

## Integrity and Pride

What does integrity look like? Can you give an example of when you saw integrity in action? I encourage you spend a few minutes talking about that action at your next squadron meeting or post it on line.

Integrity takes courage and action. Integrity is standing up for yourself and others even if you may not see a long-term change or benefit. June is Pride month. I want to recognize two Airmen who stood up for themselves the rights of others.

On September 8, 1975, Air Force Technical Sergeant Leonard Matlovich was on the cover of Time magazine. He was there challenging his discharge and the military's anti-gay policy in court. The court ordered the Air Force to reinstate TSgt Matlovich in 1980 and he continued to be a gay rights activist until his death in 1988. Although the anti-gay policy had not changed.

Air Force Flight Nurse Major Margret Witt was suspended (2004) and ultimately discharged (2008) after being outed as a lesbian without her permission. Her lawsuit challenging "don't ask, don't tell" is credited with putting a face to the prejudice facing gay and lesbian service members. On September 20, 2011 "don't ask, don't tell" was repealed.

Today members of the LGBT community are able to serve openly in all branches of the military and in the Civil Air Patrol. This is thanks to men and women like TSgt Matlovich, Maj Witt, and many others who believed that standing up to prejudicial policies was the right thing to do.

Learn more

Sally Ride <https://www.cap.news/sally-ride-breaking-barriers-blazing-trails/>

Pride in STEM <https://prideinstem.org/>

National Gay Pilots Association <https://www.ngpa.org/>

Lt. Col Patricia Schmidt