airplane?
- ✚ What goals have you set for yourself? Why?
- ✚ What would Bessie Coleman suggest that you have to start doing, or stop doing, in order to accomplish your goal?

"Because of Bessie Coleman –
We have overcome that which was worse than racial barriers.
We have overcome the barriers within ourselves and dared to dream"
"Lieutenant William J. Powell (1897-1942)

The contest is open to Atlanta/Macon Georgia youth between the ages of ten (10) and twenty-one (21)

Please join the Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc as we encourage and teach youth to set goals, resolve conflict and become financially savvy! Write an essay or poem or create a video that answers all of the three questions above. There is no single correct answer so be creative and think carefully about how you may be like Bessie Coleman. Be sure to stay within the one page, single spacing or three minute limit.



Look at What Winners will Receive!

- ✚ Experience a 40 minute "Bi-Plane Ride Over Atlanta" – in recognition of the type of aircraft that Bessie Coleman flew! Tuesday August 4, 2009 at Peachtree Dekalb Airport.
- ✚ Free admission to the Fly-Sister-Fly Empowerment Breakfast on Wednesday, August 5, 2009 at the Marriott-Buckhead. Meet the Atlantic Southeast Airline's crew who made history in February 2009 as the first all black female commercial flight crew in the U.S. - Captain Rachelle Jones, First Officer Stephanie Grant and flight attendants Diana Galloway and Robin Rogers.

- ✚ "Overall" winner will share their entry during the Empowerment Breakfast.

* The contest is open to Atlanta/Macon Georgia youth between the ages of 10 and 21.
For more information contact Thelma Rudd - TRUDD@WeAreTheLegacy.com