



This Is **HerStory**

COL Elfreda Kirksey

The inspiration for this group came to Ernestine Faircloth from a very close friend and mentor, retired Air Force Colonel, Elfreda Kirksey who sadly passed away two years before the group was established. Ernestine Faircloth and her best friend Pauline Cunningham found 32 women with a passion for helping past, present, and future women succeed through their service in the military. This organization represents all components of the military. Standby for HerStory as told by people who knew of her wonderful contributions as a woman of color.

(Ret.) Colonel Kirksey was born September 18, 1951, to Julius and Estelle Kirksey in St. Louis, Missouri. She graduated from William Beaumont High School in 1972. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and Nursing from Georgia State University and a master's degree in health administration from the University of Michigan.

(Ret.) Col Kirksey began her military career at Scott AFB, Illinois as an active-duty clinical nurse. After an active-duty assignment at Eglin AFB, Florida, she set her military career aside and was married. She gave birth to three daughters: Elisa, Erica, and Elenda, who have been her greatest motivation over the years. (Ret.) Col Kirksey resumed her career in 1981 as a Flight Nurse with 94 AES, Dobbins AFB, Georgia; and again, for the second time, in 1990 until 2003, where she served as a Clinical Nurse, Mental Health Nurse, the USAFR Mental Health Nurse Southwest Regional Representative, Assistant and Chief Nurse among many other jobs. Later, in 2003 until 2011, she was assigned to the Air Force National Security Emergency Preparedness Directorate, Ft. McPherson, Georgia as an Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer for Georgia.

Military education includes Air War College, Air Command and Staff, School of Aerospace Medicine, Battlefield Nursing and Nursing Service Management. Dobbins ARB and she was an Air Force Academy/ROTC Liaison Officer recruiting our future leaders. (Ret.) Col Elfreda Kirksey was the first African American female to be promoted to the rank of Colonel at Dobbins Air Reserve Base. As a retiree, Col. Kirksey was an active member of the National Association of Black Military Women and the Tuskegee Airmen Atlanta Chapter.

Outside of being a leader, Elfreda enjoyed traveling to her favorite places, cooking, and eating with her family and friends. She always lived life to the fullest and encouraged everyone to do the same.

Elfreda "Free" Kirksey leaves to mourn her passing: three daughters and a son-inlaw: Elisa Norman, Erica Stanley, and Elenda and Marlon Hayes; a brother and a sister: Donnie and Linda Kirksey, seven grandchildren: Eric, Alex, Erin, Thomas, Eva, Elle and Elise, a host of cousins, nieces and nephews, "Sister-Friends," "Golden Girls," childhood friends, God-children, good neighbors, extended family and several best friends.

