

The Outstanding Airmen

By Tamar A. Mehuron, Associate Editor



A1C (now SrA.) Mary C. Bullock. Full-Motion Video Analyst, 11th Intelligence Squadron (Air Force Special Operations Command), Hurlburt Field, Fla.—Aided early creation of intelligence squadron. ... Led FMV analysis on a downed Army helicopter, guiding forces that safely rescued troops and recovered classified material. ... Supported 76 coalition operations, analyzing 823 hours of full-motion video to develop al Qaeda target sets. ... Created “best practices” guide for analytical reports. ... Crafted more than 200 intelligence products for special operations forces direct-action missions that factored heavily in drop in violence in Iraq. ... Created database of 175 video products to aid first-time analysts at remote sites in developing “pattern of life” analyses for Southwest Asia operations.

TSgt. James B. Caughron. Fire Protection Craftsman, Station Chief, 22nd Civil Engineer Squadron (Air Mobility Command), McConnell AFB, Kan.—Led effort to quickly evacuate crew and passengers, including the Australian Prime Minister, from an aircraft in Iraq filled with smoke and fumes. ... Trained dozens of Iraqi civilian firefighters in techniques and equipment use. ... Helped 11 crew members aboard a P-3 to safely leave the aircraft after an in-flight emergency. ... Secured an F-16 after it engaged an airfield barrier, minimizing combat airfield damage and downtime. ... Spearheaded firefight against a second-story fire, limiting damage to Ali Air Base facility. ... Provided emergency medical care in numerous situations, including saving the lives of a soldier with a stab wound who was in shock and an individual with a partial amputation following an industrial accident. ... Honored as AMC’s Military Fire Officer of the Year.



TSgt. Earl I. Covel. Ranger Joint Terminal Attack Controller, 5th Air Support Operations Squadron (Air Combat Command), Ft. Lewis, Wash.—Received Silver Star for his actions with Army Special Forces unit. ... Executed more than 155 classified missions, supporting 57 assaults and 65 troops-in-contact actions. ... Called for close air support that led to capture of 300 insurgents and 200 enemies killed in action. ... Set up 170 combat landing zones, five while under intense hostile fire. ... Controlled airspace zones supporting some 150 intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance platforms. ... Led eight-member team on 15 combat missions. ... Cleared tunnel system on hands and knees with grenades, killing three insurgents. ... Standardized concept-of-fires fallback plan for Special Forces units. ... Devised theater-wide procedures for conventional helicopters supporting Special Operations Forces. ... Integrated JTACs into USAF Weapons School close air support exercise. ... Instructed 90 Special Forces members on CAS operations.

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 ribbon with the bronze service star device and wear the Outstanding Airman badge for one year.



MSgt. Carla L. Curry. Superintendent, Enlisted Extended Deployment Branch (Air Force Personnel Center), Randolph AFB, Tex.—Served as a truck commander and driver in Afghanistan on year-long deployment, receiving a Bronze Star. ... Performed turret gunner duty on more than 20 convoy missions. ... Integrated airmen into observation-tower duty, devising a rotation plan to relieve soldiers. ... Led key Afghan artillery turn-in campaign. ... Carried out several humanitarian aid missions, distributing hygiene kits and food to Afghan civilians. ... Monitored and tracked nearly a thousand extended deployment actions. ... Authored brief for the Air Force's first Senior Enlisted Leader Summit. ... Created a Chiefs Group continuity book, writing a procedures guide on chief master sergeant assignments.

SSgt. Eric M. Eberhard. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Craftsman, 419th Civil Engineer Squadron (Air Force Reserve Command), Hill AFB, Utah—Volunteered for one of the most hazardous improvised explosive device areas in Southwest Asia Theater of operations. ... Applied life-saving emergency medical treatment to team leader wounded by an IED, clearing additional IEDs and enabling evacuation. ... Maneuvered vehicle and laid down suppressive fire during ambush, foiling some rocket-propelled grenade attacks and enabling Army quick reaction force to respond. ... Destroyed numerous IEDs on Army supply routes. ... Aided FBI and ATF agents in collection of blast fragments for analysis in deaths of two Afghan policemen, preparing intelligence reports on enemy tactics for use by other EOD teams in theater. ... Identified and destroyed two improvised rocket launchers being readied for attack on forward operating base.



SrA. Alicia A. Goetschel. Pass and Registration Clerk, 100th Security Forces Squadron (US Air Forces in Europe), RAF Mildenhall, Britain—Deployed for six months to Army Camp Bucca in Iraq. ... Ensured safe and smooth prisoner transfer of hundreds of detainees from Basra to Baghdad. ... Helped quell two prison riots and led security force response to 11 major prisoner uprisings. ... Countered mortar and sniper attacks with increased patrols and initiated prisoner lockdowns and head counts. ... Discovered an escape tunnel and took action to ensure no escapes. ... Prevented the escalation of three aggravated assault incidents, rescuing some detainees from life-threatening situations. ... Trained and certified several Iraqi corrections officers. ... Mentored several airmen in upgrade training. ... Received Army Achievement and Commendation Medals for service in Iraq.

2008 Outstanding Airmen

SMSgt. Donna J. Goodno. Mission Support Flight Superintendent, 147th Combat Communications Squadron (Air National Guard), San Diego—Managed a communications-computer team of 27 at Baghdad Airport. ... Obtained and applied more than \$1 million in funding to fix problems with air traffic control radios. ... Ensured daily ongoing communications despite dozens of base attacks and constant threat of mortar and rocket strikes. ... Secured nearly 100 percent up-time through skillful management of airfield navigational, radio, and support equipment. ... Built communications fly-away kit from scratch, a boon for forward deploying RED HORSE teams. ... Resolved long-standing problem with the sole airspace radar control system. ... Demonstrated effective command and control measures during an emergency repair of sabotaged perimeter fence.



TSgt. Jason D. Hughes. Flight Line Expediter, 3rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (Pacific Air Forces), Elmendorf AFB, Alaska—Spearheaded F-22 maintenance beddown at Elmendorf, directing more than 50 airmen and \$1 billion in assets. ... Designed Elmendorf's F-22 hot-pit capability. ... Directed F-22 fuel tank acceptance inspection, with 70 tanks finished months ahead of schedule. ... Expedited preparations for NORAD's first F-22 alert response, ensuring airspace security in the wake of grounded F-15s. ... Supervised launch of first F-22 intercept of Russian bomber near US airspace. ... Arranged final base F-15E live munitions sortie launches. ... Streamlined transfer of F-15s and equipment to new home. ... Achieved top-notch maintenance effectiveness rate for six straight months.

MSgt. George Price Jr. Chief, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight, 45th Civil Engineering Squadron (Air Force Space Command), Patrick AFB, Fla.—Earned Army Combat Action Badge for his actions while deployed to FOB McHenry near Kirkuk, Iraq. ... Detected and stopped a bomb-laden vehicle from entering the base. ... Defended his vehicle when attacked by insurgents, pursuing enemy forces and capturing IEDs and six terrorists. ... Pulled two soldiers from rocket-damaged vehicle and performed combat-life-saving treatment, saving one soldier. ... Instructed members of 10th Mountain Division and Iraqi Army on enemy tactics and IED identification. ... Supported more than a thousand combat missions, securing the safety of 16,000 soldiers. ... Honored as senior noncommissioned officer of the month for the Army's 25th Infantry Division. ... Instructed at FBI/Forensic Post Blast Course, attended by personnel from 11 counties and 54 civilian law enforcement and bomb squad personnel. ... Selected to work with Secret Service for Presidential EOD support.



SrA. Shawn A. Ryan. Security Forces Patrolman, 82nd Security Forces Squadron (Air Education and Training Command), Sheppard AFB, Tex.—Earned Army Commendation Medal and Combat Action Badge for his actions during voluntary year-long deployment to Camp Victory in Iraq. ... Continued to help repel enemy attack though wounded, receiving a Purple Heart. ... Provided life-saving buddy care to wounded team member. ... Stopped speeding vehicle-borne IED, killing terrorist. ... Instructed thousands of Iraqi policemen. ... Conducted nearly 200 combat patrols. ... Detected artillery round rigged to explode, preventing injury to troops and damage to assets. ... Shared his M-2 machine gun expertise with team members, providing gunner-down training and enhancing unit's combat capability.



TSgt. Tammy K. Shaw. Noncommissioned officer in charge of shipping, 88th Diagnostics and Therapeutics Squadron (Air Force Materiel Command), Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio—Directed the Defense Department's largest DNA collection site, managing 38,000 samples per year and maintaining a 0.02 percent rejection rate. ... Synchronized tests from nine ANG and AFRC facilities, certifying eligibility of thousands of reservists to support the War on Terror. ... Revamped chemical inventory. ... Spearheaded medical group's first phlebotomy refresher course for 100 staff. ... Inaugurated three new point-of-collection sites, expediting test results for emergency room patients. ... Helped earn lab "Best in DOD" and AFMC lab team of year honors.

SSgt. (now TSgt.) James M. Weltin. Enlisted Accessions Recruiter, 333rd Recruiting Squadron (Air Education and Training Command), Rockledge, Fla.—Surpassed recruitment goal for 20 consecutive months. ... Took his recruiting squadron from last place performance to top rank. ... Recruited seven airmen for crucial high demand, hard-to-fill specialties in crypto-linguistics and pararescue. ... Stepped in as flight chief during superior's absence, handling daily operations. ... Hosted "Air Force Careers" radio show on the largest radio station in the recruiting zone. ... Orchestrated swearing-in ceremony for 75 enlistees conducted by a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, attracting regional press and Internet coverage. ... Named as NCO of the Quarter. ... Earned Senior Recruiter Badge.

