Edward “EJ” O’Brien III

EJ O’Brien is a retired U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sergeant who served more than 21 years in assignments spanning intelligence operations, workforce and talent management, knowledge management, and organizational leadership. His career included assignments in the United States, Korea, the Netherlands, and Afghanistan, as well as service at U.S. Southern Command, Air Mobility Command, Air Combat Command, and within NATO organizations. His operational experience supported missions including Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Unified Response, Freedom’s Sentinel, and Inherent Resolve.

During his later Air Force career, EJ served in senior enlisted leadership positions within the Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance community, including managing career-field and workforce programs supporting thousands of intelligence Airmen worldwide. Earlier assignments included two tours in Afghanistan and work alongside U.S., NATO, and international partners. His military decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, and multiple joint and Air Force commendation and achievement medals.

Following his retirement from the Air Force, EJ led major programs and initiatives at USAA and Ameritas before moving into veteran and military spouse career readiness and workforce development. His post-military work has focused on program leadership, workforce development, and helping service members and veterans successfully navigate the transition to civilian careers.

EJ is currently pursuing a Doctor of Business Administration at the University of South Florida, where his research explores decision-making during the military-to-civilian transition. He holds a Master of Science in Management and Leadership and a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology Management, along with associate degrees in Intelligence Studies and Information Management.

A Tampa Bay native and graduate of Dixie M. Hollins High School, EJ returned home after retiring from the Air Force. Through the Air & Space Forces Association, he looks forward to continuing to serve the Air Force and Space Force community and strengthening connections among military members, veterans, families, schools, and community partners throughout the Tampa Bay area.