

Award-Winning Filmmaker TJ Loftin Connects Hidden Automotive Origins of Tuskegee, Booker T. Washington With Black Wealth

Filmmaker's research explores the hidden connections between the historic Tuskegee Institute, the Industrial Revolution, the automobile and the development of Black Wall Streets.



Tuskegee, Alabama Sep 17, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Multi-award-winning filmmaker, automotive historian, and author TJ Loftin is bringing forward a body of research that he says reveals previously overlooked connections between Tuskegee, Dr. Booker T. Washington, the Industrial Revolution, the

automobile, and the development of Black-owned communities and businesses throughout the United States.

While in preproduction for a documentary dedicated to the classic-car industry, Loftin felt compelled to further explore the origins and early development of the automobile. His initial findings led him to relatively accessible information online. However, during an extended visit to Tuskegee, Alabama, for unrelated reasons, a visit to the archives at Tuskegee University radically changed the direction of his research—and his life.

Through his research and examination of historical records, Loftin identified what he describes as significant connections involving the horseless carriage, early automobile development, manufacturing, and the growth of Black economic enterprise. His research led him to investigate the roles and relationships of historic figures including **Lewis Adams, C.R. Patterson, Dr. Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, Frederick Douglass Patterson, and Marcus Garvey.**

Loftin's research advances the thesis that Dr. Booker T. Washington recognized and utilized emerging transportation technologies, including the horseless carriage and subsequent innovations, as part of a broader strategy for economic advancement and self-sufficiency. He contends that these efforts helped provide a foundation for the development of flourishing Black towns and businesses throughout the nation that would ultimately become associated with the term “**Black Wall Streets.**”

The intricate methods, relationships, and strategies identified through Loftin's research reveal a sophisticated network of entrepreneurship, manufacturing, transportation, skilled trades, and economic development—one that he believes has received insufficient attention in conventional historical accounts.

Much was accomplished, yet Loftin argues that few people have been exposed to the behind-the-scenes players, strategies, and economic mechanisms that helped make it possible.

Those findings form a central part of Loftin's groundbreaking film, ***Working With the Hands Documentary***, which has begun its film-festival run and has already received recognition at **TRILLVISION Film Festival**, including the **Jury Award for Best Documentary** and the **Audience Award for Outstanding Documentary Short.**

Concerned about what he describes as ongoing historical disinformation, the institutionalized withholding of historical facts, and the destruction or loss of culturally relevant books and records, Loftin has made it part of his mission to challenge preexisting Eurocentric historical accounts and bring his research findings to broader public attention.

Through his filmmaking, writing, speaking, and research, Loftin seeks to inspire a rejuvenated mindset among Black Americans and encourage greater implementation of what he describes as the **Blackprint gifted by Dr. Booker T. Washington**—with the ultimate goal of advancing economic empowerment, ownership, and self-sufficiency.

Loftin believes that the continued pursuit of skilled trades can create pathways toward sustainable living, entrepreneurship and ownership. He points to multiple Black-led, high-value specialty automotive industries as examples of this potential, particularly **classic cars, lowriders, restomods, custom cars and motorcycles, donks and donk racing.**

“**The time is now to forget HIStory, and learn OUR story,**” says TJ Loftin.

“WE are the creators, the builders. The greatest thing we can do is execute the Blackprint, together, and build for tomorrow.”

Loftin's research findings are explored in his multi-award-winning film ***Working With the Hands Documentary*** and his bestselling book ***TJ's Toolbox: Keeping the Legacy Alive!*** His bestselling book ***Monetizing Gentrification: Building Black Ownership*** further examines issues surrounding Black ownership, economic empowerment, and community development.

The full-feature documentary and books are available for purchase online at <https://www.tjloftin.com>.

About TJ Loftin

TJ Loftin is an **automotive historian, celebrity car builder, multi-award-winning filmmaker, bestselling author, speaker, lecturer, trades advocate, community advocate and business consultant.**

Through his work across these fields and industries, Loftin combines automotive history, skilled trades, entrepreneurship, filmmaking, writing and community advocacy to address economic empowerment and ownership, particularly within Black communities.

His work, interviews, and speaking appearances have included **TRILLVISION Film Festival, Los Angeles Lift-Off Film Festival, KJLH 102.3 FM, KABC 790 AM, Lowrider Magazine, Lowrider Japan Magazine, the LA Auto Show, FOX Soul, the Congressional Black Caucus, National Business League, Black College Expo, Tuskegee University, Compton Unified School District and Inglewood Unified School District.**

Loftin is available for **keynote speaking engagements, lectures, interviews, film screenings, educational programs, and community events** and is currently booking for **Kwanzaa, the MLK Holiday, Black History Month, commencement programs, and other special events.**

For keynote speaking, interviews, media credentials, film screenings, event information, booking inquiries, or additional information, use the contact information below.



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