

# BIOGRAPHY

A DOCUMENTED ORIGINAL TUSKEGEE AIRMAN

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN INC. PUBLIC RELATIONS, P.O. Box 830060

## LEROY F. GILLEAD



Documented Original Tuskegee Airman, LeRoy F. Gillead (1941-1949) was born in Manhattan, NYC, on June 12, 1920, the son of Jeremiah Foster Gillead and Astrid Christine Gillead.

LeRoy F. Gillead attended Stuyvesant H.S.(NYC) and enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in the Spring of 1941 (pre-Pearl Harbor) and was one of the “Original” 401 military members of the 99<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron, trained technically as a Single Engine Mechanic, before the first Aviation Cadet Class was formed in 1942.

LeRoy F. Gillead was accepted as an Aviation Cadet, Class 43-H SE, along with his fellow High School mate, Lee Archer, along with Daniel “Chappie” James Jr., Charles McGee and George Giddings., among others. He received his Primary Aircraft Flight training in Single Engine Training aircraft.

LeRoy F. Gillead was transferred to the first class of Navigators and was Commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Navigator in February 1944, where upon he further attended Bombardier School and after to Aerial Gunnery School becoming a Triple Rated Airman ... Pilot, Navigator, Bombardier ... where upon being assigned to the newly formed 477<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group. He was initially assigned to the 616<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron as a Navigator.

LeRoy F. Gillead then was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lt and Commander of the 617<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron, 477<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group. His B-25 Bomber Pilot was his former Cadet Classmate, Daniel “Chappie” James Jr. and his roommate.

It was during this period (Spring 1945) that 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. LeRoy F. Gillead along with 60 other 477th Officers began to protect the “illegal segregation” of the Officer’s Club at Freeman Field (the Freeman Field Mutiny/Insurrection). Later he was among the

101 Officers incarcerated at Godman Field for refusing to sign the “illegal segregation order” of the Base Commander, Col. Selway ... now well known as the “Freeman Field Mutiny” in 1945.

LeRoy F. Gillead was later assigned to Lockbourne Army Air Base, Columbus, Ohio, along with the 477<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group and the 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group after the War ended in September 1945.

The U.S. Army Air Corps Black Air Force was “deactivated” in 1949 and Lt. LeRoy F. Gillead was assigned to the U.S. Air Force 52<sup>nd</sup> All Weather Group as a Radar Observer for the P-61 “Black Widow” Fighter Aircraft 1949 – 1950.

LeRoy F. Gillead was discharged/separated in January 1950 from active duty at McGuire AFB, Ft. Dix, NJ, with the rank of Captain. Then serving as a USAF Reserve Officer, 1950 – 1964.

Upon his active-duty discharge, he was employed at the United Nations Secretariat (NYC) initially as a Security Officer in 1950 and then as a Statistician (1956-1964) ... during which time he obtained his Bachelor of Science (Economics) Degree from New York University (1956) attending at night while working full time and raising a family with his wife Bette (the former President of the Officer Wives Club at Lockbourne AFB, serving after 1<sup>st</sup> President Agatha Davis) and his three sons, LeRoy II, Rodney and Ramon,

Upon his graduation from NYU, he began his formal Legal Education by attending Brooklyn Law School, later transferring to the New York Law School, attending at night, obtaining a Juris Doctorate (J.D Degree/ Doctor of Jurisprudence) 1964.

Later he was employed by the National Urban League (NYC) as the Director of their Broadcasting Skills Bank, seeking expanded employment opportunities for African Americans in Broadcasting ... meeting with key industry executives in the major Broadcasting Companies. (1965 – 1967).

After his time with the National Urban League’s Broadcasting Skills Bank Directorate, he was employed by the United States Department of Labor (NYC) as the Supervisor, Contract Compliance Officer, Lead Investigator of a team of Compliance Officers, Equal Opportunity Compliance with firms having contracts with the Federal Government. (1967 -1986).

In 1986, LeRoy F. Gillead relocated to the San Francisco area, joining the San Francisco Unified School District as a Community Liaison Officer (1986 -2008)

From 1986 to 2013, LeRoy F. Gillead was an active member of the Tuskegee Airmen Inc., San Francisco Chapter (DOTA/Life Member) and served on the Tuskegee Airmen Inc. National Board of Directors ... simultaneously with his eldest Son, LeRoy II (Hannibal “Killer” Cox Chapter, McGuire AFB, NJ, 1996-2006) the “only DOTA Father & Son” to ever serve together on the TAI National Board of Directors at the same time (1996-2006).

In the year 2012, LeRoy F. Gillead further served as a Goodwill Ambassador, along with DOTA LtCol. Alexander Jefferson to the US Embassy in London at the Royal Court of St. JAMES, U.K., along with, TAI Western Region President Rodney A. Gillead (his second son of his three sons).

DOTA LeRoy F. Gillead and his three sons, LeRoy II, Rodney and Ramon all being Heritage-Life Members of Tuskegee Airmen Inc.

Tuskegee Airman LeRoy F. Gillead also served as a “consultant” to the Producer of the feature film “Red Tails” and was present for the Premier of the “Red Tails” film at the U,S, Embassy in London in 2012.

The One Hundred Black Men of America Inc. bestowed upon DOTA LeRoy F. Gillead in 2012, at their Annual Gala, two awards ... the “Trail Blazer” Award for Civil Rights (Military) for his Leadership in the Freeman Field Mutiny and their “Community Service Award”, along with Martin Luther King III among others.

\*DOTA LeRoy F. Gillead was the Co-Founder of the Airline Holding Company/Air Transportation Development Corporation... Spanish Main International Airlines & Cos. Inc., [SMIA] a New York Corporation (1972), along with \*DOTA Generals, \*Benjamin Oliver Davis Jr. and \*Daniel “Chappie” James Jr. and his son \*LeRoy Gillead II, who filed and prosecuted, an “Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity” before the United States Civil Aeronautics Board, pursuant to the Airline De-Regulation Act of 1978, filing within the “Window of Opportunity”, on November 29, 1978, within 30 days after enactment of the Airline De-Regulation Act of 1978.

After a full CAB fitness Investigation and Administrative Law Hearing before an Administrative Law Judge, because the “application” requested International Destination Authority, it further required Presidential Review. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1981, by Presidential Executive Order, President Ronald Reagan on the occasion of the Air Traffic Controller Strike, “declared that all applications pending before the Civil Aeronautics Board, from October 31, 1978 to July 31, 1981, were declared “de novo” “new entrant” Air Carriers ... Spanish Main International Airlines Inc.[SMIA] was the “only” Airline with a pending application before the CAB.

However, it did not grant any further rights, namely requiring further processing for Route & Economic Authority ... which is still ongoing. [2025]

SMIA is the “only” Air Transportation Development Corporation to be formed by Documented Original Tuskegee Airmen Commanders.

In 2014 however, SMIA and related companies filed with the U.S Securities and Exchange Commission, pursuant to SEC Regulation D, 506 C, its “Tax Exempt” Securities offerings for “Accredited Investors” and Financial firms only.

The Air Transportation Development Corporation SMIA Business Plan was reviewed and accepted by the Boeing Airline Start Up Team, becoming a Boeing Start Up Air Carrier in 2009, and is still currently actively seeking Accredited Investors, Financial Firms, Registered Broker/Dealers for its “Registered Securities Offering, including; Partnerships, Equity participation, Asset Backed Securities (ABS) secured by Aircraft & Operational equipment, Corporate Notes & Bonds and Debentures. [2025] ([www.Linkedin.com/in/LeRoyGillead2nd](http://www.Linkedin.com/in/LeRoyGillead2nd))

DOTA LeRoy F. Gillead joined the Lonely Eagles in 2013, at the age of 93, and was survived by his Wife Elizabeth C. Gillead (Bette) (Deceased 2022) Sons; LeRoy II, Rodney (Deceased 2022) and Ramon; Grandchildren: LeMonte, Reyna, Alea and Lilramo and Great Grandchildren: Kristen (deceased 2020), Brittney, Austin and now has four Great Grandchildren (two boys & two girls) (2025)

DOTA LeRoy F. Gillead is the Publisher of “The Tuskegee Airmen and the Tuskegee Aviation Experiment, 1939 – 1949 ... (Self Published)

Fellow Tuskegee Airmen High School Mates;

Lt. Col. Charles “A-Train” Dryden  
(Red Tail Fighter Pilot/Fighter Pilot Instructor)

LtCol, Lee Archer (Red Tail Fighter Pilot Ace)

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Fenton B. Sands Sr.  
(477<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 616<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron & 617<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron Navigator) (International Botanist, USAID, U.S Dept. of State)

Aviation Cadet Classmates;  
General Daniel “Chappie” James Jr. USAF  
(477<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 617<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron B-25 Pilot/Roommate) Lt.

Col. Lee Archer (USAF, Ret)

Brig. Gen. Charles McGee (USAF, Ret)

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. George Giddings (477<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 616<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron Navigator, 617<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron Navigator)

Aircraft:

Primary Aircraft Flight Training, Single Engine (Aviation Cadet, 43-H SE)

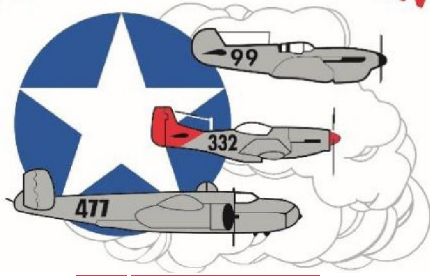
B – 25 (Mitchell) 477<sup>TH</sup> Bombardment Group 1945-1949

616<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron/Navigator

617<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron Commander

Navigator/ Bombardier/Aerial Gunner

# TUSKEGEE AIRMEN



**75** ANNIVERSARY

1941 \* 2016





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