



November 2010

Memphis Fly-Sister-Fly



Shirley M. Suber Tyus

When it comes to being first in aviation, Shirley Tyus and the late Bessie Coleman have a lot in common: Tyus is United Airlines' first African-American female pilot and in 1926 Coleman became the first African-American female daredevil pilot and the first American citizen to hold an international pilot's license.

Fast forward 84 years and Tyus, a founding member of the Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc. (BCF), served as keynote speaker at the 15th annual "Fly-Sisters-Fly!" Empowerment Breakfast on Wednesday, August 4, at the Memphis Marriott Downtown. Her speech was uplifting and emotional as she shared her journey to become a pilot and her accident that has ended her flying career. Tyus' quiet power and her spiritual strength were felt throughout the audience. William "CJ" Charlton Jr., Continental Airlines pilot, was the master of ceremony. The 2010 BCF Officers and Board of Directors were sworn into office by Memphis Mayor A. C. Wharton Jr.

Eleven women received BCF's 2010 "Sisters of Distinction" award; **Carmelia Barkley**, a 2010 MTSU graduate and committed aviation volunteer; **Shirley Blache**, Project Altitude founder and librarian at Havenview Middle School; **Paquita Bradley**, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) manager, Atlanta Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC), and philanthropist for Youth Aviation; **Sandra Campbell**, FAA manager, creator of "Follow Your Dreams", youth and aviation advocate; **Tonika Johnson**, airline captain, author and aviation promoter; **Sara McVay**, FAA training manager, Memphis ARTCC, and a strong supporter of aviation programs; **Cathy Ross**, FedEx Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer; **Pat Thompson**, aviation coordinator, Tennessee Technology Center at Memphis; **Dawn Wanzer**, airline first officer and aviation community volunteer; **Tracy Williams**, pilot and executive director of the Millington, Tennessee Airport Authority, and; **Ruby Wharton**, commissioner, Memphis-Shelby County Airport Authority (MSCAA) and passionate supporter of youth.

The highlight of the breakfast was when Bessie Coleman AKA Precious Morris just happened to stop by. Queen Bess (I mean Precious) revealed her relationships with historical figures such as W. E. B. Dubois, Glenn Curtis, Anthony Fokker, M.A. Ferguson and Ida B. Wells. Jaleesa Peete shared her and the other participants of the Bessie Coleman Leadership Academy (who were in attendance) appreciation of the lessons learned in that intense two-day workshop. Jaleesa's mother, Mrs. Stephanie Peete, stated after the breakfast, "Just being in that room with all those powerful women has encouraged me to go to grad school". That is why BCF exists - we want all of our sisters to "Fly-Sister-Fly!"

BCF MEMBER VICTORIA ROBINSON'S SUMMER ADVENTURES



Dear President Thelma Rudd,

Hi, my name is Victoria Robinson a Bessie Coleman member and I am 11 years old. This summer was a thrill of adventure. In New York I met three distinguish gentlemen Dr. Osamu Mori, Dr. Bill Nye "THE SCIENCE GUY", Dr. Louis Friedman at the Solar Sail Symposium and I also met Ms. Venus Williams in Barnes and Noble (in New York).

Dr. Osamu Mori- He came all the way from Japan. Dr. Mori and his team created the Solar Sail missions Ikaros and Akatsuki. The main event was based on the Solar Sails made by Japan and America.

Bessie Coleman- Her name is on the Solar Sail missions Akatsuki, Ikaros, and the Light Sail. The Light Sail is created by America. Akatsuki will arrive at planet Venus in December 2010.

Dr. Bill Nye- At the Symposium he asked me a question which was: "Victoria... Would I like to go into space?" I replied into the microphone: "Yes... I would like to go into Space because I want to take a journey or adventure to discover what wasn't found." I think he liked my answer.

Dr. Louis Friedman- He assigned me an essay to write for the Planetary Society website. My dad told me that I was born at the right time because Dr. Friedman is leaving as the Executive Director of the society and Dr. Nye is taking over his position.

Venus Williams- I went to her book signing and presented her with certificates from missions Phoenix and Akatsuki. The best thing about it, is that the Akatsuki mission is going to Venus. I think she was excited to receive them.

The Aviation Programs- My dad and I did three programs at the camp sites. The programs were for the Washington School, Harrison School, and Polk School. We bought toy airplanes for the kids to share, race them, and watched movies about the first African American heroes and She roes. They all turned out great.



CALLING ALL BCF MEMBERS!

**BCF MEMBERSHIP
TELECONFERENCE**

THURSDAY DECEMBER 2, 2010

8 PM EST

CALL INFORMATION WILL BE SENT TO YOUR
EMAIL ADDRESS BY NOV 18TH

THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH
BCF BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND SHARE YOUR
VISIONS AND CONCERNS FOR BCF!

BCF Executive Board & Board of Directors

*National President -----Thelma Rudd *V President ---- Nancy Lawrence
*Secretary -----Jennifer Myers *Treasurer -----Celika Caldwell

Board of Directors:

Thomas Johnson (Chair)

Doreen Branch
Nancy Lawrence

Hannah Dixon
Ted Lewis

BCF TO CELEBRATE QUEEN BESS' BIRTHDAY ON JANUARY 29, 2011



Save the date Saturday January 29, 2011 – In celebration of Bessie Coleman's birthday (Jan 26, 1892), BCF will partner with the Ida Barnett Wells Museum in Holly Springs,

Mississippi to unveil two murals, one of Bessie Coleman and another depicting both Bessie Coleman and Ida B Wells. BCF knows that it is important to archive the fact that these great women communicated and encouraged each other. Ida B. Wells served as the Mistress of Ceremony at Brave Bessie's funeral in Chicago.

These murals were painted and donated to BCF by The Artist – Jacqueline Withers. She is an accomplished mural artist who attends the Art Institute of Colorado, majoring in Design Management. She recently completed a mural for the Denver's Children Home that encompasses history from the ancient Egyptians to the famous Tuskegee Airmen. Ms. Withers was recently awarded The Tuskegee Airmen, Inc's "Hero Youth Award" in July 2010 for her commitment to Denver youth.



Introducing Ted Lewis, Newly Elected BCF Director and Public Affairs Ambassador

Ted Lewis ~ Retired Boston Police Officer. I now serve on the Advisory board of WGBH in Boston; a TV producer for both BNN and BAT TV stations, respectively. I was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and was raised and schooled in New York City. NYC was where I was introduced to the US Navy's flight demonstration team, the Blue Angels in 1959 - I have trained from mechanical to aerospace engineering to criminal justice. I realized that I am very fortunate to have done so much in my life and that if a child could realize what I have - how far more better that child might be. I believe each child is the answer to our future and the legacy of our past.



I see the Bessie Coleman legacy as the answer to our future; as Bessie Coleman worked everyday of her life so should we, and what better mechanism we have to move forward than aviation. It's my firm feelings that we need to now, start promoting space flight to our kids. In closing, I am urging President Obama to name the next space shuttle US Bessie Coleman. It is now my life work to keep Bessie Coleman on our hearts and minds: by wearing my Bessie Coleman button, everyday I'm asked who is she? Less we forget we need to say Thank you to Bessie Coleman, especially on her birthday, 26 January 1892 for all she did for Black people, in spite of the fact that she was 130 pounds, and 5'3" in height and a young Black woman: Thank you, Bessie Coleman.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



It has been fifteen (15) years since the founding of the Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc. BCF was officially formed at the home of Jill Brown, who in 1978 became the first African American female pilot for a major airline. (The picture on the left was taken at that meeting and is courtesy of Jill Brown). In attendance from left to right was Lorraine Spencer, Captain Beverly Armstrong, Jill Brown, Michelle, a colleague of Captain Armstrong, who facilitated the meeting, Patrice Clarke Washington, Sheldon Smith and Mr. Charles Horn.

I have served as a Director on the Board since its inception and I humbly serve you now as BCF President. In 2010, I celebrated Bessie Coleman's birthday at two Memphis' Middle Schools. I served as the keynote speaker at the Tuskegee Airmen Denver chapter annual fundraiser. I attended the "Salute to America's Colorful Women" – the Annual Flyover Queen Bess' grave in Chicago. I coordinated the first Bessie Coleman Aerospace Leadership Academy – an intense two day workshop for young women age 18-24. I helped with the BCF/OBAP Memphis Fly-Sister-Fly Empowerment Breakfast Committee and I attended the BCF/NBCFAE Bessie Coleman Breakfast in Indianapolis, Indiana. But, I am at my happiest when I am sharing Queen Bess' legacy with our youth - as you can see in the picture to the right. I realize that BCF is strong because we have committed members.



So I ask you – what have you done to continue Queen Bess' legacy? Better yet what can BCF do to assist you in helping us to continue the legacy? Each BCF member should receive a copy of Bessie Coleman biography written by her sister, Eloise Coleman-Patterson and a DVD with three videos. The first video is appropriate for younger (including college age) audiences because it features a young girl flying an airplane and it challenges the viewer to think about careers in aviation and aerospace, the second video is appropriate for an older audience – it focuses on Bessie Coleman's life and on our mission, and the third is the CNN interview with the historic all African-American female flight crew. It is our prayer that you can use these tools in spreading the legacy of the first American to receive an International Pilot's License and to encourage participation in Aerospace and Aviation!

Remember, Bessie Coleman's birthday is only a few months away, January 26th! Please make plans now to recognize her birthday in some form. Go to a school and share her story. Plan an event at your church or place of worship! You may even want to have a "Queen Bess" Happy Hour at your favorite spot! Whatever you decide to do – take lots of pictures and share your event with us!

Thanks again for your valued support. Please feel free to contact me or any BCF officer or Director with your ideas and thoughts.

It looks like a good day to fly,
Thelma Rudd (901-219-7544)

WHY I AM A BCF MEMBER

By JARED JONES



Ms. Bessie Coleman is an inspiration for a young black man like me. Ms. Coleman flew in an industry that was then and still is dominated by men today. Ms. Coleman succeeded in a time where just being black could get you killed. Ms. Coleman was successful when the prejudice laws of Jim Crow were in full effect.

To me, Ms. Bessie Coleman seized the moment. Ms. Bessie Coleman is a great example of someone who had the courage and heart to follow her dreams no matter what. It only made sense to want to be a part of organization build on that type of a foundation. I want to spread the knowledge of Ms. Coleman success to my own intuition. Help inspire and motivate my peers.

My name is Jared A. Jones; I am currently junior at the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore. I am graduating May 2012; I am majoring in Aviation Science, concentration Professional Pilot. I want to get a master in Aviation Safety; preventing runway incursion is my interest. Unfortunately, there are no master or doctorate programs in Aviation Science at my university. I will be forced to go to another university to achieve that goal. I also want to fly for an airline once my education is finished. To make my family proud and anyone else that follows behind me.



You can join Jared and BCF on Facebook – just search for the Bessie Coleman Foundation page that he has taken the initiative to maintain.



BCF has many volunteer opportunities. Please help us to continue the legacy of Queen Bess.

We are in need of a techie – someone with computer skills in excel, google docs, etc to help us automate BCF.

We also need support in marketing. Perhaps you can assist with the newsletter. BCF needs to know what you are doing to continue the legacy. Please forward pictures and articles about your Bessie Coleman event.

**Please respond to this ad to:
Thelma Rudd
TRUDD@WeAreTheLegacy.com**

BCF CONVENED WITH
NATIONAL BLACK COALITION OF FEDERAL
AVIATION EMPLOYEES (NBCFAE) IN
SEPTEMBER 2010



Pulling Pitch in Africa

Adventures of an African Female Helicopter Pilot.

Maggie Mutahi West



Flying helicopters became a fascinating dream for me when I saw my first helicopter. I was about 11 in primary school. When it hovered and took off, I was hooked. After my Mum(RIP) passed away in 2004, I vowed to honor her memory and everything

she taught me by pursuing and achieving my dream to be a helicopter pilot. Three years later, I'm back home flying helicopters thanks to God, my family and friends who have helped and supported me all the way. My



message to all the girls out there... especially those who have been programmed to be second best. No matter what you aspire to do, find the benchmark, the highest standard for performance of your job and compete to exceed that standard. Avoid competing against individuals be they male or female - define your goals and keep your focus on achieving them, don't be afraid to try, learn from your mistakes and you will succeed. BE PROUD, BE CONFIDENT, BE GIRL-STRONG! If you feel me - holla back :)Maggie Home: Karatina, Kenya High sch: BG Ngandu (Solidarity forever! Class of '94 Uni: USIU Bsc IBA Class of '01. *If you would like to know the kinds of missions I've flown so far, I've kept a blog to share with friends and family called "Pulling Pitch in Africa" the website is <http://skids4kids.blogspot.com>.*

“Spotlight on Dr Nancy Fontenot Lawrence”



(Pictured above from l-r is Dr. Nancy Lawrence, NASA astronaut Stephanie Wilson, BCF President Thelma Rudd and NASA astronaut Joan Higginbotham)

Dr. Nancy Fontenot Lawrence is an Associate Professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU). She teaches classes on safety and ergonomics, industrial hygiene and human factors in aviation. She is Vice President and Director of the Bessie Coleman Foundation (BCF); holds membership in Women Aviators International (WAI), American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) and active with Organization of Aerospace Professional (OBAP). In 2006, she was honored at the first BCF Fly-Sister-Fly Empowerment Breakfast. She immediately joined BCF and is a leading visionary for our organization.

Every year at OBAP convention, BCF has a booth to raise money for scholarships and Nancy mans the booth every year with her ERAU information in hand ready to talk with the youth about college education. In the last two years she has been successful and recruited two students, Darryl Jennings and Mary Smith. They are both very good students, who are adjusting well at ERAU in Daytona Beach Florida.

Thank You BCF!

I would like to thank the Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc for giving me the chance to meet people that are successful in life. One of them is Darryl Jennings Jr. He was the 2009 “Yes-I Can” overall essay winner in Atlanta. Darryl showed me that young black males can be whatever they want to be. As long as they set their mind and heart, I believe that everyone has the ability to succeed. Darryl Jennings showed not only me, but everyone at the Fly-Sister-Fly Breakfast that anybody can succeed. Again, thank you BCF for giving everyone a chance!



Wali Langford, II with Darryl Jennings, Jr.

Best Regards .. Wali Dawud Langford, II

Darryl Jennings, Jr’s winning essay is reprinted below:

“Yes – I Can”

Bessie Coleman, also known as “Queen Bess” was raised in a time where the odds were not in her favor. Her ethnic background consisted of both African American and Native American roots. She was also a woman. The racist and sexist society that she was born into frowned upon minority men as well as women of color. She probably heard all her life that she couldn’t make it or that she wasn’t good enough. I believe that Ms. Coleman felt flying was a way to literally, rise above all the road blocks and challenges of life. Furthermore, the world and its problems shrink and recede into miniature shapes, while the sky carries your mind and soul. Bessie Coleman was not just a pioneer but a visionary. She knew she had the talent and the potential. She was bold and confident in her abilities regardless of her sex and race.

I understand that being bold and confident is only as good as the plan that it is put into. Since my journey in life is just beginning, I believe in having a plan. My plan is comprised of some of my goals, which include:

- graduating with an advanced college degree
- successfully starting my own company
- reaping the benefits of helping others

I set these goals for myself because countless people before me paved a way for generations to go higher and further. Furthermore, I believe in myself; I have seen firsthand how my hard work can pay off. I, like Bessie Coleman, am determined and refused to let anyone deter me from my date with success.

According to Malcolm X, success is where opportunity meets preparation. Although Ms. Coleman was not able to attend aviation camps like youth today, preparation was a quality that she definitely implemented. Traveling all the way to France to learn how to fly, this little young, colored woman prepared herself to become one of the greatest names in African American, Native American, and aviation history. I am sure that if Ms. Coleman was here today, she would encourage all youth to not only pursue but live their dream.

When it comes to accomplishing my goals, Queen Bess would probably tell me, “You must start preparing yourself for the future that you have planned. Don’t let any obstacle deter you from your goals. Make your own pathway to success. Nay sayers will come and go but the impact of true legends will stay forever.” Like a true legend, I plan to reach my goals by pioneering and building bridges that make a way for future generations. I have learned that being great and successful is not caused by what you do for yourself, but how your actions help others.

UPDATE ON WALI LANGFORD AND DARRYL JENNINGS, JR

Wali Langford is a 7th grade Honor Student at Bellvue Middle School in Memphis, Tennessee. He plays football; active in the Student Council; Vice-President of the schools’ National Junior Honor Society; Student Envoy; Won Presidential Academic Award; recently accepted special invitation to speak as a Student Representative.

Darryl Jennings graduated from Southwest Dekalb High School in the top five percent of his class. He is currently a freshman at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) at Daytona Beach, Florida. His major is Aerospace Engineering. Darryl is on the ERAU Taekwonda team. His memberships include AAIA, OBAP and BCF.