

DCMA Employee Recognizes Different Kind of Home Front Hero

By Dianne Ryder, Editor in Chief

David Wilson, Defense Contract Management Agency Bell Helicopter Textron industrial specialist, has deployed three times — DCMA Central Iraq, DCMA Southern Iraq and DCMA Afghanistan, his current deployment. Some DCMA employees have had multiple deployments and related their various experiences to our readers, but Wilson speaks with admiration

about a “home front hero.” Wilson’s co-worker, Industrial Specialist Luther Stanton, took over Wilson’s duties while he’s serving in Afghanistan.

“I knew I could count on Luther Stanton because he had covered for me earlier in my career when I took a mid-level development training opportunity in 2000-2001, and he covered for me for much of the entire time I was in the

program,” said Wilson. “When this opportunity for me came up, I asked Luther for his support, and he did not hesitate to give it.”

Wilson’s primary reason for deploying echoes that of many other DCMA civilians we’ve interviewed: “... to be on the front line supporting our customers, the men and women in uniform; this is DCMA’s key mission.” Many of the challenges were also the same — leaving the comforts of home and living in austere quarters, traveling in often hostile environments and communicating with loved ones intermittently. Wilson, however, knew he wouldn’t have to worry

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David Wilson, DCMA Bell Helicopter Textron industrial specialist, is currently deployed to DCMA Afghanistan. He is grateful to his colleague Luther Stanton for picking up his workload while he’s deployed. (Photo by Mike King, DCMA Atlanta)



The pilot and copilot of a Bell Helicopter Textron OH-58D *Kiowa Warrior* helicopter from the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade perform a training exercise in preparation for an upcoming deployment to Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Durwood Blackmon)



Luther Stanton next to an OH-58D helicopter at DCMA Bell Helicopter Textron, Fort Worth, Texas. (Photo submitted by Ty A. Helton)

about who would handle his workload while he was away.

“It would have been unappealing, if not undoable, for me to volunteer on a contingency contracting administration support mission had it not been for Luther being in a position to cover for me,” Wilson said. “Knowing that I could come back stateside to my regular duty station and have my work all caught up because Luther would see to it that my customer’s needs and expectations had been fulfilled during my absence gave me peace of mind.”

Wilson went on to extol Stanton’s assets, stating, “He knows the business and has a university degree in industrial technology, which is an exceptional credential for the industrial specialist function. It was a clear decision [to have him take over] based on his credentials as well as our exceptional working relationship.”

Stanton, a Vietnam veteran, had more than 10 years of private industry experience in the industrial

specialist field and was hired by the local Air Force Plant Representative Office in 1983 as a GS-11 industrial specialist. After several years with the AFPRO, one of several precursor organizations to what is now DCMA, Stanton moved to his native North Texas to be close to his family. He has been at DCMA Bell Helicopter since 2001.

Wilson said there was no need to keep in constant contact with Stanton during the deployment. “Luther and I communicated at a minimum weekly, more in an effort to keep me apprised of events. He also inquired about my family and voluntarily touched base with my family members to ensure they were taken care of,” said Wilson.

When asked how seamless the transition was and whether he

would deploy again, Wilson affirmed, “Even in a perfect world, the transition is a challenge, as you are returning from a very fast-paced and volatile environment. But having people you can trust to keep an eye on details makes deploying bearable. I sincerely hope my third deployment is not my final one.”

Wilson said that in his 48 years of life, being able to deploy is the highlight. “There is no other environment where we are able to interact with numerous cultures from numerous nations and work together to achieve a common purpose,” he said. “Although I am apart from my family, I wouldn’t trade it for any experience. I also believe it is a good example for my 14-year-old son.” 

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