



Healing Through Awareness and Breaking Barriers: Then and Now

MSgt Deondra Parks, NREMT
First Sergeant, 99 Airlift Squadron
89 Airlift Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland



Agenda



- Introduction
- My story
- Resiliency
 - mental health in the DoD
 - access to care
 - personal recovery and achievements

Learning Objectives



At the end of this presentation, learners will be able to:

- Describe gender-related barriers that reduce female Service members' and Veterans' access to mental health services.
- Learn to identify and build upon resilience skills demonstrated by female Service members and Veterans.
- Discuss ways to leverage female Service members and women Veterans' strengths and skills to increase their active engagement in treatment.

MSgt Deondra R. Parks



Master Sergeant Deondra R. Parks is the First Sergeant, 99th Airlift Squadron, 89th Operations Groups, 89th Airlift Wing, Joint Base Andrews. MSgt Parks leads the outstanding Airmen providing premier airlift support to the Vice President and other important dignitaries.

Sergeant Parks was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. She initially enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 2004 as a Security Forces member and was assigned to various duty stations to include Taegu AB, South Korea; Aviano AB, Italy; Balad AB, Iraq; Osan AB, South Korea; and Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. On 20 April, 2010, she was targeted in a hate crime while stationed in Texas. She is an advocate of healing through awareness. To date, she has recovered physically and remains active on base and in the local community as an ambassador for the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program.



Survivor



April 20, 2010

Witchita Falls, Texas

Recovery



- Injuries
- Surgeries
- Rehabilitation

Poll Question #1



List a gender-related barrier that impacts access to mental health services.

Experience With Mental Health



- Self Advocacy
- Persistence
- Wounded Warriors Program
- Resilience Training



Poll Question #2



Identify a possible resilience skill that female Service members and Veterans may demonstrate and can utilize for physical and/or mental recovery.

Issues With Access to Care



- Continued care
- Collaboration

Resilience



Poll Question #3



Do you think it is important for you as a mental health provider to enable female Service members or Veterans to use their unique strengths to increase active engagement in treatment?

(True/False)

Today



MSgt Deondra Parks
First Sergeant, 99 Airlift Squadron
89 Airlift Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland
Deondra.Parks@us.af.mil