



# News Release

## UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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### **Golden Knights to perform at Air Expo 2001**

**CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE, S.C.** – The blue skies of Charleston AFB will explode into gold and black as the Army Golden Knights perform an exciting show of aerial maneuvers May 19 during Air Expo 2001.

Prepared to entertain the Lowcountry with their aerial acrobatics and precision landings, the U.S. Army Parachute Team will perform aerial maneuvers while falling toward earth at speeds reaching 120 mph.

There are four different teams of parachutists within the Golden Knights organization: The Black and Gold Demonstration Teams, the Formation Skydiving Team and the Style and Accuracy Team. The Gold Demonstration Team, which will be performing for CAFB in May, is made up of 13 parachutists.

“We have the best assignment in the Army,” said Army Staff Sgt. Jason Davis, demonstration parachutist. “Representing the Army as a whole combined with a great challenge is very rewarding. This is one of the few missions where you are constantly out in front of the American public, which is always immediately rewarding.”

Davis, who has more than 3,600 jumps, says he doesn’t get nervous any more, but he always feels a little apprehensive. “We like to differentiate what we do from other parachutists

in military jobs,” said Davis. “We do precision, military, freefall parachute jumps, all for the benefit of the audience. But our day isn’t over after we land. We still have to debrief every aspect of our day, from the technical aspects to the interaction with the public.”

The Golden Knights have performed more than 8,100 live aerial demonstrations since 1961 and perform a combined total of more than 26,500 jumps before an estimated 12 million people every year, according to a Golden Knights news release.

The program pushes the candidates physical, mental and emotional levels to the limit to find not just the best parachutist, but also the best soldiers for the Team, according to the release.

“We expect the new members to be more committed to excellence than before,” said Army Lt. Col. David Stahl, Golden Knights commander. “As the ‘Army’s goodwill ambassadors to the world,’ we constantly strive to be not only the best soldiers and parachutists, but also the best Americans.

“The soldiers who wear the black and gold colors of the team are some of the finest in today’s Army,” continued Stahl. “Each has excelled as a soldier and a parachutist.”

The gates open at 9 a.m. for Air Expo 2001. Admission and parking are free.

***(1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Beth Szucs, 437 AW Public Affairs, contributed to this article.)***

(For information call 963-EXPO or log onto [www.charleston.af.mil](http://www.charleston.af.mil) and click on special events)