

AGS crew chief best in wing, 21 AF

By Staff Sgt Pamela Smith
437 AW Public Affairs

Senior Airman Michele Eshelman, 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron Shark Flight, has been named the 1999 Crew Chief of the Year for Charleston AFB and 21st Air Force.



Eshelman

Eshelman, a C-17 dedicated crew chief, received the base level award in February and was told of the 21st AF award in March.

"I was surprised at first. I thought they were kidding," she said of hearing the news. "It feels good to be noticed, but I wouldn't have had a chance if it weren't for the team effort."

Chief Master Sgt. Michael Leies, 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron Maintenance Flight superintendent, said, "Michelle was also our Shark Flight Airman of the Year, so I wasn't surprised by this award. She is always the first to step forward and volunteer for both squadron and community events."

Leies, along with Senior Master Sgt. Cindy Lundberg, 437th Support Flight Chief, and Senior Master Sgt. John Danko, 315th Aircraft Generation Squadron Silver Sortie Generation Flight chief, submitted Eshelman's nomination package. " "

Michele's the type of person who consistently excels at everything," Danko said.

Eshelman, a five-year Air Force veteran, was recognized as a major contributor in the

Shark flight accomplishing an overall 98 percent launch reliability rate, the highest in AGS.

"She is always a major player and a vital asset," Danko said.

Eshelman was also instrumental in the flight averaging five awaiting maintenance delayed discrepancies per month, which was 12 below the AMC goal.

As a senior airman, she performed as shift chief and expeditor, both noncommissioned officer duties, for the swing shift. She oversaw the day-to-day operations of 53 technicians and is credited with balancing people and the mission during a personnel shortage throughout the Kosovo conflict.

"Every job she does, she does well," Danko said, "with little or no supervision."

Eshelman's accomplishments go beyond her performance here. She was also recognized for ability to go above and beyond while deployed, Danko said. "She always plays a role in exercises and is the first to jump at the opportunity to go TDY."

She assisted in aircraft staging while deployed to Trapani, Sicily in support of Operation Phoenix Duke II. She performed aeroport duties by preparing and filing cargo manifests; building and breaking down pallets; and she helped on-load and off-load equipment to move A-10s into the theater of operation during the Kosovo conflict. She was handpicked to help prepare and launch President Clinton's aircraft from Italy during his visit to Slovenia.

Eshelman said she was just doing her job and credits her co-workers with her recognition. "My supporters overlooked the negatives and have pushed out the positive in me."



Down in the pit

Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe

Backhoe operator Richard Clapp of Azalea Utilities lays gravel in a pit dug for a sewer line crossing Hill Blvd. The replacement of the sewer lines is expected to be completed next week and the Dorchester Gate will reopen Wednesday.