

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Colonel Anthony M. La Sure of the 177th Fighter Wing of the New Jersey Air National Guard to Speak at Stockton's Commencement Ceremony

Event Will Also Feature Tuskegee Airmen

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Galloway Township, NJ- Colonel Anthony M. La Sure will speak at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey's Annual Fall Commencement Ceremonies on Sunday, December 14, 2008 and will be awarded an honorary degree from the College. The Tuskegee Airmen will also be honored and are represented by Lt. Colonel Thomas Mayfield, Retired Tuskegee Airman.

Colonel Anthony M. La Sure: Colonel Anthony M. La Sure is the Maintenance Group Commander of the 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, having been so appointed in May of 2007. Col. La Sure, in response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, served in Operation Noble Eagle, flying a fighter plane to patrol and protect the cities of New York, Philadelphia and Washington, DC, as well as Camp David, for nine months.

Commissioned as an officer in May of 1989, Col. La Sure was assigned to Vance Air Force Base (AFB), Oklahoma, for pilot training. Having received his wings in 1990, Col. La Sure was selected to remain at Vance AFB and serve as a T-38 instructor pilot. While at Vance AFB, he served in virtually every capacity: runway supervisor unit observer and controller, training officer, scheduler, check pilot, flight evaluator and supervisor of flying. Col. La Sure completed Squadron Officer School in 1995 at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. In 1996, he was assigned to Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, for F-16 training. After graduating eight months later, Col. La Sure was assigned to the 68th Fighter Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, where he participated in several worldwide deployments and flew over 20 combat missions over southern Iraq as a part of Operation Southern Watch.

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Leaving active duty in February of 1999, Col. La Sure then joined the New Jersey Air National Guard. While flying with the Jersey Devils, Col. La Sure was activated for nine months flying combat air patrol missions over the northeast coast as a part of Operation Noble Eagle. He served proudly as Flight Commander and Assistant Inspector General in the 119th Fighter Squadron until accepting the Inspector General position in the 177th Fighter Wing in December of 2003. From February 2006 to May 2007, Col. La Sure was appointed Vice Wing Commander for the 177th Fighter Wing, and is now Maintenance Group Commander for the 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard.

Colonel La Sure has been awarded numerous medals and decorations, including the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Aerial Achievement Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor, and at least seven other awards.

Having hailed from rural Georgia, Col. La Sure earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Middle East Area Studies with a minor in Arabic in 1989 from the United States Air Force Academy. Throughout his career, Col. La Sure has been involved in his community by coaching and sponsoring local children's sports teams. He also has participated in several media ventures focused on mentorship.

Colonel Thomas Mayfield: Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Mayfield retired from the United States Air Force in 1970 with over 29 years of distinguished service. Recognized as one of the original Tuskegee Airmen, he remains active in the Hannibal M. Cox, Jr. Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, and McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey. Throughout his military career he received numerous accolades, decorations and awards for outstanding service, most notably, the Silver Pilot Wings and promotion to Second Lieutenant in the US Army Air Corps after completing flight training school in Tuskegee, Alabama.

Serving in rank from Private to Master Sergeant, and eventually an officer, Lt. Col. Mayfield's career included tours with the 99th Pursuit Squadron, 477th Bombardment Group, Godman Field, Kentucky; Squadron Commander, C-130 support Squadron, Moffat Field, California; Squadron Commander and Chief of Supply, Portugal. He also served in Illinois, Alabama, Kentucky, Missouri, California, Oklahoma, New Jersey, Portugal, Bermuda and Japan. He served this country through three wars, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

From a segregated, one-room elementary school, Lt. Col. Mayfield went on to earn a bachelor's degree in Commercial Education from Bluefield State College in West Virginia, and a master's degree in Educational Administration from the University of Illinois. He also has a certificate in Accounting from the International Accounting Society of Chicago, and a certificate in Economics of National Security from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington, DC. He taught Business Administration at Washington Technical High School in St. Louis, Missouri, and was a Guidance Counselor at Morgan Village Elementary School in Camden, and a special education teacher at Crichton School in Brown Mills, New Jersey.

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For his outstanding service to the US as one of the original Tuskegee Airmen, Lt. Col. Mayfield was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, presented by President Bush. He also was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the West Virginia All-Black schools and the Kelly Miller High School Hall of Fame in Clarksburg. Lt. Col. Mayfield was awarded the West Virginia Harrison County Davis-Jackson Distinguished Alumnus award.

During his tour in Bermuda, he met and married his wife of 52 years, the former Barbara A. Vaucrosson. Together they have three children and, as he notes, three adorable grandchildren.

Lt. Col. Mayfield continues to be active in community and fraternal organizations, having served as past President, Hannibal Cox, Jr., Chapter, Tuskegee Airmen, McGuire Air Force Base; life member and prior Basileus Nu Nu Chapter, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Willingboro, New Jersey; member of Sickle Cell Anemia Resources; and Vice President of Del Val Golf Club.

Tuskegee Airmen: The Tuskegee Airmen were dedicated, determined men who became America's first black military airmen. They met or exceeded the standards for pilots and trained in operations, meteorology, intelligence, engineering, medicine or any of the other officer fields. They were trained to be aircraft and engine mechanics, armament specialists, radio repairmen, parachute riggers, control tower operators, policemen, administrative clerks and all of the other skills necessary to fully function as an Army Air Corps flying squadron or ground support unit.

From 1941 through 1946, 994 pilots graduated from Tuskegee Army Air Field. They fought two wars – one against military forces and the other against racism. For more information on the work of these notable individuals, please go to <http://www.tuskegeeairmen.org/>.

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