

# Desert Lightning News

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Serving Southern Arizona's military community, including Davis-Monthan Air Force Base

JUNE 2023

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### FEATURE



Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon

#### RED FLAG RESCUE

See Pages 6 and 7

# HH-60W brings rescue to new heights

By Staff Sgt.  
JACOB STEPHENS

355th Wing Public Affairs

The motto "That others may live" is the driving force behind hundreds of Airmen's efforts, including pilots, special mission aviators, pararescuemen, maintainers and support personnel.

Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, received the first of its new HH-60W Jolly Green II helicopters in May 2023 as the wing continues developing and fortifying their Airmen for tomorrow's fight.

"It is great to get these new aircraft here at DM," said U.S. Air Force Col. Paul Sheets, 355th Wing vice commander. "The arrival of the HH-60W gives the team enhanced combat rescue capability for today's conflicts and the future."

By the end of 2024, this helicopter will replace the 55th Rescue Squadron's aging HH-60G Pave Hawk fleet. The Jolly Green II, currently operating in Air Combat Command and Air Education Training Command, will integrate into Pacific Air Forces, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command within the next five years.

"I am excited for the opportunities the fielding of the HH-60W brings for our rescue group, Desert Lightning Team, mission partners and Tucson community," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Jaymes Hines, 55th RQS commander. "The delivery of the HH-60W brings relevant rescue capability and capacity to bear now and for the future."

The HH-60W will further enable Airmen to execute the same rescue mission they have performed over the last two decades of conflict. The 563rd Rescue Group has accomplished its rescue mission in both civil and combat operations, saving dozens of lives, and the new Jolly Green II helicopter will ensure the group is able to continue this mission for many years to come.

"This state-of-the-art aircraft represents a



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon

**A U.S. Air Force Airman assigned to the 55th Rescue Generation Squadron spins the rotor of an HH-60W Jolly Green II at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, May 3, 2023. The Jolly Green II is an upgraded model of the current helicopter, the HH-60G Pave Hawk, flown by the 55th Rescue Squadron and features upgraded avionics and weapons.**

significant milestone for the future of Davis-Monthan and our rescue Airmen who work tirelessly to save lives and defend our nation," said U.S. Air Force Col. Jose Cabrera, 563rd RQG commander. "With its advanced technology, survivability and lethality, the HH-60W will enhance the Air Force's ability to conduct combat search and rescue missions in even the most challenging of threat environments."

The upgraded airframe solidifies the Air Force's rescue capabilities in all warfare spectrums with improvements that not only boost the combat effectiveness for the aircrew, comprised of two pilots and two SMAs, but also for the pararescue teams and other special

warfare Airmen who will utilize the platform to complete the rescue mission.

Refined avionics on the HH-60W include a flight management system coupled with a flight director system, weather radar, an improved electro-optical/infrared camera and over-the-horizon tactical data receivers capable of receiving near real-time mission and threat update information.

Additional mission equipment includes a 600-pound-capable hoist with 250 feet of cable, a personnel-locating system compatible with modern survival radios, two crew-served 7.62mm or .50 caliber machine guns and an 8,000-pound capacity cargo hook.

The transportation improvements are two-fold. First, the self-sustaining changes include a lengthened cabin, increased top speed, integrated fuel tanks, in-flight refueling probe and an increased allowed takeoff weight, furthering capabilities to provide airpower necessary to execute lifesaving actions for America and its allies. All HH-60Ws also have folding rotor blades to improve air transportability and shipboard operations, advancing the ability to project airpower anytime, anywhere.

"Our maintainers stand ready to integrate the Whiskey into our fleet," said U.S. Air Force Col. Clarence McRae, 355th Maintenance Group commander. "The maintenance



**U.S. Air Force Airmen from the 55th Rescue Generation Squadron and 55th Rescue Squadron pose for a group photo in front of an HH-60W Jolly Green II at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., May 3, 2023. More Jolly Green IIs will be arriving throughout 2023 and 2024 to the 55th RQS as their current HH-60G Pave Hawks are phased out.**

## Desert Lightning News

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# Flightline on a Friday



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman William Finn

*A U.S. Air Force A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft, assigned to the 354th Fighter Squadron, sits on the flightline at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, March 11, 2023. The A-10C is designed to provide excellent maneuverability at low airspeeds and altitude while maintaining a highly accurate weapons-delivery platform.*



*U.S. Air Force A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft, assigned to the 354th Fighter Squadron, sit on the flightline at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, March 11, 2023.*



*U.S. Air Force A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft, assigned to the 354th Fighter Squadron, sit on the flightline at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, March 11, 2023. The first production A-10A arrived at DM in October 1975, but since then, the fleet has changed to the upgraded A-10C.*

## Air Force's Enlisted Swap Assignment Program starts June 1

### SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

Public Affairs

**ARLINGTON, Va. (AFNS)** — Announced at the September 2022 Air and Space Forces Association's Air, Space and Cyber Conference, the Air Force Enlisted Swap Assignment Program goes live June 1 for senior master sergeants and below with a current assignment. This new policy

provides Airmen with more control and new flexibilities in their assignment process.

The Air Force Enlisted Assignment Working Group, which was charged with holistically reviewing the enlisted assignment program, recommended the program. This program applies only to Airmen, as the Space Force continues to explore flexible and tailored assignment options for Guardians.

Through the MyVector discussion fo-

rum, Airmen will be able to post their assignments and leverage discussions to determine interest in swapping assignments. Currently, Airmen will be able to apply through the My Application link on MyVector.

"The program application on MyVector isn't perfect, but it will evolve throughout the year," said Alex Wagner, assistant secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. "We understand the frus-

trations with our IT infrastructure, which is why it's important for you to provide feedback to the team to make them better."

Airmen must initiate assignment swaps within 90 days from their assignment selection date. Additionally, both Airmen cannot have any adverse quality force indicators and must possess the same permanent change of station eligibility, such as time on station, tour length and retainability.

See SWAP, Page 8

# Security Forces Qualification Course

By Airman  
William Finn V

355th Wing Public Affairs

355th Security Forces Squadron Defenders may be called upon to respond to a variety of threats at a moment's notice. They must possess a level of firearm proficiency that keeps them fit to fight at any time or place.

The Security Forces Qualification Course is a standardized firearms training event that was developed and tested over the course of a full year at 15 different bases, including Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

This year-long training event sharpens a variety of technical skills and consists of four training phases and two additional blocks for extra training. Prior to the SFQC, defender training was limited to a one-day event that made it difficult to retain firearm proficiency.

"With defenders firing every quarter, they are going to get more trigger time and are actually able to implement the techniques they learn in the classroom and on the range," said U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. George Henry, 355th SFS non-commissioned officer in charge of Combat Arms. "Coming in once a quarter, they are learning how to engage targets close up, in night-fire and then actually doing their qualification."

The four phases of the SFQC include:



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman William Finn



355th Security Forces Squadron defenders check targets during the Security Forces Qualification Course at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., April 19, 2023. The SFQC is a year-long training event that sharpens a variety of weapons technical skills.

**355th Security Forces Squadron defenders shoot targets during Carbine Limited Visibility Training at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., April 19, 2023. Carbine Limited Visibility Training is a phase of the Security Forces Qualification Course meant to improve defenders' ability to engage targets in environments where visibility is low due to darkness, smoke, or other conditions.**

Carbine Marksmanship Fundamentals Training, Carbine Short Range Combat Training, Carbine Limited Visibility Training and Carbine Marksmanship Qualification.

Carbine Marksmanship Fundamentals focuses on proper marksmanship fundamentals to include breath control, trigger squeeze, sight picture, sight alignment and follow-through.

"The SFQC helps me be a lot more confident firing weapons with both my dominant and non-dominant hand," said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Michael Cotugno, 355th Security Forces Squadron defender. "The course is a lot more in-depth in terms of developing fundamental mechanics."

Carbine Short Range Training includes engaging single and multiple targets while assessing threat determination in the line of fire.

Carbine Limited Visibility Training is

centered around engaging targets in environments where visibility is low due to darkness, smoke, dust or other conditions.

The Carbine Marksman Qualification event culminates the year of training in a final test, consisting of a timed 100-round course engaging targets at distances varying from 25 meters to 300 meters.

The two additional blocks of training are; Air Force Force Generation reset and the Security Forces Basic Qualification Course.

AFFORGEN reset is a course held for defenders that return from deployment to refresh their training requirements they missed while serving on their deployment.

SFBQC is designed to reintegrate old and new defenders into the Security Forces Qualification Course. Defenders now complete SFBQC during their tech school. Defenders that have been away from the

See COURSE, Page 4



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**RESCUE** (from Page 1)

team has diligently worked to gain the skills needed to sustain the Whiskey and they are ready to get the aircraft in the air. We all recognize the new capabilities and what it means to the rescue community and are ready to onboard our additional HH-60Ws slated for the future.”

The HH-60W’s capability improvements brought to the 355th Wing, an Air Combat Command designated lead wing, help ensure a more lethal, agile, and resilient team that is prepared for the next fight.

“As we look towards our pacing challenge, Davis-Monthan must be ready to answer the call for rescue in any environment, and we’ll make that happen with the Jolly Green II,” said US Air Force Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander. “Rescue is more than a motto; it is a promise to every Soldier, Sailor, Marine, Airman and Guardian that if you are ever isolated from friendlies, no amount of threat or distance will stop us from bringing you home. The Jolly Green II will help us keep that promise to our joint and coalition partners.”



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon  
A U.S. Air Force HH-60W Jolly Green II taxis the flightline at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, May 3, 2023. More Jolly Green IIs will be arriving throughout 2023 and 2024 to the 55th Rescue Squadron as their current HH-60G Pave Hawks are phased out.

**COURSE** (from Page 3)

career field or have been unable to fire for 12 months are also required to complete SFBQC to refresh their skill sets.

The SFQC is now being implemented throughout the Air Force after test bases demonstrated great improvements in Airmen qualification rates and shot groupings, all with minimal to no instructor assistance.

With more advanced weapons training, defenders will be better equipped to protect the Airmen and assets that are vital to the Air Force’s mission.



A 355th Security Forces Squadron defender shoots targets during Carbine Limited Visibility Training at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, April 19, 2023.



355th Security Forces Squadron defenders walk back from checking targets during the Security Forces Qualification Course at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, April 19, 2023. The SFQC is now being implemented throughout the Air Force after test bases demonstrated great improvements in Airmen qualification rates and shot groupings.

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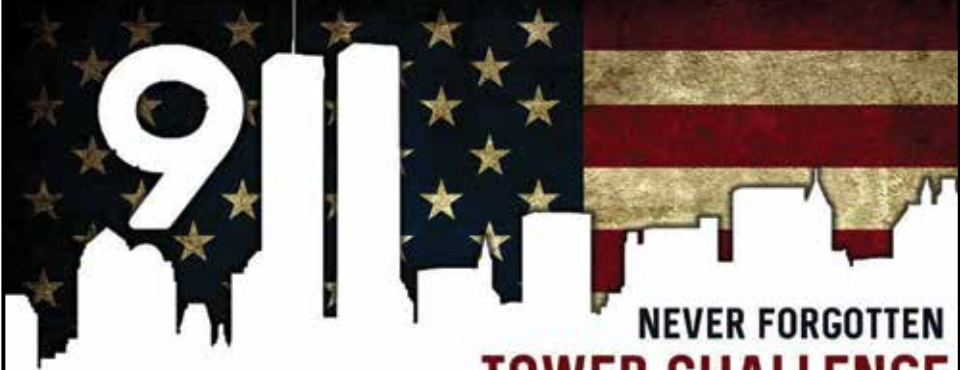
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# Airman saves lives in two separate accidents

By Staff Sgt.  
Abbey Rieves

355th Wing Public Affairs

As Wednesday morning surrendered to the afternoon, it was a normal March day for U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Gabrielle Glover.

CRASH! Right in front of her, a vehicle collided into a motorcyclist... parts, shards and people thrown from impact.

A crowd gathered, but confusion prevailed as it often does in times of crisis.

"I could see how much blood there was, people just standing there and how everyone else drove past," recalled the all-source intelligence analyst assigned to the 354th Fighter Squadron. "I just thought to myself, 'somebody has to do something.'"

That somebody was Glover.

Smashed into the ground, Glover saw a motorcyclist bleeding out from his leg injury.

"At that moment, I remembered the training I received in Basic Military Training," said Glover. "I saw everyone looking confused so I immediately did what I could."

At BMT, Glover, and every BMT graduate, was strategically trained in tactical combat casualty care. Her training was designed to save wounded service members in combat situations. As a transferable medical skill, TCCC teaches techniques like tourniquet application, wound packing, airway clearing and rapid casualty assessment.

Without thinking, Glover removed the sweatshirt she was wearing, and tightened it around the motorcyclist's leg, immediately stopping the bleeding and saving his life.

"I am super proud of her. This is not even work related, it's just her character on full display, helping people in need,"



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Abbey Rieves

**U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Gabrielle Glover, 354th Fighter Squadron all-source intelligence analyst, stands in front of an A-10C Thunderbolt II at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., April 25, 2023. An all-source intelligence analyst discovers, develops, and evaluates intelligence to advise commanders on force protection and intelligence information for U.S. and partner nations.**

said U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Anthony Flood, 354th Fighter Squadron chief of intelligence. "Her doing the exact steps needed shows how professional and people-caring she is."

Glover's action showcases her integrity, which is also an Air Force core value.

"This is a great display of her embodying the Whole-Airman Concept," said Flood. "For her to put other people's

lives ahead of her own without a second thought shows wingmanship. Camaraderie and teamwork are among the highest priorities for her, which is great for us here at the fighter squadron."

At the fighter squadron, Glover customizes training scenarios for the A-10C Thunderbolt II pilots based on collected intelligence. Glover fulfills the continuous effort from the Department of Defense to control the air, space, and cyberspace, with her key role in the intelligence community.

With lethal accuracy, Glover equips the pilots with real-life information, replicating battle spaces that the pilots will likely encounter in their upcoming missions, which is also an Air Combat Command priority.

In mid-September, after a quick lunch and reset from her work, Glover pulled the door to her apartment shut. She turned to face the hot outside air. But her eyes immediately locked onto a multi-vehicle accident just below her apartment's balcony.

A second accident in less than six-months.

Like muscle memory, Glover sprinted to the hit-and-run style scene.

Glover approached the burning vehicle where she quickly assessed the pregnant female driver as confused, but otherwise unharmed. The victim was on her way to a 38-week routine prenatal appointment.

Glover pulled the door handle, but it was barred shut. She leveraged her foot on the vehicle frame and heaved again. This time, the door cracked open.

With the vehicle still in flames, Glover carried the victim out of the burning car and to safety.

"I just wanted to make sure everyone was okay," said

See ACCIDENTS, Page 8

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# RED FLAG-RESCUE 23



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon

U.S. Air Force Airmen prepare for a simulated mass casualty event during RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. For this portion of the exercise, PJs were required to assess a simulated car crash, lift and cut open two cars to extract three mannequins and exfil with two living victims after treating them for their injuries.

## PLAYAS TRAINING

Airmen from across the Air Force and Sailors worked together during the event and built joint capabilities. RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1, May 10, 2023. Ground crew members and pararescuemen were required to lift and cut open two cars to extract three mannequins and two living victims with two living victims.



A U.S. Marine Corps aircraft provides security for a simulated mass casualty event during RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. Ground crew members and pararescuemen were required to lift and cut open two cars to extract three mannequins and two living victims with two living victims.



Two U.S. Air Force pararescuemen carry U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Ty Hendrickson, Marine Air Control Squadron 1 Company Lima Meteorological and Oceanographic analyst forecaster, during a simulated mass casualty event as part of RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. PJs assessed Hendrickson's injuries sustained from the simulated car crash, treated them accordingly and carried him to an HH-60W Jolly Green II to exfil and complete the mission.



U.S. Air Force pararescuemen board a U.S. Marine Corps UH-1Y Venom helicopter during RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. This group of PJs exfilled on the Venom with their additional supplies that could not fit in the HH-60W Jolly Green II that had previously left carrying patients from a mass casualty event.

# 23-1: MASS CASUALTY EVENT

By Airman 1st Class  
PAIGE WELDON

355th Wing Public Affairs

PLAYAS TRAINING CENTER, N.M. — U.S. Air Force personnel from across the country, as well as Marines, Soldiers and Sailors, worked together during a simulated mass casualty event at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. For this portion of the exercise, personnel were required to assess a simulated car crash, treat two living victims and exfil two mannequins after treating them for their injuries.



A U.S. Air Force UH-1Y Venom flies over ground during a simulated mass casualty event during RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. Ground security Airmen were tasked with ensuring the area was clear of simulated civilians to allow rescue teams to complete the mission successfully.



U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Cory Brundage, 79th Rescue Squadron HC-130J Combat King II pilot, waits to be loaded onto a HH-60W Jolly Green II during a simulated mass casualty event as part of RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. Pararescuemen assessed Brundage's injuries sustained from the simulated car crash, treated them accordingly and carried him to an HH-60W to exfil and complete the mission.



A U.S. Air Force pararescueman removes a mannequin from under a car during a simulated mass casualty event during RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. For this portion of the exercise, PJs were required to assess a simulated car crash, lift, and cut open two cars to extract three mannequins and exfil with two living victims after treating them for their injuries.



A U.S. Air Force pararescueman provides care to U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Ty Hendrickson, Marine Air Control Squadron 1 Company Lima Meteorological and Oceanographic analyst forecaster, during a simulated mass casualty event as part of RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. During this iteration of RF-R, Airmen from across the country, as well as Marines, Soldiers and Sailors, worked together to complete multiple training exercises and integrate personnel recovery expertise from across the Joint Force.



LEFT: A U.S. Air Force pararescueman provides care to U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Ty Hendrickson, Marine Air Control Squadron 1 Company Lima Meteorological and Oceanographic analyst forecaster, during a simulated mass casualty event as part of RED FLAG-Rescue 23-1 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, May 10, 2023. During this iteration of RF-R, Airmen from across the country, as well as Marines, Soldiers and Sailors, worked together to complete multiple training exercises and integrate personnel recovery expertise from across the Joint Force.

**ACCIDENTS**

*(from Page 5)*

Glover. "I know if it was me in that situation, I would have wanted someone to do the same for me."

Glover then realized the hit-and-run suspect, who damaged four other vehicles prior to the accident Glover discovered, had serious injuries to his head. Without a second thought, she assembled a makeshift bandage out of bed sheets and administered aid to his wound.

Once all the injuries were addressed, Glover took charge of the scene until emergency services arrived.

As the suspect realized the police were arriving on scene, he took off running. But Glover, who was one-step ahead of him, stuck her leg out in front of his running feet. The suspect fell to the ground and was apprehended by police.

Glover's decision and courage to help injured and endangered community members, even when other observers took the easy road and drove on, is a principal trait highly valued as a service member in the U.S. Air Force.



Courtesy photo

**Above and left: The vehicle accident that U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Gabrielle Glover, 354th Fighter Squadron all-source intelligence analyst, responded to in Tucson, Arizona, Sept., 7, 2022.**



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Abbey Rieves

**SWAP**

*(from Page 2)*

Airmen must also be in the same career field with the same:

- Control Air Force Specialty Code
- Skill level
- Grade or projected grade
- Special Experience Identifier (as required)
- Vector (as required)
- Security Clearance (as required)

Once the application is submitted, it will flow to the Air Force Personnel Center for eligibility checks, consideration and processing. Applicants will be notified of approval/disapproval through MyVector

"We aren't waiting for the perfect system to be built and I'm glad to see this program come to fruition," said U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass. "Just like our recent policy change authorizing retraining, this is one of the many initiatives we are rolling out to ensure we are able to retrain the talent we need on the bench," Bass said. "Building the force of the future requires us to look at our personnel policies and balance them with an integrated approach to ensure we maintain the highest standards of readiness."

Airmen are advised to only use the MyVector discussion forum to arrange assignment swaps and are reminded not to use open online spaces to post assignment information, personal contact and other sensitive confidential information to maintain operational security.

AFPC will provide an updated Personnel Services Delivery Guide identifying program procedures, which will be available in myFSS.

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# Air Force, Space Force to offer medals, promotions for recruiting support

## SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. (AFNS) —Airmen and Guardians can now receive decorations or promotions through recruiting referrals under the new Airman and Guardian Referral Program.

Two new programs, Stellar Talent Acquisition Recruiting Referral and Stripes for Referrals, aim to incentivize all Airmen and Guardians to inspire the next generation to serve in the Air Force and Space Force.

STARR authorizes enlisted service members up to senior master sergeant and officers up to lieutenant colonel to receive up to two Air and Space Achievement Medals for referring three enlisted accessions applicants who depart for basic military training.

Additionally, any enlisted member, or officer up to colonel, may receive the Air and Space Commendation Medal for referring five enlisted accessions applicants who depart for basic military training.

Stripes for Referrals allows Airman and Guardian recruits to be promoted up to E-2 by referring two enlisted accessions candidates, or to E-3 by referring four enlisted accessions candidates who join the Delayed Entry Program or Delayed Entry Training.

Applications must be submitted through the Aim High application to qualify for the Air and Space Achievement and Commendation Medals. All users must create an account and input needed information in the "Refer a Friend" portion of the app in order to receive credit for valid referrals.

In March, the Department of the Air Force launched a Barriers to Service Cross-Functional Team to exam-

**AIRMAN AND GUARDIAN REFERRAL PROGRAM**

**STARR: STELLAR TALENT ACQUISITION  
RECRUITING REFERRAL**

No more than three (3) decorations  
may be awarded, per person across a tiered awarding

**FIRST REFERRAL:**  
Initial ASAM (Air and Space Achievement Medal)

**THIRD REFERRAL:**  
2nd ASAM (Air and Space Achievement Medal)

**FIFTH REFERRAL:**  
ASCM (Air and Space Commendation Medal)

This incentive is for Airmen and Guardians currently serving

Courtesy graphic

ine existing policies and procedures to ensure they reflect the service members needed for the future. The programs announced today are part of this initiative and serve as a cost-effective instrument for referring candidates and increasing enlistments throughout the Department of the Air Force.

More information on the STARR program can be found in DAFMAN 36-2806 and Stripes for Referrals in DAFMAN 36-2032.

### To submit referrals via application:

- Download the Aim High Application on your mobile device
- Create an account using your full, first and last name, and your .mil email address
- Open the application and look for the three horizontal lines at the bottom right labeled, "more"
- Select "more" and scroll to the bottom, and select "Refer a Friend"

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**Bell X-1**



**LM X-56A**

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