

HERITAGE TODAY



MUTUAL RESPECT

Everybody I ever knew coming out of basic I wish I could go back and salute. We never saluted each other. We were instructed not to. We learned the proper way to salute our superiors. We were taught to salute our flag. But we didn't salute each other. Because we were equals. Not the same. Equals. There was never any rule in the Air Force that said you had to like the person who might one day save your life. But we respected each other. No matter what, you respect each other. There are things you don't do, lines you don't cross—between men and women, officer and enlisted. That's your brother. That's your sister. That's an Airman. And the only abuse we inflict is on the enemy. We live by a higher code of conduct in the Air Force. Doing the right thing when the world is watching takes courage. Doing the right thing when no one is watching takes character. In the heat of battle...in the heat of a moment. When no one's around, your weaknesses do not come before your country's expectations. We're all Airmen. Mutual respect is given. You may not be required to salute your equals, but you will honor their courage and sacrifice with respect. We are every pilot, every mechanic, every nurse, every combat controller, missile defender, master sergeant and four-star general that has ever sworn to be our nation's sword and shield. We are men and women who have lived and died side by side so that you can stand together, shoulder-to-shoulder, and proudly call yourselves Airmen. For what you do every day you put on that uniform, we salute you. Aim high, Airman.