

Heartland WARRIOR

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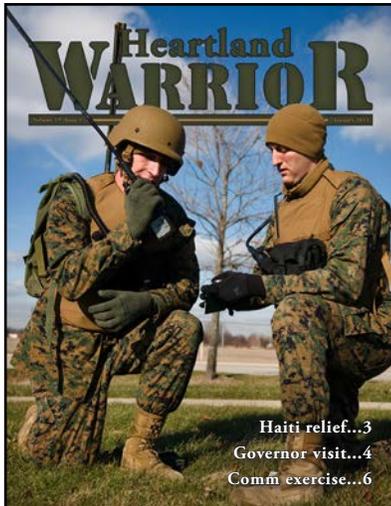
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U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

On the cover...

Lance Cpl. Charles Sansone, left, and Cpl. Austin Bailey, with Detachment One, Communication Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 45, 4th Marine Logistics Group, patrol during a communications exercise here Dec. 7. During the exercise, Grissom Marines worked to establish communications with fellow Marines in Greensboro, N.C.

James sworn in as SECAF



U.S. Air Force photo by Scott Ash

Timothy Beyland, administrative assistant to the secretary of the Air Force, swears in Deborah Lee James as the 23rd Air Force secretary at the Pentagon Dec. 20.

By Staff Sgt. David Salanitri
Air Force Public Affairs Agency

WASHINGTON -- The Air Force's 23rd Secretary of the Air Force was formally sworn in, Dec. 20, in the Pentagon.

Deborah James assumed the position of the Air Force's highest ranking leader, making her the second female in Air Force history to serve in the role.

As James takes on her new duties, she said she knows there will be challenges, inheriting the service at a time filled with uncertainties, from the budget to management of the force.

"I think our Air Force is in great shape given that we've been living through some difficult times," James said during her first interview as secretary. "I'm enormously optimistic about the future of our Air Force. We have nothing but opportunities to face in the upcoming years."

While James said she is confident the Air Force will prevail moving forward, she noted that the service's manning will look different in the future.

"I'm equally certain that we will become a smaller Air Force; we will remain a capable Air Force

with top notch people," she said. "We're going to remain No. 1."

Over the next five years, the Air Force is slated to cut roughly 25,000 Airmen. Recently, Air Force officials announced programs that will aid the service to achieve such cuts in manning.

With these force management programs beginning, James said senior Air Force leaders are working to give Airmen as much information as they can, as fast as they can.

"We are going to be as transparent as possible and get them information as quickly as we can," James said. "We don't want them to be consumed by worries of the future."

As she begins her tenure as the SecAF, James said she wants Airmen to know she is 100 percent dedicated to serving them.

"I am totally committed to every Airman," she said. "My top job is to be their advocate here in Washington and around the globe."

Before being nominated by President Barack Obama on Aug. 1, James was president of the Technology and Engineering Sector at Science Applications International Corporation. (AFNS)

Grissom reservists send aid, relief to Haiti

By Senior Airman
Jami Lancette
Public Affairs staff

Global reach and global power, tenets of the Air Force's core mission, also come with a global responsibility – a responsibility to the good of all mankind.

Using that global power and reach, Grissom's Air Force reservists partnered with Airmen from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., and Charleston AFB, S.C., to provide more than 45,000 pounds of food to Haiti as part of a humanitarian relief mission under the Denton Program Dec. 7.

The Denton program is a Department of Defense humanitarian assistance transportation program, which provides continual transportation of supplies such as agricultural equipment, clothing, educational supplies, food, and medical supplies to countries in need of assistance.

"Over 9,000 people will benefit from this mission, and that's a pretty big impact," said Ken Hundemer, an operations manager with Charleston's 437th Aerial Port Squadron, who coordinates Denton missions.

According to Hundemer, a majority of the food on this mission was set to be delivered to Haitian school children and those living in an orphanage.

"You've got all these kids and families coming in on a daily basis to these facilities, and these folks are trying as best as they can to take care of them," he explained.

To provide relief to that many people, it took an

all-hands-on-deck effort from 434th Air Refueling Wing Airmen here as they received nearly 38 pallets of food and prepared it for air shipment before loading it on a 305th Air Mobility Wing KC-10 Extender aircraft from McGuire for transport.

Contained in those pallets were rice soy meals infused with protein, vitamins and minerals.

"It's almost like a meal ready to eat; basically they take it out, add hot water, cook it up and give it out," explained Hundemer. "And, from what I've been told, they can really help out with a lot of the malnutrition problems they have down there."

Helping Haitians defeat hunger was nothing new for Master Sgt. Laurie Latchaw, Grissom's 49th Aerial Port deputy superintendent, who has supported 10 previous Denton missions.

"I'm always proud when we can help the less fortunate," said Latchaw. "It gives us a sense of accomplishment and purpose."

Although this was not the first Denton mission for Latchaw, she said it was a first for many of the other 49th APF and 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron Airmen who helped her, providing a benefit to all involved.

"It's really a win-win situation," said Hundemer. "The Haitian people receive aid; the donating and recipient agencies get this aid to the Haitians in a cost-effective way; the ground support unit gets the opportunity to train on building cargo and work-



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jami Lancette

Tech. Sgt. Kevin Black, front, and Tech. Sgt. Michael Darnell, both 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron supply management craftsmen, prepare food for shipment aboard a KC-10 Extender aircraft at Grissom Dec. 7.

ing with some different airframes; and the flying units meet currency and proficiency requirements they have as flyers."

Grissom's involvement and location was also an added benefit.

"Having Master Sergeant Latchaw and her folks participate in this was huge because without her help and the aerial port flight at Grissom helping out with getting this cargo prepared for airlift we wouldn't have been able to do it," Hundemer explained. "Being able to bring it into Grissom, a relatively local location saves (the donating agency) a tremendous amount of money in transportation costs, and

in turn, the savings allow them to go out and buy more food or get more supplies to send down there."

"When I found out what we were shipping out, I thought it was really neat the Air Force was involved in something to help out people who are less fortunate," said Staff Sgt. Steve Bourff, 49th APF aerial port specialist. "I thought it was really rewarding to do something to help other people out."

Bourff also said the mission showcased how the Air Force is not just about combat.

"We're out to help people, not hurt people," he elaborated. "We just want to help."

Indiana Gov. Mike Pence thanks Grissom Airmen



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

Indiana Gov. Mike Pence asks Lt. Col. Vic Verboncoeur, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron chief pilot, a question about aerial refueling aboard a KC-135R Stratotanker during the governor's visit to Grissom Dec. 19. Pence visited the Hoosier base to meet with troops and thank them for their service.

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner
434th ARW Public Affairs

While many expect Saint Nick around this time of year, the Hoosier Wing recently got a holiday visit from someone a little different.

Opting to wear a blue suit instead of a red one, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence visited with Grissom's reservists and civil servants to thank them for their service and wish them happy holidays here Dec. 19.

"It really is the time of the year for joy, for family and for traditions, but really it's also a time to reflect and be thankful," said Pence in an opening statement in front of a KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft in a Grissom hangar. "As I stand before you today, I can tell you my little family and the people of this state are proud of you, proud of your work here at Grissom, grateful for the sacrifices you and your families make to serve our nation, and the selflessness that all of you personify in the cause of duty and country."

After his opening remarks, the governor shook hands with nearly every one of the approximately 100 Grissom employees in attendance before taking part in a tour of a

434th Air Refueling Wing KC-135.

During the visit, Pence said the Hoosier state Indiana is one that places a high value on military service.

"While Indiana is the 15th most populous state, I'm proud to say we have the fourth largest National Guard in the United States of American, and we have the 16th highest number of veterans in the nation," he explained. "This is a state that cherishes service in uniform and cherishes the role of those who serve and those who have served."

Pence, who took 10 trips overseas to visit troops downrange as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, said he has seen firsthand the good work of Hoosier reservists and guardsmen around the world.

"As many of you know, here in Indiana, many of our armed forces go above and beyond the call of duty each and every day; for their service, putting on the uniform, wearing it with pride serving under circumstances that are very challenging, we owe them a debt of gratitude," he said. "It is a debt that, I pledge to you as governor of Indiana, I will ever seek to repay."

According to Pence, part of that

debt repayment and pledge comes with providing support to veterans and military families.

"President Abraham Lincoln said it well when he said, we must 'care for him who shall have borne the battle,' and I believe those words echo through history as a challenge and mandate to every American and every Hoosier," said Pence. "We'll keep our promises to our veterans, and we'll come alongside the families of those who serve in uniform today."

For Staff Sgt. Erica Sherwood, 434th Force Support Squadron personnel specialist, having the governor come to the base to thank her and her fellow Airmen was very meaningful.

"It was an honor to meet him, and I was surprised by how down to earth he was," recalled Sherwood.

"His visit shows he cares about us and what we do here, and I liked that he took interest in the (KC-135) and our mission; like he said, what we do here is very important."

Chief Master Sgt. Michael L. Bowden Jr., 434th ARW command chief, said he thought the event was a success.

"I think it was a great visit, and it was good for him to stop by and see the troops, wish them happy holidays and let them know what they do is important to nation's security and that they're doing an outstanding job," Bowden said. "Hopefully the governor doesn't become a stranger to Grissom and comes back and visits us again."

In his concluding remarks, Pence passed along well wishes for the holidays.

"Grissom is a great source of pride for all the people of Indiana and you here who serve are the reason why, and so I wish to extend to you our thanks," he said. "On behalf of the first lady, my family, and all the people of Indiana I wish you a blessed and memorable holiday season, and if you share my tradition, I want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous and safe New Year. Thank you for your service. God bless you all."

Grissom leaders serve up holiday cheer



U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Andrew McLaughlin

Col. Don Buckley, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander, serves food to Airmen at Grissom Dec. 7.

By Staff Sgt. Andrew McLaughlin
Public Affairs staff

The holiday season is a time of year for traditions, including one that allows Grissom's leaders to show how much they care for their Airmen.

Col. Don Buckley, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander, along with other Grissom commanders, officers, chiefs and first sergeants, took time to serve a holiday meal to Airmen at the base dining facility Dec. 7.

"It shows solidarity between all of us," said Buckley as he dished out the holiday fixings. "It lets Airmen know we are there to take care of them."

Base leadership serving food has become a

tradition of sorts during Grissom's primary unit training assembly each December, said Capt. Jonathan Murphy, 434th Force Support Squadron force support officer.

Murphy said he believes the tradition sends an important message and speaks to the relationship of leaders and their troops.

"It's symbolic," he continued. "The commanders remind them that their role is to also serve."

He also said the leaders can learn something new from the experience as well.

"It's something different for them," said Murphy. "They can experience what services does and interact with people there; part of leading is showing that you care."



Master Sgt. Wendi Conwell, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron first sergeant, serves a holiday lunch to an Airman at Grissom Dec. 7. Each year Grissom's leaders don aprons and wield serving utensils to spread holiday cheer.

Marines train for battlefield communications

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

From the Halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli, U.S. Marines have a long-established history of tirelessly grinding through to get jobs done.

While they weren't storming any beaches or planting flags this time, Marine reservists of Detachment One, Communication Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 45, 4th Marine Logistics Group, were busy overcoming some tough obstacles of their own during a communications exercise held here Dec. 7-8.

During the two-day exercise, Marines worked 24-hours-a-day to establish radio and data contact with fellow Marines in Greensboro, N.C., said 2nd Lt. Lara Soto, Detachment One Headquarters Platoon commander.

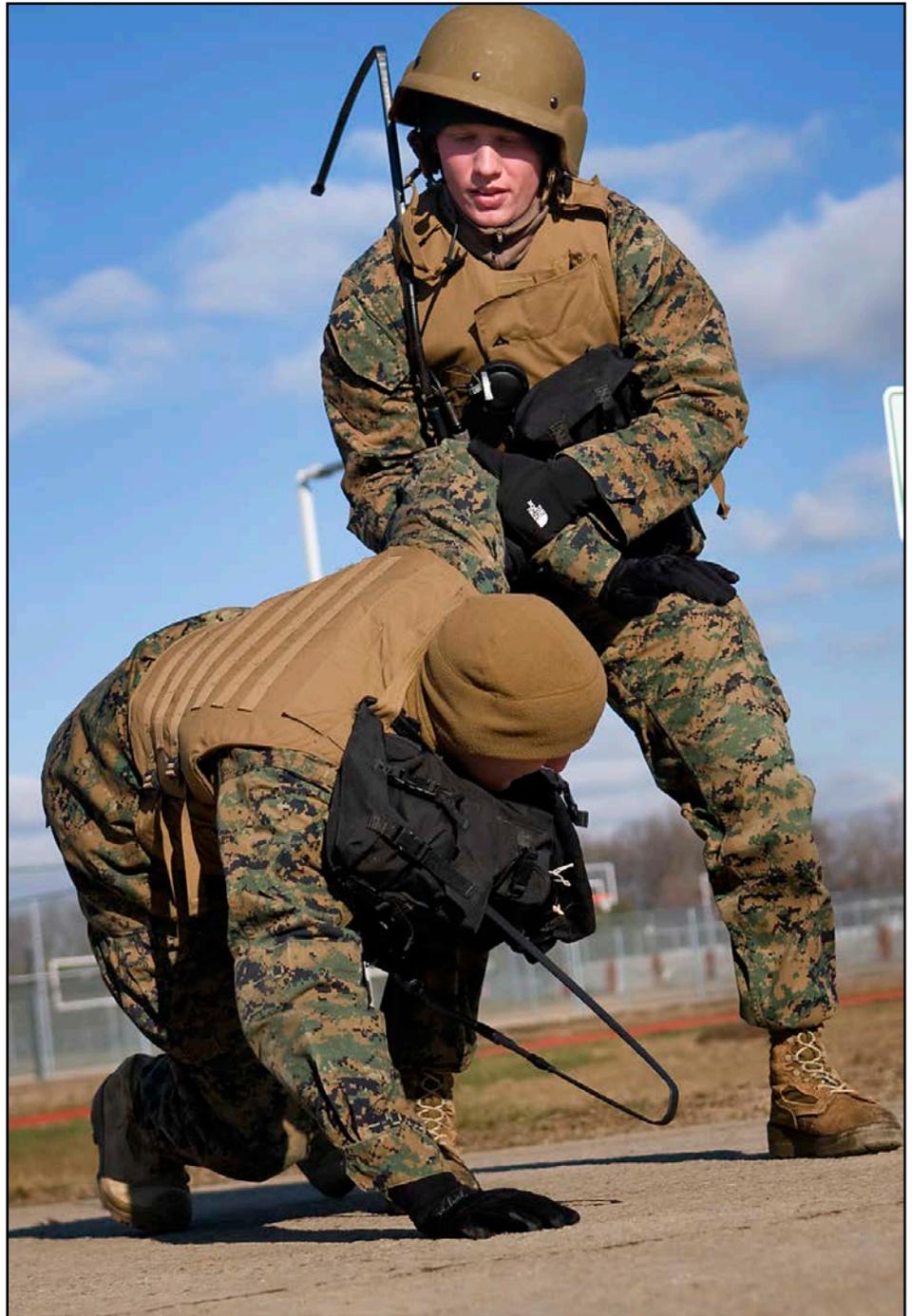
The all-day-and-night scenario provided the Marines with an environment close to what they would find in the real world, said Capt. Timothy Chun, Detachment One inspector instructor.

"No matter what we do, wherever we go as communicators, we don't stop working until communications are up, because if we don't get our networks up our commanders can't talk and that could potentially mean that Marines can be harmed or killed," explained Chun. "Our goal is always work, work, work until the job is done.

"Once our communications are up and running, then we can take a little break and start the maintaining portion of the exercise," he added.

While establishing communications for this exercise was no easy task, thanks in part to some equipment hiccups, the Marines didn't relent.

"I think the Marines are doing really well; they're learning," said Soto just a few hours into the exercise. "We have had some obstacles with equipment, but the Marines have been able to adapt



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

Lance Cpl. Michael Haney assists Cpl. Austin Bailey after their team took simulated enemy fire during a communications exercise at Grissom Dec. 7. Both Marines are field radio operators assigned to the Detachment One, Communication Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 45, 4th Marine Logistics Group.

and overcome."

After establishing communications, teams went on patrol around Grissom and trained on different communications scenarios they could encounter on the battlefield.

"The goal was for them to practice communicating, actually

passing information over the radio using standard forms we have in different situations," explained Marine Sgt. Dominic Leto, Detachment One Transmissions Platoon sergeant. "We should be able to effectively communicate with anybody, whether it's Marines, Army, Air Force, Navy, or whoever



Cpl. Brian Castille, a cyber network operator with Detachment One, Communication Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 45, 4th Marine Logistics Group, works on a satellite system during a communications exercise here Dec. 7. During the two-day exercise, Marines worked 24-hours-a-day to establish radio and data contact with fellow Marines in Greensboro, N.C.

we're working with because it's a universal idea."

While a lot of the training during the exercise consisted of technical aspects with various types of radios and other communications systems, Leto said the training was more focused on effective communication.

"Effective communication on any system is key, so even if they don't know everything about every radio we own, still being able to effectively communicate the information is extremely valuable," he said, while adding the technical proficiency is still critical. "If you don't have the ability to relay the information, you can't communicate, so you need to know how to use the radio, but at the same time, what good is it if

when you pass that information and somebody isn't able to make sense of it."

Helping make sense of that information, the Grissom Marines practiced relaying 9-line and SALUTE reports. A 9-line report is way to request medical evacuation while providing casualty information in a standard format, and a SALUTE report communicates the size, activity, location, unit, time and equipment of enemy forces.

Adding realism to the training, experienced Marines like Leto, who deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2007 to 2008, provided exercise participants with non-scripted scenarios and challenges forcing them to adapt to an ever-changing environment.

"A lot of times we haven't had the opportunity to present hypothetical scenarios where they have to think on their feet, and that's what this is," Leto explained about the exercise. "It's not just being able to take what's written in front of them and create it, it's being able to assess what's happening, process that information and then communicate effectively."

In the scenarios, Detachment One Marines had to relay information back to their command about unexploded ordnance, enemy forces and casualty evacuations.

With this local exercise behind them, the Grissom Marines can now focus on getting ready for a much larger Marine Forces Reserve communications exercise set to take place in February.

Technology keeps families connected

By Senior Airman
Jami Lancette
Public Affairs staff

Bridging continents and hearts, Airmen are using technology more than ever before to stay close to the ones they love.

From tablets to video messaging services, 434th Air Refueling Wing Airmen have seen the world get smaller over the years as technology allows them to stay in contact with friends, family and loved ones as they deploy around the world.

“To see the change is amazing,” said Tech. Sgt. Douglas Hays, 434th Air Refueling Wing public affairs superintendent, who did a remote tour in the Republic of Korea in 1991, adding that during those days Airmen were allowed one five-minute morale call per month and relied heavily on the mail service to stay in contact.

“The entire base would watch for the red flag to be raised at the post office indicating all mail was posted for the day,” Hays continued. “Everyone would rush over and peer into their tiny mailboxes hoping for something from home.”

Today, hearing from home is a mouse-click, or finger swipe, away.

Tech. Sgt. Erica Morgan, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron personnel specialist, put modern technology to use during her husband’s recent deployment. Master Sgt. Michael Morgan, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron in-flight refueling evaluator, deployed in September, shortly after their daugh-



U.S. Air Force photo illustration by Tech. Sgt. Erica Morgan

Master Sgt. Michael Morgan, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron in-flight refueling evaluator, watches his daughter, Melea, play violin during a recital in Carmel, Ind., Oct. 27.

ter, Eila, was born.

“He’s been gone seven weeks, and it doesn’t feel like that because I get to see him every day,” she said while her husband was still in deployed.

Thanks to the ability of real-time video chatting, the Morgans were able to share special moments in life with their newborn and school age daughters.

“He’s been able to see our youngest daughter roll over and giggle for the first time and our oldest daughter’s cheerleading competition and violin recital,” said Tech. Sergeant Morgan, adding she enjoys she can share even the most basic of things in her day with her husband.

“Even the little stuff that matters,” she explained. “Like I can talk to him as I fold laundry or give the baby a bath,” she said. “He’s still a part of our daily lives, and that makes all the difference in the world.”

And, with the “little stuff” being important, the big stuff, such as the birth of a child, is even more so as one Grissom maintainer found out as he used video messaging to witness the birth of his first-born daughter.

Senior Airman Dustin Neu, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron KC-135 crew chief, was deployed when his wife, Melissa, gave birth to their daughter, Summer.

“Technology was the only way I had a chance to see the birth of my child, which was the most important moment of my life so far,” said Neu. “If I had missed that, it’s something I would have never been able to get back.”

While technology allows for military families to share those special moments, it can also be used to harm them as well, prompting the 434th ARW public affairs office to suggest caution online.

“For the sake of you and your family, always keep operational security in mind,” said Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner, public affairs deputy chief. “Never disclose deployed locations or troop movements because those leave Airmen and their families open for harm.”

Other tips include turning off locations services on mobile devices, not letting social media sites go unattended, never discussing mission specifics or operational capabilities, and making it look like an Airman is home online, even if they are deployed.

“We have an aggressive emerging technology education program at Grissom, and every deployer is briefed before leaving about how to protect themselves, their fellow Airmen and their families online,” said Orders-Woempner. “We count on them to share that information with their families and friends.”

CSAF hosts summit to address sexual assault

Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Mark A. Welsh III hosted a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Summit Dec. 11-12 as part of the Air Force's ongoing effort to provide education and analysis on the issue and discuss the complex concerns sexual assault presents.

Welsh brought in wing commanders, command chiefs and sexual assault response coordinators from across the Air Force to attend the two-day event at Joint Base Andrews, Md., which included discussion from senior leaders, sexual assault victims and national experts in the field.

"We have some people who are brilliant about it ... and their experience is incredibly valuable to us," said Welsh in his address to commanders, explaining his goal of ensuring everyone has the same access to information and best practices.

Summit briefers included experts in the study of predatory behavior, victim care, legal and legislative issues.

"We selected these speakers because they are recognized experts in their field and have a deep understanding about the issues that surround sexual assault - they have studied it for years," said Maj. Gen. Margaret Woodward, director of the Headquarters Air Force SAPR Office.

"You can see the quality of the expertise of the people advising us here... a pretty impressive group of people who care an awful lot about what's going on in our military and want to help any way they can," Welsh said.

Part of the problem's solution, the general said, is creating an environment where every Airman is valued and every Airman is engaged.

"Our Airmen join the Air Force to make a difference, they want to feel valued. They deserve a culture of dignity and respect," he said. "Every one of them has to feel critically important to what we do. If they don't, we're not as good as we could be. That's the culture we want, that's the Air Force we want to be a part of. The folks that are going to



U.S. Air Force photo by Scott Ash

Maj. Gen. Margaret Woodward, director of the Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response office, talks with sexual assault response coordinators during a SAPR summit at Joint Base Andrews, Md., Dec. 12.

make that a reality are sitting in this room."

One of the attending commanders, Col. Kimberlee Joos, 17th Training Wing commander at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas, remembers when she was a lieutenant and there wasn't an emphasis on fighting and preventing sexual assault as there is in today's military.

"When Lieutenant Joos was starting out, we didn't have any of this," she said. "I think the actions we've taken are good. The Chief was right - it's now up to us to remove the culture that might still exist in certain places that encourages that type of behavior. I think people are more willing to come forward now, but we're not there yet. We're a long way from declaring victory."

In June this year, the Air Force stood up a more prominent, directorate-level SAPR office which reports directly to the Air Force vice chief of staff.

"We all have a lot to learn about sexual assault and the more every Airman understands it, the better equipped we are to identify the insurgents amongst us and better support the survivors of this crime," she said.

Central to that support is the partnership between leaders and

their SARC's who work to provide a seamless response to victims as well as develop prevention initiatives, provide training and ensure community awareness, according to Debbie Allen, Air Force SAPR office operations branch chief.

"We want people to walk away from the summit feeling empowered about their role in the process," Allen said. "They are doing a great job, and we appreciate that, however, we have many challenges that all of us are working collectively to solve the problem of sexual assault."

Woodward wants all commanders to "start by believing." Believe there is a problem, and believe victims when they come forward. This doesn't go contrary to "innocent until proven guilty," but balances the rights of the accused with the critical act of believing victims throughout the process, she said.

Welsh closed the summit thanking the group for their focused efforts.

"The fact is, you guys are working hard, don't slow down," Welsh said. "We're just starting to gain a little bit of momentum. Thanks for everything you're doing, we haven't done near enough. We've got to be better, that's why we're here."

(Randy Roughton, Defense Media Activity, contributed to this article)

Grissom announces enlisted Airman promotions

By Senior Airman Jami Lancette
Public Affairs staff

From their first to their last, America's Airmen earn each stripe of rank.

Thirty-five Airmen from the 434th Air Refueling Wing here recently earned their next stripe. Their names are as follows:

To senior master sergeant:

-Jason Drewitz, 434th Maintenance Squadron
-Kenneth Ferron, 434th Air Refueling Wing

To technical sergeant:

-Bruce Bennett, 434th Security Forces Squadron
-Rachelle Chance, 434th Communications Squadron
-James Craig, 434th SFS
-Shawn Crane, 434th SFS
-Preston Geimer, 434th SFS
-Edward Green, 434th Force Support Squadron
-Adam Hobbs, 434th MXS
-James Marshall, 434th SFS
-Trevor McMartin, 434th ARW
-Bobby Reece, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron
-Jason Sinko, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
-Craig Ward, 434th AMXS

To staff sergeant:

-Elicia Frelix, 434th LRS
-Robert Grasmick, 434th AMXS
-Michael Miller, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron
-Sang Park, 434th CES

To senior airman:

-Eric Flowers, 434th CES
-Corina Garrison, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron
-Braden Hood, 434th CES
-Benjamin Johnson, 434th CS
-Amber Monroe, 49th Aerial Port Flight
-Noah Murphy, 434th AMXS
-Christopher Owens, 434th FSS
-Bryon Snead, 434th AMXS
-Jordan Suchovsky, 434th Operations Support Squadron
-Darcie Wagenbach, 434th AMDS

To airman 1st class:

-Dillon Frederickson, 434th CES
-Maurice Kendall, 434th SFS
-Terrence McGrew, 434th FSS
-Brandon Smith, 434th MXS

-Benjamin Stout, 434th CES

To airman:

-Jeremy Honore, 434th OSS
-Anthony Jones, 434th LRS



U.S. Air Force photo by Lt. Col. Joseph Austin

Here's lookin' at you...

Maj. Jacob "Rocky" Hostetler, 23rd Bomb Squadron assistant director of operations, looks up from his B-52 Stratofortress at a 434th Air Refueling Wing KC-135R Stratotanker during a refueling mission over Kansas Dec. 20. The 23rd BS is based out of Minot Air Force Base, N.D.



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