

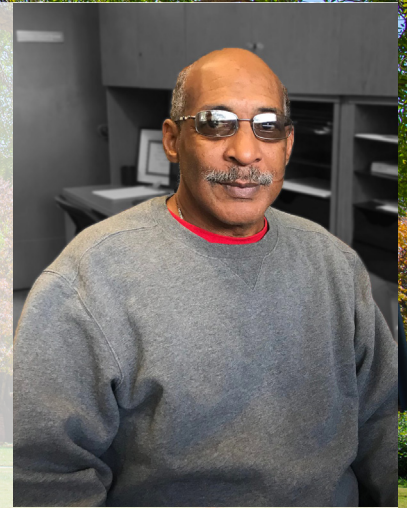
Veterans Upward Bound

*Outstanding
Alum*



Brandon Blodgett

*Rising
Star*



Michael Collins

Captain Brandon C. Blodgett has served his country through the United States Air Force for over 16 years. He is currently serving as a reserve aircraft commander on the KC-135R McConnell Air Force Base. Brandon has served in multiple functions for both active duty and reserve components. During his enlisted years as a combat civil engineer, he served in both Iraq and Afghanistan supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

As a pilot, Brandon has been deployed three times to the Middle East and once to the Pacific Theater executing combat missions over Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. As a civilian, Brandon works as a first officer for Envoy Air.

From mentors in his church and military communities to programs such as Veterans Upward Bound (VUB), getting the right advice at the right time from the right people was critical to every step and he is humbled and thankful for every door that has been opened.

Michael Collins was enlisted in the United States Marine Corps from 1973 to 1976. His Military Occupation Specialty was 0351 anti-tank assault/demolition. He has been to many interesting places around the world, including Finland and Norway. He entered the Marines during a time when service members could enter without earning a high school diploma.

After separating from the military, Michael went to work in the aircraft industry. Unfortunately, he was laid off. However, that experience made him realize that he needed to further his education in order to be employable. As a result, he sought out the Veterans Upward Bound program for help.

In 2014, Michael became a VUB participant. He entered the program because he wanted the opportunity to hone his academic skills, work on a GED, and eventually earn a college degree. "VUB has helped me to build more confidence in myself" Michael recently remarked.