



1918-2011

*African-American/Caribbean Education Association, Inc.
(AACEAINC)*

"Working to better the education of our children"

***The William Samber, Sr.
Aviation/ Math and Science Scholarship***

Biography

William Samber, Sr. had roots emanating from Key West, Florida where he attended Frederick Douglas Elementary School. An apt pupil eager to be at the head of his class, even in these early years, he adhered to his mother's educational values to learn; and he was determined to reach his full potential. Raised in the church and cherishing his mother's Christian teachings, service to others was instilled in him. Early on, he strived for excellence and was desirous of making a difference. In 1933 the family moved to New York City where he attended James Fenimore Junior High School. Striving to be all that he could be and living up to his mother's expectations, he graduated as the Class Salutatorian. As a DeWitt Clinton High School student, he excelled in all his subjects but was a master of mathematics making perfect scores on Mathematics Regents Examinations. His dedication to the needy found him majoring in Sociology at the City College of New York, where he earned his first college baccalaureate degree in 1942. But something happened in the interim of his pursuit for higher education, along came the War. He volunteered for the United States Army Air Force and scored 100% on the Air Force Entrance exam. He was sent to Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama and became one of the "Original" Tuskegee Airmen who served in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations during World War II. To help enlisted men taking correspondence courses while in combat, he taught mathematics and other courses to them so that they could complete requirements to receive their high school diplomas. He later went on to continue his education at the State University of New York, which helped him start his education career as a teacher at George Westinghouse High School. He later went on to fulfill all requirements to become an administrator. He served as an Assistant Principal at Halsey Jr. High School and later became Principal at Roland Hayes Intermediate School 291. A brilliant scholar, Mr. Samber earned a Masters degree from Queens College in Guidance Counseling and a Masters degree in Educational Administration from Columbia University. He also earned a Professional Diploma from Fordham University and a \$5,000 scholarship to conduct a special training group in technology and open classrooms. Over the years Mr. Samber tirelessly tutored high school students who failed algebra and plane geometry; trained paraprofessionals to work effectively with math teachers; was the Institutional Representative of Boy Scout Troop 422 at the Calvary AME Zion Church; was a facilitator of Religious Education and member of the Jamaica Sunday School Association, was a co-founder of the Retired Principals Group, served as Mentor and Usher on the Male Usher Board at Greater Allen AME Cathedral where he was affectionately known as the "Sunday School Dad"; and was a recognized hero of the community leading many Veteran's Day Parades as Grand Marshall. On March 29, 2007, William Samber, Sr. was honored for his heroism and bravery as an "Original" Tuskegee Airman receiving the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor at the Nation's Capitol. He served as Education Captain to AACEAINC inculcating the importance of service and leadership. Until the time of his passing in November 2011, two weeks short of his 93rd birthday, he remained active and faithfully spoke to young people at schools, churches, civics, and CBOs advocating the pursuit of excellence and service to the community. A man of distinction and a great humanitarian, he was recognized by elected officials and featured in newspaper articles and television programs. During his lifetime, he was the recipient of various honors and awards from the community, Greater Allen AME Church, and the Aviation programs at York College and Dowling College. However, his greatest reward was in knowing that he had helped somebody along life's road to a better tomorrow.



CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL CEREMONY

in honor of

THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

The Rotunda
United States Capitol
March 29, 2007
1:00 p.m.

"On freedom's wings bound for glory these intrepid men roamed the skies in defense of liberty for all men. Before the Air Force shattered the sound barrier, the Tuskegee Airmen shattered the race barrier. Their deeds will be forever etched in the annals of those who sought freedom and justice."

— The Original Tuskegee Airmen
[1941-1949]

PROGRAM

Prelude

The United States Air Force Ceremonial Brass

Call to Order

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, *Speaker of the United States House of Representatives*

Presentation of the Colors

United States Air Force Honor Guard

National Anthem

Ms. Melissa Cinton, *Lyric Coloratura Soprano*

Posting of the Colors

Invocation

The Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, *Chaplain of the United States House of Representatives*

Welcome and Remarks

The Honorable Carl Levin, *United States Senate*

Remarks on the Resolution

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel, *United States House of Representatives*

Greeting from the Congressional Black Caucus

The Honorable Carolyn C. Kilpatrick, *United States House of Representatives*

Musical Selection: The 23rd Psalm

Mr. Jeff Major, *Harpist*

Featuring Mr. Walter Sigler

Remarks

The Honorable Colin L. Powell, *Former Secretary of State and Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*

The Honorable John Boehner, *Republican Leader of the United States House of Representatives*

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, *Republican Leader of the United States Senate*

The Honorable Harry Reid, *Majority Leader of the United States Senate*

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, *Speaker of the United States House of Representatives*

The Honorable George W. Bush, *The President of the United States of America*

Presentation of the Gold Medal

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd, *President pro tempore of the United States Senate*

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, *Speaker of the United States House of Representatives*

The Honorable George Bush, *The President of the United States of America*

Acceptance and Word of Thanks

Lieutenant Colonel Lee A. Asher, Jr.

Dr. Roscoe Brown, Jr.

Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Jefferson

Colonel Charles E. McGee

Lieutenant Colonel Harry T. Stewart, Jr.

Technical Sergeant George Watson

Benediction

The Reverend Barry Black, *Chaplain of the United States Senate*



The Congressional Gold Medal is the most distinguished award bestowed by the United States Congress. It is the nation's top civilian award presented to those individuals that embody the best quality in America's heritage. Before it can be awarded, legislation must be approved by Congress and signed into law by the President. Congress first awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to George Washington in 1776.



