



# AIR COMMANDO FOUNDATION

Supporting Air Commandos Past, Present & Future

**Our Mission: Provide critically needed support and financial assistance to Air Commandos and their families, past, present, and future.**

*The ACA Foundation is considered by the USSOCOM Care Coalition as the face of AFSOC for benevolent needs. In that role, the Care Coalition comes to ACA first when there is a need*

“Thanks to the Air Commando Association [Foundation] for their passionate and compassionate care of our force. Once again, when a need for benevolence was identified they quickly answered the call. For all the gracious organizations out there that care for our wounded, ill, and in need teammates, the ACA [Foundation] is by far the most responsive and has the greatest latitude to give. Hats off to Maj Gen-retired Secord and Col-retired Barnett. What you’ve done with ACA is remarkable...and very much appreciated by AFSOC leadership and our great force of Air Commandos! HOOYAH, ACA!!”

CMSgt William Turner  
Former AFSOC Command Chief



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## What is the Air Commando Foundation and who do we help?

- 1) The Foundation is totally supported by the operational side of the ACA. Therefore funds contributed to the Foundation are totally 100% dedicated to supporting Air Commandos and their families....no overhead costs
- 2) The Foundation is considered by the USSOCOM Care Coalition as the face of AFSOC for benevolent needs. In that role, the Care Coalition comes to ACA first when there is a need
- 3) The Foundation is very agile and can literally react at a moment's notice.
- 4) Our contributions to assist AFSOC personnel and their families range from \$150 to slightly over \$10,000. The baby shower support was around \$2,200 and we reacted literally over the weekend to support the wife of this wounded warrior. A request from a SrA from Duke was fulfilled within hours.
- 5) Examples of how we have supported our fellow air commandos:
  - a. TSgt Guitierrez, an Air Force Cross recipient, needed additional financial assistance for his recovery at Andrews Institute that the government could not fund
  - b. Female SSgt at AFSOC HQ had stage four cervical cancer. Care Coalition asked if we would assist in funding a trip for her and her two young children to Disney World to "build some memories" as the single mom's prognosis was 12-18 months. We purchased the tickets and provided additional funds for the family to enjoy the trip
  - c. Young female airman at Cannon was injured while deployed and suffered from a very painful hip problem. Doctors prescribed a new treatment not available in the Clovis, NM area and not authorized by Tricare. We provided funds for her to receive treatment in Lubbock, TX
  - d. Assisted in securing a service dog for a retired air commando suffering from PTSD
  - e. Supported a widow and six children of an active duty special operator, who was tragically killed in a training accident, with \$5,000 for immediate needs
  - f. Provided moving support to a severely wounded Air Commando and his family after two years of rehabilitation at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.



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Dear ACA Members,

The air commandos of the 15th SOS offer our greatest thanks in your support of our 10 Year Fallen Hero's Memorial. With your generous donations we were able to host over 500 military personnel, 100 distinguished visitors, and 50 family members to remember the lives lost on TALON 13 and CHARIOT 55. Your contributions allowed our Squadron to procure seating, stages and refreshments for our guests and your gift of a patriotic floral wreath was a commemorative centerpiece of the memorial event. Thank you!

Very Respectfully,  
Richard Carrell, Lt Col, USAF  
15th SOS, Hurlburt Field Commander

Dear Air Commandos,

The Air Commando Association helped my family in assisting in our final PCS. As a family of the fallen, I was flying across the country alone with my two little ones, ages four and one and a half; the ACA assisted by getting my sister a plane ticket to fly with us. It was a major help to have my sister on our travels as two little kids and one adult is not an easy task! Our family appreciated the kindness and willingness of the ACA to support us in an unusual request, and I was personally very grateful to have assistance with the boys. Thank you to the Air Commando Associate for their support to my family, and all the families that they support of wounded or KIA veterans.

Sincerely,  
Krista Harvell

Dear ACA Members, Current and Future,

My name is TSgt Robert Gutierrez Jr, Combat Controller who was Wounded In Action Oct 2009 Herat Province AFG. The ACA was the first at home station to offer and help out in the long injury recovering process, consistently helping and finding ways to help not only me, but my family and other Air Commandos as well. I am personally indebted to the association and so is my family! Thank you for everything you do and for helping our wounded AFSOC Airmen and their families!

Respectfully,  
Robert Gutierrez Jr TSGT, USAF  
125th Special Tactics Squadron, Combat Controller



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Dear ACA Members,

My name is SrA Danielle Szymczyk part of the 919th OG USAFR at Duke Field and last year my husband SFC Jerry R Szymczyk, at the time assigned to Ft Bragg 1-504th PIR, was injured in Afghanistan fighting for this great country. He was severely wounded while on a patrol in Ghazni when his convoy rolled over home-made explosives, killing two other soldiers in his vehicle. Jerry suffered a spinal separation along with burns, a broken wrist, broken ankle and severe traumatic brain injury. While being transferred to Longshutl in Germany and awaiting transfer to Walter Reed Medical Center I contacted my Unit the 919th OG at Duke Field and my 1st Sergeant, MSgt Lennard. Within the next few hours my daughter and I had plane tickets and a room at The Fisher House.

Without this assistance Jerry wouldn't have received the support he needed to do a full recovery along with reuniting our family. Jerry may not be an Air Commando but he sure received the support and care as if he was one and realized just how much AFSOC takes care of theirs and the families. I am forever grateful for this organization and what they do for Air Commandos!

V/R,  
Danielle Szymczyk, SrA  
USAFR AFRC 919 OG  
Geospatial Imagery Analyst

Dear ACA Members, Current and Future,

My name is TSgt Joseph Deslauriers, AFSOC EOD Technician, who was wounded September 23, 2011 during operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

My wife Lisa had planned to attend her baby shower on September 24, 2011. Unfortunately, my injury caused the entire event to be cancelled. Once I transferred to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center with Lisa by my side, the baby shower was rescheduled to the Washington, DC area. The ACA was thoughtful and generous enough to fly five of her close friends to surprise her for the event. She was excited to spend time with her friends after constantly meeting new people for six weeks.

Thank you for keeping my family in your thoughts and hearts. We will never forget your kindness and support in helping us celebrate the upcoming arrival of our first child among the life changes we were experiencing.

Very Respectfully,  
Joseph Deslauriers, TSgt, USAF  
1 SOCES/CED  
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician