

Aviators earn 'Wings of Gold' in November ceremony

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony on Nov. 19, 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."

Five U.S. Naval Aviators received "Wings of Gold." They were:

Lt. j.g. Brian Hanson, 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 Sept. 27. Hanson completed Advanced Jet Flight Training

with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt. Kenneth Hollon, USN, who was designated as a Naval Flight Officer in 2004 and flew as a Weapon Systems Officer in the F/A-18F until 2008 when he was selected for the NFO to Pilot transition. Hollon was selected as VT-9's Student of the Month for March 2010 and 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 Nimitz (CVN-68) on Nov. 7. Hollon completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt. j.g. Nikolai Howe, USN, who earned two Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and earned the "Top Gun" award for his class. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Sept. 27. Howe completed Advanced Jet Flight Training

with Training Squadron Nine;

Lt. j.g. Joseph Rice, USN, who was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training. He earned five Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Jet Flight Training and earned the "Best Bomber" award for his class. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Sept. 28. Rice completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine; and

Lt. j.g. Matthew Turner, USN, who was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training and earned one Navy "E" for bombing accuracy during Advanced Flight Training. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) on Sept. 28, when he was named "Best at the Boat" for that carrier qualification evolution. Turner completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.