



Caroline 'Blaze' Jensen

Combat Veteran, Speaker, Executive Coach, Leadership Consultant

Caroline "Blaze" Jensen, a retired Lieutenant Colonel from the United States Air Force (USAF), epitomizes the pinnacle of dedication, skill, and pioneering spirit in both military aviation and leadership. A distinguished graduate of the USAF Academy in 1998, Blaze's career is marked by groundbreaking achievements and exemplary service. She has amassed over 3,500 flying hours across various aircraft, including the Schwitzer 2-33 gliders, Cessna 172, T-37B Tweet, T-38 Talon, and notably, the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

Blaze's career is highlighted by her role as the first female reserve officer to fly with the prestigious USAF Air Demonstration Squadron, the Thunderbirds, showcasing her exceptional flying skills and breaking barriers for women in aviation. Additionally, she made history as the first woman to qualify to fly the Boeing T-7A Red Hawk, the Air Force's advanced jet trainer, further cementing her status as a trailblazer in military aviation.

Her operational experience is extensive, with 1870 hours in the F-16, including 200 combat hours, and over 1500 hours instructing in the T-38 Talon. Her tenure with the Thunderbirds as the #3 Right Wing pilot and her participation in OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, supporting US and allied ground troops, are among the many highlights of her distinguished career.

Beyond her accomplishments in the cockpit, Blaze has demonstrated exceptional leadership and strategic acumen. She served as a Legislative Fellow in the Secretary of the Air Force Legislative Liaison Senate office, contributing to significant legislative efforts. Her leadership extended to operational roles, including leading the flight operations and personnel of the 64th Aggressor Squadron and serving as Deputy Commander for over 300 personnel across various missions critical to national security.

Outside of her military career, Blaze is a devoted single mother to her son, Finn, making history as the first child in the US to see his mother fly in an advanced jet aerobatic demonstration. They reside in River Falls, Wisconsin, with their dog, Gunner. Blaze continues to contribute to the aviation community. She served as a Vice President on the board of directors for the National Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) WWII Museum, advocating for the recognition and celebration of women's contributions to aviation history.

In summary, Caroline "Blaze" Jensen's career is a testament to her pioneering spirit, leadership, and dedication to serving her country. Her legacy as a trailblazer in the military aviation community continues to inspire future generations of aviators and leaders.