

Airman spotlight with Staff Sgt. Joshua Houston, 73rd Airlift Squadron.

**932nd PA:** Why the Air Force Reserve?

**JH:** The Air Force Reserve gave me the chance to continue serving in the military after my active duty career was cut short. I have been stationed at three bases: Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Joint Base McGuire Dix Lakehurst, New Jersey, and now Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. I have been deployed eight times to various parts of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. I have also had the unique experience of holding four Air Force speciality codes during my Air Force career, first as a C-130J Guidance and Control Technician, then as a KC-10 In-Flight Refueling Operator, C-40C Guidance and Control Technician, and now as a C-40C Flight Attendant.

**932nd PA:** What is one of your fondest memories since joining the 932nd AW/73 AS?

**JH:** I have had the privilege of being in two 932nd units; first with 932nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and now the 73rd AS. One of my fondest memories is shortly after I joined the AF Reserve, the 932nd AMXS had their squadron summer picnic and I had the privilege of attending. There were different games you could play: football, Frisbee, little three-wheel trikes you ride around on. One other game was to put on these giant inflatable bubbles suits and then try and play soccer wearing them. The first two kicks of the soccer ball went as planned and then we just started running into each other as hard as we could. My commander, at the time, was on the opposing team and my job was to block him. With everything I had, I ran as fast as I could and jumped feet off the ground into my Commander. It was the only time in my ten years in the military that I have purposely hit an officer. It was all in good fun and fellowship, but for being in the unit for about a month before this picnic, the camaraderie that was shown to me is one of best memories I have in the military.

**932nd PA:** What is your full job title and short description of your duties?

**JH:** My full job title is C-40C Executive Flight Attendant.

**JH:** Our primary duty on the aircraft is to be able to provide for passenger safety during aircraft operations. As flight attendants, we demonstrate emergency equipment use, emergency procedures and egress. Brief passengers. Responsible for expeditious evacuation of passengers/crew and provide emergency first-aid as needed/required. Perform pre-flight, thru-flight, and post-flight inspections of aircraft emergency, cabin and galley equipment. Operate aircraft systems and equipment such as electrical, interphone, doors and exits. Responsible for cleanliness of aircraft interior.

**JH:** We also provide passenger comfort during aircraft operations. Plan all menus and coordinate meal requirements. Purchase and prepare required food and supplies to serve meals and beverages. Store and preserve food items. Provide cabin service and monitor passengers in flight.

**JH:** We supervise and perform loading and off-loading of passengers and baggage onto aircraft. Prepare and validate passenger manifests. Perform passenger and baggage inspections. Supervise loading and unloading of baggage. Apply restraint devices such as straps and nets to prevent shifting during flight. Ensure access to escape exits.

**932nd PA:** What would you like to do or see in the next few years within your career or within the AF Reserve?

**JH:** I would love to attend a Joint Service Professional Military Education School. The idea of going to another service's non-commissioned officer or senior non-commissioned officer course to not only learn the way other branches train, but also try and find new ideas to bring back to the squadron. Not that the Air Force doesn't have great NCO PME, but I would have the chance to showcase what the Air Force does to other branches of the military.

**932nd PA:** Any additional thoughts you would like to share?

**JH:** One of the biggest lessons I learned in my ten years in the military was ownership of one's mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes and has shortcomings; not having that enlisted performance report in on time, forgetting that dental appointment, or failing a physical fitness test. In my personal history PT tests were a contributing factor to why I left active duty. I had fully intended on serving 20 years and retiring but, due to choices I made, that didn't happen. To be in front of your commander, in full-service dress, waiting to find out if this bad choice I made would destroy the career I had in the military is not an experience I relished. My commander at the time asked me one question before he determined what would become of my career. He asked who was to blame for my failed PT test. Was my supervisor not giving enough time to work out? Was it the commander for having deployments to fill? Or some outside force that made it difficult for me to pass the PT test?

**JH:** I told my commander that the only person to blame was myself. The look I got from him was surprise instead of the anger I thought was deserved. My commander told everyone in the room that this was the first time in the three years of being a commander that someone had owned their shortcoming and not blamed someone or something else.

**JH:** That was the day I learned that using every mistake you make is an opportunity to learn from and teach others you see making that same mistake. I was asked a question at my current squadron when I interviewed to be a Flight Attendant. They asked "If we don't select you to be in our unit, what will you do?" I took a minute and thought out my answer. I told the board that "Whether I'm chosen here today or not, I will use this experience to learn from and to continue to serve where I am now. But if I have anyone in my unit that wants to be a flight attendant, I will do my best to help them with whatever they need to get hired and become a flyer." My answer might have surprised

the interview board or it might not have, but here today I sit as a flight attendant in the Air Force Reserve.

**932nd PA:** Thank you Staff Sgt. Houston for sharing your Air Force story.