

Kathy LaSauce USAF Lt Col ret

Vietnam War

Draft ending - to fill expected shortfalls increased number of women allowed to serve above 2%

1972 OTS San Antonio, Texas (Apr- Jul 1972)

- 12 week indoctrination course
- Marched separate WAF Squadron
- Not allowed to complete small arms training or obstacle course
- Not participate in sports

AMOC Chanute AFB Illinois (Jul – Dec 1972)

- Air Force initiated a plan to utilize women in more non-combat fields.
- In the first class of women trained as Aircraft Maintenance Officers
- 900 hours technical training in Aerodynamics, airframe construction, reciprocating and jet engines, electronics, electrical, environmental & egress systems, fuel systems, weight & balance

Travis AFB California (1973-1975)

- 80 hours Technical Training C-141
- Flight line Maintenance Officer “Alpha One”
- Supervised 120 maintenance personnel - launch & recovery of 40 C-141 Aircraft
- **“Operation Homecoming”** bring POWs home from Vietnam
- Developed C-5 & C-141 Refurbishment Program (MAC Standard)
- Technical Training C-5 & C-130
- Transient Maintenance Officer

Anderson AFB Guam (Apr 75-Mar 76)

- OIC nine WC-130 “Typhoon Chasers”
- Supervised 70 maintenance personnel to insure success of vital weather reconnaissance & rescue missions
- **“Operation New Life”** Vietnam Refugees
- Regular Commission Received

1975 legislation enacted to open service academies to women and Air Force planned to conduct a “test” program to train women pilots

1976 Squadron Officers School Maxwell AFB (Mar – Jun 1976)

- Retake AFOQT test (parts previously restricted to women) and complete a Life Support & Aeromedical evaluation

1976 UPT Williams AFB Arizona Class 77-08

- 16 day Flight Screening at Hondo Texas
- 15 hours Cessna 172
- Initial class of ten Women pilots
- “No Loss” Flight Commander
- 350 hrs. Classroom 125 hrs. Physical Training
- Cessna T-37 “Tweet” - 90 hours twin jet engines
- (300 MPH) unpressurized 25,000ft.
- Dec 2 solo – certificate HIS XXX HER
- Aerobatic maneuvers, instrument flight procedures, intro formation
- Cross Country March AFB Ca. – on descent ear block - declared “emergency” and diverted to Norton DNIF
- Disneyland IP Ron Wetters on Dumbo ride “I’ve got the elephant”
- Supersonic T-38 Talon - over 800 MPH (Mach 1.2) pressurized above 50,000 ft. – 120 Hours IP Denny Pruitt
- Solo cross country to Utah over Grand Canyon
- Formation Flying
- Four ship Formation of Women in “No Loss” - call sign “Hot Lips”
- Pilot Silver Wings Sep 1977

C-141 Training Altus AFB Oklahoma (Oct 77-Jan 78)

- Top Academic Graduate
- Advantage - 7 months training AMOC, Technician training C-141, C-5, and C-130
- Four years' experience Maintenance Officer

Norton AFB, California (1977- 1983)

- C- 141 Starlifter Cruise (500 MPH) max Gross Weight 345,000 lbs.
- Fuel efficient Mach .72 or .74 at 41000 ft.
- Crew - 2 pilots, 2 flight engineers, loadmasters & navigator
- Co-Pilot qualified March 1978 (15 day – 807 Pacific Mission)
- 4 months later Civic Leaders LAX to Scott AFB with Col Cassidy and Capt. Duncan McNabb (navigator) - taxied first time LAX - flew left seat first time landing at Norton
- Mar 79 FP Training Altus AFB
- **3 Feb 1980 Certified Aircraft Commander**
- 15 day Pacific Mission – numerous aircraft malfunctions / weather issues “Emergency return, aborts on runway – demanding mission “from HELL”
- **3 Dec 1980 promoted to Major - three years Below the Zone**
- Apr 1981 IP Training Altus - Upgraded to Instructor (top 3%)
- Mar 1982 IP Flight Simulator – then Wing Flight Examiner Pilot (top 1%)
- Call sign “Lifter #11”
- Jun 1982 Wing/Base Flight Simulator Instructor/Flight Examiner - Wing Stan Evaluation IP/FE (225 Wing pilots – 4 Women)

Armed Forces Staff College - Norfolk, Va. (Jun1983-Jan 1984)

89th Military Airlift Wing Andrews AFB Maryland (1984-1986)

- Special Airlift Missions VC-135 (VIP variant Boeing 707)
- Worldwide airlift for the Vice President, Cabinet members, Congressional leaders and other high ranking dignitaries of US and foreign governments
- VC-135 - 11 hours endurance with long range fuel tanks

- SAM missions block in within seconds of scheduled arrival – passengers often greeted by heads of state or media coverage
- Crew 3 pilots, 2 flight engineers, crew chief, 2 radio communications specialist's, 3-4 flight stewards, and sometimes security police and flight surgeon
- Aircraft Commander Line check 18 day around the world with Rep Rodino, Pat Schroeder and House Judiciary Committee
- Required 22 diplomatic clearances with last minute clearance to Hanoi
- Alaska, Tokyo Japan, Hong Kong, Beijing China, Seoul Korea, Hanoi Vietnam, Bangkok Thailand, Rangoon Burma, Calcutta India, Delhi India, Peshawar Pakistan, Bahrain , Rome Italy, Torrejon Spain, Andrews Washington (16 Aug – 3 Sep)
- Taj Mahal, Sistine Chapel, – rode an elephant - ate calamari in Madrid
- 1 March 1986 promoted to Lt. Col.
- Managed flight operations for VC-135/VC-137 Aircraft and 225 aircrew personnel

HQ USAF Pentagon (1986 – 1988)

- Deputy Chief /Chief Special Activities Division
- Managed Air Force Model Installation Program for Air Force Chief of Staff
- Supervised 11 personnel that develop and implement actions/documentation that defend Air Force Program before Congress, OSD, JCS and the Secretariat

89th Military Airlift Wing Andrews AFB Maryland (1988 – 1992)

- Deputy Commander , Air Transportation 89 MAWg
- Commander 93 Aerial Port Squadron
- Busiest & most visible Air Passenger Terminal in the Air Force
- Over 150 personnel involved directly with air passenger traffic, baggage handling, & ground servicing of over 2,000 transient military & foreign aircraft per month

- Air transportation for the President and Vice President of the United States, the Cabinet, Members of Congress, Foreign Heads of State and DOD.
- Managed airlift and ground support operations for Gorbachev's visit to Washington Summit, Presidential Campaign, DOD Salute to President Reagan, Freedom Flight (POWs from Iraq) and a wide range of media intense events.
- Planned/directed the air movement of President Reagan's professional manuscripts, papers and memorabilia. (Joint Service Commendation)
- Supported Humanitarian relief missions to Afghanistan, Africa, South America, Soviet Armenia, Romania, Pakistan, Angola, Chad, Argentina, and Kurdish people in Iraq.
- During **Operation Desert Shield/Storm** supported over 670 wartime missions
- Involved in unique missions tasked directly by State Dept. , White House, and DOD
- Commands, plans, and controls all activities of 140 Aerial Port Squadron personnel
- **Selected for promotion to Colonel 1990** and ICAF
- Assistant Deputy Commander, 89 Operations Group
- **Retired Apr 1992**