

1st Lt. Bliss Receives Award for Excellence



by Ms. Ashley Wuytens, Staff Writer, DCMA West Headquarters

The Major General Donald L. Owens Award was presented to Air National Guard 1st Lt. Harold Bliss, Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) Phoenix, Scottsdale Team at the 56th annual National Guard Association of Arizona conference in Carefree, Ariz. 1st Lt. Bliss received the award for his superior performance as a maintenance officer for the 161st Maintenance Squadron. Junior officers from grades second lieutenant through captain who serve in the Arizona National Guard are eligible for this award. It is conferred on the officer who has excelled in the performance of duties, enabling the Arizona National Guard to meet peacetime and wartime mission requirements.



The nomination for this award is placed by the squadron commander and includes specific facts, achievements and examples that illustrate the officer's exceptional qualities. A nominee's achievements should distinguish this officer from his or her peers and demonstrate leadership and job performance in the officer's primary Air Force Specialty Code. A nominee should also exhibit leadership in social and cultural activities as well as the ability to be an articulate and positive representative of the Arizona National Guard.

Receiving the award was the highlight of 1st Lt. Bliss' career. He has been in the military for 17 years, 13 of which were as an enlisted soldier. After graduating from the I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center's Academy of Military Science, he became supervisor of more than 180 maintenance personnel within his squadron. This position requires highly developed disciplinary and communication skills. "The decisions I make directly affect the members of the unit and the unit itself," said 1st Lt. Bliss, "and the recognition I have received from my squadron commander makes me feel great."

1st Lt. Bliss sees a direct link between his National Guard and DCMA careers. "When I am activated or perform annual training for the military, I become a warfighter and rely on the equipment our very Agency oversees. ... This [award] directly relates to my skills and abilities to perform at the same level as a software acquisition manager for DCMA."

"Receiving this award provides a very high level of recognition and demonstrates to my superiors that I have excelled in my duties and responsibilities," said 1st Lt. Bliss. "It will signify to a selection board, when I am up for promotion, that I am prepared and capable of taking on more responsibilities as a leader and a member of the National Guard." The award is also meaningful to 1st Lt. Bliss as both his father and grandfather served within the unit while Maj. Gen. Owens was in command. "Maj. Gen. Owens was a member of the unit I am assigned to, the 161st Air Refueling Wing [ARW]," said 1st Lt. Bliss. "Our unit was established in the 1940s and has been going strong since." Maj. Gen. Owens rose through the ranks of the 161st ARW, becoming wing commander, air commander and then adjutant general of the Arizona Air National Guard.

(Top) Air Force 1st Lt. Harold Bliss, DCMA Phoenix, Scottsdale Team, recipient of The Major General Donald L. Owens Award. (DCMA staff photo)