



**Combat  
Control  
Foundation**

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## MEDIA CONTACT

John Hill

Digital Multimedia & Data Manager

(210) 204-6863

[media@combatcontrolfoundation.org](mailto:media@combatcontrolfoundation.org)

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# Two Highly Decorated Air Force Special Tactics Combat Controllers to Be Honored during the Air Force Falcons vs Army Black Knights Football Game at Mile High Stadium

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The traditional annual face-off between the Air Force Falcons and the Army Black Knights, a renowned and revered tradition marked by intense competition and unwavering commitment, is poised to transcend its status as a mere football game this year. In a similar vein of fiery spirit and tenacity, the U.S. Air Force Academy's sophomore class of 2026 has etched its name in history by instigating a significant policy change in selecting an enlisted airman as their Exemplar. The Class of 2026 has made a groundbreaking choice by designating Medal of Honor recipient Master Sergeant John A. Chapman as their Exemplar, marking not only the first-ever enlisted Exemplar but also the first Special Tactics Airman to receive this honor.

This annual matchup is an opportunity for the on-field presentations to honor exemplary service and selflessness. The Combat Control Foundation, along with John Chapman's family, will present the *MSgt John A. Chapman "Service Before Self" Award* to U.S. Air Force Special Tactics Combat Controller (Ret) Command Chief Master Sergeant William "CM" Markham, acknowledging his outstanding contributions to the United States Air Force Special Tactics community and the veteran population.

CCM(R) Markham's dedication to service and his comrades is nothing short of exceptional. He etched his name in history as the first Airman to set foot in Afghanistan in the aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks. His remarkable courage in the face of danger earned him the military's third-highest decoration for valor, the prestigious Silver Star Medal.

Throughout his illustrious career in the Air Force, Markham consistently embodied an unwavering commitment to his lifelong mission of "I just want to take care of people." His guiding principles, encapsulated by the mottos "Freedom to maneuver" and "Always find the way to YES," have been his guiding light. In the two decades that have followed his military service, Markham has dedicated himself to the noble cause of serving veterans and their families.

The *MSgt John A. Chapman "Service Before Self" Award*, named after the heroic actions of Medal of Honor recipient Master Sergeant John A. Chapman, pays tribute to exceptional individuals who exemplify the core values of the Air Force, placing service above personal interests and displaying selflessness and dedication in their actions. CCM(R) Markham's unwavering commitment to this ethos makes him a most deserving recipient of this prestigious award.

The award presentation will take place during the scheduled timeout between the 1st to 2nd quarter of the Air Force Falcons vs. Army Black Knights game on November 4, 2023, further strengthening the bonds of unity and camaraderie that exist between the branches of our military.

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# Combat Control Foundation

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## **About Combat Control Foundation - EIN:83-3980682**

Combat Control Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity that provides programs of support to all eras of our nation's Combat Controllers, their families, and other members of the military special operations community. The Combat Control Foundation's First There programs focus on providing care and support through its four pillars: Resilience, Wellness, Education and Heritage. For more information on Combat Control Foundation and its mission, please visit [CombatControlFoundation.org](http://CombatControlFoundation.org)