

# Heartland Warrior

Volume 18, Issue 1

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# Heartland WARRIOR

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U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

## On the cover...

U.S. Army Reserve Spec. Rebekah White, 316th Psychological Operations Company psychological operations specialist, calls in a simulated wounded Soldier's condition during a combat lifesavers training course here recently. The 316th PSYOP Co. trained for a month prior to deploying to the Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

# Grissom Soldiers deploy



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Ben Mota

Soldiers from the 316th Psychological Operations Company out of Grissom board an aircraft at Indianapolis International Airport Dec. 7 shortly after a departure ceremony was held to honor their service. The Soldiers will be supporting Operation Enduring Freedom and are expected to be gone for 10 months.

## By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota

Public Affairs staff

Words of encouragement and gratitude filled the air as airport travelers and awaiting family members thanked Grissom Soldiers preparing to deploy to Africa.

Twenty-four Soldiers from the U.S. Army Reserve's 316th Psychological Operations Company at Grissom departed from the Indianapolis International Airport Dec. 7, on their way to conduct additional training at Fort Dix, N.J. There they will complete their final training before deploying to the Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The 316th PSYOP Co. provides world-wide military information support operations to conventional and special operations units, both in peace and war.

"Our primary responsibility is to conduct military information support operations and allow for the truthful dissemination of information to foreign audiences to support foreign policy and na-

tional objectives," said Maj. Glenn Baugh, 316th PSYOP Co. tactical detachment officer in charge. "We do this by disseminating media to the local population that supports national objectives and the units in the area."

Preparation is an essential part of any deployment, especially when the deployment is overseas.

Members of the company were notified of the deployment in January, started initial training in March and were mobilized a month ago to conduct essential training, said Baugh.

"For the last month we have been conducting culture training consistent to the area we will be deploying to," explained Baugh. "We also conducted combat life saver courses and numerous online training courses to prepare us for our deployment."

While Soldiers of the company have strenuously prepared for their future task at hand, the looming idea of being away from family

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Heartland Warrior



# Grissom spreads holiday cheer by giving

By Tech. Sgt. Ben Mota  
Public Affairs staff

Grissom Airmen and their families are known to put service before self, but sometimes the service gets a chance to give back.

And, that's just what the 434th Air Refueling Wing did, spearheaded by Jill Marconi, Grissom Airman and Family Readiness director, who recently headed a fundraiser that led to the donation of five decorated Christmas trees.

"We knew that we had several families who didn't have much, so what we decided to do was take up a collection within the (Family Readiness) building to raise money for trees," explained Marconi.

Word about the trees quickly spread, and soon

a much larger plan was devised to have different groups around base participate by turning efforts into a base-wide Christmas tree decorating contest.

Marconi said she was able to get 434 ARW staff, 434th Operations Group, 434th Maintenance Group, 434th Mission Support Group and the Grissom Rising Six to each participate in the contest, decorating a total of five trees.

Civilian and military members were encouraged to participate in the decorating contest by bringing in decorations and the trees were donated anonymously, said Marconi. Donations were accepted all the way until Saturday morning of the December unit training assembly.

The trees were then



U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Airman Andrew McLaughlin

The 434th Maintenance Group Christmas tree on display at the 434th Air Refueling Wing Christmas party here Dec. 1. Various teams participated in a Christmas tree decorating contest and tree lighting ceremony during the party.

decorated by their respective organizations during the base holiday party, and children in attendance voted on their favorite.

Lt. Col. Greg Demaio,

434th ARW processing manager, said he and his family, who helped gather ornaments and decorated the 434th ARW staff tree, were moved by not only the atmosphere created by all the garland and lights, but also by the willingness of everyone to give.

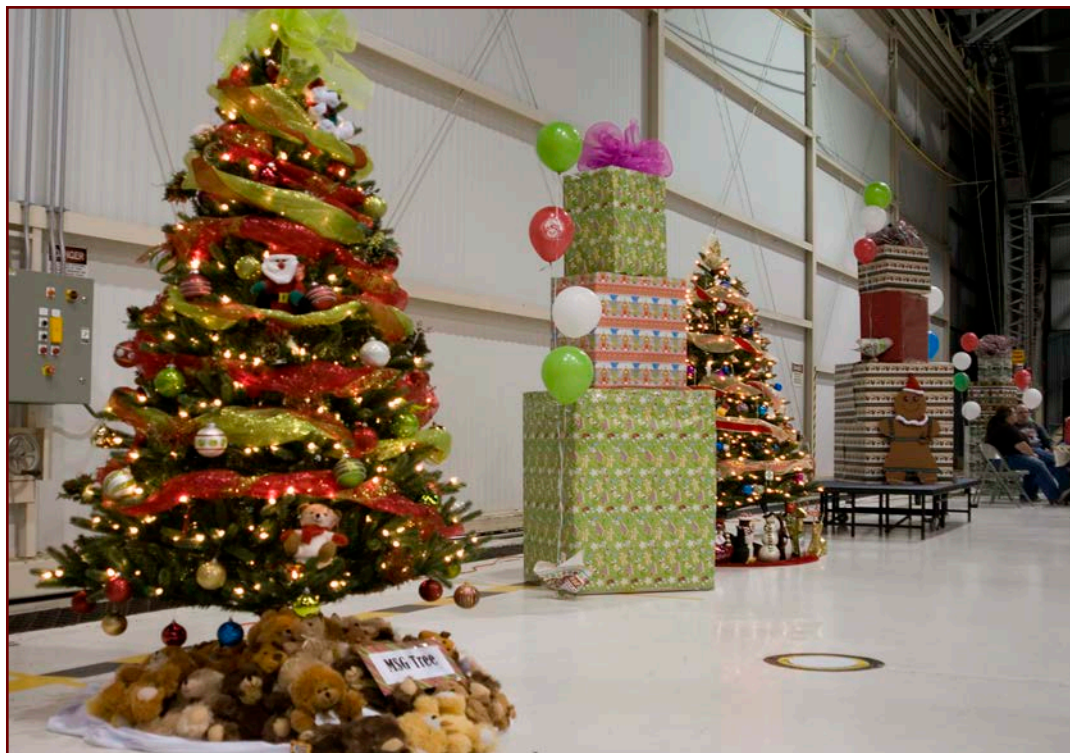
"It really put me in the Christmas spirit," said Demaio. "At first I didn't know if anyone would come through, but when it came time everyone really stepped up."

Toward the end of the party in Dock 1, the lights dimmed revealing five fully-decorated trees, and an announcement was made that the 434th MXG had won the contest.

But, at that point the focus was no longer on the contest, said Marconi.

"The whole concept of the event was to bring people together, and we did that," she added.

Following the party, the trees were donated to select military families.



Christmas trees on display at the 434th Air Refueling Wing Christmas party here Dec. 1. Various units of the wing participated in a Christmas tree decorating contest during the party.





*U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Ben Mota*

**Melody Scalf and her niece watch an aircraft taxi that transported the young girl's father and 23 other Soldiers to Fort Dix, N.J., for predeployment training Dec. 7. The soldiers from the 316th Psychological Operations Company are deploying to Africa for a 10-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.**

still seemed to weigh heavily on their minds.

"You can prepare for a deployment, but you can't prepare for leaving a loved one," said Sgt. 1st Class Warren Seegers, 316th PSYOP Co. tactical detachment acting first sergeant. "Being away is always the toughest part of the deployment."

Seegers spent his last moments in Indiana with his wife, who joined him at the airport to participate in a departure ceremony. She and other family members later escorted the departing Soldiers to their aircraft terminal before saying their good-byes.

Sen. Dan Coats, Sen.-elect Joe Donnelly and Indiana State Rep. Kevin Mahan were present at the ceremony to thank the Soldiers for their service to their country and to offer words of encouragement to family members.

"When we travel around the world, people often come up and say 'Your country is so extraordinary, how did that happen?'" said Donnelly. "And the answer is easy; because of you, the dedication you have, the love for the country, and the example you set for all of us."

"So thank you, God bless you and the families, and God bless America," he concluded.

Grissom is not only home to the 434th Air Refueling Wing, the largest KC-135 Stratotanker unit in the Air Force Reserve Command, but also three Army Reserve units and a Marine Corps communications detachment.

Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines routinely deploy from Grissom in support of the Department of Defense missions and U.S. strategic objectives.



**Spc. John Kitchell, 316th Psychological Operations Company psychological operations specialist, feeds his two-week old daughter while speaking with Indiana State Rep. Kevin Mahan after a deployment ceremony at Indianapolis International Airport Dec. 7. Twenty Four Soldiers, including Kitchell left Indianapolis to conduct additional training at Fort Dix, N.J., to prepare for a 10-month deployment in the Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.**

# Indy Veterans Day Council honors Airman

By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota  
Public Affairs staff

Changing lives is something many aspire to accomplish and is an achievement that has garnered one Grissom Airman a prestigious award.

The Veterans Day Council of Indianapolis honored Tech. Sgt. Shannon Fuller, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, with a 2012 Veterans Day Military Achievement Award for her years of dedication to the Air Force Core Value of "service before self."

"I was both proud and shocked when I was told that I had been nominated for the award," said Fuller, who serves as a medical readiness noncommissioned officer. "There are so many people on this base that do extraordinary things, so being nominated means a lot."

The Veterans Day Military Achievement Award is presented to individuals who have shown exemplary performance in their military careers. Fuller was one of two individuals from the 434th Air Refueling Wing to receive the honorable award.

"As a guide, selection is based on ratings in the following categories: military performance, attendance,



Tech. Sgt. Shannon Fuller

judgment, reliability, leadership, appearance, attitude and preparation for advancement," said Melissa Jacobs, Veterans Day Council of Indianapolis representative.

And, while Shannon Fuller was judged to be exemplary in all of those areas by 434th ARW leadership who nominated her for the award, she said she chooses to focus her military career on service.

"I try to be flexible and am willing to help with anything, but the most rewarding aspects of my job in the military are the opportunities to change lives," explained Fuller, who came to Grissom in 2008 after serving five years in the regular Air Force. "I have built sandbags to prevent floods in Grand Forks, N.D., and helped provide shelter for nationals that have been run out of their homes in Turkey."

"Along with those more tangible things, I have been able to change lives by simply showing support, mentoring and training my fellow Airmen," she added.

While Fuller gave credit to her military colleagues and leadership for helping her along the way, she said her father, a 23-year Air Force veteran, provided her a shining example of putting service before self.

"He always led by example and instilled in me the love for our country at a young age," she recalled.

As part of the honor, the Veterans Day Council invited Fuller to attend a formal awards banquet where she was presented with a special token in front of her husband, father and 434th Air Refueling Wing leadership.

## New Tricare premiums took effect in January

FALLS CHURCH, Va. -- New premium rates for Tricare Reserve Select and Tricare Retired Reserve went into effect Jan. 1.

Monthly rates for member-only coverage under TRS are now \$51.62. That is down 5.3 percent from 2012 premiums. Rates for member and family coverage are \$195.81 a month, a 1.5 percent increase over 2012 rates.

Premiums for member-only coverage under TRR are now \$402.11 a month,

a decrease of 4.4 percent. Rates for member and family coverage are \$969.10. That is down 5.7 percent over 2012 rates.

Those not currently covered under either program who want to initiate coverage must submit an initial two-month premium payment with a completed application form. The initial premium payment can be paid by check, money order or cashier's check, or by debit or credit card.

After the initial premium payment, the regional

contractor will provide a bill by the 10th of each month. Payments are due no later than the last day of each month and are applied to the following month of coverage.

After Jan. 1, TRS and TRR premium payments could only be accepted by automatic payment via a debit/credit card or electronic funds transfer.

Electronic payments streamline account management and ensure continuous coverage for beneficiaries. Failure to pay premiums by the due

date results in termination of coverage.

TRS and TRR are premium-based health plans. TRS is available for eligible members of the Selected Reserve - Air Force Reserve Command unit reservists and individual mobilization augmentees - and their families. TRR can be purchased by retired Reserve members, their families and eligible survivors of deceased retired Reserve sponsors. For more information go to [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil). (AFRC News Service)



# DIRTY-DITCH MEDICINE:

## *Grissom PSYOP Soldiers train as combat lifesavers*

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner  
Public Affairs staff

Combat medicine is high-pressure, chaotic and downright dirty, something Grissom psychological operations Soldiers learned firsthand.

Nearly 50 Soldiers from the Army Reserve's 316th Psychological Operations Company participated in a four-day combat lifesaver course here recently.

The course, which was held in conjunction with a month-long predeployment buildup, included 40 hours of classroom training and intense hands-on sessions that culminated with a written test and tactical combat casualty care course, said David Petroski, a contract CLS instructor with a Florida-based tactical training company.

"We're here to save lives by teaching Soldiers

and battle buddies life-saving skills in order to bring them back home, and that's the bottom line," explained Petroski. "It's proven to work, and that's why we do it -- 100 percent, hands down it works."

The U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command requires that all of its Soldiers be CLS certified and with the 316th PSY-OP Co. deploying to the

Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom later this year, a CLS class was arranged.

"This training was probably the most important training that we have done over the last month," said Sgt. 1st Class Warren Seegers, 316th PSYOP Co. tactical detachment acting first sergeant. "The training was very stressful because you're running around, so you have the



U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

U.S. Army Reserve Pvt. 1st Class Michael Klingsmith, left, and Sgt. First Class Warren Seegers attend to simulated wounds of Staff Sgt. James Sterling during a tactical combat casualty care course here recently. The three Soldiers are assigned to the 316th Psychological Operations Company and participated in a combat lifesavers class as predeployment training.



physical aspect, plus you have the instructors putting the pressure and stress on you by yelling to put the chaos affect into it.”

On top of the hectic and, at times, chaotic training, the course forced Soldiers to get down and dirty with basic life-saving medicine.

“This is dirty-ditch medicine, so they’re going to get bloody, they’re going to get dirty, and there’s nothing clean, pretty or nice about this,” said Petroski. “If somebody loses a limb with a traumatic amputation,

you’ve got to get a tourniquet on that, you’ve got to stop the bleeding.

“If you don’t stop the bleeding, that Soldier is going to bleed out,” he added. “With a femoral artery, you could bleed out in as little as three minutes.”

With that kind of pressure and with a life on the line, knowledge and speed are paramount.

“It’s about speed and not hesitating to do the things that they’re taught because that’s what’s going to save lives and bring people home,” explained Petroski.

In just a few days, what Soldiers are taught during the course is quite extensive.

“In four days, we try to teach them what a paramedic has a career to learn,” said Petroski, who added that the main purpose of a CLS-trained Soldier is to stabilize the wounded and move them along in the echelon of care.

“They’re in the field, so their focus is to stop the bleeding and keep their airway open long enough for a helicopter or Humvee to take them to a medical treatment facility

where they will get the medical care they need.”

Spec. Rebekah White, 316th PSYOP Co. psychological operations specialist, said she felt the intensity and realism of the training is what made it invaluable.

“It was really intense and there was a ton of good information,” elaborated White. “The training let me go over things I hadn’t thought about before, and I was able to correct them on the spot, which is a lot better than making mistakes in a place like Afghanistan or the Horn of Africa.”



Garry Floyd, a combat lifesaver instructor, creates a simulated neck wound on Army Reserve Sgt. Tiffany Jones, during a recent predeployment training here.



Garry Floyd, left, and Brian Bush, right, add stress and pressure to combat lifesaver course students from during a recent training here. Both are contract CLS instructors.



Soldiers for the Army Reserve’s 316th Psychological Operations Company here carry a fellow psychological operations Soldier with simulated wounds out of a ditch during a combat lifesavers course held here.



# Grissom senior NCO honored by command

By Staff Sgt. Carl Berry  
Public Affairs staff

Some people define success in the amount of wealth or position, while others define success by the amount of people they help achieve their dreams.

Senior Master Sgt. Linda Mason-Wilson, who received the Air Force Medical Service Corps Association Air Reserve Command Outstanding Health Service Management Apprentice award for her exemplary job performance during the past year, is the latter.

"I receive more joy by seeing others grow to see their potential," said Mason-Wilson, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron health service management specialist.

Mason-Wilson received the Her list of accomplishments, among other things include; the revamping of the unit Tricare billing process, resulting in the correction of bills for more than 87 Airmen, representing the Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Development Course professional development center during the 2012 Chief's Summit and organizing a walk to benefit breast cancer research for her home church, which generated \$2,500 in charitable donations.

Her commander spoke very highly of her expertise and her desire to serve others before herself.

"Sergeant Mason-Wilson is an extremely energetic individual who does a great job taking on additional responsibilities," said Col. Thomas Collins, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron commander. "For example she has taken on the responsibility of being a mentor for junior enlisted personnel by helping them define their career paths."

When she learned that she received the award she was very thankful for the people that nominated her, and for the opportunity to represent the wing.

"It truly was a honor receiving this award, because it means people have been recognizing the work that I do, which is often behind the scenes," said Mason-Wilson.

One example of the behind the scenes work that Mason-Wilson has done is rebuilding the 434th AMDS orderly room. To do so she had to learn the new regulations and procedures from people to complete the project.

"One of the many things I have learned during my Air Force career is you can't lead where you don't

go and can't teach what you don't know," shared Mason-Wilson. "I have made it a priority to constantly learn new things, so that I may teach others."

Mason-Wilson's refusal to become complacent, following the Air Force core values, and being a good wingman are characteristics all Airmen can follow.



U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Carl Berry

Senior Master Sgt. Linda Mason-Wilson, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron health service management specialist, received a 2012 Outstanding Health Service Management Apprentice award for exemplarily service. Among other things Mason-Wilson has consistently achieved excellent ratings on squadron emergency management program inspections, earned a second Community College of the Air Force degree and developed an Honor Guard brochure as a marketing tool.



## Kick the habit

### Grissom offers tobacco cessation classes



U.S. Air Force photo illustration by Staff Sgt. Ben Mota

**By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota**  
*Public Affairs staff*

The time to quit is now, and Grissom is ready to help.

Starting in January, Grissom will offer a four-class tobacco cessation course designed to provide tobacco users assistance with leading a tobacco free life.

“Twenty percent of the total Air Force uses some source of a tobacco product,” said Juli Phelps, 434th Force Support Squadron exercise physiologist. “That number is alarming considering the number of health problems associated with tobacco use.”

According to the Center for Disease Control and

Prevention tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability and death in the United States.

Phelps added that tobacco use is associated with numerous health problems that reduce life expectancy including: high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease and cancer.

“Conquering nicotine addiction consists of much more than just quitting the habit,” she explained. “Other factors are associated with quitting, and all of those factors are addressed in the four classes we are offering.”

The hour-long classes will cover multiple topics including: nicotine addiction and habit, consequences of tobacco use, information and tips on how to quit, tools for coping with withdrawal symptoms, social supports, avoiding weight gain, and managing stress through relaxation techniques.

All Grissom personnel, their family members and civilian employees can attend the course free of charge.

The classes will be held on Wednesdays starting Jan. 16 at 3:30 p.m. Phelps highly recommended that individuals interested in the course attend all four classes in order to gain the full benefits of the material covered.

## In the limelight

### Promotions

**To master sergeant** – Robert Delee, 434th Security Forces Squadron; and Tanisha Silva, 434th Force Support Squadron.

**To technical sergeant** – Joseph Schluttenhofer, 434th Air Refueling Wing; Austin Horen, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; and David Dunlevy, 434th Maintenance Squadron.

**To staff sergeant** – Eric Baker, 434th Communications Squadron; David Bryant, 434th MXS; Angelica Colon, 434th Operations Group; James Poole, 434th FSS; and Andrew Wray, 434th Maintenance Operations Flight.

**To senior airman** – Jannis Alonso, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron; Jade Bess, 434th SFS; Lance Chase, 434th CES; Scott Hunter; 434th AMXS, Paul Ingram, 434th CES; Christopher Karlson, 434th AMXS; George Walker, 434th CES; Keith Wuetig, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron; Ragheed Azooz, 434th CES; Jason Hrycaj, 49th APF; and Jason Lowe, 434th AMXS.

**To airman first class** – Zachary Blow, 434th MXS; Mayzin Naing, 434th MXS; Justin Tallman, 49th Aerial Port Flight; and Mandy Thibeault, 434th AMXS.

**To airman** – David Holland, 434th MOF; Kelsey McFadden, 43th APF; and Sarah Miles, 434th CES.





# PA specialist receives veterans award

**By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Recognizing service that goes above and beyond the call of duty is a tenet of the Veterans Day Council of Indianapolis, which chose to honor one of Grissom's own.

Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner, 434th Air Refueling Wing public affairs specialist, was honored by the council with a 2012 Veterans Day Military Achievement Award.

"I was honored when I found out I had received the award," said Orders-Woempner. "Anytime leadership recognizes a person for an award it makes them feel appreciated and realize that all the hard work they have done has not gone unnoticed."

The Veterans Day Military Achievement Award is presented to individuals who have shown exemplary performance in their military careers. Orders-Woempner was one of two individuals from the 434th ARW to receive the award.

"Exemplary performance is part of our Air Force core values," added Orders-Woempner. "If we don't always strive for perfection, we will never have a chance to achieve it."

At Grissom, Orders-Woempner is the primary editor, writer, photographer and graphic designer for the base public internet and social media websites. In addition, he has written hundreds of stories for Grissom, Air Force Reserve Command

and civilian media publications, and was named AFRC Photojournalist of the Year for 2011.

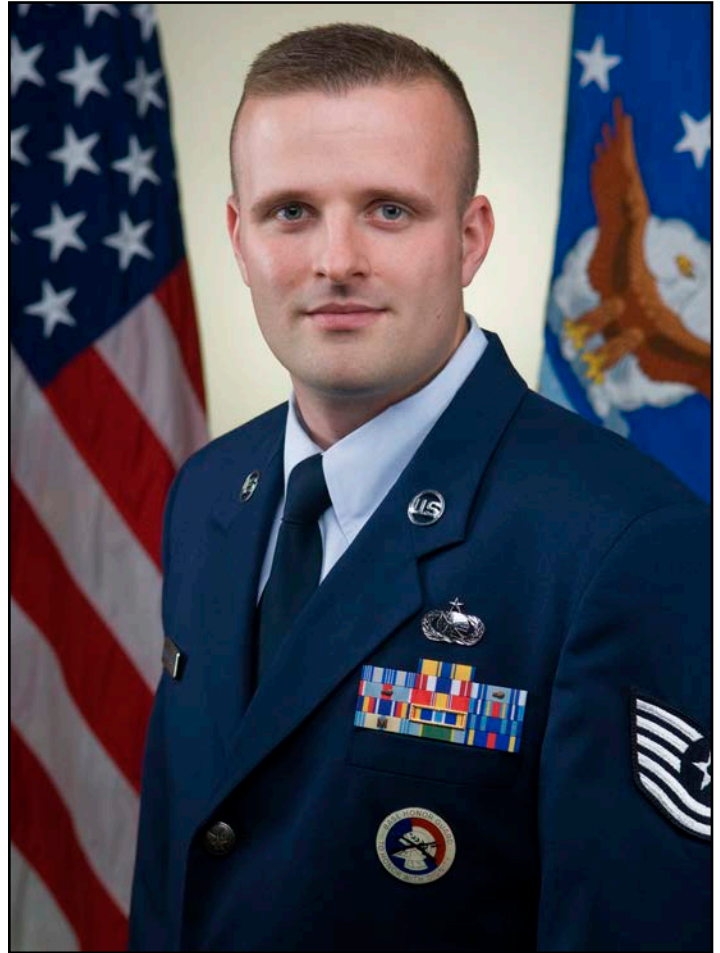
"The most rewarding aspect of my job is telling the stories of Grissom's Airmen, Soldiers and Marines," he said during the award presentation. "Grissom's service men and women sacrifice much for the sake of freedom, but often that goes unnoticed given the humble nature of our Hoosier heroes, so it's my pleasure and honor to tell the stories of their sacrifices, accomplishments and lives, and those of their families."

Orders-Woempner said he credits his success to his faith, supportive family and his military leadership.

"The Air Force is a culture of excellence, and I am proud to be part of an organization that has mentored me and brought me up in that," he added.

And, it was that positive attitude that helped get the PA noncommissioned officer hand-selected to help rewrite the Air Force public web communications instruction as well change the way the Air Force Reserve Command operates its public websites, making changes that will affect the way the entire Air Force communicates its mission to the public.

"Being able to have a job that you are passionate about and truly believe makes a difference is absolutely phenomenal," said Orders-Woempner. "But, being asked to help lead the way for the future was an



*U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Andrew McLaughlin*

**Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner, 434th Air Refueling Wing public affairs specialist and social media director, was recently honored with a 2012 Veterans Day Military Achievement Award from Veterans Day Council of Indianapolis. The award is presented to individuals who have shown exemplary performance in their military careers.**

amazing opportunity that is almost impossible for me to describe."

However, it was not just Orders-Woempner's duties as a public affairs specialist that set him apart as his achievements and participation in other capacities also showed his passion to serve.

Over the last year, the PA noncommissioned officer took on the responsibilities as the 434th ARW Staff unit deployment manager and was recognized for supporting 12 deployments in less than six months, said Lt.

Col. Gary Lockard, 434th ARW chief of public affairs. He also took on the task of rebuilding Grissom's base honor guard as honor guard manager.

"No matter what the job is someone is counting on you to get the job done, and I will do everything in my power to not be a person who lets a fellow Airman down," Orders-Woempner explained. "I think no matter what you are assigned to do you should always put your best foot forward and do the job to the best of your ability."



# Program helps wounded warriors

**By Tammy Cournoyer**  
*Air Force Personnel Center Warrior and Family Operations Center*

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas -- The Air Force's Wounded Warrior Civil Service Employment Program assists combat-related ill and injured Airmen secure Air Force civil service jobs.

Since the program's inception in 2006, nearly 120 wounded warriors have joined the Air Force's civilian work force.

This employment program affects wounded warriors with a 30 percent or higher combat-related disability rating. It provides for the non-competitive placement of a wounded warrior into an Air Force civil service position and can temporarily fund their salary through the use of a central salary account if necessary.

Wounded warriors not only gain employment, but employers benefit as well from the hiring program.

The recruitment process is streamlined and employers get well-qualified and trained individuals much faster to fill existing openings.

Former Airman 1st Class Ray Alexander is one wounded warrior who benefited from the special hiring program.

In 2005, Alexander was injured in a major vehicle accident while on routine patrol outside Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan. He suffered a concussion and back injuries, and he



*U.S. Air Force Air Force photo illustration by Javier Garvia*

**The Air Force's Wounded Warrior Civil Service Employment Program assists combat-related ill and injured Airmen secure Air Force civil service jobs, and since the program's inception in 2006 nearly 120 wounded warriors have joined the Air Force's civilian work force.**

currently suffers from a traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder and long-term memory loss.

During his recovery, Alexander had a goal of re-entering Air Force service. Working with his nonmedical care manager, Bob Gullion of the Air Force Wounded Warrior program, he was able to reach that goal as a civil servant. Today he is serving as a civilian career security field team analyst at the Air Force Personnel Center here.

"I made it clear that my goal was to continue serving my country, and I would make myself avail-

able for civil service," said Alexander. "Although the process was not easy, nor immediate, Bob and the wounded warrior team worked hard to make sure that my goal of re-entering Air Force service came to fruition."

As a former security forces Airman, Alexander brings a special skill set and job knowledge to his current duties.

"Ray has demonstrated a strong work ethic and dedication to getting the mission accomplished," said Joel Alaimo, chief of the security career field management team and Alexander's supervisor. "Additionally, Ray

has been a fast learner and is always willing to do whatever it takes to ensure we succeed as a team."

Alaimo believes civil service supervisors should seriously consider hiring wounded warriors.

"Ray is the second wounded warrior this office has hired and both have been positive experiences, providing the government with dedicated career-minded employees," said Alaimo.

He believes that veterans have valuable skills through their military training, such as leadership, being disciplined, and practicing teamwork that translate into all areas of the civilian workforce.

Alexander agrees that civil service is the place for him.

"I can honestly say that I love the position I am in," explained Alexander. "It allows me to continue on in the field for which the Air Force invested so much. This position also allows me to incorporate my previous active-duty experience and criminal justice education that I have received through undergrad work, and management and leadership principles that I am currently learning through my graduate program."

Wounded warriors interested in the special hiring program should contact their nonmedical care manager to begin the process.

For more information about the Air Force Wounded Warrior programs and opportunities, go to [www.woundedwarrior.af.mil](http://www.woundedwarrior.af.mil).





*U.S. Air Force photo illustration by Maj. Kelly Howard and Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner*

**Lt. Col. Christopher Filer, 434th Aerospace Medical Squadron medical readiness flight commander, was recently presented the Air Force Reserve Command Outstanding Medical Service Corps Officer award for his outstanding performance.**

## ***AMDS officer deemed ‘outstanding’ by command***

**By Maj. Kelly Howard**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Outstanding is a word that often is used to define an individual who stands out from others in a positive way.

Lt. Col. Christopher Filer, 434th Aerospace Medical Squadron medical readiness flight commander, recently received that title when he was presented the Outstanding Medical Service Corps Officer Award for 2011.

“Filer is an extremely talented officer that works tirelessly without a clock,” said Col. Thomas Collins, Aerospace Medical Squadron commander. “There is not a task that is too big for him.”

One of those extraordinary tasks was attending a healthcare Lean Six Sigma training course designed to improve organizations by identifying and removing the defects of particular processes.

Using that training, Filer was able to reduce waste by \$24,000 and ease the flow of the organization,

said Collins.

Filer’s role as a medical service corps officer is much like a chief operations officer – overseeing all operations, logistics, readiness, plans, finance and systems under the guidance of the commander at the medical facility.

While in this role, his ability to coordinate resources and build cohesion led to 105 patients being moved during six overseas missions with zero mishaps. In addition, Filer maintained 100 percent currency of squadron member deployment training requirements and deployment checklist consolidation.

During the award period and while stationed with the 514th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Filer was a subject matter expert for the squadron on tempo banding assignments and new requirements. He also became the wing point of contact resulting in a unit deployment posture of 100 percent.

“During the past year I’d say the greatest challenge has been the HSI prep,” Filer said. “It was a lot

of work getting people to work together, recognize each other, and develop rapport and teamwork; but it was the most rewarding too.”

Filer said he believes in supporting others on their journey to self-improvement as well as making his own. He personally coached two Airmen on how to fast track their careers and both received accelerated promotions.

“I think my greatest accomplishment during the past year has been assisting individuals here manage their careers better,” the 17-year veteran said. “When I got here we had about 8 awards a year in the unit, and this year we will have 102.”

“It’s why I stay in the (Air Force) Reserve; to help people and do something for my country,” Filer said.

During his career he’s served as a Navy corpsmen and been stationed in Okinawa, the Philippines, Washington D.C., Washington, Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Texas and Alabama.





# Winter wonderland

## Grissom welcomes winter, reminds everyone to be safe

Winter is here officially and as the first snow and ice of the season accumulated at Grissom, it brought with it the need for increased safety and caution.

Astronomical winter is determined by the winter solstice, which is when the Earth is tilted farthest away from the sun in the Northern Hemisphere. This year, the winter solstice occurred at 6:12 a.m. EST Dec. 21.

For many, winter begins in December, when the autumn weather in Indiana starts to turn blustery and cold. Meteorologists use this reasoning as well, as they use whole months to identify meteorological seasons.

In the Northern Hemisphere, meteorologists identify the three coldest months of December, January and February as meteorological winter.

No matter what your view on the start of winter, as the cold rolls in with ice, sleet and snow, the National Safety Council has a few reminders for how to stay safe this season.

### ***Winter preparation:***

- Change the batteries in smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors once a year.
- Clean chimneys and fireplaces.
- Check furnaces and heating systems by having them inspected by a professional prior to the start of every heating season.
- Prepare for emergencies with a winter survival kit.
- Check fire extinguishers and charge or replace them if necessary.
- Get a flu shot.

### ***Snow shoveling safety:***

- If there is a history of heart problems or inactivity, talk to a doctor before shoveling.
- Warm up and stretch before starting.
- Drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.
- Shovel fresh snow. Freshly fallen, powdery snow is easier to shovel than the wet, packed-down variety.
- Push, don't lift. It's easier on your back and uses less energy than lifting.
- Pick the right shovel, and don't pick up too much.
- Use a small shovel, or fill only one-fourth or one-half of a large one.
- Lift with the legs bent, not with the back. Keep the back straight.
- Dress the part. Dress in layers; if working up a sweat, remove some of those layers.
- If the body is saying stop, listen to it. Stop if pain is felt or if there are heart attack warning signs including chest pain; shoulder, neck or arm pain; dizziness, fainting, sweating or nausea; and shortness of breath.

### ***Vehicle safety:***

- Have vehicles serviced regularly.
- Check the concentration level of the antifreeze.
- Add a stronger windshield cleaning/de-icer fluid solution to keep the spray from freezing.
- Check tire air pressure and replace any worn tires.
- Keep the fuel tank full or near full to avoid being caught on the road in long lines of slow moving traffic.
- Always carry an emergency kit, with items to support all occupants in case the vehicle becomes stuck.