



Aug. 24, 2016

# BEHIND THE BADGE

OFFICIAL INFORMATION SOURCE FOR THE AIR FORCE RECRUITING PROFESSIONAL



## **Wings of Blue Recruiter**

Tech. Sgt. John Shortell goes on a tandem jump with Master Sgt. Terrance Murphy, 98th Flying Training Squadron, during his interview process for the Wings of Blue recruiter position at U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado, July 27. Shortell, 336th Recruiting Squadron D-flight chief, performed the tandem jump from 10,000 feet freefalling at 120 mph. The job requires Shortell to complete the Academy's AF-490 basic free fall parachuting school and complete five solo jumps, which will earn him his jump wings and provide real experience to aide in recruitment efforts. (U.S. Air Force photo)



# Mentorship Minute

## Be a Great Airman First

By: Chief Master Sgt. Carmelo Vega

Our command philosophy is one that dates back to the early days of aviation. In 1861 John La Mountain rose to 1,400 feet in a military balloon, informing Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler that confederate strength around Hampton, Va. was weaker than originally thought. This act became known as the first military reconnaissance mission for the U.S. Army and in essence earned La Mountain the title “Airman”. What followed was a series of daring and dazzling events that would launch mankind into modern aviation. This new notion required a different kind of individual, one that dared to venture beyond known risks and possessed an unsurpassed desire to serve others by advancing airpower. Each one of those individuals displayed the characteristics of a great Airman.

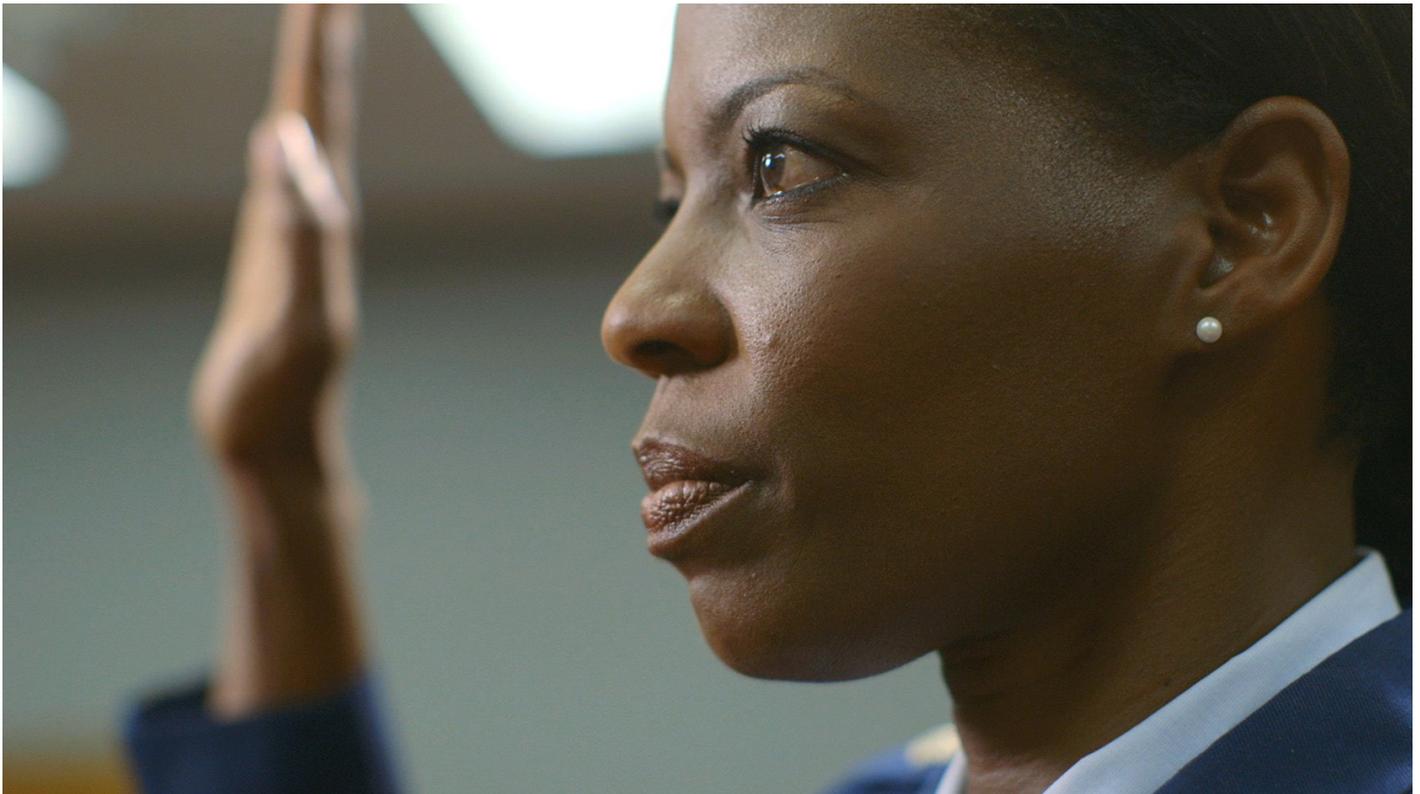
The lineage of today’s Airman can be traced back to those early pioneers as they all shared, in my opinion, six key characteristics. So what does it mean to “Be a Great Airman First” in today’s recruiting environment?

**A great Airman must be agile.** You must act and think quickly when faced with mission critical situations. You must possess the ability to assemble a strategy that results in mission accomplishment while maintaining the competitive edge to ensure your zone carries on long after you complete your assignment. A great Airman is agile in helping others succeed. Senior Airman John Levitow displayed a high degree of agility when he risked his life to save his crew in a chaotic situation.

**A great Airman must innovate.** You must adapt to a rapidly changing environment finding new ways to engage, inspire and recruit the best and brightest. This is no easy task. A great Airman exploits this characteristic applying new methods developed from their own ideas, driven by a high desire to succeed. Innovation drives savings not only in material costs but also saves time that Airmen can invest to better themselves professionally and personally. Mastering this characteristic ties modern Airmen to those early aviation pioneers. Without innovation, man would not have ventured beyond the balloon.

**A great Airman possesses a high degree of resilience.** An Airman must be able to overcome adversity but also handle success. Resiliency gives an Airman the elasticity to balance the challenges and blessings they will face in an ever changing recruiting environment. This characteristic must not be limited to only aspects of the job. It also applies to an Airman’s daily personal life. Resiliency helps an Airman cope with the stress of not making goal or handling a difficult family situation. An Airman must have the courage to gain their composure following a failure. By bookmarking this life experience they can ensure not to repeat the behavior that led to the failure. Without the will to try again and again, the Wright Brothers would never have left the ground.

**A great Airman is an accessible mentor.** An Airman must share the wealth of operational knowledge and life experiences with others in the selfless interest to help others succeed. The recruiting profession provides a unique



Courtesy photo

opportunity to mentor young men and women who will become the Air Force's future leaders. Mentoring is the lifeblood of our profession as the transfer of knowledge from tier 3 and tier 2 recruiters down to the rookie recruiter keeps the conveyor belt running at a constant speed securing the success of our command. What would modern aviation be if the Wright brothers had kept their flying knowledge a secret?

**A great Airman is authentic.** An Airman must possess the ability to communicate their deep rooted values in a manner that inspires trust. It is the first element of leadership. The recruiting profession is underpinned by this characteristic. Authenticity is the secret to success. Don't try to make others believe what you don't believe yourself. People will see right through you and the level of trust required to positively influence someone will be lost. It's essential for recruiters to be honest regardless of the situation -- good or bad. Be yourself and communicate good intentions in the best interest of your applicants. Being authentic is the building block to a long term relationship. Our fore fathers gallantly fought in WWI and WWII mainly because their leaders succeeded in communicating the value of victory alongside the real threats they would face. They had faith in what they did and that were inspired by an authentic leader.

**A great Airman displays a high degree of nobility.** Outstanding human qualities set Airmen apart in a community. Going above and beyond your recruiting duties by volunteering in your local community has profound long lasting effects. It's two fold. Not only will it help you meet your mission, it will also plant the seed among influencers and key leaders of your community which in turn will continue to refer applicants to our service well beyond your tenure. Volunteer your talents such as teaching a class or talking to troubled youth in your off duty time and help others understand how fulfilling public service can be in many aspects of life beyond military service. Our history books are filled with thousands of stories of heroism. In fact our country is ever grateful to those men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of our country to preserve freedom and offer opportunities and prosperity for all. I cannot think of any higher act of nobility.

"Be a Great Airman First" is a philosophy that stems from a lineage of early aviation pioneers. Each of these remarkable individuals embodied each of the six characteristics mentioned here which when put together coin the term "AIRMAN". Each is an essential element to your success professionally and personally. I urge you to live by these day in and day out. Recall that to be a great Airman you must be **Agile, Innovative, Resilient, a Mentor, Authentic and Noble**. The word "great" clearly defines acts of going beyond basic Airmanship and paired with the six characteristics described here, provides a solid foundation for every Airman in our recruiting profession.



### **Class presentation**

Staff Sgt. Telia Garry, 317th Recruiting Squadron F-flight, speaks to students about the benefits of joining the Air Force at Germanna Community College in Fredericksburg, Virginia, July 21. (U.S. Air Force photo)

### **VFW visit**

Tech. Sgt. Scott Thomson, 317th Recruiting Squadron, visits Ed Mann at the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Mechanicsville, Virginia, Aug. 2. Thomson visited the VFW to show support for his community and to provide assistance for possible future events. (U.S. Air Force photo)





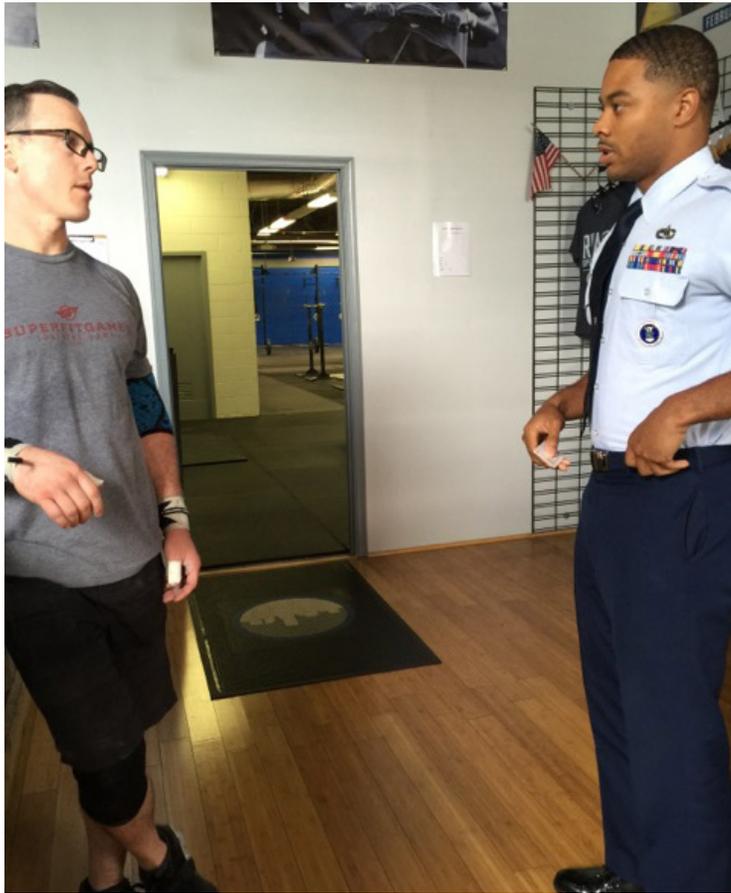
**Community blitz**

Members of the 317th Recruiting Squadron F-flight visit local businesses to gather relationships, leads and partnerships in Richmond, Virginia, July 21. From top left are: Staff Sgt. Pierri Fitzhugh, Tech. Sgt. Kristin Rose, Tech. Sgt. Craig Bratcher, and Staff Sgt. Marlon Yarde. (U.S. Air Force photo)



**DEP Swear in**

Col. Israel Askew, 360th Recruiting Group commander, swears in members of the 338th Recruiting Squadron Delayed Entry Program at Scioto Park in Dublin, Ohio, Aug. 11. (U.S. Air Force photo)



### **CrossFit visit**

Staff Sgt. Pierri Fitzhugh, 317th Recruiting Squadron F-flight, talks to Jamie Sulc, RVA CrossFit owner, in Richmond, Virginia, Aug. 3. Sulc invited Fitzhugh to come to an event next month to set up a booth targeting potential Special Operations applicants. (U.S. Air Force photo)

### **Formula Drift**

Maj. Gen. Garrett Harencak, Air Force Recruiting Service commander, presents the AFRS commander coin to Master Sgt. Gregory Hite, 361st Recruiting Squadron, at the Formula Drift in Monroe, Washington, Aug. 6. (U.S. Air Force photo)





### Parkville Fun Day

Staff Sgt. Tamara Sherrill, 317th Recruiting Squadron C-flight, attends the Parkville Community Fun Day at Parkville High School in Baltimore, Maryland, July 23. Sherrill attended the event to increase Air Force awareness and to establish her presence in the community. (U.S. Air Force photo)

### Norfolk Tides swear-in

Col. Jason Brown, 480th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing commander, swears in members of the 317th Recruiting Squadron Delayed Entry Program as the Norfolk Tides baseball team honors the Air Force at Harbor Park in Norfolk, Virginia, July 23. Tech. Sgt. Jesse Hegeman, 317th RCS B-flight, assisted in the event. (U.S. Air Force photo)





### **AFRS Honorary Commanders**

Maj. Gen. Garrett Harenca, Air Force Recruiting Service commander, presents Natalie and John Rougeux the Honorary Commander Certificate during the AFRS Leadership Summit in San Antonio, Texas, Aug. 16. (U.S. Air Force photo by Maricris Moore)



### **AFRS Leadership Summit**

Dan Clark speaks about professionalism and encouragement during the Air Force Recruiting Service Leadership Summit in San Antonio, Texas, Aug. 17. Clark has been selected to receive the 2016 American Spirit Award for his continued support of Air Force recruiting efforts. (U.S. Air Force photo by Maricris Moore)



### 338th RCS Tech. Sgt. Selects

Members of the 338th Recruiting Squadron celebrate their newest Tech. Sgt. Selects at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, July 22. From left are: Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Newton, Lt. Col. Tameesha Coatney, 338 RCS commander, Tech. Sgt. Select Elsie Mavron, Tech. Sgt. Select James Simpkins, Senior Master Sgt. Mark Wildes, and Capt. Christopher Daniels. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jasmine Vance)



### Recruiter Certification

Senior Master Sgt. David Jackson, 338 Recruiting Squadron production superintendent, presents Staff Sgt. Daniel Fenimore, 338 RCS F-flight, his recruiter certification in Charleston, West Virginia, Aug. 5. (U.S. Air Force photo)



### **Top Large MEPS**

Col. Israel Askew, 360th Recruiting Group commander, presents the Top Large MEPS award to Master Sgt. Thomas Sinkewicz, Staff Sgt. Tyler White, and Staff Sgt. Donald Porter, Military Entrance Processing Station liaison noncommissioned officers, at the MEPS office in Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 11. (U.S. Air Force photo)



## **PA Corner**

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