

HERITAGE TODAY



Breaking Barriers

It's easy to find your limits. Eventually you hit a wall. Or a ceiling. In the Air Force, we tell our own to aim high. Since the beginning, we've refused to accept limits. We don't hit walls. It wasn't that long ago they said man couldn't fly. In 1947, we broke the sound barrier. The Tuskegee Airmen broke the color barrier. America's women broke the gender barrier. Some walls are inside your head. Some walls are in the minds of others. Intolerance. Ignorance. Oppression. The Berlin Blockade was a wall you could touch. We broke through. More than two million tons of cargo—food, clothing, medical supplies—were airlifted across the Soviet line. The Arctic saw a C-47 Skytrain become the first plane to ever land at the North Pole in 1952. In 1978, GPS was born with the launch of NAVSTAR, and guided defense systems became reality. The first enlisted RPA pilot. The first American female fighter pilot. Soon the first female Spec Tactics Airman. The *Enola Gay* ushered in the nuclear era. We've made planes all but invisible. We were the first to parachute from outer space. We have to aim higher because there are no boundaries in this Air Force. We see the impossible. We see things no one else sees. But we don't see walls. Where others see barriers, we see bridges to the future. Hard to cross. Dangerous. With no guarantee. But what's on the other side is worth it. It's not greatness or glory. It's selflessness. We don't break barriers for ourselves. Because to break through is not the end of your journey. It's the beginning of a thousand journeys for those right behind you. Inside every one of us is something so small and enormous, it has the potential to change the world. It's our purpose. Small because it's personal. Enormous because of its power. Someone once said the two most important days of your life are the day you're born and the day you find out why. Everything was impossible until

someone did it. You have sworn an oath to follow orders. Your orders are to look to the horizon. Look to the sky. Space. Dare to see beyond everything we know. The future is waiting for you to create it. Walls are built of fear and doubt. The ones who break through are the ones who never saw a wall at all. Aim high, Airman.