



News Release

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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CAFB LOADMASTER AIR FORCE TIMES AIRMAN OF THE YEAR

CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE, S.C. – Airman 1st Class Andrea Quillen, a C-17 loadmaster with the 14th Airlift Squadron here, received the Air Force Times Airman of the Year award in a May 15 ceremony in Washington, D.C.

“It was a great honor to win the award,” said Quillen. “I feel really proud, but I was just doing my job ... getting the stuff to the fight.”

To win AF Times Airman of the Year award, Air Force Times readers had to nominate the person they thought was most deserving of the award.

Two members from the 14 AS thought Quillen was deserving of the award.

“She’s outstanding,” said Master Sgt. Jim Mueller, 14 AS chief C-17 loadmaster. “She always gives 110 percent, never complains and is always volunteering for projects.

“She’s the only airman first class who has already been looked at to be an instructor,” Mueller continued. “She was one of our first to be night-vision goggle qualified.”

Quillen said she was one of the 10 air-land crew selected for night-vision goggle training. She said she was also the only loadmaster to earn world-wide, mission ready status after just one overseas mission.

Another master sergeant in the 14 AS had more to say of Quillen.

“In the current operations tempo, we are 75 percent manned and 100 percent taxed for duties,” said Master Sgt. Angel Rodriguez. “I never hear anything from her about not being able to continue.”

Mueller said “she won the award mainly because of how she presents herself. The responsibilities she has as an airman first class are huge. She’s been deployed numerous times for Operation Enduring Freedom.”

Quillen said she has managed airlifts in support of the no-fly-zone over Iraq, participated in Operation Noble Eagle and flown more than 130 hours and 28 sorties in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“Aircraft commanders come back, and we get feedback about her that is always very positive,” said Rodriguez. “As far as the crews she deploys with, she’s always very professional.”

Quillen said that only one Air Force member was chosen from over 5,000 nominations.

“It was narrowed down in the end to a master sergeant and myself,” Quillen said. “The winner was chosen on package alone. I have no clue how I won.”

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At the ceremony on Capitol Hill, Senators John McCain, R-Ariz., and Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, were the guests of honor.

“Some senators came to the presentation, along with family members, my squadron commander, and my supervisor,” said Quillen.

Although selected for the award, Quillen continues to recognize others as winners for the award.

“I was truly honored, but I’m just doing my job,” said Quillen. “I think everyone deserves recognition. We’re all doing our jobs.”

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