

2018 AIR FORCE FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR



Major Amy L. Natalini

Major Amy L. Natalini is assigned as the Director, Commander's Action Group at HQ 8 AF, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana and is one of the top long distance runners in the AF. She led the AF team to the Armed Forces Marathon Championship with her 2:55:57 finish, which ranked her eighth among females at the Marine Corps Marathon, in a field of 21,000 runners. Her finish qualified her as one of four US Armed Forces competitors advancing to the 2019 Military World Games in China. She was the second overall female finisher at the Louisiana Marathon, the Cow Town Marathon (Fort Worth), the BMW Dallas Marathon, and the Little Rock Marathon. Major Natalini also finished 186th of 13,392 female finishers at the prestigious Boston Marathon and 58th of 22,154 women runners at the world famous New York City Marathon. She volunteered and coached 35 elementary runners at nine practices and seven cross country meets. Additionally, she conducted 15 clinics for 217 military members, stressing proper running techniques for maximum performance and minimal injuries. Major Natalini exemplified what it took to be named the 2018 Athlete of the Year.



2018 AIR FORCE MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR



Second Lieutenant James G. Jax

Upon graduation from the US Air Force Academy (USAFA), Second Lieutenant James G. Jax served as an Air Force Business Operations Project Manager at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida. While a cadet at the USAFA, his play on the Academy baseball team resulted in his induction into their Baseball Hall of Fame in 2018, recognizing him as their most decorated baseball player to date. In 2018, he was selected to the AF World Class Athlete Program to train for the 2020 US Olympic Baseball Trials. Lieutenant Jax was assigned to the Fort Myers Miracles for the 2018 season, a team in the Florida State League and affiliate of the Minnesota Twins. He led the team to the League Championship and earned the Minnesota Twins Minor League Pitcher of the Week honors on three occasions during the season. His play resulted in his selection to Major League Baseball's Arizona Fall League, a league reserved for the most promising prospects. Additionally, he also volunteered 16 hours at local children's hospitals and spoke to 100 local middle school students about his life story and military service opportunities. Lieutenant Jax exemplified what it took to be named the 2018 Athlete of the Year.

