

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Matthew Scott Bowers**

Born December 5, 1964, Matthew Scott Bowers quickly matured and grew into an outgoing individual who showed interest in others from the time he was a toddler. He was very friendly, considerate, caring and willing to help anyone in need. Matthew had a special empathy for children. He participated in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program while at the University of Delaware and had a little brother assigned to him during this period. He exemplified the very best of attitudes in all of his activities and with all of his associations. Matthew was an extraordinary young man devoted to God, his family, his friends and his country.

During the summer of 1985, Matt attended an Air Force flight screening program at Lackland AFB, Texas. He was rated in the upper 20% of the flight in overall performance and was recognized as having excellent leadership traits both as Flight Commander and when participating in group decision-making problems. One of the regular Air Force officers stated, "His initiative, rock-solid dependability and acceptance of responsibility are indicative of excellent leadership skills and great potential." In August, 1985, at the completion of the training, Colonel George Rouse, USAF, evaluated Matthew as one of the finest cadets he had ever seen. He recommended that Matt be selected for the prestigious Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program (which happened in 1987). Matt also received a two-year pilot scholarship to complete his studies at the University of Delaware.

As Cadet Corps Commander during the fall of 1986, Matt made several suggestions that were implemented including a structural reorganization, an improvement in esprit de corps, an enhanced Economic Development program, re-organization of the Recruiting Dept. (he authored a Cadet Recruiting procedure when he was the Cadet Recruiting Officer) and implemented a new physical fitness program. He emphasized the importance of being fit to all Cadets – he attained the rank of brown belt as a member of Shotokan Karate of America.

Matthew had an overwhelming desire to serve his country. To help prepare for entering the Air Force, he earned his private pilot's license. He clearly stated his intention to make the Air Force his career. He was particularly interested in flying the F-15, F-16 and FB-111 but was eager to fly any aircraft he would be assigned in the Air Force inventory. He had a childhood dream of being an Air Force pilot and as he progressed toward that goal through the AFROTC program he added the very difficult astronaut program as one of his future goals.

Matthew graduated from the University of Delaware with a Civil Engineering degree on May 31, 1987, and received a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. Nearly 5 weeks later on July 8, Matthew Scott Bowers collapsed after an errant lightning strike. Matt was loved and respected by everyone he met.

As a tribute to Matthew's hard work and good will we, AFROTC Detachment 128, dedicate this run to him and his family. Matthew was a person with many exceptional characteristics which made him a great friend and loving son. As a sign of his devotion to help the community all the proceeds of this race will be donated to Save the Children Foundation.