



## For Immediate Release

Gloria Nelson  
Dir. Of Development and Social Impact  
412-342-1349  
[glorian@hosannahouse.org](mailto:glorian@hosannahouse.org)

Max Pipman  
Sr. Director of Communications  
412-586-6042  
[mpipman@pittsburghkids.org](mailto:mpipman@pittsburghkids.org)

# ***Hosanna House Inc. and Children's Museum of Pittsburgh Celebrate the Launch of the Center for Aviation Technology and Training (CATT) and the Tuskegee Airmen Museum***

***The Newly Renovated Space at Hosanna House Inc.'s Sherwood Event Center Will Open with the Black Wings, American Dreams of Flight Exhibit***

Pittsburgh, PA (Thursday, February 24) – The Center for Aviation Technology and Training (CATT) and Tuskegee Airmen Museum launch is Thursday, February 24. The project is a partnership between Hosanna House Inc. and Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. The Tuskegee Airmen Museum will feature the exhibit, "*Black Wings: American Dreams of Flight*," a Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition.

The launch event is from 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Scheduled speakers include Hosanna House Inc. Founding Chief Executive Officer Leon E. Haynes, III.

The completely updated space is a collaboration between Hosanna House Inc. and Children's Museum of Pittsburgh that creates an opportunity for the Greater Pittsburgh region's youth to explore the field of aviation and aeronautics through hands-on, informal learning opportunities rooted in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

"The Center for Aviation Technology and Training provides a pathway for education and training of black and brown children and teens that increases their capacity to stimulate career opportunities that help build a foundation of financial security in the future," said Hosanna House Founding Chief Executive Officer Leon E. Haynes, III. "The Tuskegee Airmen Museum showcases the history, influence, tenacity, strength, and accomplishment of generations of African Americans who served our country in the field of aeronautics."

The CATT will consist of three main elements, a STEM Makerspace and flight simulation lab, the Tuskegee Airmen Museum, and an interactive exhibit space for children and youth both inside and outside.

“We are thrilled to help create experiences that are both innovative and inclusive,” said Jane Werner, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh Executive Director. “Our work with Hosanna House Inc. allows children and families to explore hands-on learning in informal settings, and build skills that help them make an impact in the Pittsburgh region and beyond.”

“Hosanna House Inc. values the long-standing partnership with Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh. The ability to partner with Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh allows Hosanna House Inc. to leverage the capacity of an established museum whose mission is in sync with ours: education for under-exposed children and youth,” added Haynes.

The collaboration has led to the creation of a new museum that is focused on the Tuskegee Airmen. The entire museum is centered on the contributions of black and brown pioneers and leaders in aviation. The opening exhibit “Black Wings, American Dreams of Flight” was organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) in collaboration with the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum. The exhibition was made possible by the generous support of MetLife Foundation. It chronicles the story of African Americans, who, despite facing racial barriers, attained great achievements in the world of aviation.

‘Black Wings: American Dreams in Flight’ is by supplemented the Tuskegee Airmen Museum’s growing collection of World War 2 and aviation artifacts, including a pilot’s flight suit and gear, a real propeller and nose cone, autographed items owned by Tuskegee airmen and other objects and ephemera.

In addition, the Children’s Museum created a custom collection of interactive, hands-on exhibits to extend the learning experiences. The experiences include:

- **Cockpit Flight Trainer:** A full-scale interactive cockpit with both analog and digital controls lets visitors imagine what it’s like to fly a real plane. The analog panel is designed for multi-sensory, tactile interaction with lights, sounds, ratchet mechanisms, toggle switches, buttons and the wheel. The digital panel includes an authentic Jay Velocity flight simulator by Redbird Flight. Front nosecone of cockpit features the 6 aircraft types the Tuskegee Airman were trained to fly. Emblems below them feature their Fighter and Bomber Groups. Filling out the experience are two rows of real airplane seats.
- **Things that Fly Praxinoscope:** See images of things that fly come to life using this early form of animation. Spin the table top and look in the mirrors: the rapid succession of images creates the illusion of motion. Switch out the custom-made cards to bring other images to life. This open-ended and creative interactive device can be used to support a wide range of exhibit themes and educational activities for various audiences.
- **Land the Plane Maze:** Inspired by Air Traffic Control Radar, visitors guide the ball to a safe landing, tilting the round table top to avoid the red planes working all the way around to the landing strip. Visitors can gather around and work together or alone to land the plane.

- **Imagination Mirrors:** Interactive, back-lit mirrors activated by pressure sensitive mats expose images of airplanes. This multi-layered experience with sound and props provides extended imaginative play and helps children see themselves in roles in the aviation field.
- **Wearable Wings:** Children can build and wear a pair of wearable airplane wings or a rocket ship and imagine they are flying through the sky.
- **Airport Play Table:** A multi-purpose play table with a scaled version of a real airport and a collection of play pieces provides a multi-layered experience with sound and props for extended imaginative play. This activity helps children create narratives about what it's like to operate an airport.
- **Outdoor Play Space:** In the summer 2022, the outdoor Playscape will open and include a variety of gross motor and pretend play opportunities, including a rocket ship, drone landing pad, and a real airplane.

Exposure to CATT programming expands educational and career opportunities. Components include:

- STEM education for preschool - adolescent age children
- Drone technology literacy for teens through hands-on flight training
- Specialized training for high school students preparing for a two-year degree program from trade schools and colleges such as the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics (PIA), Community College of Butler County (CCBC), and Hampton University
- Expanded access to job opportunities and career paths as commercial pilot, Air Traffic Control, Aerospace Management, Aerospace Maintenance, Aerospace Electronics, and more

This summer, two vital organizations are leading the first phase of this strategic effort: Hampton University and Black Girls Drone.

"Once the students see people who look like them in these roles and the impact these heroic individuals made in aviation, they'll realize the sky is not the limit, but their playground," said Andrew J. Smith, Assistant Professor AT-CTI Program Coordinator, Hampton University.

"Everything has been set before us. Our foundation is firmly formed. The future of work is in our hands," added Ernanda White, Founder & CEO, Black Girls Drone Inc.

The CATT and Tuskegee Airmen Museum is launching this February for Hosanna House Inc. guests, children, and families. The building will be available for rentals and events starting in April.

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#### **About Hosanna House Inc.**

Since the early 1990s, Hosanna House Inc. has gathered people and pulled our resources together with a single purpose in mind, ending a life cycle of poverty and helping individuals and families reach their maximum potential. We work hard to create an environment where: Hope grows and families' flourish. Parents feel successful and supported. Parents and children build relationships fueled by trust, enjoyment and mutual understanding. Our community comes together to celebrate our achievements.

#### **About Children's Museum of Pittsburgh**

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh is a place that provides innovative and inclusive museum experiences that inspire kindness, joy, creativity, and curiosity for all learners. We forge connections with artists, community partners, and neighbors to work on behalf of children, youth, and families. Permanent interactive exhibit areas at the Museum include The Studio, Theater, Waterplay, The Kindness Gallery, Backyard, and MAKESHOP®.