

Sept. 7, 2012 USAF Basic Military Training Graduation
Col. Jerry Couvillion, Reviewing Officer, Comments

Ladies and gentlemen, moms, dads, family members, and distinguished guests, thank you for attending today's basic training graduation!

My fellow Airmen! What an honor it is to have served as your reviewing officer today! As a parent of a new Airman among you, I am privileged to be representing all of your parents as well as your family members and friends and say on their behalf: "Wow, you have certainly changed since we saw you last, and we couldn't be prouder!"

You have completed a rigorous 8-week program and have earned the right to be called Airmen. More than two months ago, you arrived as citizens, but today, you can now count yourselves among the 1 percent...those who serve and defend our nation. On behalf of the entire Air Force family, we are honored to have you join "the long blue line!"

History is being made today and your future in our Air Force, for however long you choose to serve, is just beginning. For among you is certainly a future military training instructor, first sergeant, chief master sergeant, officer, and yes maybe even a future Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force or even a general officer!

To our veterans, past and present, thank you for your service and thank you for being here today. Among the veterans present today, there is one in the audience who stood at the beginning of the "long blue line" shortly after our Air Force became a separate service in September of 1947. In May 1948, an 18 year-old young man fresh out of high school, the third youngest of 12 children from a small farming community in Louisiana, jumped on a bus and joined the Air Force and attended basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, just like these Airmen.

He was there right after the Air Force was established and today he is here, 64 years later, to witness his grandson, a third generation Airman, graduate from basic training! I am proud to call this Airman my dad! To my dad and to the hundreds of thousands of Airmen just like him who not only laid the cornerstone, but the very foundation of our Air Force 65 years ago this month, thank you for what you did. In front of you stands your legacy!

And finally to all military training instructors and first sergeants: We will be forever in your debt for the outstanding care, compassion, leadership, dedication, and professionalism that you brought to your job every day! Look at what you did! You took these young men and women and molded them into proud Airmen!!!! Thank you for a job extremely well done!

My fellow Airmen, my only advice to you is this: Set your goals, set your course, and make your history! Are you ready to join the ranks of the world's greatest Airmen? Let's swear you in to the United States Air Force.

Oath of Enlistment

I, (state your name), do solemnly swear or affirm, that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice, so help me God.