

# From Humble Beginning to Hero.

## The Soaring Spirit of Mississippi's Ensign Jesse Brown.



As a child working in the fields of Covington County, Jesse Brown looked to the skies in amazement and awe, feeling an unmistakable sense of longing while watching the farm owner's son train to be a WWII pilot.

That longing grew into determination. And that determination led Jesse to become the first African American aviator in the U.S. Navy.

He never set out to be a war hero, but that's what he became. After flying 20 combat missions in the Korean War, Jesse was shot down on a remote North Korean mountaintop, where he perished at just 23 years of age. For his actions in service, Jesse was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, and the Purple Heart.

Mississippi, the state of his birth, salutes Ensign Jesse Brown – this valiant, decorated airman who broke the barriers of color ... and gave all for his country.

**MISSISSIPPI...**  
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