



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

COLONEL SHARON A. SHAFFER

Colonel Sharon A. Shaffer is the Staff Judge Advocate for Headquarters Air Combat Command, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. As staff judge advocate, she is the principal legal adviser to the Commander Air Combat Command (ACC) and headquarters staff on all legal issues involving military justice, combat operations, civil litigation, environmental law, claims, international law, and administrative law. She provides professional guidance to over 300 active duty, reserve and civilian attorneys and to over 300 enlisted paralegals and civilians. Colonel Shaffer's office establishes policy oversight for 20 legal offices, including six general court-martial jurisdictions, which provide legal services to over 134,000 active duty members and civilians and their eligible dependents.



Colonel Shaffer was commissioned as an Air Force officer through the direct appointment program and entered active duty on 5 February 1990. She has served as a Circuit Trial Counsel, Circuit Defense Counsel, Military Judge, Staff Judge Advocate for Headquarters, Air Force Reserve Command and Staff Judge Advocate for Headquarters, Pacific Air Forces. In 2003, Colonel Shaffer was selected as the first Deputy Chief Defense Counsel for the Office of Military Commissions and assigned to represent one of the first four detainees charged in the Global War on Terrorism. Following the military commissions, she served as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, Headquarters United States Air Forces in Europe. Colonel Shaffer has tried over 150 courts-martial as either trial or defense counsel and presided as a military judge in 160 general and special courts-martial.

Colonel Shaffer is licensed to practice law before the Supreme Court of the State of Michigan, the United States Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals, United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, and the United States Supreme Court.

EDUCATION

- 1985 Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and German, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS
- 1989 Juris Doctor, Western Michigan University Cooley Law School, Lansing, MI
- 1992 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL
- 1998 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL
- 2003 Air War College, by correspondence
- 2013 Joint Air and Space Operations Senior Staff Course, Hurlburt Field, FL

ASSIGNMENTS

1. March 1990 – February 1992, Assistant Staff Judge Advocate, Air Force Military Training Center, Lackland AFB, TX
2. February 1992 – March 1994, Circuit Trial Counsel, Second Judicial Circuit, Maxwell AFB, AL
3. March 1994 – July 1995, Circuit Defense Counsel, First Judicial Circuit, Bolling AFB, Washington D.C.
4. July 1995 – July 1997, Chief, Accessions and Recruiting Branch, Office of The Judge Advocate General, The Pentagon, Washington D.C.

(Current as of September 2017)

5. July 1997 – June 1998, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL
6. June 1998 – October 2000, Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, Dover AFB, DE
7. October 2000 – July 2003, Military Judge, USAF Eastern Circuit Trial Judiciary, Bolling AFB, Washington D.C.
8. July 2003 – January 2005, Deputy Chief Defense Counsel, Office of Military Commissions, Office of the Secretary of Defense, The Pentagon, Washington D.C.
9. January 2005 – July 2006, HQ AF/JAA, Legal Advisor for SAF/IGS, The Pentagon, Washington D.C.
10. July 2006 – June 2007, Chief, Military Justice Division, HQ USAFE, Ramstein AB, Germany, & Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, Headquarters Third Air Force
11. June 2007 – July 2008, Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, Headquarters, United States Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein AB, Germany
12. July 2008 – June 2010, Staff Judge Advocate, Headquarters, Air Force Reserve Command, Robins AFB, GA
13. June 2010 – June 2012, Director of Staff/Chief, TJAG Action Group, Office of The Judge Advocate General, The Pentagon, Washington D.C.
14. June 2012 – August 2016, Staff Judge Advocate, Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, Joint Base Pearl-Harbor Hickam, HI
15. August 2016 – Present, Staff Judge Advocate, Headquarters Air Combat Command, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, VA

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

- 1987 American Jurisprudence Award/Constitutional Law, Thomas M. Cooley Law School
 1991 Company Grade Officer of the 2nd Quarter, Lackland Air Force Base, TX
 1991 Company Grade Officer of the Year, Lackland Air Force Base, TX
 1991 Air Force Association Company Grade Officer of the Year
 1991 Outstanding Young Judge Advocate of the Year, Air Training Command
 2004 President's Commendation, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
 2005 Roger N. Baldwin Medal of Liberty Winner - ACLU
 2005 Joe A. Callaway Award for Civic Courage

Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters

Defense Meritorious Service Medal

Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters

Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with one oak leaf cluster

Air Force Organizational Excellence Award with four oak leaf clusters & one silver leaf cluster

Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

First Lieutenant	5 February 1990
Captain	5 August 1990
Major	1 February 1997
Lt Colonel	1 August 2002
Colonel	1 May 2007

(Current as of September 2017)

FORMAL PRESENTATIONS, LECTURES

April 2013: Defence Legal Joint Legal Issues Workshop, Puckapunyal, Australia: **Presenter: “Current Issues in Sexual Assault & Special Victims Counsel Program”**

October 2006: The George Washington Law Review Symposium on “The New Face of Armed Conflict”: **Presenter: “Practitioner’s Views from Guantanamo”**

October 2006: National Association of Women Judges: 28th Annual Conference: **Keynote Speaker, “Women Judges at War”**

December 2005: United States Air Force Academy; **Presenter: “Loyalties as a Military Officer vs Loyalties to the Constitution”**

June 2005: Interview on 60 Minutes with Ed Bradley; **“Defending Terrorists”**

March 2005: Supreme Court Fellows Presentation; **Presenter: “Military Justice vs Military Commissions – Mounting Defense Challenges”**

May 2004: Sudan Bar Association & Judiciary; Khartoum, Sudan; **Presenter: “The American Judicial System”**