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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: OCTOBER 26, 2020

(Release #2020/21 – 026)

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Perry High Graduate Awarded AFA Pete O’Neill STEAM Scholarship



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA - A Perry High School 2020 graduate, Cadet Col. Abbie Spears, was selected as the inaugural Pete O’Neill STEAM Scholar. The Air Force Association (AFA) Carl Vinson Memorial Chapter 296 sponsored this \$1,500 scholarship.

Spears is now a freshman at Georgia Southern University, pursuing a degree in nursing while continuing her Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) training. She has committed to serve in the U.S. Army for at least four years active duty, plus four years Individual Ready Reserves upon graduation from Georgia Southern.

At Perry High, C/Col. Spears served as Cadet Corps Commander for the schools Junior ROTC. As Corps Commander, she was responsible for the operation of the Cadet Corps overseeing a staff of 25 and a corps of 135 cadets. Her responsibilities included fulfillment of the goals, objectives and operations outlined in AFJROTC guidance. In addition, she was responsible for the establishment and enforcement of appearance standards, efficiency, training and conduct. Through her outstanding leadership, she led the Cadet Corps to an “Exceeds Standards” rating on their most recent AFJROTC unit inspection by headquarters. During her four years of AFJROTC, she earned over 520 hours of community service.

C/Col. Spears maintained a 4.0 GPA at Perry High and participated in varsity soccer, volleyball and wrestling. She was also a member of the AFJROTC Drill Team and Color Guard. She won numerous awards, including second place at the Houston County Art Show, Honorable Mention at the Georgia National Fair, and Georgia Capitol Art Show Exhibition with Georgia Legislators. C/Col. Spears has also received the Silver Star Community Service with Excellence Award. Her AFJROTC awards include Military Order of World Wars Award, National Sojourners Award, Top Performer Award - presented to only top 2% of AFJROTC cadets - two Outstanding Cadet Ribbons and more. Her Senior Aerospace Science Instructor was Lt. Col. (ret.) James "Greg" Bailey.

MORE

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Spears has committed to serve in the U.S. Army for at least four years active duty, plus four years Individual Ready Reserves upon graduation from Georgia Southern University.

She was presented the scholarship by Col. (ret.) Dan Penny, Jr., treasurer of the AFA Chapter 296. The mission of AFA is three fold:

1. Educate the public about the need for aerospace power and its role in a strong national defense.
2. Advocate aerospace power and a strong national defense.
3. Support the United States Air Force and the Air Force Family.

To learn more about the Carl Vinson Memorial Chapter contact robinsairforceassociation@gmail.com. Perry High is located at 1307 North Avenue in Perry. Dr. Wesley "Del" Martin serves as principal and may be reached at 478-988-6298.

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