## Major Richard C. Pullam

Tuskegee Airman/College Professor

MAJ Richard C. Pullam was born in 1917 and grew up in Kansas City, MO. He enrolled at LU in 1940, by which time his brother, Arthur E. Pullam, Jr., was already on staff as an instructor. In 1942, he enlisted in the Army to join the "Tuskegee Experience" and earn a commission as an Army second lieutenant. After serving 10 years in the US Army Air Corps, he returned to LU in 1951 as a veteran of WWII and a seasoned combat pilot.

During his initial enrollment at LU, Pullam was an honor student, a Mathematics Club member, trombonist with the LU Collegians Band and an active member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. He completed his baccalaureate degree in 1952 graduating with a BA Degree in Graphic Arts.

Significantly, MAJ Pullam was among the first of the original Tuskegee Airmen, making them the first African Americans to qualify as military aviators. During the WWII, Pullam flew four different airborne platforms and is known to have had led a mission of more than 60 aircraft from Ramatelli, Italy to southern France in a critical Allied Forces offensive during summer 1944. Stateside, [Captain] Pullam commanded the 301st Fighter Squadron at Lockbourne Air Base, OH.

Attaining the rank of major before leaving active duty, he was a founding member of the "Heart of America Chapter" of Tuskegee Airmen International. In 2007, he received, posthumously, the US Congressional Gold Medal for his exceptional leadership and distinguished service with the African Americans of the US Army Air Corps known as the "Tuskegee Airmen."

In 1995, Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan spoke volumes when he said of MAJ Pullam and his comrades, "The freedom they could not find on earth, they captured in the sky."

We salute MAJ Richard C. Pullam, an original Tuskegee Airman.