

My Dream

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What is a dream? When someone sleeps, he dreams. But what is a dream in a deeper sense? Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language* defines the word as the phenomenon "to have ideas or images in the mind" and "to think; to imagine." In other words, a dream is what we fantasize about, especially about the future. What is my dream? My dream has essentially been the same for over ten years.

Since my father served with the United States Air Force, I've had the opportunity to move around—a lot. One assignment that I remember very well is our being stationed at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan. It is here that I began an obsession for military aircraft. One aircraft in particular is the F-15 Eagle. For years the F-15 has been my favorite airplane. It holds the speed record for vertical climb rate, it's been the fastest fighter in the Air Force since its debut, it's the aerial superiority fighter in the world, and it has, in my opinion, the most beautiful aircraft design ever. For ten years I have dreamed of flying an F-15 for the Air Force. Not only because it

is considered the “ultimate” fighter plane, but for many other reasons as well.

The fact that I would be in the United States Air Force would mean that I am working to protect my country. I would be serving my country by flying this plane. There are few feelings in the world that can equal the feeling of knowing that you are keeping the country that you love safe. I have always wanted to experience this feeling. I had a “second-hand” feeling of this because I knew that my dad was protecting the country by keeping people alive when they needed to eject or jump out of an airplane. He built and packed parachutes for an F-4 pilot and an OV-1 pilot and their weapons systems operators when they had to eject. His work also helped a countless number of para-rescue teams and combat control teams when they had to jump out of an airplanes. He helped them. He served our country well. I want that. I want a “first-hand” feeling of this. I want to serve and protect America.

One thing that comes with piloting is money. I’ve never had a desire to be rich. I do, however, want my family to feel secure. I want my future wife and children to have a life of luxury. I want my future children to grow up in a home similar to mine. I want my future

wife to be treated similar to the way my mom is treated. My family right now isn't a rich family or even an upper middle-class family. In fact, with my college tuition coming up combined with current expenses, my family will be entering a tight and stressful time. But for all my life, I've at least known the middle-class. I've been blessed to have this, but this is just the minimum of the luxury that I want my family to have. I want my parents to have a better life. With the salary of a pilot, I could *almost* give my parents what they deserve. Maybe I could buy my mom a Lexus luxury car. Maybe I could buy my dad a Boston Whaler fishing boat. Maybe I could even help with my brother's college tuition when he goes to college. I know that materialistic things will never pay back what my parents have done for me, but it's the least I can do. My family gave to me my whole life, and I think that it is about time that I gave back.

My dream is to fly an F-15 Eagle. However, only half of that dream is in my hands. I still have to graduate in the top percentage of my college class with a very difficult engineering degree. I still have to be accepted into Air Force flight school, and I still have to pass flight school in the top of the class. These are just the controlled factors. The factors that aren't in my hands are the people competing

with me to get into flight school, the people competing for the best grades in flight school, and the availability of an F-15 when I graduate flight school. If something goes wrong, then I cannot fly the plane of my dreams. But as my dreams finally approach reality, they change. It would be *ideal* for me to fly an F-15 or even another fighter plane, but I would love any aircraft that is issued me whether it be a fighter, bomber, airlift, cargo, or any other plane. I just want to fly. That's my dream. I want to serve my country by flying for the United States Air Force.