



Francis M. "Chick" Powell
Class of 1948

Francis M. "Chick" Powell, a native and life-long resident of Tuskegee, Alabama is a graduate of Tuskegee University (Tuskegee Institute). He grew up in the backyard of the campus' gymnasium, tennis courts and sports fields. After graduation from Tuskegee Institute High School he served two years in military service being honorably released on a medical discharge.

Chick entered Tuskegee Institute after military service and two years of employment at the U. S. Post Office in Washington, DC. He trained athletically under the legendary coach, Cleve Abbott, who molded and motivated him to become a championship tennis player. Coach Abbott entered Chick into the National Tennis Tournament in New York City in 1945, where out of 186 participants, he was ranked number five nationally.

Under Coach Abbott's tutelage, Chick went on to twice win the SIAC Tennis Championship; the Southwest Tournament, the Florida Tournament and the National Collegiate Tournament. He was the winner of the Tuskegee Open Tournament for ten years and during the same period also maintained his national ranking in the top ten. He also lettered in basketball for three years and was a member of the 1947 SIAC championship team.

In 1948, upon graduation from Tuskegee Institute in Commercial Industries and Physical Education, Chick began a 35-year career in civil service. After retirement from the Tuskegee Veterans Administration Center he worked for another eight years with the Alabama Extension Service.

Powell, throughout his life, has voluntarily assisted in the teaching and coaching of students in the game of tennis in the Tuskegee community. He received the 1996 Cleve Abbott Award for Distinguished Achievement and Service in Athletics and was inducted into the 1998 Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Hall of Fame. He is now retired and enjoys swimming.