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AFROTC woman selected for pilot school

by Suzanna Mitchell Donovan
Staff Writer

The first woman from UMO's Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps to have been offered a pilot's school position has decided she will attend the school after she graduates from UMO in 1986.

Elizabeth "Libby" Bizier, a junior in both AFROTC and her major, international affairs, will be attending Undergraduate Pilot Training upon graduation and commissioning as an officer in the Air Force.

Slots for pilot school were determined at Maxwell, Ala. by a committee of generals called the Central Select Board, Bizier said. She said she received unofficial word last Monday that she had a slot, but this was not confirmed until Wednesday.

Col. Kenneth Deal, professor of aerospace studies and commander of the UMO detachment, said that out of the 153 AFROTC groups in the United States, only about 1,000 cadets are offered pilot school positions. However, only 26 women were given slots this year.

He also said that at UMO alone there were 10 applicants for pilot training.

After "weeding out" applicants through qualifying tests such as physical exams, four cadets ended up with slots. "I was certain in my own mind that she (Bizier) was eligible," Deal said. "I'm pleased the board chose her."

He said Bizier has stood out as a cadet since she joined the corps two years ago. "She had the enthusiasm and leadership and motivation to go to pilot training."

Deal said not all persons in the Air Force are pilots. "In this class, we have 14 students," he said. "Four (will be) pilots, two navigators, one nurse, three engineers, and the rest support officers."

Bizier said she has been working toward the goal of pilot training school ever since she was a freshman at UMO.

"It is a hard, long involved process," she said. "You have to take initiative and go to the commander, and make sure you go through the correct steps."

"I tried to hold as many positions as possible, and create a good image for myself. I helped a lot, got a lot of awards and put in a lot of detachment time."



ELIZABETH BIZIER

Also important in working toward a slot in pilot school, Bizier said, was how she performed at a field training camp last

summer. There, cadets go through physical training and are rated on their Air Force potential by an officer.

Following one year of pilot training, Bizier said she has a six-year commitment as a pilot in the Air Force.

She said after that, she will be 29 years old and may enter the Air Force legal program, which would send her to law school.

"I consider flying a hobby," Bizier said. "I feel like playing around a while, until I'm 30."

Bizier said she has been exposed to pilots and airplanes all her life. Her father is employed by Boeing Co. and was in the Air National Guard, but is now on inactive status.

"I've had a lot of exposure to flying bases," she said. "My parents are overseas, so I've been taken under the wing of dad's old flying cronies who are in the Bangor area."

Bizier's parents are now in Zaragoza, Spain but she was born in Bangor. She is a member of Alpha Chi Omega.