

## Commemorative Statues Acquisition at the Duluth International Airport

This past summer, the Society became the owner of both the Tuskegee Airmen commemorative statue, which specifically was created to offer a tribute to Joe Gomer, former Veterans' Memorial Hall Advisory Committee member, and a new commemorative statue created in honor of David Wheat and all POWs. The first statue was given to the Society by the City of Duluth and the second statue was transferred to the Society by the Northland Veterans Service Committee, which also donated a substantial amount for the maintenance of both statues at the airport on an ongoing basis.

David Wheat/POW commemorative statue near completion in sculptor's studio (l) and Joe Gomer/Tuskegee Air Men statue in place at Duluth International Airport



## Partnership through Affiliation with Iron Range Historical Organizations and Other Groups

### Erie Mining Book Project

In 2015 the Society and the Erie Mining Book Project Team intensified the effort to produce a book about the former taconite mining company's history, including detailed information about the lives of its former employees, gathered through an extensive oral history interview project. Authors Bill Beck and Larry Sommer began their writing in the summer. Countless volunteer hours have been donated by an extensive network of Erie Mining Company former employees. An IRRRB grant for \$25,000 was secured; many individual donors have made contributions (see "Donations - \$100 and Up per Individual Donation" at the end of this report); and a Legacy Funds grant was received from Minnesota Historical Society by the Ely Greenstone Public Art Committee, another collaborative partner in this project. Vice President Emeritus Robert S. Mars generously hosted two fundraising