



News Release

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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TWO CHARLESTON AIRMEN NAMED BEST IN AIR FORCE

CHARLESTON AFB, SC -- Team Charleston is now home to two of the Air Force Association's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year for 2001.

Staff Sgt. Terrence Carraway, 315th Security Forces Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Brian Sharman, 437th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight, were told they would be wearing the Outstanding Airman badge for the next year, after being selected by a board that included the chief master sergeant of the Air Force and the command chief master sergeants from each major command.

The award recognizes 12 outstanding enlisted members for superior leadership, job performance, community involvement and personal achievements, according to AFA's Web-site. Carraway and Sharman are scheduled to attend the AFA's annual convention in Washington, D.C., where the association honors the 12 OAY.

"I'm excited," Carraway said. "I feel honored and privileged just to be chosen." Carraway learned of his selection from Air Force Reserve Command's Command Chief Master Sgt. Cheryl Adams.

"Chief Adams found out first, and she said she wanted me to be the second to know," Carraway said.

A 15-year veteran of the Florence, S.C., police department, Carraway said the biggest honor is being recognized for who he is.

"This is the way I live my life," said Carraway. "I volunteer. I work with kids, and I do a little more."

Carraway said he's been considering taking on a foster child.

"Being a police officer, I see how fortunate my child and I are," said Carraway. "I feel the need to add light to someone else's life."

Carraway attributed his success to the people in his life who support him, like his wife and 9-year-old son, as well as his Air Force family.

"I'd like to say thanks to Master Sgt. (Joseph) Hores (315 SFS) and Lt. Col. (Terri) Hams (315th Support Group deputy commander)," Carraway said. "They helped put my package together. I'd also like to thank my unit and wing. Without them, none of this would have been possible."

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Carraway also offered some lessons he has learned that helped him become the person he is today.

“Never give up,” said Carraway. “Always believe in God as the one who’s in charge. With a little prayer you can get there. Always believe in yourself, and remember, in order to be a good leader, you must be a great follower.”

Sharman was almost convinced he wasn’t going to be named as one of the 12 OAY, he said.

“I didn’t think I got it, because Carraway was unofficially notified earlier in the week, and I figured I missed out,” Sharman said. “Then a colonel from AMC called me and asked me to hold. I figured it was about something else we’re working on in the shop. Then a person came on the line and started talking to me.”

About two minutes into the conversation, Sharman finally asked whom he was talking to.

“It was Gen. (John) Handy (commander in chief, U.S. Transportation Command, and commander, Air Mobility Command),” Sharman said. “He told me he had an e-mail from Gen. (John) Jumper (Air Force chief of staff) naming me as the only AMC selectee.”

Sharman reacted in much the same way as Carraway.

“I was ecstatic,” Sharman said. “I was really excited. It’s not every day when eight stars worth of generals call you at work.”

According to Sharman, he thinks a big part of his success this year is due to the fact that he worked at two different bases – Hickam AFB, Hawaii, and here – with two very different missions.

“At Hickam, we directly supported many small islands throughout the South Pacific with large amounts of unexploded World War II ordnance, so that’s a lot of what we did there, whereas here, the main focus is presidential and Secret Service support,” Sharman said.

Like Carraway, Sharman said he attributes much of his success to the people around him who helped along the way.

“A big reason I made it is because Chief Master Sgt. (Harvey) Hampton (437th Airlift Wing command chief master sergeant) and some other chiefs and senior NCOs on base ran me through mock boards to prepare me for the AMC level of competition,” Sharman said. “The AMC board members told me that made a huge difference.”

Charleston AFB’s senior NCOs weren’t the only ones to help.

“My flight really helped me prepare too,” Sharman said.

As far as advice to other airmen, Sharman offered some of the things he’s learned on the path to becoming one of the 12 OAY.

“Have a good attitude,” Sharman said. “When presented opportunities, capitalize on them. Instead of turning down the TDY no one else wants, take it. Jump in and do your best.”

Sharman also highlighted the importance of having footsteps to follow in.

“Find a good mentor, somebody who’s sharp, and learn from them,” Sharman said.

The 12 OAY program was initiated at the AFA’s 10th annual national convention, held in New Orleans in 1956, according to the association’s Web site. Carraway, Sharman and the other 10 selectees will serve on the AFA Enlisted Council for one year.

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