

# It's Been an Amazing Journey

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**ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga.** -- As I reflect on my career and prepare for retirement from my beloved Air Force Reserve, I am so thankful for having had the opportunity to serve my country and I am so excited to see what all of you will do in the future.

In my journey, I have laughed, cried and sang. My two amazing sons were born. I built friendships and found a family with all of you.

Throughout my career, it was always my desire to add value to everyone I came in contact with. This has been my guiding principle and I hope I have been successful along the way.

I'm grateful to all my mentors who encouraged me to grow and pushed me out of my comfort zone. Sometimes, this was painful, but I knew I needed this to keep growing in order to add value to others.

It was not always easy, but without you, my life would have been flat and boring. Because of you, I was able to reach all of my goals.

Because of your guidance, I was aware of my blind spots. This allowed me to see things from your perspective, to see what I was missing and learn how we could help each other. All of you made me stronger than I ever expected. You allowed me to learn, grow and change. You gave me opportunities to do my best and to serve better.

You built security and confidence in me.

When I was a young Airman, you taught me the value of teamwork and what it meant to be a good Airman. When I faced toxic leadership, I was able to weather the storm because I knew what goodness looked like. You taught me that alone we can be good, but together, we can be great.

As an NCO, I learned my obligation to give back and develop the next generation of Airmen. I kept learning and being ready for the next opportunity. I was a very happy, engaged supervisor, peer and friend.

As a chief, I have done my best to give back, to push people out of their comfort zones to reproduce goodness in our force.

In this journey, I have been committed to my country, my fellow Airmen and military brothers and sisters. I cannot thank my civilian job enough for granting me the time to serve in this capacity. Thank you to my sons who have been my rock. Without them and their help, I would have stopped a long time ago.

Along the way, I have learned I need to be patient, persistent, mature and I need to always keep my eye on the big picture. I always need to be prepared for the next challenge.

Every step of my journey has given me a new version of me. We are constantly changing, and as we change, there is a new level of understanding.

If I were to give you any advice, it would be to be secure in your journey, in your service and in your commitment to our country. Use your gifts and your strengths to find opportunities. Use your story to inspire others and to keep the uphill battle of self-discipline going. Make a commitment to grow yourself.

I leave with my heart full of happiness knowing the Air Force Reserve is in the best hands and that the future is bright.

What is next for me? I'm going back to my civilian job with the Department of Homeland Security in California. My sons will have me back and my brother will finally get a break from being the primary caregiver for our mother, who requires full-time care.

As I continue to grow, I will also start a business where I can continue to teach leadership, coach individuals to find their full potential and speak to audiences about resiliency and self-growth.

I have been amazed at how every step in my journey – good, bad or ugly – has brought me here. I thank all of you for allowing me to be part of your lives!