Army Aviation Hall of Fame 2007 Induction - Atlanta, GA

Retired CW5 Mary Cara Smalley was a great pioneer for women aviation officers.

She enlisted in the Army to become a crew chief and to earn a college degree.

In 1976, she became the 13th woman to graduate from flight school and went on to serve as first woman aviator in the 6th Air Cavalry Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas.

There she served with aviation visionary COL Robert Molinelli, who later achieved the rank of major general, and flew UH-1 and OH-58 helicopters.

Molinelli arranged for Smalley to become the first female pilot rated in the AH-1 Cobra attack helicopter.

Although she completed the AH-1 transition, women were not authorized to be assigned to attack helicopter companies in the late 1970s.

Smalley served in a variety of assignments to include as a medical evacuation pilot, a night

vision goggle instructor pilot, an Initial Entry Rotary Wing course instructor pilot, and as a training, advising and counseling (TAC) officer with the Warrant Officer Candidate School.

In 1985, while serving as a TAC, she earned a masters degree in Aviation Management in her off duty time.

Smalley was the first woman aviator promoted to CW4 in 1989 and was selected to serve as the adjutant for the prestigious United States Precision Helicopter Team in 1991.

In 1994 the National Club's Outstanding Women in Aviation Society selected her as the outstanding female Army Aviator of the year.

Smalley was the first female regular Army warrant officer and aviator to achieve the rank of CW5 in 1995.

A master Army aviator with over 3,000 flight hours, 1,000 hours as an IP, Smalley retired in 1999 after serving her country for 24 years.

Smalley has been a truly outstanding warrant officer and an inspiration to all men and women Army aviators.