

Air Force names 2007 Sijan award recipients

12/17/2007 - **RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN)** -- Air Force leaders recognized four Airmen with the service's 2007 Lance P. Sijan Air Force Leadership Award.

The Sijan award annually recognizes Airmen who demonstrate outstanding leadership abilities.

The Senior officer category winner is Lt. Col. Laura A. Soule, who is assigned to Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. Colonel Soule commanded squadrons at Lackland AFB and McConnell AFB, Kan., and at a deployed location in Southwest Asia. Her unit in Southwest Asia received the Air Force Association's Citation of Honor Award and was selected best medium security forces unit in 2006 by Air Mobility Command. While deployed, she molded more than 200 security forces members and led security operations enabling the generation of 13,000 sorties, 130,000 passengers and 24,000 tons of cargo.

The Junior officer category winner is Capt. Stewart J. Parker, who is assigned to Pope AFB, N.C. Captain Parker led a team of combat controllers into combat in Iraq and Afghanistan reaping an impressive list of combat effects. As the critical link to a full array of airpower capabilities, Captain Parker precisely integrated fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft fusing intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance capabilities with timely firepower. The results proved devastating to enemy forces.

The Senior enlisted category winner is Master Sgt. William F. Facio, who is assigned to Nellis AFB, Nev. Sergeant Facio volunteered and was selected as the first security forces senior NCO to deploy to Iraq for 365 days. While there, he was charged with building and training a 25,000-man Iraqi police force on apprehension, detention, investigation, interview and tactical skills. He also conducted more than 150 combat patrols and led forces in five firefights.

The Junior enlisted category winner is Tech. Sgt. Joshua D. King, who is assigned to Mountain Home AFB, Idaho. Sergeant King led an explosive ordnance disposal team during 367 missions supporting the 4th Infantry Division at a forward operating base in Iraq. Sergeant King also supervised his unit's support section ensuring 24 technicians were ready to respond to any emergency at any time.

The Lance P. Sijan award was first given in 1981. It was named in honor of the first Air Force Academy graduate to receive the Medal of Honor. Captain Sijan was shot down over Vietnam on Nov. 9, 1967, and evaded capture for 45 days despite severe injuries. He later died while in a Vietnamese prisoner-of-war camp and was presented the Medal of Honor posthumously for his heroism.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley will present the awards to this year's recipients at a later date.