

**Major Lisa L. Carter**

**Atlanta, GA  
Bronze Star**

When Lisa L. Carter was an Atlanta postal worker caring for her two-year-old daughter, she had a strong feeling she was capable of more. Little did she know that, almost two decades later, she would be in command of more than 90 soldiers in the sands of Iraq. Nor would she have predicted that a Bronze Star would be pinned on her uniform in 2003 for her extraordinary service in support of the 555<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company.

Spurred on by colleagues, she joined the Army Reserves in 1987 and was forever changed when she saw a black female officer and thought, "If she can do it, surely I can do it." From that day forward, she tirelessly reached for excellence. In 1996, she received her bachelor's degree in social work from Georgia State University and earned Army lieutenant gold bars through the school's ROTC program, all the while raising a family as a then-single parent.

Around the Christmas holiday of 2002, the 2/43 Air Defense Artillery Battalion and the 555<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company received their deployment orders to Iraq with 80 percent of the company on leave. Carter had a goliath task ahead, and she embraced it. As the 555<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company Commander at Ft. Bliss, Texas, she meticulously, safely, and effectively rail-loaded the entire company of 51 pieces of equipment in record time. Under her leadership, the unit's support of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force aided more than 65 contact

missions, recovered 45 vehicles, and repaired more than 35 pieces of equipment within a four month period. Able to maintain a grueling operational tempo, her personnel were instrumental in the battalion's 95 percent above readiness rate during three critical weeks of intense combat. For these stellar accomplishments, then-Captain Lisa Weems (Carter) was awarded the Bronze Star.

Now back in the United States as member of the Defense Department's Why We Serve program, the major is engaged in telling her story to fellow citizens. From a hard-working single mother in Atlanta to a distinguished Army major, Carter now sums it up: "Service members know that this is their job and responsibility – to serve."



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