

Veteran Narrative

Captain Tamara Lee Archuleta was not able to describe herself, instead, one of her fellow officers, also known as her Uncle, Michael Long told her story. Tamara started college at the age of 16 at the University of New Mexico. A few years later she graduated valedictorian, and at 20 she received her Bachelor's Degree in science. She was soon accepted to a pilot training program after she showed so much excitement on the subject. Discovering a love of flying, Tamara joined the Air Force and found herself flying rescue helicopters and guiding rescue missions. Her life of service to her country began.

A few days before her rotation sent her home, Tamara led her last rescue mission to save two Afghani children who were injured. It was very dark and windy, best described as a stormy night. The helicopter lost course and the pilots could not stop it from crashing into the mountains ahead of them. In the dark of the night, Tamara Lee Archuleta and all of the others on the helicopter died attempting to rescue two children. The officers that knew her were filled with grief when they heard the news, but they knew that she would be proud of herself, for she always followed the Air Force motto: "It is my duty, as a member of the Air Rescue Service, to save life and to aid the injured. I will be prepared at all times to perform my assigned duties quickly and efficiently, placing these duties before personal desire and comforts. These things I do that others may live." Tamara was a person that felt duty bound to save all of the people possible. She did just this and fulfilled her duty as an Air Force officer.