



**Tech. Sgt. Mark A. DeCorte
United States Air Force**



Tech. Sgt. Mark DeCorte is a 13- year veteran of the United States Air Force and is currently serving as part of the *Why We Serve* speakers program. He recently returned from assignment in Afghanistan and is speaking to groups around the country about his personal experiences while supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

DeCorte was attached to the 33rd Combat Rescue Squadron where he, and two other aeromedical Evacuation Flight Instructors, were handpicked to develop an air ambulance on HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters. Each instructor operated as the sole medic onboard during any given mission. During this time DeCorte was on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. While logging more than 104 hours on 63 combat sorties, he made 36 coalition rescues and resupplied Special Operation teams during fire fights with critical ammunition, water and supplies.

DeCorte is currently stationed at Minot Air Force Base, ND and assigned to the 5th Medical Support Squadron as the noncommissioned officer in charge (NCOIC) – Medical Readiness He followed in the footsteps of both his parents and enlisted into the Air Force in 1994, after graduating from Oscoda Area High School in Oscoda, Michigan. DeCorte is married to Tech. Sgt Loretta DeCorte, also an Air Force medic, and they have four children, Emilee, Mikael, Nicholas, and Benjamin.

When asked why he DeCorte chose to serve, DeCorte stated, “I have always felt a calling to serve in the military. I grew up in a military household filled with stories of past operations and discussions on current events between my father, mother, and uncle; all of whom had also been USAF medical sergeants. Between our family history and my involvement in the Boy Scouts, my brother and I became patriotic at a young age. Over time, we found ourselves studying the captivating military around us and it eventually became our military too.”

DeCorte’s decorations include the Air Medal with two devices, the Air Force Commendation Medal with two devices, the Air Force Achievement Medal with five devices, the Meritorious Unit Award, the AF Outstanding Unit Award with 7 devices, the Combat Readiness Medal, the AF Good Conduct Medal with three devices, the National Defense Service Medal with one device, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Air & Space Campaign Medal, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border, AF Longevity Service with two devices, and the Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon with one device.