

HERITAGE TODAY



## Teamwork

There've always been civilians in the Air Force. Right there with us. Side by side. At home and deployed. We wore the uniform, and they didn't. But they took that oath. "To support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic." Chances are, that oath means more to them than anybody can imagine. We're all part of the team. They could have taken their skills anywhere, but they brought them to the Air Force. Some of them have been here longer than us, and they'll be here when we've moved on. They're the ones with lifetimes of experience. They're the ones with fresh-faced enthusiasm. Patriotism...they're the ones who are here to be a part of something bigger than themselves. To serve their country and lead in any way they can. Are they Airmen? Some are separated or retired. Some came in through an intern program or basic federal employment opportunity. Some were Marines, Army, Navy, Coast Guard...a lot of them do what we do. Better. They do it for the same reason we do. Country. A team is not the people you work with. A team is the people you trust. Ask any Airman what the civilians' purpose in the Air Force is and you might hear that civilians are here to provide know-how and support. And just about every Airman would tell you that civilians aren't just *part* of the team—they're a *critical* part of the team. So think about this: if everybody on a team supports each other, how are we supporting *them*? Simple. With our respect. This is for all you civilians watching this. The electricians, the defenders, engineers, childcare, instructors, logistics, finance, human resources and all 180,000 men and women without whom this Air Force would grind to a halt in a split second. You. Our civilians. You may not stand at attention, but you

stand for everything that is good and right about this country. You may not wear the uniform, but you *do* wear the mission. You are part of this team, you embody our core values and there is such a thing as respect. We are never required to salute civilians. But we are *allowed* to. So we salute you. We thank you. And to every single one of you we say this: Aim high, Airman.