## Victor Mason Barker

## Tuskegee Airman/Educator

Victor Mason Barker was born and raised in Kansas City, MO. He matriculated to Lincoln University, where he excelled as an honor student, a member of the Mathematics Club, trombone player with the LU Collegians band and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. He graduated from Lincoln in 1941 with a degree in mathematics.

In August 1942, Mr. Barker was assigned to the Army Air Corps Signal Corps at Fort Riley, Kansas. He was trained in sophisticated technology, the development of radar, mobile communications and deciphering machines. During this assignment he was selected to participate in the "Tuskegee Experience," an experimental flight training program for African American servicemen. Pilots and air operations staff trained under the provisions of this experiment, in Tuskegee, Alabama became known as, "Tuskegee Airmen". During WWII, Mr. Barker served with distinction as a navigator, bombardier and aerial gunner.

After the war, he returned to Kansas City and pursued several careers as a high school math teacher, US Postal Service employee and Department of Agriculture personnel officer until his retirement in 1979. During that time, he was also actively involved in civic causes including the Lincoln University Alumni Association, Inc., YMCA, NAACP, Urban League and Boy Scouts of America. Notably, he was a founding member of the "Heart of America Chapter" of Tuskegee Airmen International. In 2007, Mr. Barker received, posthumously, for his service as a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, the United States Congressional Gold Medal of Honor, the highest civilian award presented by the United States Congress.

Victor Barker married his college sweetheart, Lola R. Harrington, and their marriage of 50-plus years produced three children; Eloise, William and Victor.