



Jim H. Brown, CBO, CFPS

After almost 28 years of working in the built industry, **Jim Brown**, deputy building official for the city of Gillette, Wyo., and a Code Council board director, believes more than ever there is a strong correlation between his responsibilities during his United States Air Force service and his building safety career.

“The prevention of injury and loss of life, continued training, the focus on resilience, and last and most importantly not least, the art of service to others are the most prominent similarities,” said Brown.

Brown served with two units in the U.S. Air Force from 1976–1980, first, with the 8th Tactical Deployment Control Squadron; then with the 334th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 4th Fighter Wing.

Although he was honorably discharged after providing and maintaining personal and safety equipment for pilots and weapon officers, transitioning to the civilian life was challenging.

He returned to Carroll County, Md., where he continued working in the construction field. But there were no benefits. “If you worked, you got a paycheck. If you did not work, you did not eat.” said Brown.

As a newlywed, Brown was looking for a brighter future. Taking advantage of his construction experience, he applied for a building inspector position in Carroll County.

Although he doubted his qualifications for the position, to his surprise, Brown received the job offer and served as the youngest building inspector in the county under the mentorship of Richard Owings, a plans examiner in Carroll County. Owings took Brown under his wing and taught him about codes and engineering formulas. The rest is history.

Brown said he’d be honored to help show fellow vets the new career path. “You are welcome here in the building safety industry. There is an abundance of great opportunities for you. And thank you, thank you for your service.”

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