



2020 Jasper Harris, Jr. Aviation Scholarship



Samantha Carter

**Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Aerospace Engineering**

Ever since I was a young girl, I have been drawn to the world of aviation. I was introduced to the Red Tailed Hawks (RTH) in 2014, where my curiosity quickly turned into a passion and I started working towards earning a Private Pilot Certificate. With great financial assistance from the RTH, I received my certificate in the summer of 2017- right before my post-secondary education began. For the longest time I had been dreaming of a career flying jets and travelling the world. During my flight training, I realized that despite how much I enjoyed flying, I wouldn't want it as a career. Instead, I felt drawn to the theories and reasoning that go into planning and manufacturing an aircraft. Just months before arriving on campus, I switched my major from Aeronautical Science to Aerospace Engineering because I felt the same pull that introduced me to the RTH leading me to engineering...

Jasper Harris Jr. was an amazing man that did not allow his desire for knowledge to be hindered by the difficulties a black man faced in the 40s and 50s. After serving in the war, he returned to school and then entered the workforce, paving a way for other people of color to enter the aerospace industry. How he lived is the RTH's mission brought to life. He was dedicated to helping young people interested in pursuing aviation related careers and the RTH is committed to introducing youth to aviation and sparking interest in STEM fields. The legacy left by Jasper Harris Jr. is one of excellence, perseverance, and mentorship. This past summer the RTH has shown all three qualities in continuing to uplift the young despite the challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic. As Jasper Harris Jr. encountered pushback from the state of the world so did we. This summer I attended both aviation day camps to help where I could. While I prepare myself to transition into the workplace, I will keep Jasper Harris Jr. in mind and stay connected to the RTH and other organizations committed to helping and inspiring young minds.

