



HEADQUARTERS
MULTI-NATIONAL BRIGADE (EAST)
CAMP BONDSTEEL, KOSOVO
APO AE 09340



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I give my strongest recommendation for CPT Matthew Geraci's selection to the Astronaut Program. Matt is the leader of a Task Force level resource solely responsible for Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) in my Multi-National Brigade (East) (American) sector of the KFOR mission. That position is just the current highlight of many. Matt's varied successes are marked by accomplishment above his peers in stressful environments where the selection and success rate is already low. Matt demonstrated this type of success from a young age and it continues to this point. He is also one of those rare people that shows aptitude for success across the full range of team accomplishment. Although regularly in leadership positions, he is equally skilled as a team member.

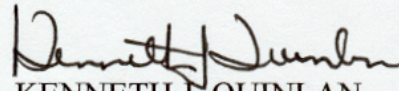
A few of Matt's accomplishments that quickly come to mind are his rise to the rank of Eagle Scout, his selection to and graduation from West Point, and his current position as an EOD Company Commander. All three accomplishments require a high measure of self-discipline as an individual member of a team, yet in all three, Matt also succeeded above his peers, either academically, or by selection to a leadership position. Achieving the rank of Eagle Scout is the pinnacle of Scouting and is a natural role model for junior scouts. Less than five percent of scouts ever attain this honor. Selection to West Point requires Congressional recommendations, solid high school credentials, and is highly regarded as one of the most stressful academic and character building environments. At West Point, Matt not only graduated, but he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in physics with a minor in nuclear engineering; two of the most demanding curriculums at West Point. After commissioning into the Ordnance Corps, US Army, Matt attended and completed the Ordnance Corps' coveted and demanding EOD School. The school is so demanding, that only an average of thirty-five percent of the students complete the course. The results of that training are having a direct impact on my operations here in Kosovo.

CPT Matt Geraci and his company of explosive ordnance experts are doing a tremendous job to build a safe and secure environment in Kosovo. Over the last six months, the teams that form the company responded, on short notice, under extremely adverse conditions, time and again, to incidents that help save lives. This is another success where Matt demonstrates aptitude across the full range of team accomplishment. Matt not only leads the company, but is a fully qualified team leader. He routinely responds to explosive ordnance incidents himself. He is as individually skilled as his team members and has demonstrated it in support of the presidential delegation in the United States, the desert of Kuwait, and now in the countryside of Kosovo. Where a leader can usually be less skilled in the individual tasks of his team members and still be

quite successful, Matt cannot. He must be more skilled in order to lead a team and, at the same time, perform the very precise and deadly job of explosive ordnance disposal. There simply is no room for error; this is precise work where you often only get one chance.

Finally, there are Matt's varied interests. He is musically inclined, having produced a compact disk with six original songs on it. He is a top athlete that routinely produces the maximum score on his Army physical fitness test. He studies German, is a skilled soccer player and coach, and uses those skills to coach children's teams.

In closing, CPT Matt Geraci is an all around success story. His life is a pattern of seeking and taking responsibility in challenging situations. He is equally comfortable as a team leader and demonstrates regularly that he possesses the personal skill required of his team members in a detail-oriented business, where there are no second chances. There is no doubt that the Astronaut Program is another challenge where CPT Matt Geraci will succeed. Again, I give my strongest recommendation for his selection.


KENNETH J. QUINLAN
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Commanding