

The Outstanding Airmen



The Air Force Outstanding Airman program annually recognizes 12 enlisted members for superior leadership, job performance, community involvement, and personal achievements.

The program was initiated at the Air Force Association's 10th annual National Convention, held in New Orleans in 1956. The selection board comprises the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and the command chief master sergeants from each USAF major command. The selections are reviewed by the Air Force Chief of Staff.

The 12 selectees are awarded the Outstanding Airman of the Year Ribbon with the bronze service star device and wear the Outstanding Airman badge for one year.

By Tamar A . Mehuron, Associate Editor

SSgt. Johanna S. Aviles. Network Operations Center Technician, Space Communications Operations Squadron (Air Force Space Command), El Segundo, Calif.—Aided the first MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aerial vehicle flights over Afghanistan. ... Provided 48 UAV imagery reports to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, helping identify 72 California wildfires. ... Fixed chronic message system outage; wrote a technical support guide to minimize downtime. ... Relocated 250 network devices efficiently, avoiding intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance sortie delays. ... Managed several maintenance teams installing



SSgt. Johanna S. Aviles

fiber optic cable and completed task eight months early. ... Spearheaded fiber installation course, instructing technicians on termination skills. ... Oversaw a \$725,000 network upgrade, including leading a 12-member team whose efforts doubled MQ-1 Predator UAV armed recon/interdiction missions. ... Led team to fuse six networks into a single platform, providing battlespace situation awareness to UAV and U-2 pilots.

SMSgt. Mary A. Bechdel. Operations Superintendent, 13th Intelligence Squadron (Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Agency), Beale AFB, Calif.—Filled chief master sergeant position. ... Managed and



SMSgt. Mary A. Bechdel

trained 380 airmen in executing wartime ISR operations, guiding unit that served as eyes and ears for combat search and rescue missions and convoys. ... Reported hundreds of potential improvised explosive devices and identified an attack on convoy and called for close air support. ... Prepared 79 airmen for ISR combat operations and leadership duties. ... Led Distributed Common Ground Station



MSgt. Tyrone F. Bingham



SrA. Channel H. Bolton-Scholl

integration with ISR operations. ... Oversaw US Northern Command ISR operations, aiding California firefighters, and followed with a new ISR concept of operations to support civil disaster relief activities. ... Helped organize RQ-4 Global Hawk UAV missions supporting US Southern Command operations, including counterdrug actions. ... Integrated more than 60 Reservists into active duty ISR operations. ... Prepared three Air National Guard sites for work with U-2 and RQ-4 reconnaissance data.

MSgt. Tyrone F. Bingham. Host Aviation Resource Management Superintendent, 170th Operational Support Squadron (Air National Guard), Offutt AFB, Neb.—Maintained flight records for more than 1,700 aviators, more than the average USAF wing. ... Supported 16 Air National Guard C-130s that conducted 360 missions in Afghanistan. ... Ensured crews had up-to-date combat mission data. ... Completed more than 360 mission reports on Operation Enduring Freedom activities for the Tanker Airlift Control Center. ... Provided critical flight summary data to investigation board reviewing an OEF C-130 mishap. ... Developed continuation training plan to work around manning shortage and deployments. ... Created new procedures to track disbursements in annual flying incentive pay. ... Engineered aviation suspense tracking board that increased visibility and improved on-time mission rate. ... Devised new, streamlined aircrew member in-processing procedures.



TSgt. Manuel J. Herrera

SrA. Channel H. Bolton-Scholl. Aircraft Maintenance Technician, 446th Maintenance Squadron (Air Force Reserve Command), McChord AFB, Wash.—Provided excellent maintenance support in the aeromedical evacuation of an injured National Science Foundation scientist from Antarctica to New Zealand. ... During month-long deployment in support of Operation Deep Freeze, served as ground/flying crew chief, launching and recovering 918 passengers and 621 cargo tons. ... Deployed for six months to Sather AB, Iraq, supporting more than 16,000 aircraft missions that included moving more than 1,000 distinguished visitors and 38,000 tons of cargo. ... Identified and quickly repaired or replaced critical components, from cracked engine nose dome to faulty starter in auxiliary power unit, to ensure minimal aircraft downtime. ... Assisted with dismantle and recovery of C-130 in Baghdad. ... On deployment, helped maintain State Department L-100 and USAF C-17, recommending fix for thrust reverser fault.

MSgt. John T. Carter. Security Forces Resources, 100th Security Forces Squadron (US Air Forces in Europe), RAF Mildenhall, England—During a 210-day deployment to Iraq, halted a bomb-laden vehicle, preventing loss of life.



MSgt. John T. Carter

... Received the Joint Service Commendation Medal. ... Directed a raid on an insurgent stronghold, nabbing two terrorists and thwarting the kidnapping of an Army major. ... Led a joint sting operation and nabbed an IED-maker. ... Evacuated bunker following a mortar attack, administering lifesaving first aid. ... Set up and managed tactical security operations for brief refueling of Air Force One. ... Directed 6,000 mounted and foot patrols. ... Searched and vetted thousands of Iraqi nationals, obtaining vital intelligence. ... Resolved equipment account discrepancies. ... Funneled excess equipment to several geographically separated security forces in Britain and excess ammunition to deployed units. ... Exemplary flight chief, providing training and realistic exercises that enabled high unit quality control pass rate.

TSgt. Manuel J. Herrera. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Craftsman, 375th Civil Engineer Squadron (Air Mobility Command), Scott AFB, Ill.—Spearheaded hundreds of IED missions in Iraq and helped capture 36 terrorists. ... Led several key operations that disrupted weapons flow into Iraq and resulted in capture of 19 high-value terrorists. ... Guided recovery and disposal of nearly 5,000 IEDs



TSgt. Benjamin P. Horton

or unexploded ordnance items, sharply reducing enemy weapons stockpile. ... Planned route clearance missions that secured thousands of miles and helped cut enemy attacks by 43 percent in six months. ... Conducted a dozen post-blast analyses, collecting evidence to counter IED attacks and help convict numerous insurgents. ... Designed/fielded IEDs training route in daily use by 400 soldiers of US Army's 10th Mountain Division. ... Led team at Secret Service request on 14-day, four-country trip by the President and 18 other VIPs. ... Updated lifesaving technique, which was disseminated throughout Southwest Asia. ... Honored as AMC Civil Engineer Military Technician of the Year; received Bronze Star Medal and Air Force Combat Action Medal.

TSgt. Benjamin P. Horton. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Craftsman, 775th Civil Engineer Squadron (Air Force Materiel Command), Hill AFB, Utah—Risked his life to save eight-man infantry unit about to enter a booby-trapped building. ... Used smoke grenades to hide his position during an ambush and cleared unexploded ordnance threat under sniper fire. ... Removed four injured troops from wreckage of an IED attack and cleared a medevac landing zone to get them out quickly. ... Secured IEDs in a collapsing courthouse, retrieving valuable documents. ... Investigated 40 blast sites and gathered evidence of enemy tactics. ... Raided 14 weapons cache sites, destroying thousands of



TSgt. Marisol M. Lozada

munitions. ... Directed hundreds of road-clearing missions, destroying scores of IEDs and helping keep Iraqi supply routes open and secure. ... Led hazardous devices search team helping Secret Service during Presidential visit to New York City. ... Identified and corrected a critical flaw during a joint service Small Diameter Bomb test. ... Awarded Bronze Star Medal for heroism while deployed to Iraq.

TSgt. Jennifer S. Laufer. Chaplain Assistant, 42nd Air Base Wing (Air Education and Training Command), Maxwell AFB, Ala.—Took on the responsibilities of a master sergeant and was key to revamping the unit chaplain program and averting burnout for shorthanded staff while they maintained spiritual outreach to 70,000 military and civilian personnel and dependents. ... Served as combat spiritual leader, while deployed to Iraq, during dozens of rocket attacks, providing vital assistance to soldiers and injured troops. ... Conducted inaugural Joint Services Turkmen Mosque visit. ... Managed Kirkuk AB, Iraq, chapel, redirecting resources and creating electronic schedule program that saved man-hours. ... Identified visitation teams to contact



TSgt. Jennifer S. Laufer

and mentor 3,000 airmen, helping boost Kirkuk mission effectiveness. ... Created continuity procedures that enabled effective deployed changeover in hours rather than days. ... Helped initiate Air Force-wide Ministry Center funds review, identifying thousands of dollars in annual savings. ... Launched volunteer weekend assistance program, saving chaplain man-hours.

TSgt. Marisol M. Lozada. NCOIC, Mental Health Flight, 27th Special Operations Medical Group (Air Force Special Operations Command), Cannon AFB, N.M.—Sole wing certified alcohol and drug abuse counselor. ... Created alcohol and drug abuse prevention team (ADAPT) recidivism tracking database employed across the service. ... Developed ADAPT outcome metrics process, lauded by Air Force IG. ... Revised traumatic stress response team procedures. ... Advocated unit's need for educational equipment and resources, leading to securing necessary funding. ... Enhanced fellow mental health workers' readiness skills by sharing research on War on Terror deployment cases. ... Identified and corrected discrepancies in mental health, ADAPT, and family advocacy records. ... Served as mentor to junior mental health military and civilian workers.



MSgt. Christopher W. Pollock

... Successfully employed new traumatic stress response procedures to sustain hundreds of base personnel following a local community tragedy.

MSgt. Christopher W. Pollock. Pavements and Construction Equipment Craftsman, 18th Civil Engineer Squadron (Pacific Air Forces), Kadena AB, Japan—Led four-hour firefight in Afghanistan, killing five insurgents and wounding nine. ... Received Bronze Star Medal. ... Executed major construction projects at Kandahar, Afghanistan, and six forward operating bases (FOBs). ... Spearheaded multimillion dollar Army Materiel Command beddown in Afghanistan. ... Led reconstruction at Farah Airfield, replacing failed landing zone and enabling more than a thousand close air support missions. ... Built Romanian tactical operations center. ... Spearheaded Joint Logistics Command's troop transition and surge, providing facility for 3,000 soldiers. ... Guided Kandahar reconstruction to provide three times current capacity to maintain NATO forces. ... Opened Qalat FOB in less than a month, to enable operations along the Pakistan border. ... Restored airfield drainage system. ... Led 63-member team to provide expert maintenance of airfield and roads. ... Prepared 450 engineers for contingency operations.

SrA. Alexander W. Royal. Tactical Air Control Party, 13th Air Support Operations Squadron (Air Combat Com-



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mand), Ft. Carson, Colo.—Named 2008 TACP of the Year. ... Served as dismounted TACP on several high-value individual (HVI) raids, providing security for joint terminal attack controller to direct close air support during extended action. ... Engaged in one-hour firefight, killing three enemy combatants, as JTAC called in CAS. ... Provided TACP support to US Army and coalition forces through numerous missions and firefights. ... Directed Joint STARS ground surveillance support to target areas and correlated intelligence with UAV coverage. ... Planned CAS for HVI raid, tracking movement to house and enabling target's capture. ... Assisted JTAC in 700 hours of joint CAS planning and control for scores of raids and operations. ... Modified an Army Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected vehicle with a Remotely Operated Video Enhanced Receiver (ROVER) for TACP operations. ... Established two battalion tactical operations centers, installing and testing TACP equipment. ... Trained 75 soldiers and special operations forces on CAS remote-video operations. ... Created battalion TACP brief for new soldiers, and instructed 56 soldiers. ... Trained Army fire support staff in UAV control operations. ... Received Army Combat Action Badge.



SMSgt. Jeffery E. Steagall

SMSgt. Jeffery E. Steagall. Manager, Communications and Information Inspections, Hq., Air Force Space Command (Air Force Space Command), Peterson AFB, Colo.— Led 80-member flight in providing near 100 percent network systems continuous operations in US Central Command area of responsibility. ... Conducted several and planned dozens of armed maintenance convoys. ... Directed repair of hundreds of personal computers at AOR depot, cutting repair time in half. ... Managed critical convoy communications circuit. ... Directed network use after AOR fiber optics cut crippled theater communications; kept more than 50 mission platforms operational. ... Conducted an AOR network health evaluation. ... Managed resolution to 90 service outages, rerouting critical communications to provide command and control for thousands of combat sorties. ... Led rewrite for AFSPC nuclear enterprise inspection assessments, taking charge of 13 initiatives. ... Planned and executed the first AFSPC no-notice focused inspection, identifying 20 mission-critical errors. ... Planned and implemented Air Force-directed communications squadron reorganization, completing revamp four months early. ■