

Inside ED

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ED's Veterans and Military Family Members: Proud Service of Our Country in the Past, Present, and Future (Part I)

In honor of Veterans Day 2011, ED is sponsoring multiple projects to honor the veterans, current service members, and military relatives in the ED family. In addition to these projects, *Inside ED* is providing a place for ED employees to share their military stories in detail.



Inside ED received an incredible response to our call for stories about those who serve in the military, and the overarching theme of the pieces is pride. From ED employees whose children currently are risking their lives in service overseas, to decorated Vietnam and Gulf War veterans with stories of battles on land and daring rescues at sea, to people whose fathers — and mothers — took part in the battles we've read about in our history books, ED's veterans and military family members could not be prouder of their service and of their support for those who serve. We at ED serve our country through our work every day, but the stories here tell of a very different type of service — the type that creates heroes.

Due to the overwhelming response, these stories will be continued next month in Part II.

The First Proud Mom

—Carolyn Buser, OVAE

Carolyn Buser of the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) was the very first proud mom to send *Inside ED* a report of her son's experiences as a member of the armed forces. She inspired us to collect these accounts from all of ED's employees.

In response to *Inside ED's* annual call for graduate stories earlier this year, Buser said:

"I am just as proud of my "other" graduate, who just got back from a year in Afghanistan. Our son, Lt. Cmdr. John Jerome Buser Ward, just returned after a year of leading a team of 50 American soldiers at an Australian forward operating base in Uruzgan province, west of Kandahar. In addition to discouraging the Taliban from menacing the villages, he and his troops established irrigation facilities, provided medical services, and opened the first girls' school in the province. I was particularly proud of his school, as he had specific instructions not to interfere with the 14th-century-style treatment of women in that province. He has wonderful stories about working with the Taliban, warlords, village elders, and drug lords to permit the establishment of the school. We were definitely one of those military families who needed support, and I received it in OVAE."

Buser then supplied *Inside ED* with email messages and photos from her son detailing the happenings at the school he worked so hard to set up, as well as with accounts of his daily life in a war zone.



"Hey guys. This is a picture from the first girls' school here — we just opened it. Felt good."

“We patrolled to the school today to hand out more supplies. There are two classrooms, and while everybody else was in one, I went to the other, where it was just me, boxes of school supplies, and 30 little Afghan girls. I motioned that they could come to pick some stuff out of the box, so they very gingerly walked over, one took a pencil, a second took a pad of paper, a third took a clipboard, but then they went crazy, like kids jumping on a piñata, showing no fear of my 6'4” frame or the loaded rifle I was holding, knocking me aside and diving into the boxes like crazy people. The teacher came back in the room and looked terrified. I'd like to think that—language barrier aside—I taught these girls the meaning of "well-behaved women rarely make history." The great part about this school is that we just opened it about a month ago—it's the first ever in the Chora Valley, which also happens to be the home of the woman from the cover of Time magazine who had her nose cut off last year for leaving her Taliban husband.”



About this photo, Buser’s mom says, “He is second from the left. It was taken at one of the many, many “churas” [meetings] where they met with assorted (and often warring) local leaders to convince them to undertake one of their projects, like the school, together. The perimeter of these meetings was heavily guarded.” She notes that her son holds a bachelor’s degree from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., an MBA from the University of Maryland University College, and a law degree from the University of Baltimore. He was deployed to Afghanistan two days after his graduation from law school.

During his tour, Buser, who did not speak the local language, used an interpreter, or “terp,” to assist in communication. He wrote, “This photo is from my terp Zia, who is on the far left. This is from the Kamisan Valley operation, which lasted two weeks. It was a huge Taliban area—we were the first ones to go in there in a decade, so they weren't happy, but the villagers treated us like liberators.” The note Buser included from the interpreter reads, “Hey, boss. The time that we spent, the work that we have done, and the encouragements that you gave are all unforgettable, which I really appreciate. Sir, I attach a pic which will remind you of some early days in Kamisan Valley. Wish you good life and happy time with your family.”



Toward the end of his tour, he wrote, “Life here is still pretty dicey. Just trying to stay focused until the end as losing sight even with a few days left will get people hurt. I hear the weather back home is almost as bad as it is here? And politicians are now posing half nude on Twitter? What's going on?!”

Working With Heroes

—Carrie Jackson, OIG

Carrie Jackson of ED’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) compiled the following stories about her coworkers and fellow veterans in OIG’s Information Technology Audit and Computer Crime Investigations (ITACCI) component.



Deputy Assistant Inspector General for ITACCI Sherri Demmel is married to retired Lt. Col. Bob Demmel of the U.S. Air Force. Demmel retired after 23 years of service as the deputy director of information management at the headquarters of the Air Force in Europe. Sherri has been with the Department for 11 years. “Being the spouse of a career military officer not only taught me to be flexible,” she said, “but also gave me many career-enhancing opportunities as we moved all over the world. Because of the frequent moves, I had to take whatever positions were available when I arrived at a new Air Force base. Consequently, I have been almost every grade, from a GS-3 to a GS-15 in my career. Although it was hard to resign one job and move, not knowing how long it would be before I would find another job or what grade I would have to take, the experience I gained was immeasurable and ultimately helped to prepare me for the position I have today. Following a career military spouse was not easy,

but serving your country is an honor and I am glad for every year I was a part of it.” In the photo at left, which Demmel jokingly called a “prom photo,” the couple is dressed for a military ball.

ITACCI’s Computer Assisted Assessment Techniques Division Director Edward Slevin (pictured at right) served three years in the U.S. Army as a communications specialist. He has been with the Department for one-and-a-half years. Slevin said about his time in the service, “My return home from Vietnam is different than [it is] today, as you came home as an individual rather than as a unit. The looks, silence, and questionable eyes traveling across the country were at times overpowering, but I tried to filter it all out. The last part of my journey home was taking a local New York City bus to a stop about four blocks from my parents’ home. Getting on the nearly empty bus at the airport, I purposely sat near the driver and gave him my stop location so he could wake me, and then I quickly sank back to the oblivion of sleep. I was suddenly awakened by a constant tugging on my shirtsleeve. Opening my eyes, I saw this gray-haired lady smiling down on me. She quietly said, “You’re home.” Looking up, I discovered that the bus was now packed with typical rush-hour New Yorkers who were—untypically—silent, and all focused on me. I looked out the window and discovered that the bus was parked in front of my home, and then a growing crescendo of hand clapping filled the bus. To this day I get very emotional about that moment my country welcomed me back home.”



U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. and Technology Crimes Division (TCD) Special Agent in Charge Mark Smith actively serves in the Air Force Reserves. He has been in the Air Force for 22 years and counting, and currently is a squadron commander for the 3rd Field Investigations Region in the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. He has been with the Department since February 2005. Smith started his career as an aeronautical engineer. He deployed to the United Arab Emirates in 2005 in support of [Operation Southern Watch](#). His wife, Mary, is also a veteran. She was an Air Force security policewoman for nine years, with five of them as a dog handler.

Assistant Special Agent in Charge Chris Cooper served six years active duty and two years in the reserves in the U.S. Army. He achieved the rank of sergeant and worked as a legal non-commissioned officer. He has been with ED for almost 11 years. He was trained as an operational law non-commissioned officer (NCO), a nuclear-biological-chemical NCO, and a physical fitness instructor. Alongside his many other accomplishments, he received the Expert Driver's Badge, which, he said, probably was his favorite award.



TCD's Carrie Jackson served four years active duty and then in the Air Force reserves as a special agent. She deployed to Qatar in 2004. She has been with the Department since 2006. Jackson is married to Lt. Col. Doug Jackson, who is a C-5 pilot and currently the commander of the 436th Operations Support Squadron at Dover Air Force Base (AFB) in Delaware. Jackson said, "The Air Force has afforded us several educational opportunities. Both of us received our undergraduate degrees through Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) scholarships. My husband has received two master's degrees courtesy of the Air Force, and they contributed to part of mine. In theory, our six-month-old daughter will be able to use her father's post-9/11 GI Bill benefits for her education. One of the many benefits of the military is its education opportunities.

I am very proud of my husband, who could have done anything in the world, but instead has chosen to continue to serve our great country." The photo at left, which was published in a photo essay on a website dedicated to news from Spangdahlem AFB near Spangdahlem, Germany, shows Jackson flipping pallet rollers over after unloading cargo from a C-5 Galaxy.

It Was His Time

—Donna Snoddy, OVAE

As a teenager, my son Joseph "Joey" Starnes fell in with the wrong crowd and was arrested for the first time for petty theft. Instead of sending Joey to juvenile detention, the court in West Virginia sent him to Abraxas Academy, a 16-week military course located in South Mountain, Pa. Joey used that time to obtain his GED, earning straight As. After he graduated, he told his longtime girlfriend that he was going to join the U.S. Coast Guard, and he did so in October 2002. They married that December, and Joey was sent to a



Coast Guard base in Charleston, S.C. He was planning to train as a helicopter rescue pilot, and he just loved the Coast Guard. He loved anything to do with water.

Joey had a heart of gold. When Joey would see somebody on the side of the road, his wife would always say, “Don’t stop.” But he would always stop because he was just like that. On Aug. 5, 2004, Joey was riding his motorcycle on his way to the base when a pickup truck came onto the road and clipped him in the back. Joey was thrown off the bike and hit his neck on the guard rail, which killed him instantly. At age 21, he left a 21-year-old widow and took away a piece of his mom’s heart. But he served in the U.S. Coast Guard proudly. He received several awards in the Coast Guard before he passed away.

I have a motorcycle with a picture of Joey in his uniform airbrushed on the tank. A year after Joey’s death, I was riding my motorcycle in West Virginia and stopped in a store and bumped into a U.S. Coast Guard officer. The Coast Guard office in Martinsburg, W.V. investigates the deaths of any and all Coast Guard members who die accidentally, and he recognized Joey and commented a little about him. He remarked that he remembered Joey’s case and said Joey was doing everything right that fateful day (obeying the speed limit, riding with all safety gear on). It was just his time. I miss him terribly.

Not an Auxiliary!

—Randy Borkowski, OCR

As an employee in the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), I know that I chose my career path in large part because of my mother, Alvina Mickels, a proud World War II veteran.



Having just completed nursing training in Omaha, Neb., she enlisted in the Army Nurse Corps at the beginning of World War II in August of 1942. Serving first on the hospital staff at Camp Dodge in Iowa, she volunteered for overseas duty and shipped out to North Africa in 1943 as part of the Fifth Army. She was in the 94th Army Evacuation Hospital unit. Those units, created for the North Africa Campaign, worked out of tents just behind the front lines. They cared for both soldiers and prisoners of war sent from the front lines. They cared for patients who needed a few days of recovery before they could be transported to field hospitals. These “evac” hospitals moved frequently

as the battlefronts shifted.

While in North Africa, my mother required emergency surgery and had an appendectomy in the middle of the desert in an Army tent. She told us that because of her fear of general anesthetic, she had the procedure with only a local anesthetic and watched the operation in a mirror. She later was part of the Anzio Invasion, which drew the Axis Forces south before D-Day.

She completed her active service in Rome until the end of the war. While in the Army, she enjoyed playing baseball on an otherwise all-male ball team. After the war, she continued in the reserves, attaining the rank of captain before resigning on March 5, 1953, in protest of being asked to sign a loyalty oath after her years of service.

As I was growing up in small-town Iowa, I remember she was denied admission to the local Veterans of Foreign Wars post because she was a woman. When told she could join the women's auxiliary group for the wives of servicemen, she was incensed!

Her innate sense of fairness and equity always was an inspiration for me.

The Past Is Also Present

—Cynthia Dorfman, OCO

When I take on a new job, I try to think of people or situations I have known to “humanize” my perspective. In many cases, I channel my father, who was career military. He was Master Gunnery Sgt. Michael P. Hearn, and he retired after 34 years of military service. In addition to those years of service, he spent five years with the Department of Veterans Affairs and later went on to work 20 more years for the Central Intelligence Agency. All in all, he had about 60 years of government service. In fact, he died in 2001 on his way to work one morning (as one of my friends said, “He died with his boots on!”).

Needless to say, he loved his work; he had a strong sense of duty and honor. He fought in D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge in World War II, served in the Korean War, and did two tours of duty in Vietnam.

I relate two experiences from his military service with my work here: supervising the OCO regional offices and mentoring interns and young hires.



With regard to the regional offices, I have to remind myself that working in the OCO regional offices can be somewhat lonely. Many of the offices have only one or two people in them, and the outreach work they do often requires them to be on the road alone. In supervising these employees, I have taken the approach that they need to be self-directed and empowered to make decisions on their own. I think of what my father's experience must have been like when he was in Vietnam. His second tour of duty was with the Pacification Program, where he was out there, a lone American, trying to work with local communities to strengthen social structures. I found a copy of his position description from that job, which said:

“... Adviser to the Vietnamese as political and training officer. ... This included the supervision and provision for all of their financial, logistical, and medical support. Supervised the training in such fields as health, education, welfare, security, construction and paramilitary courses, which were used as training vehicles for the instruction of village and hamlet personnel. This entailed many briefings and reports ... prepared in both Vietnamese and English...”

This sounds a lot like what the regional OCO folks are asked to communicate about: education, construction, continuous contact with local representatives, etc. So, I try to be sensitive to the pressures of the regional jobs.

With regard to ED's interns and 20-somethings, during his service in World War II in Lammersdorf, Germany, my father received a Bronze Star. I found the citation for that medal, which read that he:

“...volunteered to repair a line which had been broken in several places by enemy mortar and artillery fire. Although enemy snipers were in the town, though friendly protection was little, and though enemy shell fire fell within fifty yards, Technician Fifth Grade Hearn, with complete disregard for personal safety, crawled some 500 yards and repaired the break; thus his observation party was able to bring fire upon the enemy ...”

When I read this, I say, “What was he thinking? He was crazy!” But then I remember he was 23 years old—that explains it! I have to remember that the wonderful thing about the interns and 20-somethings in our office is their enthusiasm and willingness to do almost anything to get the job done. This is an inspiration to me and helps me keep going on the most difficult days.

So, this is my father's story, which has become mine. I am thankful that I knew him so well and am proud that he was a veteran. He was very proud of that, too.

Catanzaro on Carney

—Tracey Beers, OCR



Louis Catanzaro joined the Navy in February 2006. He is 26 years old, was born in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and grew up in Ridgefield, Conn. He is an electronic technician and responsible for overseeing the operations of the electronic equipment used to send and receive messages, detect enemy planes and ships, and determine target distance. He must maintain, repair, calibrate, tune, and adjust all electronic equipment used for communications, detection and tracking, recognition and identification, navigation, and electronic countermeasures. In addition, he is certified to shoot a 250-caliber rifle, which he mans in and out of port.

Catanzaro currently is on board the USS Carney, a destroyer based out of Mayport Naval Station in Jacksonville, Fla., and is on his fourth deployment off the coast of Africa as part of NATO forces.

His very proud cousin, Tracey Beers of OCR, was delighted to honor him with this submission. He is pictured in the photo at left with (l to r) his father Michael, sister Catherine, and mother Allyson.

Singing for Her Country

—Vernia L. Lewis, OCR

Vernia L. Lewis of OCR began her military career in the U.S. Air Force on Dec. 2, 1971. She spent 26 years in the military.

Lewis spent Christmas, New Year's Day, and her birthday in basic training. One of her most memorable moments while at Lackland AFB, near San Antonio, Texas, was when she won first place in the "Guys versus Dolls" talent competition held on base during the Christmas season. She beat out male and female singers, dancers, and instrumentalists by singing "Unchained Melody" a cappella. Lewis completed basic training at Lackland in February 1972.



While in the Air Force, Lewis had three career changes.

Her first career field was as freight traffic specialist at McGuire AFB in New Jersey, beginning in March 1972. She was dismayed to find many of the skills she acquired in tech school would not be used, and her primary job became typing government bills of lading and filing documents.

After being at McGuire for about six months, she entered the base talent competition and won first place in the female vocal category. The same year she represented her base at the Military Air Command Talent Competition at Scott AFB, in Illinois, and won first place in the female vocalist category. She advanced again to compete at World Wide Air Force Talent Competition, which consisted of talent from every command in the Air Force and which was held at the Stardust Hotel in Las Vegas in 1972. She placed second in the competition and was selected to become a member of "Tops in Blue for 1972." As member of Tops in Blue, she traveled all over the United States and to Panama, entertaining military personnel and their families during the Vietnam era.



Thus began her second career, singing. In 1974, Lewis was privileged to become the first black female member of the Air Force Premier Band at Bolling AFB in Washington, D.C. She made her debut on the steps of the U.S. Capitol singing solo "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," with the Air Force Singing Sergeants under the direction of Col. Arnold Gabriel (pictured below at left). She also was the lead vocalist for the Air Force Mach 1 Rock Band (pictured above).



One of the most momentous days of her military career was when she performed the Battle Hymn of the Republic before the House of Representatives on June 12, 1975, and received a standing ovation. Three congressmen (Harold E. Ford, Sr., Bill Nichols, and Henry J. Hyde) wrote letters of appreciation to her commander lauding her performance.

In 1983, Lewis left the Air Force Band and became an equal opportunity specialist, training personnel on equal opportunity and human relations, and investigating complaints of unlawful discrimination. She spent 14 years in that field. In 1990, she was promoted to senior master

sergeant. She retired from the Air Force in December 1997 with an honorable discharge. She is the recipient of the Meritorious Service Medal with two devices*, the Air Force Commendation Medal with one device, the Air Force Organizational Excellence Award and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with two devices.

**Editor's note: "Devices" denote medals that are awarded for valor (bravery in the face of the enemy) or merit (an extraordinary job under noncombat conditions).*

The Best Jobs in the Finest Army

—Mike Rockis, FSA

I am honored to have served on active duty in the finest army on the planet from 1983 to 1994. I was privileged to have held three of the best jobs the Army has to offer, among many duty assignments. In my 11 years of active duty and five years in the reserves, I was a tank platoon leader, tank company commander (M1 Abrams), and armor battalion, headquarter company commander. I continue to support military families and veterans issues by staying active in my Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and American Legion posts.

The photos at right and below depict me on duty in Korea.





Active Reserve

—George Strudgeon, FSA

I am Capt. George Strudgeon, U.S. Navy Reserves. I was commissioned in 1974 as an ensign in the Navy directly from college in the Medical Service Corps as a hospital administrator. For three years, I was on active duty at the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland. I then went reserve — a very active reserve. I was fortunate to have civilian positions, and a family that allowed me to spend nearly two months and 20 weekends a year on duty at the peak of activity in the Persian Gulf War in 1987. As a reservist, I was the company commander of a Marine Corps field hospital.



In 1996, my reserve duty station changed to the headquarters of Navy medicine. I had the great opportunity to lead a project, changing the very cultural climate of training for Navy medical reservists. The project brought about integration of reservists into their active duty station as opposed to their reserve center for training, and altered the national plans and process for the conduct of recalling Navy medical reservists in times of emergency. On 9/11, I was at the Bethesda Naval Hospital, temporarily recalled to test a brand-new computer system for managing call-ups. That day, we moved from test into full production, calling up a few hundred reservists to backfill the hospital staff, as they were deployed to the hospital ship. Eventually, I was called to active duty myself, and served into 2004. From the headquarters, I led the team that managed the recall of 2,400

reservists, backfilling Navy hospital staff. The big challenge in managing recalls is managing a three-pronged set of requirements: (a) finding a person with an exact match in skills and credentials, (b) maintaining military unit integrity for some units and cannibalizing others, and (c) doing it all quickly.

My final tour was at U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Fla. as the medical information officer. I am now branch chief of the Financial Management Branch, Internal Controls Division, Program Management Services, Business Operations in Federal Student Aid (FSA).

My photo is me at [Rolling Thunder](#), wearing a T-shirt with the multinational emblem of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I cannot fully describe what it feels like to ride the streets of D.C. with thousands of people wanting to say a simple thank you to the ex-troops. If you get a chance, say “thanks.” It means a lot.

Chasing ... Or Being Chased?

—Gayle Palumbo, FSA



Servando Jose “Joe” Velarde, the father of Gayle Palumbo, a team leader for the School Participation Team in San Francisco and Seattle, had a long and illustrious military career.

It began in February of 1942, when Velarde was a student at Brooklyn College. He withdrew in order to enlist in the U.S. Army Air Corps after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Velarde went through basic and specialized aerial gunnery training, and was assigned to the 82nd Fighter-Interceptor Squadron. His squadron’s responsibility was the defense of the U.S. West Coast against aerial attacks.

Shortly thereafter, Velarde was shipped to Belfast, Northern Ireland to train with the Royal Air Force and then shipped to northern Africa. He was assigned to support the allied invasion of southern Italy and to chase [German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel](#) around the area (or perhaps the other way around; it’s unclear who was chasing and who was being chased). During his years in World War II, Velarde flew 60 missions in a B-52 bomber.

His military career didn’t end there.

After the war, Velarde returned to civilian life, earned higher education credentials, and went to work as a teacher and fencing coach at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He also served as an Air Force reserve officer and intelligence language specialist. In 1951, while teaching at Columbia University, he was recalled to active military duty for a top secret mission to Central America. Velarde was one of the first Air Force officers to specialize in counterinsurgency and psychological warfare.

His notable activities included two tours as an adviser to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS); official travel to Cuba in anticipation of the Cuban missile crisis; service as a trainer in Venezuela for three years; service in Lebanon

during the Lebanese crisis in 1958; and teaching for four years at the Air Force Academy as an associate professor in foreign language and area studies.

Velarde served almost 25 years in the military, retiring as a lieutenant colonel. His last mission was to secure the release of prisoners of war during the Vietnam War. Although the rescue attempt was unsuccessful, Velarde earned many commendations and awards during his military tenure, including the Presidential U.S. Legion of Merit, medals from Venezuela and Vietnam (where he provided advisory services), three bronze achievement medals, a Special Freedom Foundation Award, and two JCS medals.

An Original Tuskegee Airman

— Krystal Southall Austin, OPEPD

My grandfather, C. Gordon Southall, a native Washingtonian, attended Hampton Institute (now Hampton University) from which he received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1948. During his first years at Hampton, Southall was trained in the Civilian Flight Training Program and became a licensed pilot. His college education was interrupted in 1941, when he was drafted to fulfill his military obligation during World War II. Entering the U.S. Army Air Corps as a second lieutenant, Southall was sent to Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University), where he received further flight training and emerged as a military pilot in the 99th Pursuit Squadron. The 99th Pursuit Squadron was the first graduating class of the Air Corps Advanced Flying School at Tuskegee Field and included Colonel (later General) Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., who became the commanding officer. This unit was unique in U.S. military history because all of the personnel were African American. These men were the original Tuskegee Airmen, the first African-American military aviators in the armed forces, at a time in which African Americans were discriminated against because of Jim Crow laws. The 99th Pursuit Squadron neither lost a single plane nor suffered any casualties while in combat.



Southall received an honorable discharge from the Army Air Corps after achieving the rank of captain. Following his active military service, he served in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, attaining the rank of major before retiring. He served as the president and membership chairman of the [East Coast chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated](#). Southall was responsible for the traditional red jackets that the Tuskegee Airmen wear today, which symbolize the red-painted tails of their fighter planes.

Southall's son (my dad), Gordon Winston Southall, followed in his father's footsteps and made a career in the

Army. These men fearlessly served their country, and it is a pleasure to honor them on Veterans Day. I am proud to be their granddaughter and daughter.

Finance and Fire

—Diedre Windsor, FSA



Maj. Diedre L. Windsor, now retired and with FSA, is a native of Detroit, where she enlisted in the U.S. Army as a finance specialist. Upon completion of basic training and advanced individual training, she served three years in Neu Ulm, Germany, with the 7th Corps Finance Group, and three years at Fort Bragg, N.C., as a paratrooper with the elite 82nd Airborne Division, Finance Company. After four-and-a-half short years, Windsor was promoted to the rank of staff sergeant. Shortly after her promotion, Windsor applied for and was awarded an Army [Green to Gold Scholarship](#). She graduated from Methodist University, in Fayetteville, N.C., in 1994, with a Bachelor of Science degree in political science, whereupon she was commissioned into the Army as an air defense artillery officer.



Windsor's initial tour of duty as a commissioned officer was with 1st Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery. There she served as both a maintenance and fire control platoon leader. Later, she served as battalion tactics evaluator for the 1st Battalion, 1st Air Defense Artillery in Fort Bliss, Texas. Upon the unit's deployment to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, she served as the task force adjutant. Upon completion of her air defense artillery branch detail, she transferred to the Adjutant General Corps and served in myriad assignments, including assistant brigade S1 for the 1st Recruiting Brigade in Fort Meade, Md., and as commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 19th Theater Support Command in Taegu, Korea.

Windsor is a graduate of the Air Defense Artillery Officer Basic Course, the Adjutant General Corps Officers Advanced Course, the Combined Arms Service and Staff School, and the Command and General Staff College. Her awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal (1 OLC), Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal (4 OLC), Army Achievement Medal, the Office of the Secretary of Defense Identification Badge, and the Parachutist and Air Assault Badges.

Windsor has a beautiful 6-year-old daughter, Gabi Love.

In the photo above at left, Windsor is preparing for an airborne operation.

Protecting the President

—Louis Edwards, FSA

I am an electronics and communications lieutenant colonel, and have held four titles in the last three years, all for the Army's [Cyber Command](#). These duties require me to have one of the highest levels of top secret security clearance. I have served for 25 years in global communications in Germany, Thailand, Japan, Korea, Hawaii, and elsewhere in the U.S. My team provides global communications for six four-star general combatant commands worldwide, including in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Africa.



The men and women in uniform are performing extraordinary tasks. Various nations around the world are constantly trying to hack into our networks, but we provide 24/7 secure data communications.

I was inspired to enlist because I followed a legacy of brothers and other family members who served before me. My favorite part of serving is the camaraderie with fellow soldiers, and the opportunity to travel the world and experience different cultures.

My awards include the Army Achievement Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Military Service Medal, Information Technology Pin, and the Airborne Paratrooper Badge. I was a

Fulbright Scholar Candidate and a current Alabama Sports Hall of Fame Candidate. I also hold a doctoral degree in management; have completed the Command and General Staff College, a graduate school for service officers, interagency representatives, and international military officers; and completed Dartmouth College's Executive Education Program and Harvard University's Leadership Institute 2011. In addition, I am a proud member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated.

In the photo at left, I am serving as a part of President Obama's security detail during his inauguration.

Aim High!

—Otis Wilson, ODS

I have had the distinct opportunity to serve these great United States for over 25 years. What began as a way to finance my postsecondary education quickly became my way of life. It all began in October 1986, with basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas — the gateway to the Air Force. I will never forget the experience and its life-changing effect, and all because of Sgt. Nichols, a 5-foot 7inch, training instructor from North Carolina. His influence, along with that of the Air Force as a whole, affected me so much that the Air Force motto became my objective — Aim High!

During my career, I have had the opportunity to participate in a majority of the free world's operations, starting with Operation Just Cause and the more recent Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. During Operation Desert Storm, I was an aircrew



member aboard the second C-5 to land in the former Saddam Hussein International Airport in Baghdad (now Baghdad International Airport) under small arms fire. That was pretty intense! After 17 years of enlisted service, I was blessed with an officer's commission and the rest, as it is said, is history.

You may wonder why I still serve. First and foremost, I know that "[freedom ain't free](#)," (an idiom thought up by Col. Walter Hitchcock of the [New Mexico Military Institute](#) to express gratitude for the service of military members). However, today we live in an environment where the fight can potentially land on our shores, in our communities, and in our neighborhoods. We must remain ever-vigilant. I serve because deep down inside it makes me proud to assist and protect my family, my friends, and the citizens of this country. I serve because there's nothing like seeing Ol' Glory waving high atop the flagpole, symbolizing the steadfastness of our freedom and liberty. I serve because that's my opportunity to help. I am helping others, even if it calls for paying the ultimate sacrifice. Thank you for your continued support of and vote of confidence for our military members.



Escort Service

—**Jermaine Sullivan, OCO**

When I was in the Air Force, my job was about taking care of troops and their families around the world. As a services officer, I helped support the Air Force global mission by feeding troops, managing tent cities, operating field exchanges, attending to fallen comrades, providing fitness activities and off-duty sports programs, and planning base family activities. My last assignment was at Bolling AFB in Washington, D.C., as a protocol officer. In this capacity, I coordinated general officer promotion and retirement ceremonies and conducted funerals in Arlington National Cemetery.

The most honorable position I had over my 12 years in the Air Force was serving as the military escort to families who lost a loved one that served our country. Escorting these families through Arlington Cemetery to their loved one's final resting place is something I will never forget. Also, I am a Gulf War veteran.

In the photo above, I am pictured (on the left) with coworkers at Bolling AFB.

Fit Family

— **Itzeth Testa-Sanchez, OELA**

I am the granddaughter of an Army serviceman who fought in World War II. I also am the stepdaughter of an Army serviceman who fought in the Vietnam



War. I am an education program specialist in OELA. I also am proud to say that I am the third generation of my family who has served as a member of the Air Force reserve, of which I have been a member for the past 12 years, and the mother of two boys. On Oct. 16, 2011, I scored a 99.6 percent on my fitness test, which was the second highest score in my unit and the highest of my career, surpassing my score last year of 99.1.

A Dog, Parachutes, and Chocolate

—Shawn Kline, FSA

FSA's Shawn Kline, then known as Pfc. Kline, was walking the perimeter of a military base in Wiesbaden, Germany, while on guard duty very late into the night when he saw an older German gentleman walking towards him with a very large German Shepherd. Kline asked the man, "What is the name of your dog?" The man told Kline the name of his dog, and they talked for another few minutes, both haltingly trying to speak in the other person's language. The man and his dog soon left, and Kline continued with guard duty. Two weeks later, his company commander told him that the base commander wanted to see him in his office.



Kline entered the base commander's office convinced that he was in big trouble. The base commander said, "PFC Kline, you know you are not supposed to speak to people while you are on guard duty, correct?" Kline said, "Yes sir, correct, I am not supposed to speak with people while I am on guard duty." The base commander said, "Well, this German fellow said you were talking to him a couple weeks ago while you were on guard duty. Kline then said, "Yes sir, I was talking to the German man. I asked him what the name of his dog was." The commander went, "Well, this German fellow and his family (the Lauths) would like you to come over for dinner. So in this case, we'll chalk up your talking while on guard duty to bettering German-American relations."

A few weeks later, Kline went to the Lauths' for dinner and heard their story. Mrs. Lauth was a small child living in Berlin when the Soviet Union blockaded the city. The Soviet Union blocked rail and road access to the parts of Berlin that were controlled by the U.S. and its allies. In response, the U.S. and its allies started flying food and supplies into the city to circumvent the blockade, an operation known as the Berlin Airlift. Some of the pilots that were flying into and out of Berlin would drop little parachutes with candy (usually chocolate) attached to them right from their cockpit windows, and the little children would chase after the parachutes with the candy attached. Mrs. Lauth was one of those little children and having Kline over for dinner was repayment for something she always cherished. Kline ended up having dinner with the Lauths almost every weekend for the rest of the time he was in Germany, and he kept in touch with them for many years afterward.

Kline said, "I served in the U.S. Army from 1984 until 1986, and I worked as a lance missile crewman during my enlistment.

In the photo, I am in East Berlin (the wall was still up then), standing next to a Soviet soldier who was guarding

the Soviets' tomb of the unknown soldier and concentration camp victim from World War II. After the wall came down, the tomb was rededicated to serve as a memorial for victims of war and tyranny.”

Promotion Stripes

—Kathleen Guy, OPEPD

Chief Master Sgt. Christopher “Clarke” Guy, the son of Kathleen Guy of OPEPD, is the guard personnel and mobilization analyst for the Air National Guard adviser to the commander, Air Mobility Command, assigned to the Headquarters Air Mobility Command in Scott AFB, Ill.

After graduating high school, Guy was employed as a law clerk and librarian. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1994, and arrived at Lackland AFB, Texas, in June 1994, for basic training. After being assigned to duty in Missouri, Germany, Texas, Maryland, and Virginia, in June 2011, Guy accepted his current assignment.

Guy’s entire military career thus far has been done at a time of continuous contingency and deployed operations. Under conditions of constant organizational change, operational surge, and manpower and budget reductions, it is Guy’s duty to solve problems and find ways to perform missions more efficiently. He has deployed numerous times and has been involved in the planning or deployment of numerous military operations. These operations include, but are not limited to, the following:

[Operation Uphold Democracy](#) (1994)

[Operation Deny Flight](#) (1995)

[Operation Desert Fox](#) (1997)

[Operation Enduring Freedom](#) (2001)

[Operation Iraqi Freedom; Operation New Dawn](#) (2003/2010)

[Operation Odyssey Dawn](#) (2011)

His military decorations include the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal. Other awards include Ramstein MSS Airman of the Year 1999, Ramstein Base Level Personnel Specialist of the Year 1999, Randolph Airman Leadership School Academic Achievement Award Class 00-6, Randolph ALS John L. Levitow Award Class 00-6 and the Air National Guard Personnel Superintendent of the Year (Headquarters Level), 2008.

Guy has been married to Claudia Bautista Guy of Chicago for 13 years and has a son, Connery, age 12, and a daughter, Caridad, age 11. He holds an associate degree in personnel administration through the Community College of the Air Force, and currently is taking classes toward a bachelor’s degree in business management through Grantham University.

In the photo above at right, proud mom is ready to put on new promotion stripes.



A Real-Life Army Wife

—Adriana De Kanter, OPEPD

I was an “Army wife,” moving 10 times in 18 years. My husband, Philip La Perla, retired as a colonel in the Army in 2003 after serving 28 years. I met him in 1984 as a young ED staffer. He was a dashing captain stationed at the National Military Command Center (which housed the real Washington-to-Moscow hotline during the Cold War). Looking back, I never could have guessed what I was getting myself into—weeks alone in foreign places, trying to explain our different last names, performing protocol functions for generals, defending my policy of all “ranks” in our coffee group, organizing endless fundraisers for family support groups, decorating dilapidated living quarters, being “dressed down” by commanders’ wives, and dressing up for military balls. It was great!

Besides normal maneuvers and exercises, we weathered the first Gulf War and 9/11 together—but, for a military wife, life means actually always being apart. Phil commanded the 57th Signal Battalion, hailing the first soldiers behind enemy lines into Iraq in 1991. His small team of two women and a man moved ahead of the land troops to set up the communications for Operation Desert Storm. The 57th Sig was first in and last out!

When 9/11 struck, Phil was commanding the signal activity for the Military District of Washington, in which role he was responsible for military communications from Richmond, Va., to New York. On that fateful day, I walked across Washington from LBJ to Fort McNair, where I demanded that the gate guard summon him, since I didn’t know when I’d see him next! Two weeks later, he came home having run commo (communications equipment) into the damaged Pentagon and directed military communication activities at the devastated World Trade Center. His images from that tragedy still linger, just as the images of combat will never wane for every soldier, seaman, airman, or marine. Give thanks to those who have served!

I’ve been saving a portion of an op-ed by Benjamin Stein, published in The Washington Post on Veterans Day 1992, titled “Here’s to an Army Wife.” Let me end with it:

“There aren’t any monuments to Army wives in Washington, at least no big ones that tourists come to in busloads. That’s too bad, because Army wives deserve one. They also served and they all suffered and bled and died and never complained. We owe them remembrance today, and thanks for real service and sacrifice, in lonely wrenching hours, so the rest of us can live the way we do.”

Bless military spouses past, present, and future!

The photo below is of De Kanter's 57th Signal Battalion coffee group. De Kanter, in the center of the front row, sewed the Signal Corps orange garters the group members are wearing.

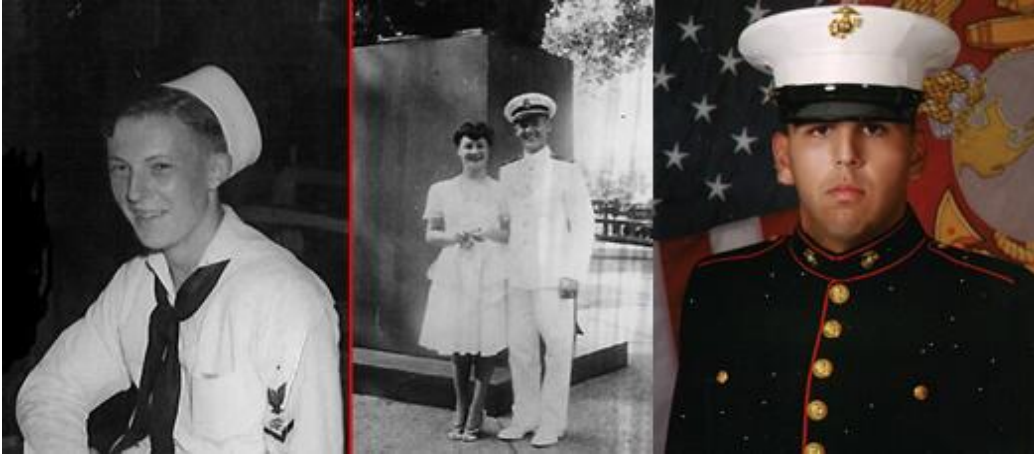


Three Men Serving Their Country Honorably

—**Bill Carrington, OPEPD**

We've got no major meritorious awards, just three men serving their country honorably during wartime.

My son, Michael A. Carrington (at left in the photo on the right): U.S. Marine Corps, November 2010 to the present. He earned the rank of private 1st class and is currently deployed to the 7th Communications Battalion, Okinawa, Japan. He received basic training at Parris Island, S.C., weapons training at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and communications training at 29 Palms, Calif.



My father, William A. Carrington (at left in the photo on the left): U.S. Navy, served from March 1943 to November 1945 as a radioman 3rd class on a subchaser warship, mostly in the Pacific during World War II. Operations included Palau Island, Leyte, and Okinawa. He earned the American Theater Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, and

the World War II Victory Medal.

My father-in-law, Albert R. Dunn (at center): graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy, 1944. He served as a lieutenant on battleship USS North Carolina during World War II, directing six-inch guns. He trained in the Lighter than Air program, which directed Navy blimps. He served in the Navy until 1955.

First Deployment

—Cindy Carroll, OCIO

Cpl. Scott Carroll, son of Cindy Carroll of OCIO, is a U.S. Marine, active duty, with the 2D Marine Logistics Group (FWD), Combat Logistics Battalion 2, Headquarters and Support Company. He currently is stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C. He completed his first deployment in Afghanistan from July 2010 to February 2011. He is pictured on the day he deployed to Afghanistan in July 2010.



Reports From the Field

—Greg Spencer, OIG

Lance Cpl. Benjamin Spencer, my son, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in August 2008. He is attached to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, not far from Pearl Harbor. Ben is an

infantryman and fire team leader responsible for three other infantry Marines, and is currently serving his second deployment to Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Ben has earned medals and ribbons for serving in wartime, combat action, and expert marksmanship, as well as several others. He also earned special recognition from his unit, Bravo Company, for his actions in battle.

Marine Corps deployments last about seven months with no leave. team deploys together and returns together. While deployed, he works with Afghan National Army interpreters and troops, and, in 2010, he fought in the battle to drive hundreds of Taliban fighters from the city of Marja. Ben has had some access to a satellite phone call home, but he doesn't get to Skype home or eat normal food beyond what we mail him or what he buys from locals.

Ben says he enjoys the Afghan children he meets on patrol because they provide a sense of normalcy amid the chaos. His current friend four-year-old girl who seeks him out and sits in his lap so they can have a conversation in [Pashto](#), which Ben claims he understands. On his last deployment, there was a boy about 12 years old who always sought out "Marine Ben" with whom to practice his English and create a personal Pashto-English dictionary.

Back in the states, the life of an infantryman is daily physical training, training in California and on Hawaii's big island, conducting public service activities such as building school playgrounds, and, for the single Marines, periods of boredom. Whenever possible, Ben and his buddies make good use of the beautiful beaches and coves of Oahu for swimming, snorkeling, spear fishing, and sandbar parties.

He talks about his deployments only sparingly, but I think Ben wants others to know that infantry Marines are volunteers who don't choose their deployments or battles; they do what is asked of them, serve their country courageously, lose friends, and stay true to America's ideals, the Corps, and their fellow Marines. Ben separates from the corps in August 2012; however, I think he'll always be a Marine.

He is looking forward to college and is considering a major in psychology to become a crisis counselor.

The photo above shows (l to r): Spencer, Navy Corpsman Luwin Sandoval (in the background), Cpl. Nathan Fanning, and Lance Cpl. Jeremy O'Hearn.



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A Surprised Soldier

—Tawanna Coles, OII

I joined the U.S. Navy Reserves while working full time for the federal government. My first reserve assignment was with the Military Sealift Command (MSC) Headquarters in Washington, D.C. I served as a yeoman, reporting for duty one weekend a month and performing active-duty training two weeks a year. My responsibilities were in administrative

support, and as I moved up in the enlisted ranks, I served as an administrative officer, career counselor, and physical fitness coordinator.

When I joined the military, I never thought of being called to war, but after six years of serving in the Navy, my unit was recalled to support Operation Desert Storm. This meant that I was no longer a reservist who reported one weekend a month—I became a full-time active duty member of the Navy. Because I was working for ED, I was provided 15 days of military leave and then placed on a leave of absence for the duration of my mobilization. I spent nine months on active duty supporting Operation Desert Storm.

In addition to being at MSC Headquarters, I spent time in the Netherlands. My Navy career provided me the opportunity to travel within and outside the United States. Some of the countries I visited were Bahrain, England, Germany, Panama, and Portugal. In some instances, I visited these countries numerous times throughout my military career. I had the opportunity to join other reserve units such as Naval Beach Group and Naval Sea Systems Command. I received the following military honors: Navy Achievement, Unit Commendation, and National Defense Service Medals; Armed Forces Service, Meritorious, and Overseas Service Ribbons; and letters of appreciation and commendation. In addition, I received Small Arms Qualification training and earned Marksmanship Ribbons for the Navy Pistol (9mm Beretta M9) and the M16 Assault Rifle. I ended my Navy career when I retired after 20 years of service as a petty officer 1st class.



Two's Company

—Teri Lewis, OIG

I would like to honor two veterans in my family.

My husband, Brian K. Butler, entered into military service because of his belief that every able-bodied American should serve at least two years in the military regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or religion, and because it was an excellent means of paying off his college student loans.

He was the primary computer operator in the fire direction center. He operated the battery computer system that received electronic requests for cannon fire (indirect fire support). In 1990, he was sent to Korea (sans his newlywed wife) to the demilitarized zone (DMZ), one of the most heavily armed and guarded borders in the world. He spent two years guarding the DMZ, one of the last remaining fronts of the Cold War. The war has yet to be resolved between North and South Korea. Although the cease-fire was signed in 1953, no peace agreement or treaty was signed, and as a result, fighting could resume at any time. There was and is extreme tension and hostility in the DMZ. While in Korea, Brian's unit (Alpha Battery 1/15 FA) did a 30 day rotation to the DMZ, and were in alert status 90 percent of the time. He participated in "Team Spirit 1991" in conjunction with the Republic of Korea Army on the southern two-thirds of the peninsula, as a show of strength and solidarity to discourage North Korea from invading during Desert Storm. Brian was supposed to spend only one year in Korea but served two. He was honorably discharged from the Army.



Brian is a graduate of La Salle and Temple universities. He now works for the city of Philadelphia as the executive assistant to the deputy commissioner of operations in the Department of Human Services, Division of Juvenile Justice Services.

His awards include Service Ribbon, National Defense Ribbon, Army Lapel Button, Humanitarian Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with an Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Achievement Medal with an Oak Leaf Cluster, Good Conduct Medal, Expert Badge (rifle), Sharpshooter Badge (grenade), and Parachutist Badge.

In the photo above, he is in uniform in Korea.



My uncle, James H. Jackson, passed away on Sept. 16, 2011. He served more than 20 years in the Army and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

After graduating high school, Jackson attended South Carolina State University and joined the ROTC. After graduating, he joined the Army. His service took him around the world, and he served in the Vietnam War. During his funeral service, several retired and current Army servicemen spoke of how he had inspired them and how instrumental he was in shaping their military careers. I am not sure of the awards he received, but I know he received many.

After retiring from the military, he became a math teacher and a minister, and went back to school to obtain a doctorate in education. He had a true love and passion for mathematics. I remember as a child when my siblings and I went to visit his family during the summers, he would have a contest where the first person to answer a math question would receive a monetary reward!

Private First Class to Lieutenant Colonel

—Carolyn Lee, OVAE

While working at the Department of Veterans Affairs and pursuing a master's degree at Howard University, and after some review of military literature and conversations with friends and family, I made a bold decision to join the U.S. Army. The night before I was scheduled to go to basic training, several of my friends took me to dinner, and laughed and remarked that I would never make it through basic training as I was too dainty and petite (I weighed 98 pounds and received a waiver to qualify, as the minimum weight to join was 99 lbs). My friends could not imagine me crawling through the mud, climbing a wall, or any of the other tasks associated with basic training. My sister exclaimed, "It would be more of a miracle for you to get up at 4 a.m. than for Moses to part the Red Sea!" (I loved to sleep late). That very same night, I saw the movie *She's In the Army Now*, which depicted the realities of basic training. I thought, "Perhaps my friends are right. Perhaps I will not make it." I naively assumed that if I did not like the Army, I could leave.



Well, as it turns out, not only did I make it through all the kitchen patrol duties, long days, short nights, marching, running, et cetera, but I was one of 12 in a company of over 100 recruits of men and women to receive a Superior Performance Certificate for basic training, the highest award. I subsequently joined the ROTC at Howard University, and two years later I was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps of the U.S. Army Reserves. This was one of the happiest days of my life! I subsequently served



two summer tours of duty at the Pentagon as a second lieutenant.

During my tenure of over 25 years, I have had a variety of professionally rewarding and developmental staff and command positions in the Medical Service Corps, Army Medical Command. My principal assignments in the Army reserves have been as an administrative officer, finance officer, training officer; and acting troop commander during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. Most notable is that I was company commander of over 900 Army reservist nurses and medical personnel activated to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington in support of

Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm in 1991. I also served as plans and operations officer both for the National Disaster Medical System at Walter Reed and the 2290th U.S. Army Reserve Maus Warfield Hospital. I also had the opportunity to serve four summer tours of duty as a medical readiness officer on a joint military staff in the Office of the Surgeon General at Ramstein AFB in Ramstein, Germany.

I received several Army commendations throughout my tenure, including the Army Commendation Medal (the second highest award). So, it indeed was a professionally rewarding and challenging career, and I am deeply honored to have served in the U.S. Army.

The photo above at left was taken at Ramstein AFB. In the photo above at right, I am being commissioned as a second lieutenant, with my niece and sister pinning on my bars.

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