



F-35 Lightning II Program

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Before beginning Halloween mission in his custom built F-35 Fighter Jet, Honorary F-35 Pilot Dillon Rosenlieb receives encouragement from his ground crew of siblings, sister, Briana, and two brothers, Conor and Darian. The F-35 Division customized wheelchair allowed Dillon and his quadruplet siblings along with his entire family to enjoy Halloween together this year (Photo by Ms. Kisha Staches)

F-35 DIVISION HELPS MAKE CHILD'S DREAMS A REALITY

By Jeffrey Schetroma

WRIGHT-PATTERSON Air Force Base, Ohio – Every child dreams of what they want to be when they get older. This year, the F-35 Division at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and volunteers from the Magic Wheelchair organization brought one boy's dreams to reality.

On Oct. 27, 2017 a ceremony was held in front of the Fighters and Bombers Directorate to help Dillon Rosenlieb realize his wish to be a Fighter Pilot.

Volunteer and professional fabricator Doug Hayes Jr., his build team, and the F-35 Division, gifted Dillon with his own Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II fighter jet Halloween costume.



Brig. Gen. Michael Schmidt the program executive officer for Fighters and Bombers Directorate, various VIPs and volunteers from the costume build team, family and friends present Dillon Rosenlieb with his customized F-35 Fighter Jet and a model at F-35 Lightning II Joint Program Office stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. (Photo by Ms. Kisha Staches)

For the past month and a half, the division worked with Hayes, providing him with design inputs to the build process and coordinated the location for the reveal.

Hayes received specialized training from the Magic Wheelchair, a non-profit organization that partners with the Stan Winston School of Character Arts, to build Halloween costumes for kids and young adults with disabilities.

Dillon was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy at the age of one, which prevents him from walking independently. Dillon has always enjoyed Halloween with his quadruplet siblings and joined them during Trick or Treat. However, due to his wheelchair dependency, his costumes never really stood out.

Hayes built a Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II fighter jet scaled to fit Dillon's wheelchair as well as meet his mobility needs.

The F-35 Division provided costumes for Dillon's sister, Briana, and two brothers, Conor and Darian, to be his ground crew, allowing the entire family to enjoy Halloween together this year.

On hand for the reveal was Brig. Gen. Michael Schmidt the program executive officer for Fighters and Bombers Directorate, Jorge Gonzalez, director for Engineering and a member of the Senior Executive Service, Michael C. Karraker F-35 division chief, Robert "Elvis" Balsarak, Air Superiority Lead for the Lockheed Martin Dayton Office, volunteers from the costume build team, family and friends of Dillon, and the men and women of the F-35 Lightning II Joint Program Office stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

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