Air Force unit “Vijay 10” wins 2003 Mackay Trophy
Five crewmembers given prestigious award for duty in Iraqi war

Arlington, VA – The National Aeronautic Association and the United States Air Force awarded the unit known by the call sign “Vijay 10” with the Clarence Mackay Trophy for 2003 for its heroic service in the U.S. efforts in the war in Iraq.

The five-member crew planned and led a key portion of Operation Northern Delay in Iraq, the main supporting action for Operation Iraqi Freedom. On March 26, 2003, the first night of the coalition ground campaign in Northern Iraq, the crew directed the combat insertion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade with a 15-ship formation of C-17A Globemaster IIIIs, a strategic transport plane.

The initial airdrop occurred over Bashur, Iraq, and constituted the largest formation airdrop since D-Day in World War II. The Air Force termed the mission the most demanding C-17A mission in the aircraft’s history, and it marked the first time personnel were dropped from the C-17A in combat. After the initial insertion, Vijay 10 crew members, along with active and Reserve crews from Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., and McChord Air Force Base, Wash., conducted four more nights of missions to deploy the rest of the 173rd and the Combat Readiness Group. Vijay 10’s mission effectively established the United States’ second military front in Iraq.

The award is presented annually for the most meritorious flight of the year and for gallantry, intrepidity, unusual initiative and resourcefulness, achievement of outstanding results with unusual presence of mind in either combat or non-combat conditions.

The Vijay 10 crew members are part of the 62nd Airlift Wing, based at McChord, located near Tacoma, Wash. They are Lt. Col. Shane Hershman, 7th Airlift Squadron; Maj. Bob Colvin, 8th Airlift Squadron; 1st Lt. Matt Clausen, 4th Airlift Squadron; Master Sgt. Shawn Brumfield, 62nd Operations Group; and Master Sgt. Chris Dockery, 7th Airlift Squadron.

For their distinguished service in combat, NAA will present the five members of Vijay 10 with the Mackay Trophy at the Association’s Fall Awards Banquet later this year. The Mackay Trophy was first awarded in 1911; the original trophy is on display at the National Air and Space Museum.

NAA is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering opportunities to participate fully in aviation activities and to promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. For more information on NAA and its award and recognition programs, visit www.naa-usa.org.