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Air Force Times

1st female fighter pilot chosen to command wing

By Bruce Rolfsen - Staff writer

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Col. Dawn Dunlop, the first woman to fly the F-22 Raptor, will soon achieve another milestone when she becomes the first female test pilot to lead an Air Force wing.

Dunlop is set to take command of the 412th Test Wing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., on June 4.

A 1988 Air Force Academy graduate, Dunlop began her aviation career as a T-38 Talon instructor pilot and was among the first women flying Air Force fighters once the ban on female fighter pilots was lifted in 1993.

After flying operational F-15E Strike Eagles for 2 1/2 years, she was accepted into the Air Force Test Pilot School at Edwards in 1997 and began flying F-15 tests mission the following year.

In 2003, she was assigned as operations officer for the F-22 Combined Test Force at Edwards and became the first woman to fly the jet that November.

Out of the cockpit, Dunlop was chief of the Air Staff's Senate liaison division and a White House fellow.

She returned to Edwards in August as vice commander of the 412th. Dunlop takes over from Brig. Gen. William Thornton, who is moving to Materiel Command headquarters at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

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