

CIVIL AIR PATROL VOLUNTEER
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CAP's 'Ironman'

By Jennifer Gerhardt

Cadet Staff Sgt. Jamison Satterlee works diligently through the obstacle course during the Alabama Wing Encampment.

Photo by Susan Schneider,
CAP National Headquarters

Weighing in at 60 pounds and standing less than 4 feet tall, Civil Air Patrol Cadet Staff Sgt. Jamison Satterlee has been full of surprises for the last 17 years.

His first surprise was being born 12 weeks earlier than his due date. The second surprise was that Jamison's foot had developed upside down.

"We were not expecting any of that to happen," said Gina Satterlee, his mother. "But we felt it was meant to be, so we kept moving forward."

Refusing to give up, one cadet's determination inspires others

By age 3, Jamison had a prosthetic leg.

"I stopped counting surgeries when we passed 20," Gina said. "It never slowed him down, though. If he wanted to try something, we figured out a way to adapt it, so he could do it. But we never really gave him a choice. We were always like, 'Come on, let's do this.'"

The can-do attitude definitely influenced Jamison. Initially, he was interested in his school's Junior ROTC program. After learning about Civil Air Patrol through a Facebook friend, though, Jamison's curiosity sent him on a different path.

"I wanted a program outside of school that would give me some leeway, but also challenge me," Jamison

said. "The more I learned about Civil Air Patrol, the more I liked it."

In fact, Jamison became interested in everything from firefighting and law enforcement to cyber security and emergency services.

"Whatever CAP needs, he wants to do it," Gina said. "As parents, we believe you find your child's strengths and then build on them. CAP really works for Jamison."

After completing all his research, Jamison decided to go to a Civil Air Patrol meeting.

"He showed up one evening interested in everything," remembered Lt. Col. Michael Guthrie, the deputy commander for cadets for the Alabama Wing's Redstone Composite Squadron 119. "We didn't have experience with disabilities before. I wasn't sure what he could participate in or what he could do."

Guthrie didn't have to wait long to find out what Jamison could or could not do. "His mom was like a first sergeant," he said. "She told us he could do whatever we needed him to and to push him to his limits."

Jamison had more surprises in store for Guthrie when he attended his second CAP meeting. It was physical fitness night.

"We had a shuttle run, and Jamison

really wanted to do it," Guthrie said.

"I was worried about him, so we initially set the course one-third of the length. But Jamison said he wanted to do the full length, so we let him. He completed it with flying colors."

It was at the encampment that Jamison's enthusiasm and true spirit shined through, earning his nickname, "Ironman."

"I was completely amazed by his determination and performance," Guthrie. "He even had the advantage on the horizontal ladder. I'm really

proud of him." He said Jamison participates in formations, drills and almost every activity he can, just like his fellow cadets.

"He's quite the inspiration to everyone here," Guthrie said. "He's such a great example for kids with disabilities, too. They might not think they can do it, but Jamison is proof it can be done."

Overcoming seemingly difficult challenges and inspiring others comes naturally for Jamison, who likes to focus more on challenging his peers than seeing challenges for himself.

"If you feel like giving up, don't. Always keep your chin up, and keep pushing forward," said Jamison. "It'll help you achieve more in the long run." ▲