

10 Navy, Marine Corps aviators earn 'Wings of Gold'

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony on Jan. 21 in the chapel at NAS Meridian.

The naval aviator designation ceremony is not prescribed specifically by U.S. Navy regulations, but has emerged as an honored product of the rich heritage of naval tradition. It marks the culmination of nearly two years of specialized training, which has prepared these officers for the rigorous demands of aerial combat and carrier operations -- earning each the title of "Naval Aviator" and the right to wear the coveted "Wings of Gold."

Ten U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aviators will receive "Wings of Gold." They were:

First Lt. Travis Bond, USMC, who was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Dec. 11, when he was named VT-7's "Top Hook" for that carrier qualification evolution. Bond completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven;

Lt. j.g. Douglas DeVuono, USN, who earned four Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Dec. 12. DeVuono completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

First Lt. Stanton Gardenhire,

USMC, who earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and was selected as VT-9's Student of the Month for July 2010. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Dec. 11, when he was named VT-9's "Top Hook" for that carrier qualification evolution. Gardenhire completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt. j.g. Anthony Golemi, USN, who earned two Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Dec. 12. Golemi completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

First Lt. Derek Heinz, USMC, who earned four Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Dec. 12. Heinz completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt. j.g. Christopher McCook, USN, who was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training and earned five Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Dec. 12. McCook completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with

Training Squadron Seven;

Lt. j.g. John Reeves, USN, who earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Nimitz (CVN-68) on Nov. 6. Reeves completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven;

Lt. j.g. Erik Smith, USN, who earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Dec. 11. Smith completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt. j.g. Michael Smith Jr., USN, who was selected VT-9's Student of the Month for June 2010 and earned the "Best Bomber" award for his class. He was named to the Commodore's List during Advanced Jet Flight Training and earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Nimitz (CVN-68) on Nov. 6. Smith completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine; and

Lt. j.g. Andrew Wigginton, USN, who earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Dec. 12. Wigginton completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.