



Office of the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington DC 20330-1670



July 13, 2022

Fellow Airmen,

It is with deep regret that I inform you of the death of Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, retired, James M. McCoy. CMSAF McCoy passed away in his home surrounded by his family on July 13, 2022, at the age of 91.

CMSAF McCoy served as the sixth Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force from August 1, 1979, until his retirement on November 1, 1981. Throughout his long and distinguished career, CMSAF McCoy held numerous key positions, including commandant of the Strategic Air Command Noncommissioned Officer Preparatory School; chief of the training branch and deputy chief of staff for personnel at Headquarters Second Air Force; chief of the military training branch and deputy chief of staff for personnel at Headquarters Pacific Air Forces; and the first senior enlisted advisor to Strategic Air Command.

CMSAF McCoy was a patriot of unparalleled honor and dignity. He devoted his life, both during and after his time in uniform to serving our Airmen. Long after he retired, CMSAF McCoy continued to mentor and develop Airmen and veterans – often speaking at Offutt Air Force Base Airman Leadership School, and devoting time to the American Legion. Recently, in 2021, CMSAF McCoy was awarded the Air Force Association Lifetime Achievement Award.

During an interview, CMSAF McCoy said he heard many people say that the Air Force and its Airmen are not the same as they used to be. To that he responded, “Well, it’s not supposed to be like it used to be. It’s not supposed to be like when we were serving. Because they’re better.”

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force McCoy was a giant who elevated our Air Force and our Airmen. He will be deeply missed by all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joanne S. Bass".

JOANNE S. BASS
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force