

Lieutenant Colonel Clarence Lewis Withers, Jr. (Ret) is inducted into the Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame for his exceptionally meritorious contributions to the status, operations, prestige, and mission of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard during the period 2 June 1947 to 9 September 1978. His superb planning ability, combined with the assistance he rendered to subordinate units, has contributed significantly to the development and success of both the ANG operations at Olmstead Field in Middletown, and the ANG Station at Fort Indiantown Gap.

Colonel Withers began his military career in June 1941 by enlisting into the Army Air Corps. He was awarded the Bronze Star, along with numerous decorations, for his combat service in the European Theater during World War II. After a short stint of civilian life, TSgt Withers enlisted with the PA Air National Guard in June 1947. He received a direct commission to second lieutenant in December 1948. In 1952, after a period of active duty, he returned to Pennsylvania and began a distinguished career in the civil engineering field.

In September 1971, Colonel Withers became commander of the first RED HORSE unit in the entire reserve force – the 201st Civil Engineering Flight (HR) at Fort Indiantown Gap, PA. He exhibited initiative, resourcefulness, and professional confidence in all phases of preparing a virtually, “bare-bones” operation to a suitable operating environment. In June 1972, the flood waters from Hurricane Agnes struck Pennsylvania, and Colonel Withers and the 201st answered the call to cleanup flooded ANG facilities at Harrisburg International Airport and to deal with the flood devastation in the Wilkes-Barre/Kingston area.

Under Colonel Withers’ outstanding leadership, the 201st Civil Engineering Flight completed scores of important projects throughout Pennsylvania and at Air Force facilities in the United States and overseas. The work performed by the 201st saved taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars. In addition, the 201st Civil Engineering Flight performed exemplary community service projects and earned the gratitude of many state and local organizations. In 1977, the 201st was awarded its first Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

From his enlistment in 1947 until his retirement in September 1978, Lt Col Withers’ superb service reflected the highest traditions of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard. Colonel Withers has earned recognition as one of the forefathers of civil engineering in the Pennsylvania Air National Guard. The singularly distinctive accomplishments of Colonel Withers during a distinguished career of service reflect great credit upon himself, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and warrant his induction into the Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame.