509th Communications Squadron award winner flies in B-2

Tech. Sgt. Darius Charles, NCO in charge of information technology asset management assigned to the 509th communications squadron, poses for a photo with 509th Bomb Wing leadership and members of his family on April 2, 2019, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

Staff Sgt. Kayla White
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Tech. Sgt. Darius Charles won the rare opportunity to fly in one of the Whiteman Air Force Base's stealth aircraft, the B-2 Stealth Bomber on April 2, 2019.

Charles, the NCO in charge of the information technology asset management section of the 509th Communications Squadron at Whiteman AFB, Missouri, received the incentive flight as part of being recognized as the 2018 Outstanding NCO of the Year.

509th Bomb Wing leadership recognized Charles for his contributions and excellence, both stateside and while deployed to Afghanistan.

509th BW Command Chief, Chief Master Sgt. James Lyda, emphasized the importance of recognizing peoples' efforts and contributions.

"Darius is a great example of a technically competent NCO, leading Airmen, and getting the mission done both at home and in combat," said Lyda. "His efforts and accomplishments will hopefully fuel a passion for others to do more."

Surrounded by coworkers, Wing leadership as well as his family, Charles relished his experience in the glow of the setting sun.

"I just want to thank everyone who made this happen for me," said Charles, still flush from the flight. "This has been unreal and I will never forget it."

Tech. Sgt. Darius Charles, NCO in charge of information technology asset management assigned to the 509th communications squadron, laughs with Brig. Gen. John Nichols, 509th Bomb Wing commander, and Chief Master Sgt. James Lyda, 509th BW command chief, on April 2, 2019, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

Tech. Sgt. Darius Charles, NCO in charge of information technology asset management assigned to the 509th communications squadron, stands for a photo with Capt. Seth Woolcott, a pilot assigned to the 393rd Bomb Squadron, on April 2, 2019, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri. Charles, a 2019 Wing annual award winner, won an incentive flight in one of the base's B-2 Stealth Bombers with Woolcott. (U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Kayla White)