

Remembering

Paul K. Mikeal

North Carolina Air National Guard, 145th Airlift Wing – North Carolina

Career Lieutenant Colonel

Date of Death: July 1, 2012

Age: 42

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Keith Mikeal, North Carolina Air National Guard, of Mooresville, North Carolina, was a member of the 156th Airlift Squadron of the 145th Airlift Wing of the North Carolina Air National Guard, stationed near Charlotte, North Carolina. He also served as the Chief of Standardization and Evaluation of the North Carolina Air National Guard.

Lt. Col. Mikeal grew up in Clinton, Tennessee, attending Clinton Elementary and High School. After graduation, he attended the University of North Carolina-Charlotte on a swimming scholarship, where he was a three-year letterman and captain of the varsity swim team. While in college he was a member of the Air Force ROTC and was the unit's Distinguished Graduate. He received a bachelor's degree in psychology, was commissioned as a second lieutenant and, most importantly, met his wife, Marlo. He served on active duty for ten years before joining the Air National Guard.

During his career, Lt. Col. Mikeal had five deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, where he flew C-130 transport

planes and participated in Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom (in Afghanistan), Joint Forge (in Bosnia-Herzegovina), Jump Start (Mexico-U.S. border security) and Restore Focus. During his career he earned, among many others, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Achievement Medal with five oak leaf clusters, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Humanitarian Service Medal, all while contemporaneously earning a master's degree in aero science technology.

Lt. Col. Mikeal passed away on July 1, 2012, while piloting a C-130 transport plane on the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) 7 mission to fight wildfires in South Dakota. He was 42 years old and is survived by his wife of 20 years, Marlo; a daughter, Amanda; and a son, Liam. In honor of his many accomplishments in community service and swimming, the community center swimming pool in Clinton, Tennessee, has been renamed as the Paul Mikeal Aquatic Center.

Paul was a devoted and loving husband, father, and son, an optimist, and a fine officer.

