
On Saturday, November 8, 2003 a ceremony honoring the first African-American cadets was held at Doolittle Hall. Honored were Charles V. Bush, '63, Col. (Ret) Isaac S. Payne, IV, '63, and Roger B. Sims, '63. At the celebration, the following poem was read by the author C3C Jeff Coverdale.

The Pathfinder's Legacy

By C3C Jeff Coverdale II, '06

Pathfinder

Appointed one, delegated to find a path

Many are called, few are chosen, chosen to search through binds of wrath

For once the chimes and laughs fade, soldiers are made, braves take flight

Flight or fight, and sometimes both that's why we call this a Way of Life

When days and nights coincide and pride hides under the calloused, burnt hands

We carry the torch on proudly now but only because there was that first man

Those first men stepped up on first and ten with waves to learn

Unaware they'd leave an endowment of such profound sense; a legacy in laymen's terms

The praises turned; indeed they earned, running uphill against the breeze

They did more than graze the frame; they changed the game in '63

In '59 the journey's genesis where three elite entered the premises

Behold the loathe to those who broke the mold, potential rendered limitless

Washington D.C. sent its suitor bearing knowledge and discernment

Noted by the bulk as 'Chuck' yet nursed as birth as Charles Vernon

A stern man, Intelligence was his forte, or so the norms say

A cicerone who rose amidst the stones of contempt, so now the road's paved

Back in those days New York's valor came in 78 inches of tower

A force of power that ventured to Colorado by way of Howard

And found his love while roaming through the clouds and mass of blue

Surpassed his youth but established a new mold in the ranks of Globemaster IIs

So that's the crew; but wait, there's still the great who spawned ambition

Exemplified in none better than he bearing 432 combat missions

These three warriors; enduring night so we may have the key of dawn

At first three strong, but joined our Force of Air through the trials of Vietnam

So here I stand, a living imprint of these three founding individuals

Our race's potters who 'waded in the water' like the old Negro spirituals

My Way of Life; the impossible became possible in '63

Epic of warriors, voyage of virtue, the Pathfinder's Legacy