

Colonel Nicholas J. Bereschak Sr. distinguished himself by outstanding service to the United States of America, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard during a career that included the longest tenure as commander of any Pennsylvania Air National Guard flying unit.

Colonel Bereschak began his military career in 1949 as a member of the 148th Fighter Interceptor Squadron based at Spaatz Field, Reading Pennsylvania, the "birthplace" of the post-World War II Pennsylvania Air National Guard. As an original member of the 148th, he was activated during the Korean War. Trained, ready, and eager to serve his nation, Col. Bereschak went to Korea and flew the F-84 and F-94. He accumulated 134 combat hours flying classified missions into North Korea. Following his combat tour, he returned to the 148 FIS, where he became commander. Col Bereschak flew the PT-17, BT-13, AT/T-6, P-40, P/F-51, P-47, F-84, F-94, C-45, C-46, C-47, C-54, U-3 and C-119 aircraft while stationed at Spaatz Field. AS commander, the unit's operations, maintenance and support personnel kept pace with the rapid growth, modernization and critical expansion of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard's role in national defense.

Instrumental in preserving the Pennsylvania Air National Guard's complement of flying units, he played pivotal role in relocating the 148th from Reading to Olmstead Air Force Base in Middletown. With his foresight, leadership and determination, the organization changed to an electronic warfare mission, known as the 193d Tactical Electronic Warfare Group. Colonel Bereschak took the group through its conversion from the C-119 medical airlift mission to the C/EC-121 Lockheed Constellation aircraft, specially equipped to perform electronic warfare missions in support of the Joint Chief of Staff directives.

Demands for the services of the 193d TEWG grew worldwide, as its value in peacetime military exercises and wartime contingency operations gained recognition at all levels of the national defense establishment. Colonel Bereschak commanded the deployment of two EC-121 aircraft to Thailand in support of Operation Commando Buzz in 1971. During the deployment, he not only commanded the deployed forces, but also flew 268 combat hours. The mission was the first of its kind and was so successful it grew into today's psychological warfare platform of choice for the U.S. Air Force. Domestic mission requirements also tested the planning and leadership ability of Colonel Bereschak as he led the unit through the devastating Hurricane Agnes flood of 1972 and the Three Mile Island incident in 1979. Colonel Bereschak kept his professional focus on the development of his flying organization and his persistent and innovative thinking led to the unit's transition to the EC-130 Hercules aircraft, a key step in modernization. The organization evolved to take on a one-of-a-kind psychological warfare mission, eventually being designated as the 193d Special Operations Wing, which is unique in all of the armed forces of the United States.

During his tenure, the unit was awarded three USAF Outstanding Unit Awards, one with "V" Device for valor recognizing service during the war in Vietnam. The 193d flew over 173,000 hours accident-free during his watch, and later became the most deployed Air National Guard flying unit in the nation. As a Command Pilot, he logged over 15,000 flying hours, serving over a span of thirty-three years, and set a host of enviable standards which would guide the 193d operations for years to come.

The singularly distinctive accomplishments of Colonel Nicholas J. Bereschak Sr. during a lifetime of service reflect great credit upon himself, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the

Pennsylvania Air National Guard, warranting his induction into the Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame.