

Hometown Hero Honored

After Two Tours in Iraq

[Sarah Schulte](#)

March 7, 2005 - A hometown hero was honored in Chicago Monday.



Marine captain Vernice Armour is the first female, African-American combat pilot in US history.

She recently returned from her second tour of duty in Iraq and was honored Monday in a ceremony at the Thompson Center.

Monday was proclaimed Capt. Vernice Armour Day in the State of Illinois.

At only 31-years-old, Vernice Armour has already made history as the first African-American female combat pilot. Armour is back home and hopes to become an inspiration for others, especially kids.

"To the youth out there and other people my age, people older, whatever motivates you, find your passion, find your desire," said Armour.

Some life lessons, Armour says, her very proud father taught her.

Gaston Armour says he always knew his daughter would be successful, but he admits he was shocked when he learned his daughter wanted to join the Marines and learn how to fly, especially a combat helicopter.

Gaston is relieved his daughter survived her two tours in Iraq.

"It sent chills up my spine to see her aircraft come back riddled with and I'm blessed that the creator is making it possible for her to share her life with the young folks and to inspire them," said Gaston Armour.

Vernice has always tested her parents. Before joining the marines, she worked as a motorcycle cop and played running back for a women's professional football team.

"I probably put every gray hair on my dad's head from me getting my motorcycle to, you know, wanting to be in the military. I know they're happy for me in whatever I choose to do and they totally support me 100 percent, and I feel comfortable in that and I just try to come back safe," said Vernice.

Capt Vernice Armour says she does not know if she will be called back for her third tour of duty in Iraq, but if she is, Armour says she is prepared and proud to return.

You may contact Capt. Armour online at her website www.VeniceArmour.com