



Impact Statement

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Legacy in the Sky, 2026

Digital Art

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Unsung Hero: Jerrie Cobb

My choice of Unsung Hero Jerrie Cobb was inspired by her powerful story. It was one rainy afternoon, and as I was mindlessly searching for anything that could be interesting, a quote pulled me in. "We seek, only, a place in our nation's space future without discrimination. We ask as citizens of this nation to be allowed to participate with seriousness and sincerity in the making of history now, as women have done in the past." The quote inspired me; it showed determination and power, with just two simple sentences. This quote sparked curiosity in me, and it made me question who said this quote. What was their life like? I dug deeper and found out that the woman who said this was a person named Jerrie Cobb, a person whom I had never heard of before.

I discovered that Jerrie Cobb was a pioneering aviator. She was just 18 when she earned her commercial license. By age 19, she was teaching men how to fly, and by age 21, she was flying military bombers and fighters to foreign air forces worldwide. However, after World War II, Jerrie Cobb faced gender discrimination, being forced to take lesser jobs such as patrolling pipelines, regardless of her amazing talent. However, even with this setback, Jerrie Cobb never gave up and worked even harder. By age 30, she had set three aviation world records, helping inspire other women to pursue their interests. Later, NASA had a few women employees in their program. NASA decided to test whether it was possible to send women to space, and Jerrie was one of the 19 women being tested. Jerrie passed all extreme physical and psychological tests, resulting in the top 2% of both male and female genders. However, despite her passing, NASA declared that they had no plan to send women to space, and these tests were just tests. But instead of holding Jerrie Cobb back, it motivated her to fight even harder. She testified in front of the U.S. Congress in favor of women going to space.

Her determination encouraged others to fight against gender discrimination in space exploration. She inspired others to fight for what is right. Even after being rejected by NASA, Jerrie Cobb still did everything she could to make the world a better place to the best of her ability. I wanted to represent this in my artwork. She pursued flying again and spent the next decades of her life flying crucial medical supplies and equipment for non-profit organizations in the Amazon and pioneering new air routes across the hazardous Andes Mountains and Amazon rainforests, which were essential for delivering medicine. Her pioneering work led to countless lives being saved, helping tribes receive the supplies and medicine they needed to survive.

This story is what really brought Jerrie Cobb to me and inspired me to create my artwork. Her story helped me realize that we need to always stand our ground and fight for what is right and do our best to help inspire a better world, regardless of the setbacks the world throws at us. She taught me to see the best in situations and make the best of them, and to never give up, as she did even through her obstacles at NASA; she still contributed and helped deliver key medicine, saving lives. Her determination also inspired me to live my life fighting for equality, and to live my life to help others, and to create a better world.

I hope to represent Jerrie's leadership and determination in my artwork, symbolizing her leadership and her lead to fight for women's rights in space exploration by leading a group of birds to fly high, as she did to help women find the way to maximize their talents and explore. Furthermore, as she flies into the sunset, I hope this represents the light that she shone on this world to inspire other women, and as well to make the world a better place.

Through my artwork, I hope that people will always push through for what they believe in and fight for their beliefs and always see the best in situations. I will also share the story of Jerrie Cobb with my school and my friends to help people be more inspired to create a better world like Jerrie Cobb did.