

# Air Combat Command

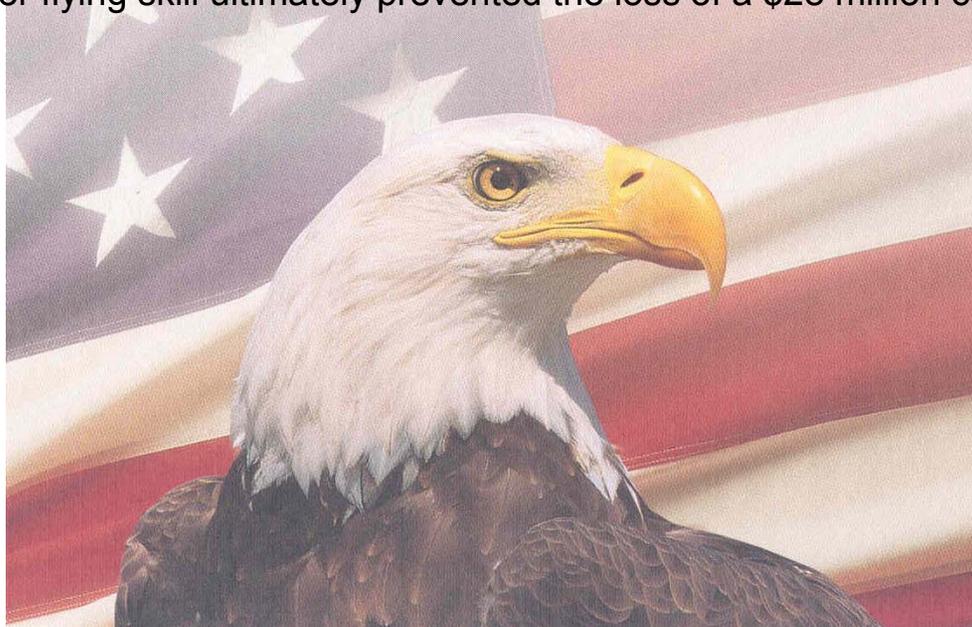
## Pilot Safety Award of Distinction

### CAPTAIN MICHAEL FERRAIO

Capt Michael Ferrario had been the flight lead in an F-16 night flight lead upgrade sortie when he began an Instrument Landing System (ILS) approach. He attempted to extend the landing gear, but the gear handle light did not illuminate to indicate the gear was in transition and neither did the three green down-and-locked indicators illuminate once the gear had extended. Capt Ferrario could not confirm that he had a safe landing configuration and directed his wingman to rejoin with him as he executed a go around back to the radar pattern. After coordinating with the supervisor of flying and his wingman, Capt Ferrario accomplished the landing gear malfunction checklist. Visual inspection with night vision goggles indicated the gear was down and locked, although the cockpit gear lights continued to indicate an unlandable configuration. Due to his critically low fuel state and visual indications that the gear was safe, Capt Ferrario chose to attempt a night approach end cable engagement rather than continue to trouble shoot the problem. He executed a modified ILS approach and successfully engaged the approach end cable. The landing gear remained down and locked, and the aircraft was not damaged by the cable engagement. Capt Ferrario's quick analysis under extreme pressure, timely decision making and superior flying skill ultimately prevented the loss of a \$28 million combat asset and potential loss of life.



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4th Fighter Squadron  
388th Fighter Wing  
Hill AFB, Utah