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**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS**

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2019-02418

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COUNSEL: NONE

HEARING REQUESTED: YES

APPLICANT’S REQUEST

His DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty*, Block 13, *Decorations, Medals, Badges, Citations and Campaign Ribbons Awarded or Authorized*, be corrected to reflect the following:

- 1. His Air Force Achievement Medal with one bronze oak leaf cluster (AFAM w/1 BOLC) be removed.
- 2. He be awarded the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM).

APPLICANT’S CONTENTIONS

He was awarded an AFAM w/1 BOLC while attending a commissioning program. However, the award write-up states the award was for “Meritorious Service” for the period of 17 Apr 01 to 2 Aug 04, and further explains how he “distinguished himself by meritorious service while assigned to the Air Mobility Command Computer Systems Squadron and the [redacted] Squadron.” He believes, since the award write-up indicated meritorious service, the award should have been a MSM and not an AFAM.

The applicant’s complete submission is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The applicant is a former Air Force senior airman (E-4) who entered the Regular Air Force on 1 Nov 00.

On 2 Aug 04, according to the applicant’s DD Form 214, he was honorably discharged from the Air Force. The awards listed in Block 13 include the following: AFAM, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and the Air Force Training Ribbon.

On 23 Mar 21, AFPC/DP3SP (Recognition Team) informed the applicant they were unable to verify award of the MSM. They informed the applicant, although he provided evidence with his

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application to the Board, it did not support his request. The evidence provided indicates a recommendation for award of the AFAM w/1 BOLC. They invited the applicant to provide source documents to support his request to upgrade the AFAM w/ 1 BOLC to an MSM, such as a decorations package to include: a reconstructed award recommendation for upgrade from someone with firsthand knowledge of the act/achievement preferably someone within the chain of command at the time of the act/achievement, a signed narrative citation, (narrative must be signed by the recommending official in the applicant's chain of command and have first-hand knowledge) and eyewitness statements from those who can attest to the act/achievement. In addition, a revocation for award of the AFAM w/ 1BOLC must be submitted.

For more information, see the excerpt of the applicant's record at Exhibit B and the letter and advisory at Exhibits C and D.

AIR FORCE EVALUATION

AFPC/DP3SP recommends denying the applicant's request. The applicant did not provide a complete decorations package from someone within the applicants' chain of command with firsthand knowledge of the act/achievement recommending the AFAM w/ 1 BOLC be upgraded to award of an MSM.

In accordance with Air Force Manual 36-2806, *Military Awards: Criteria and Procedures*, dated 10 Jun 19, section A2.11, the MSM is awarded to any Service member, or to any member of the armed forces of a friendly foreign nation, who has distinguished himself or herself by outstanding meritorious achievement or service. To be eligible, normally the acts or services rendered are comparable to that required for the Legion of Merit, but in a duty of lesser though considerable responsibility. The medal may be awarded for outstanding achievement or service while serving in a combat zone, combat zone tax exclusion areas, and areas authorized for hostile fire pay, imminent danger pay, or hazardous duty pay. However, the Bronze Star Medal is the appropriate equivalent level award to recognize meritorious achievement or service performed under combat conditions.

In accordance with section A2.15, the AFAM is awarded to any Service member, or to any member of the armed forces of a friendly foreign nation, who has distinguished himself or herself by outstanding achievement or service. The medal is awarded to U.S. and foreign military personnel in the grade of O-5 and below. No more than one AFAM may be awarded during a 1-year period except under extraordinary circumstances. The medal may not be awarded for aerial achievement or retirement. Superior performance of duty or attainment of honors based solely on academic achievement (such as graduating with honors from a Noncommissioned Officer Academy or other course of instruction) does not, in itself, constitute justification for an award of the AFAM. Awards should be restricted to achievements or services that are clearly outstanding and unmistakably exceptional when compared to similar achievements and accomplishments of personnel of like rank and responsibilities. Accordingly, appropriate remarks on effectiveness and performance reports, favorable communications, locally developed certificates and command special trophies and awards provide ample means of recognizing the high caliber performance expected of Air Force members. The successful accomplishment of a predesignated number of tasks or functions

is not a valid basis for an award of the medal. However, unusual and extraordinary sustained performance may be used as a point of departure in justifying meritorious achievement or service. In instances where persons are affiliated with an exceptionally successful program, project, or mission, the medal may only be awarded to the relatively few members whose contributions clearly stand out from the others, and who have contributed most to the success of the program.

The complete advisory opinion is at Exhibit D.

APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF AIR FORCE EVALUATION

The Board sent a copy of the advisory opinion to the applicant on 23 May 23 for comment (Exhibit E), but has received no response.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. The application was not timely filed.
2. The applicant exhausted all available non-judicial relief before applying to the Board.
3. After reviewing all Exhibits, the Board concludes the applicant is not the victim of an error or injustice. The Board concurs with the rationale and recommendation of AFPC/DP3SP and finds a preponderance of the evidence does not substantiate the applicant's contentions. The applicant did not provide evidence he was awarded a MSM. The use of meritorious service in the citation is standard language used in awards based on meritorious service, outstanding achievement, heroism or valor. These types of awards are listed in Table 3.2 of AFMAN 36-2806 and include the AFAM and in section A5.2.11 the language used for the AFAM is outlined. The Board also notes the applicant did not file the application within three years of discovering the alleged error or injustice, as required by Section 1552 of Title 10, United States Code, and Department of the Air Force Instruction 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR)*. The Board does not find it in the interest of justice to waive the three-year filing requirement. Therefore, the Board finds the application untimely and recommends against correcting the applicant's records.
4. The applicant has not shown a personal appearance, with or without counsel, would materially add to the Board's understanding of the issues involved.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board recommends informing the applicant the application was not timely filed; it would not be in the interest of justice to excuse the delay; and the Board will reconsider the application only upon receipt of relevant evidence not already presented.

CERTIFICATION

The following quorum of the Board, as defined in Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR)*, paragraph 2.1, considered Docket Number BC-2019-02418 in Executive Session on 30 Nov 23:

Work-Product Panel Chair
Work-Product, Panel Member
Work-Product Panel Member

All members voted against correcting the record. The panel considered the following:

- Exhibit A: Application, DD Form 149, w/atchs, dated 16 Apr 19.
- Exhibit B: Documentary evidence, including relevant excerpts from official records.
- Exhibit C: Letter to Applicant, AFPC/DP3SP, dated 23 May 21.
- Exhibit D: Advisory Opinion, AFPC/DP3SP, dated 2 Dec 22.
- Exhibit E: Notification of Advisory, SAF/MRBC to Applicant, dated 23 May 23.

Taken together with all Exhibits, this document constitutes the true and complete Record of Proceedings, as required by DAFI 36-2603, paragraph 4.12.9.

1/22/2024

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Board Operations Manager, AFBCMR
Signed by: USAF