



SHAWN F. LEONARD  
CLASS OF 1998

Shawn F. Leonard is a 1998 graduate of Point Pleasant Borough High School. Shawn played football and track and field during his tenure at the Boro. After graduation, Shawn entered the United States Air Force in February 1999, attending basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, TX. While there, Shawn was selected to attend training as a Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) at Hurlburtfield Air Force Base, FL. As a TACP, he lives, trains, and deploys with US Army units. When deployed, the TACPs are on the front lines, and live under austere field conditions. Shawn is a certified Department of Defense Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC), providing final attack control to the pilots while the fighters are inbound to the target. The JTAC is responsible for ensuring that the pilot identifies and attacks the correct target while minimizing risk to friendly ground forces in close proximity.

Shawn has served as a TACP for 12 years, achieving the rank of Technical Sergeant (TSgt). He has significant combat experience including tours to Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. TSgt Leonard was instrumental in the training of eighty-three TACP members, providing meticulous mentorship and keen instruction that prepared them for combat duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. While deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom with Combined Joint Special Operations forces from September 2008 to May 2009, he supported fifteen named operations and personally conducted forty-one combat patrols and two air assault missions with numerous agencies, resulting in sixty-two enemy killed-in-action; the clearing of six improvised explosive devices (IEDs); the discovery of

five enemy weapons caches; and the capture of four high value individuals. During one high profile mission, Shawn sustained direct rocket-propelled grenade and machine gun fire. While simultaneously returning fire and maneuvering to a dominant position, TSgt Leonard was able to call in close air support dangerously near to his position, ending the fire fight and saving the lives of three wounded commandos. A consummate air power expert, he was selected to teach Close Air Support operations to US Special Forces teams; the Drug Enforcement Agency; other special agencies; and Afghan Special Operations Commandos.

In March 2010, TSgt Leonard was honored with the 2009 Air Combat Command TACP of the Year award and received the US Air Force SSGT Jacob Frazier JTAC of the Year Award during a ceremony in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes. Additionally, Shawn was awarded the Bronze Star and Combat Action medals for his actions while deployed. He has also received numerous other Air Force and Army commendations and medals.

Currently, Shawn is stationed at 3rd Air Support Operations Group at Ft. Hood, Texas, as Chief of Standardization and Evaluations, responsible for 118 JTACs in the Midwest region. Shawn ensures they are properly evaluated and combat mission-ready for deployments anywhere around the world. Additionally, TSgt Leonard is the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) of Alpha Flight. Shawn's previous assignments have been to Ft. Riley, KS (1999-2001); Camp Casey, Korea (2001-2002); and Schweinfurt, Germany (2002-2005).

Shawn is involved with Habitat-for-Humanity in Killeen, TX; Adopt-A-School program in Coppers Cove, TX; and an active member in the KOMEN Race for the Cure, the Carmie Brady Foundation, and the Lance Armstrong LIVESTRONG challenge, helping raise over \$5,000 for all the organizations.

Shawn has been married to Katherine A. Leonard of Austin, Texas since October 2009. They live in Harker Heights, TX and have two Labrador Retrievers, Luna and Abby.