



NEWS RELEASE

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CAFB mentor-mentee selected for Thunderbirds

CANNON AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. – Two Airmen from the 27th Special Operations Wing at Cannon Air Force Base were recently selected for the U.S. Air Force Thunderbird Air Demonstration Squadron at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada.

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Brian Wolford and Senior Airman Keith Dickens Jr. from the 27th Special Operations Aircraft Maintenance Squadron were selected for the for the prestigious demonstration team based on their exceptional performance, leadership and job knowledge.

The pair's high performance and success is the direct result of their empowering work relationship.

"When I first got here, Dickens was an Airman First Class and still fairly new," said Wolford. "I watched him constantly overthink things and worry something may go wrong. Then I gave him opportunities to learn by leading. He was uncomfortable, but ready and willing to do it."

"In each stage of my life, especially in my military career, there's been different people who motivated me along the way," said Dickens. "I want to embody what they've taught me and how they've taught me so I can pass that forward to others."

"Our leaders are encouraged to remove barriers so Airmen feel empowered to seek independent initiatives to become experts in their field," said U.S. Col. Harry Seibert, 27th Special Operations Maintenance Group commander. "TSgt Wolford's deliberate development of SrA Dickens demonstrates the investment Airmen need for ownership, accountability and success."

Guiding Dickens' through the Thunderbird application process also opened a door for Wolford to apply.

"When the Thunderbirds team called to inquire about Dickens," explained Wolford, "I asked 'while I have you, do you need a Tech. Sgt. with F-16 experience?' He responded, 'yes.'"

That simple response led to Wolford applying for, and being accepted to, the Thunderbirds maintenance team.

Dickens joined the Thunderbirds team, which is composed of eight pilots, four support officers, three civilians and 130 enlisted personnel, on (date) to begin formal training. Wolford will join him in March 2023.

The full story video feature is available to download and share at:
<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/854695/empowered-purpose>

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