

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5, 2020

**TUSKEGEE AIRMAN AND U.S. AIR FORCE VETERAN CHARLES E. MCGEE
PROMOTED TO BRIGADIER GENERAL, HONORED AT THE STATE OF THE UNION**

*McGee participated in the Super Bowl LIV coin toss and is a longtime supporter of
the Friends of the National WWII Memorial.*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) is very pleased to congratulate our dear friend and longtime supporter Charles E. McGee for his honorary promotion to brigadier general. President Donald J. Trump promoted McGee in a private ceremony on February 4, 2020, at the White House and announced his promotion during his State of the Union address that evening. Gen. McGee was accompanied by his great-grandson at the State of the Union address. The promotion follows months of efforts by Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), who introduced legislation in July to authorize McGee’s promotion to brigadier general. That legislation was signed into law this past December.

Gen. McGee, who currently lives in Bethesda, Md., served as a pilot with the famed Tuskegee Airmen during World War II, completing 136 combat missions. He went on to serve in the U.S. Air Force, completing an additional 100 combat missions in the Korean War and 173 combat missions in Vietnam. Gen. McGee was also the first African-American to command a stateside Air Force Wing and Base in the integrated Air Force.

Gen. McGee turned 100-years old in December 2019 and the NFL recently honored him at Super Bowl LIV, where he participated as an honorary captain in the ceremonial coin toss before the game, along with three other 100-year-old World War II veterans. Friends was honored to both facilitate this recognition and to travel with Gen. McGee to Miami for the Super Bowl.

“The NFL’s recognition of the 75th Anniversary of World War II and its honoring of the four World War II veterans marked the culmination of six months of efforts by the Friends of the National World War II Memorial to encourage the NFL and its teams to commemorate the 75th anniversary of World War II and to honor the “Greatest Generation.”,” said Holly Rotondi, executive director of Friends of the National World War II Memorial.

Gen. McGee has also been a strong supporter of Friends’ educational programming, as education and engaging our youth on the future of our country are his passions. He has participated in all of Friends’ summer teachers conferences, talked to educators from across the country, told his story, and encouraged them to continue to teach their students about the importance of history.

About Friends of the National World War II Memorial (www.wwiimemorialfriends.org):

Founded in 2007, the Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to honoring and preserving the national memory of World War II and to creating the next “Greatest Generation” of tomorrow. To meet this mission, Friends sponsors an annual public lecture series featuring prominent historians; hosts an annual teachers conference in Washington, DC; and collects and archives video interviews of World War II veterans and other members of the Greatest Generation. Additionally, Friends has the lead responsibility in planning, staging, and funding five or more major national commemorative events annually and is currently sponsoring a national four-year World War II 75th anniversary commemoration. Friends relies on private support to breathe new life into the Memorial and to ensure that it continues to serve as a living lesson for all Americans.

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For media inquiries:

Friends of the National World War II Memorial

Thalia Ertman, Public Education Officer

202.543.0878 / tertman@wwiimemorialfriends.org