

Eight students earn aviator 'Wings of Gold' July 23

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony on July 23, 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."

Eight U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aviators received "Wings of Gold." They were:

First Lt. Chad Allen, USMC, who was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training and the Commodore's List with Distinction during Advanced Jet Flight Training. He also was designated a Chief of Naval Air Training Distinguished Naval Graduate. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned five Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy and carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on June 13. Allen completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven;

Lt .j.g. David Anderson, 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 June 12. Anderson completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt .j.g. Braden Apperson, USN, who earned four Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and received the Chief of Naval Air Training "Top Gun" award for outstanding achievement in the Air Combat Maneuvering syllabus. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on June 12. Apperson completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven;

Lt .j.g. William Carey Jr., USN, who earned the "Best

Bomber" award for his class. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy and carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on June 12. Carey completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt .j.g. Traver Fordham, USN, who earned four 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 June 12, when he was named "Best at the Boat" for that carrier qualification evolution. Fordham completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt .j.g. Nathan Gingery, USN, who was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training. He 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 June 13. Gingery completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven;

Lt .j.g. John Hesling, USN, who was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training and the Commodore's List with Distinction during Advanced Jet Flight Training. He also was designated a Chief of Naval Air Training Distinguished Naval Graduate. During Advanced Jet Flight Training, he earned three Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy and was selected as VT-7's Student of the Month for April 2010. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on June 13. Hesling completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven; and

Lt .j.g. Gregory Stammen, 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 June 12. Stammen completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.