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UT grad to put experience to use as Air Force surgeon general

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By John Marx, jmarx@qconline.com

You have found life's right track when — in your 50s and on the verge of becoming Surgeon General of the United States Air Force — you can recite a cornballish line of life you learned from your father.

A line you have grown to cherish.

"It takes 10 years to get 10 years of experience," said Lt. General Dr. Charles "Bruce" Green, a 1973 United Township graduate, who is based out of Bolling Air Force Base at Washington, D.C.

"I hated that phrase," Lt. Gen. Green continued. "But as usual, it turns out he (his father) was right. I have 31 years of experience in the world's greatest Air Force, and we will continue to do great things as a high-performance team for this great country."



Photo: Submitted
United States Air Force Lt. Gen. Dr.
Charles 'Bruce' Green

Humble to a fault, today Lt. Gen. Green takes over an Air Force medical service that is a \$6 billion, 43,100-person integrated health care delivery system, serving 2.4 million beneficiaries at 75 military treatment facilities worldwide.

Not bad for the guy who spent a sweaty afternoon holding the head of Paul Bunyan atop his high school homecoming float yelling, "Give 'em the ax."

Lt. Gen. Green moved to Silvis in eighth grade. He will guide an Air Force that has set records for the lowest died-of-wounds-disease-non-battle-injury rates in history. The average casualty from Afghanistan or Iraq is back to the United States and in the arms of loved ones in three days.

"I have seen first-hand how this accelerates recovery," Lt. Gen. Green said of treatment and the benefit of an injured soldier being reunited with family as quickly as possible. "Our air-evacuation teams ensure they get home safely as well. I'm fortunate my predecessor, Lt. Gen. James Roudebush, trained me well, and we will continue to provide the best care for America's heroes. That's my task in its simplest form."

High school, Lt. Gen. Green says, trained him well for life after graduation. He first wanted to become a dentist, mainly because his girlfriend wanted to become a dentist.

"Mr. (Griff) Francis insisted I do my very best on every project, and I never had a tougher

course in college or graduate school," Lt. Gen. Green said. " Mr. (Chuck) Allee was always encouraging us and supporting our efforts to learn beyond the realm of the textbook. Coach (Harry) Arvanis taught me to love the challenge and the people. My high school education really prepared me well for life's challenges."

Lt. Gen. Green was commissioned through the Health Professions Scholarship Program and entered active duty in 1978 after completing his Doctorate of Medicine degree at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. The Health Professions Scholarship Program was at the request of his father.

" He saw it as an opportunity for a very young physician to put 'some structure in his life.' Turned out, I loved the mission and being part of a truly wonderful team." Lt. Gen. Green said.

Obviously a father who knew the right path for his son.