

Heartland WARRIOR

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September 2014

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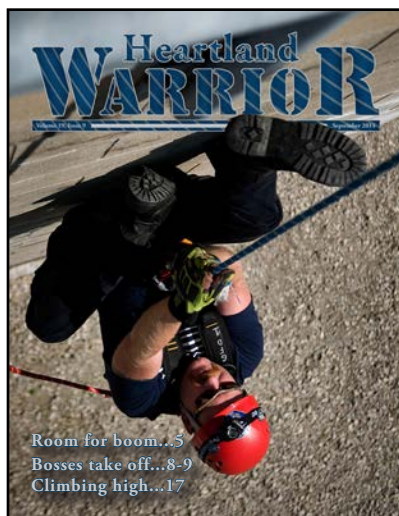
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U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

On the cover...

Jamie Lay, Grissom Fire Department firefighter, hangs upside down on a fire training tower during a rappel training exercise at Grissom Aug. 15. More than a dozen of the GFD's 49 firefighters are certified rescue trained, allowing them to conduct rescues from high angles, low angles, in confined spaces and from under collapsed structures.

Rep. Messer's staffer visits GARB



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

Molly Newell, legislative assistant for Rep. Luke Messer, experiences flight inside a KC-135R Stratotanker simulator during a visit to Grissom August 1.

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

As a key player in the nation's defense, as well as the local economy, there is a lot that goes on at Grissom, and one U.S. representative's legislative assistant recently got a close-up look at the base and its mission.

Molly Newell, a legislative assistant for Rep. Luke Messer, toured Grissom and met with 434th Air Refueling Wing Airmen and leadership during a visit to the north central Indiana base Aug. 1.

"While Grissom is no longer an active base in name, it is still a very active base in function," said Newell. "Having the opportunity to see how Grissom contributes to the security of our nation further emphasized the importance of maintaining our military capability."

To give her that opportunity, Newell first toured on one of Grissom's 16 KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft, where Master Sgt. Jason Washburn, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron KC-135R crew chief, explained what goes into keeping the aircraft flying.

Newell then got a hands-on experience with the 434th ARW's mission as she took the controls of a KC-135R for both a takeoff and landing in Grissom's flight deck simulator.

Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th ARW commander, sat in the copilot's seat and helped her learn the aircraft's controls and assisted her through a simulated flight over Grissom.

"There's so much to know and keep track of," Newell said of the crash-course in flying before moving on to what Schwartz referred to as the "business-end" of the KC-135 in Grissom's new boom operator weapons system trainer, or BOWST, where she simulated refueling an F-22 Raptor.

Taking a break for lunch, Newell discussed the 434th ARW's mission as well as hopes and plans for the future with Schwartz.

"Grissom is well-recognized for serving our country for decades; however, it wasn't until visiting the base that I understood the great extent that Grissom serves our community and state," she said following the tour. "I think that is none more evident than in its visibility in the Miami County community and its impact on generations of Hoosiers."

To the Airmen of the 434th ARW, Newell expressed thanks before she left.

"Getting to meet with the servicemen and women at Grissom who dedicate their lives to serving our country gave me another reason to say I am proud to be a Hoosier," she concluded.

Visit provides 4th Air Force with Airmen's perspective



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

Senior Master Sgt. Scott Fleek, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron explosives ordnance disposal flight superintendent, left, and Master Sgt. Charles Lyon, 434th CES EOD noncommissioned officer in charge, right, help Col. Mark Pantone, 4th Air Force director of logistics and installations, into a bomb suit during the colonel's visit to Grissom Aug. 10.

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

Taking a new approach to oversight, one 4th Air Force leader got an up-close and personal perspective behind the mechanics that make Grissom a unique and valuable asset.

Col Mark Pantone, 4th Air Force director of logistics and installations, visited 434th Air Refueling Wing Airmen during the August unit training assembly with the purpose of speaking to Grissom personnel, hearing their issues and identifying opportunities and challenges affecting the wing.

"The primary purpose for visiting Grissom is to understand what the issues of the wing are, and there is no better way to do that other than visiting the wing and speaking to Airmen," said Pantone. "One of the primary missions of 4th AF is to advocate for the

wings, and we cannot effectively advocate for them if we do not know what the issues are they are facing."

Pantone lauded Grissom's maintenance squadron as a prime example of excellence across the Air Force Reserve Command.

"The maintenance side, they have always led the command in the tanker world on how well they care for their jets," said Pantone. "The other areas of the wing are the same way; they are very dedicated and very squared away."

In addition to expressing the value of the 434th Maintenance Group, Pantone also made it clear of the importance of Grissom.

"Grissom is huge; it has one of the largest fleets of KC-135s in the Reserve Command, and so Grissom plays a huge role, not only for its centrally located geographic location in the United States, but also for the number of jets it can

provide," he said. "The aircraft availability at Grissom is always high, so we can count on Grissom to provide the number of KC-135s that might be required by the Air Force at any given time."

One unique aspect of the colonel's visit was that he had not been here since 2010, he said.

"One of the reasons we have not been here in so long is because we know Grissom is a healthy base with very dedicated people who know what they are doing," added Pantone. "The 434th is a great wing; they have a great culture, they have great facilities and they have great people."

Throughout the colonel's two-day visit he expressed the importance of mentoring new Airmen and passing down knowledge to fill a critical manning gap in the Air Force.

"Right now the Air Force has a lot of new Airmen

and a lot of older Airmen, but what is lacking is the gap of people in between," Pantone said. "There is a lot of empty space in the middle, and we need the younger Airmen to be ready, willing and able to fill in the gap as the older generation of Airmen begins to retire."

While visiting the base Pantone provided advice to help Airmen get ready for their future so they can fill the critical gap of personnel the Air Force must sustain to continue its mission.

"Do the job you are doing today the best that you can," said Pantone. "Don't worry about the future; don't worry about the things that can't be changed, but instead focus on the things that matter, getting upgraded, getting professional education, and doing your job to the best of your ability while absorbing the knowledge of senior leadership."

Russell assumes command of MSG



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

Col. Scott Russell, 434th Mission Support Group commander, right, receives the 434th MSG guidon from Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander, during a special assumption of command ceremony at here Aug. 9.

By Senior Airman Jami Lancette
Public Affairs staff

Airmen from the six squadrons that make up the 434th Mission Support Group witnessed a long-standing military tradition as their new commander took charge.

Col. Scott Russell took command of the 434th MSG during an assumption of command ceremony here Aug. 9.

Commanding a mission support group is familiar ter-

ritory for Russell as he recently commanded the 459th MSG at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, where he was responsible for the training and readiness of more than 500 assigned personnel.

"I've got three priorities," said Russell. "Get the mission done, take care of your people and have a good time."

Russell assumed command of the 434th MSG which encompasses six squadrons and one flight including over 800 personnel with a mission to provide vital support to the 434th Air Refueling Wing.

"We've got the operational mission bringing fuel to the fight, as well as an expeditionary mission too," Russell added.

Russell began his Air Force career in 1979 when he enlisted as a security policeman. He later went on to graduate from the University of Minnesota in 1987 and, within that same year, commissioned as an officer.

Since then, Russell had been assigned to various locations around the world to include Cairo West Air Base, Egypt, as a deputy defense force commander and Eskan Village, Saudi Arabia, as a 320th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron commander.

Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander presided over the ceremony and told the audience that Russell was the right man at the right time to take command of the 434th MSG.

"Welcome to the team, and we look forward to having you serve us, and also to serve you here as the commander of the 434th MSG," said Schwartz. "Welcome aboard."

Civilian employees recognized for longevity

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

Federal civilian employees are also referred to as civil servants, a title that denotes their commitment to serving their country.

Such is the case for several 434th Air Refueling Wing civilians who were recognized for their longevity of service during a recent civilian commander's held here.

The following employees were recognized for their time spent as civil servants:

Forty-year service awards

- Linda Flook, 434th ARW
- Brenton Rose, 434th Communications Squadron

Thirty-year service awards

- Chief Master Sgt. Patrick Devine, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Tech. Sgt. Russell Fernald, 434th Operations Support Squadron
- Master Sgt. Matthew Geiger, 434th AMXS
- Tech. Sgt. Douglas Hays, 434th ARW
- Thomas Lennon, 434th Mission Support Group
- Jill Marconi, 434th Force Support Squadron
- Scott Shives, 434th CS
- Master Sgt. Timothy Stibbe, 74th Air Refueling Squadron
- William Thayer, 434th MSG
- Master Sgt. Rodney Waikel, 434th Maintenance Squadron
- Kevin Yeager, 434th CS

Twenty-year service awards

- Martin Alexander, 434th

- Maintenance Operations Flight
- Master Sgt. Scott Apple, 434th MXS
- Senior Master Sgt. Sara Lane, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron
- Senior Master Sgt. Melissa Pinaire, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron
- Tech. Sgt. Michael Whyde, 434th MXS
- Master Sgt. Ronald Wright, 434th FSS

Ten-year service awards

- Vickie Butte, 434th FSS
- Sue Correll, 434th Contracting Flight
- Tech. Sgt. Thomas Davis, 434th MXS
- Staff Sgt. Matthew Gattung, 434th MXS
- Shari Matz, 434th FSS

CE gets dirty, makes room for boom



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

Senior Airman Steven Litviak, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron pavements and construction apprentice, uses a backhoe to construct an explosive ordnance disposal training area here Aug. 10. The sand pit will be used for landmine detection and disposal training.

By Staff Sgt. Andrew McLaughlin
Public Affairs staff

Grissom's technicians who specialize in detecting, diffusing and exploding dangerous ordnance now have their own area to train with tools vital to helping them save lives.

Pavements and construction Airmen from the 434th Civil Engineer Squadron assisted their fellow CE brethren as they completed work on an explosive ordnance disposal training area here during the August unit training assembly.

The site provides a location where Grissom EOD technicians can conduct necessary

training using the tools of their craft, said Senior Master Sgt. Scott Fleek, 434th CES EOD superintendent.

EOD supervisors will use the area to evaluate their Airmen in training and team leaders as they practice their skills, said Fleek. EOD will also use the site to conduct specific training that recreates dangers encountered in operations overseas, especially in Afghanistan.

"We utilize after action reports from [within combat zones] and set up the same problems here," he said.

Fleek, who has been helping plan the project since last year, said it also benefits the pave-

ments and construction Airmen because it's a good training opportunity for them.

Master Sgt. Jeffrey Engel, 434th CES heavy equipment shop non-commissioned officer in charge, said he agreed with Fleek.

"It gives us the training we really need and keeps us proficient," said Engel.

The CES Airmen started working on the site in June, and this project allowed them quality hands-on training with different equipment including a frontend loader, backhoe, grader and dump truck, he said.

The civil engineers also got to practice their surveying and mapping

skills to prepare the area.

The site encompasses approximately 11,000 square feet and will be surrounded by concrete barriers. It also includes a sand pit for landmine detection and disposal training.

The engineers used about 100 tons of sand to fill the landmine pit, said Engel.

The site will also contain a large earth-covered culvert simulating a road like those found in Afghanistan, said Engel.

Improvised explosive devices are commonly placed in these tunnel-like structures, and the EOD team will use this for training with their robots, said Fleek, who added that he hopes to eventually add more features to enhance training such as movable walls, stairs and ramps.

According to the EOD superintendent, there were previously limitations on the training the EOD team was able to do at Grissom as they were not able to complete required tools training without going another base, but the training area change that.

"It's an area to train without having to burden the rest of the base," he added.

Engel said completing real-world and relevant projects like this where they construct something permanent is important for them because it will serve a lasting purpose and directly benefit the mission.

"You take pride in it," he concluded.

Inspection program brings cultural shift

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

A product of the 1960s, Grissom's director of inspections is no stranger to cultural changes, but is now tasked with leading one of his own.

Lt. Col. Charles Good, 434th Air Refueling Wing director of inspections, is at the tip of the spear as the Hoosier Wing implements the new Air Force Inspection System, or AFIS, here.

Under the new system, Air Force units are responsible for inspecting themselves, which is a dynamic shift from the past.

"The major command inspector general offices can no longer financially support the big footprint of 100 to 200 people coming in and combing through every little nitpicky aspect like they used to do," explained Good. "That whole concept is gone."

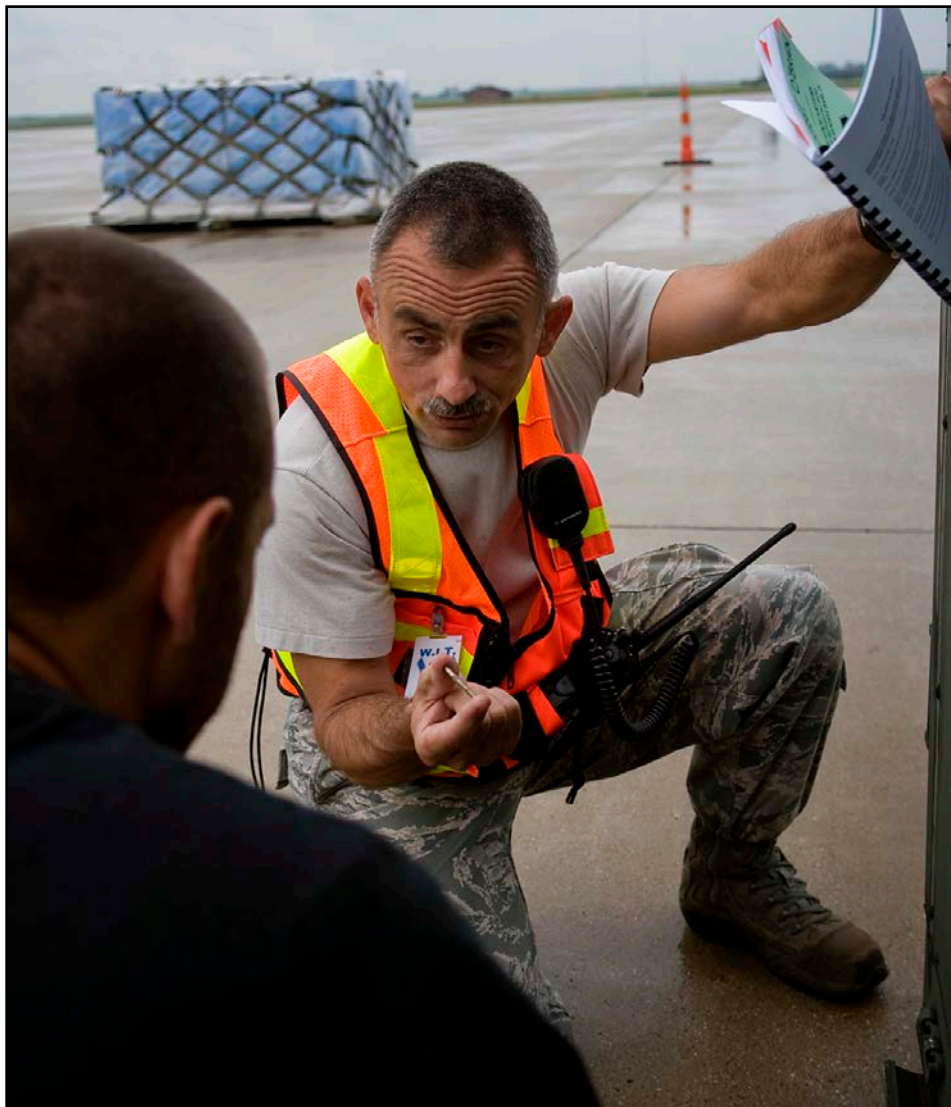
Like most cultural shifts, they begin gradually, and evolve over time. The AFIS was no different.

"Initially, when they downsized the number air force and headquarters staffs, they put more responsibility on the wings through what were originally the CVZ offices," said Good. "The people that were assigned to the CVZ offices would actually become [Air Force Reserve Command] IG inspectors who went to other bases to inspect."

"Well, that didn't meet the requirement of downsizing and being fiscally responsible, so they created the new inspection system along with a new position of the director of inspections," he continued. "And, with that change, the former exercise evaluation team, which had always been helping evaluate, became the wing inspection team that inspects instead of evaluates."

While inspect and evaluate may seem synonymous to some, in the Air Force inspection world they're not.

"The EET was there to help the wings, through evaluation, get ready for an outside inspection," said Good. "Now the WIT is the group conducting inspection - essentially,



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

Senior Master Sgt. Tim O'Brien, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron plans and integration superintendent, discusses a piece of debris found on a mobility storage bin with Travis Wilkison, a contractor, during an exercise here July 12.

we're inspecting ourselves, which is a novel concept."

Part of what makes that concept so novel is that it's based around absolute honesty and the first Air Force Core Value of integrity.

"It's a double-edge sword, where you have to figure out how to inspect yourself and be effective; that's the hardest hurdle to get across while inspecting ourselves," explained Good. "We want to be honest, but we also don't want to look bad, so we have all these things in conflict."

"It's a cultural shift because before it was, 'if we can't fix it before the IG gets here, let's hide it and maybe they won't see it,'" he added. "Now,

we want you to be honest; we know you're going to find faults, and we want you to find faults."

To get over that hurdle, the Air Force is putting a stronger emphasis on training for the WIT members as well as aiming to educate units with the knowledge that identifying deficiencies is a good thing.

"It's a big deal; all the WIT members are given authority from the Department of Defense IG through the Air Force IG and on down," said Good. "It's such an important responsibility, they even take an oath in front of the wing commander."

Senior Master Sgt. Tim O'Brien, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron



Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth C. Ferron II, 434th Air Refueling Wing inspections superintendent, reviews documents with Senior Airman Amber Muston, 434th Force Support Squadron personnel specialist, as he inspects a mobility processing line during an exercise here July 12. Under the new Air Force Inspection System, major commands will no longer send large groups of inspectors to bases and units are responsible for inspecting themselves, which is a change.

plans and integration superintendent, has directed the execution of hundreds of exercises at Grissom and said he thinks the new system will be an easier transition than some may expect as 434th ARW Airmen have always displayed high integrity.

"We've always been honest on the deployment side of things, and that honesty is why we're as good as we are now," he elaborated.

Still, Good reiterated the need to be truthful while explaining people should have faith in the new system to respect such honesty.

"Nobody is perfect, and we're not helping ourselves by lying to ourselves," he added. "The big message is that there isn't going to be repercussions for raising your hand and saying, 'yes, we have some items that are broken, they need fixed, and here's how we're going to fix them.'"



Scott Shives, 434th Communications Squadron information assurance manager, left, and Allen Edgerley, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron supply and fuels quality assurance evaluator, discuss mobility processing procedures during an exercise here July 12. Both are wing inspection team members.

According to Good, the key is not just in identifying, but also coming up with a sound plan within a reasonable time to correct any errors or deficiencies.

"The biggest key here is do we have a reasonable plan to fix the issues," he added. "There's only been four [unit effectiveness inspection] capstone events in AFRC since the new system was put in place, and out of those four, I've not heard of anyone being slammed for saying they have a few programs that are broken and need to be fixed."

While the emphasis under the new program is on self-inspection, AFRC is still sending inspection teams for UEI capstone events. However, this team will be more focused on how units inspect themselves rather than looking at the unit's processes and procedures.

"The higher headquarters footprint will only be 20 to 30 people, and they're mainly looking at the commander's inspection program and how the IGI runs that program," explained Good. "They will still look at a few programs directly, but 85 to 90 percent is an inspection of our inspection program."

Another change in the new system will have very little impact on Grissom at all.

"In the old program, there were several [Air Force instructions] that

were very specific on how many and what type of exercise and inspections needed to be done, but under the new one, it's the IGI office and the wing commander who determine what needs to be inspected and how often," explained O'Brien. "Looking ahead, we're going to stay about the same as we did before, because we believe the numbers gave us pretty good feedback, and more often than not we went above and beyond to make sure the wing was ready at all times."

Good echoed that confidence in the wing to perform its missions around the globe.

"We're in a very good position," he said. "We do have a few programs that need looked at and have identified a few trends even in the short time of this program, but as far as our mission, we do our mission well."

As for the future, the next year will be a busy one for the 434th ARW as the Hoosier Wing will undergo another self-assessment through MICT in October as well as a nuclear operational readiness inspection and UEI capstone event in the coming months.

"It's definitely a serious cultural shift, but it's something we've been asking for for years," O'Brien concluded. "It's our responsibility to make this thing work - the ball is in our court at this point."

Indiana's flying wings team up for boss lift



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

An A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft from the Air National Guard's 122nd Fighter Wing in Fort Wayne, Ind., refuels from a KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft from the Air Force Reserve's 434th Air Refueling Wing at Grissom during a refueling mission over the Hoosier state Aug. 20. Indiana's two flying wings partnered together to fly 37 employers of guardsmen and reservists on a boss lift aimed at educating them about their employees' military service and responsibilities.

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

Indiana's Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard connect in the Hoosier skies every week offloading fuel and training to fight, but they recently connected for another mission – educating employers.

Airmen from the 434th Air Refueling Wing at Grissom teamed up with those from the 122nd Fighter Wing in Fort Wayne, Ind., along with the Indiana Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve to host a two-day tour and boss lift flight Aug. 19-20.

"We were really excited to host our first boss lift in over two years in support of the ESGR and the great employers of our reservists and guardsmen," said Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th Air Refueling

Wing commander. "It was a special couple of days as we were able to team up with our partners from the Air National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve to showcase what we do here as part of team Grissom."

Elizabeth Ransom, Indiana ESGR program support specialist, agreed with that assessment.

"This was the first time our Indiana guard and reserve units have combined together to host a flight like this," said Ransom. "What made this so special was that it wasn't them just seeing one aspect; they saw training in combination with real-world operations and also showed them that no one component can do anything on their own."

"We live in a joint environment where things are always in conjunction with another component,

and this event allowed the employers to put those puzzle pieces together," she added.

On top of showcasing the joint aspects of today's military, the event also allowed the employers to see the unique skills their reserve component employees have due to their military

service.

"Not only did they get to see and experience today's military, a military that is quite different from even 15 years ago, they got to see the skills and training their employees have and how they can apply them in their civilian workforce," explained Ransom.



Maria Crowe, a global manufacturing and operations president, talks with Jamie Medlock, a chamber of commerce president, onboard a 434th Air Refueling Wing KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft during a refueling mission Aug. 20.

Another goal of the event was to educate the employers about the rules and responsibilities both they and their reserve component employees have as well as foster a stronger relationship between them.

“This breaks down barriers and allows them to communicate on a new level,” she said. “Many of these employers haven’t been military, but now they can talk the lingo and feel more comfortable in engaging with their employees about military service.

“It also makes them more comfortable to hire servicemembers and have them in the workplace,” Ransom added.

Lynn Harshberger, an employer from a steel erecting and rigging company in Lagrange, Indiana, said the event was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and accomplished all of its goals.

“What a mind opener,” continued Harshberger. “I don’t have a military background, so it was very educational for me to see what our military does for us; it really woke me up as to what we can do to support them.”

To kick off the two-day educational adventure, employers of 434th ARW Airmen, along with those nominated from around the Hoosier state by the ESGR, toured Grissom’s Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Air Force explosive ordnance disposal units while employers of 122nd FW Airmen toured Air National Guard facilities in Fort Wayne.

The two groups, consisting of 37 employers in all, then converged for a

dinner in Kokomo, Indiana, before heading back to Grissom for the night.

The following morning, the employers traveled to Grissom’s aircrew flight equipment section where they received briefings on the ESGR, 434th ARW and 122nd FW before taking flight onboard two KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft.

The two-ship formation first headed to an air refueling track over southern Indiana, Illinois and Missouri to offload 35,000 pounds of fuel to an E-3 Sentry airborne warning and control system aircraft from the 513th Air Control Group at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, before heading to a military operations area just above Grissom to refuel two 122nd FW A-10 Thunderbolt IIs.

Upon their return, Col. Timothy Donofrio, 122nd FW vice commander, presented each employer with an honorary aircrew certificate.



Marine Gunnery Sgt. Korey Wright, Detachment One, Communication Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 45, 4th Marine Logistics Group martial arts instructor, coaches Marines during a demonstration as reserve component employers watch during a tour at Grissom Aug. 19.



Staff Sgt. Timothy Strader, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron explosive ordnance disposal technician, puts a bomb suit helmet on Lee Corder, a civilian employer, during a tour for reserve component employers at Grissom Aug. 19.

Semiannual award winners announced

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

Twice a year Grissom recognizes the best of the best with its semi-annual award program.

This year was no different as the 434th Air Refueling Wing leadership recently announced its semi-annual award winners for the January through June 2014 timeframe.

Listed below are the first half of 2014 winners.

Airman category:

Senior Airman Aaron Wilson, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squad-

ron biomedical equipment maintenance specialist

Noncommissioned officer category:

Staff Sgt. Jessie Vanouse, 434th Security Forces Squadron fire team member

Senior NCO category:

Master Sgt. Jonna Sullivan, 74th Air Refueling Squadron aviation resource management technician

Company grade officer category:

1st Lt. Dustin Schimp, 434th Communications Squadron director of operations

Civilian category:

Robert Moore, 434th Operations Support Squadron Airfield operations manager

Chief Master Sgt. Karen Perkins, 434th ARW command chief, said Grissom's awards program is important because it recognizes and rewards 434th ARW Airmen for their contributions to both the Air Force and their communities.

Nominees are evaluated on a host of items based on their level of responsibility, but common to all is how they impact Grissom, the Air Force and their communities.

Twelve Grissom officers, NCOs awarded medals

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

For their meritorious service in the Air Force, 12 Grissom Airmen were recently awarded medals.

Meritorious Service Medal

Four 434th Air Refueling Wing Airmen were recently presented with Meritorious Service Medals. President Lyndon Johnson established the MSM by Executive Order 11448 on Jan. 16, 1969, as the counterpart of the Bronze Star Medal for the recognition of meritorious noncombatant service. Those who received MSMs are listed below:

- Lt. Col. Brian Hollis, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron
- Master Sgt. Laurie Latchaw, 49th Aerial Port Flight
- Master Sgt. Tanielle Phillips, 434th Force Support Squadron



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

- Master Sgt. Paul Sherrod, 72nd ARS

Air Force Commendation Medal

One Grissom officer and six noncommissioned officers were awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal. This medal was authorized by the Secretary of the Air Force on March 28, 1958, for award to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who distinguished themselves by meritorious achievement and service. Below are

those who received commendation medals:

- Capt. Bartholemew Erwin, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron,
- Tech. Sgt. Kimberly Davis, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Tech. Sgt. Christie Kurka, 434th FSS
- Tech. Sgt. Brian Stillwell, 434th Maintenance Group
- Staff Sgt. Haime Anderson, 434th Security Forces Squadron
- Staff Sgt. John Kenney, 434th Operations Support

Squadron

- Staff Sgt. Timothy Potts, 434th SFS

Air Force Achievement Medal

Tech. Sgt. Tammie Washington was awarded the Air Force Achievement Medal. This medal was authorized by the Secretary of the Air Force on Oct. 20, 1980, and is awarded to Air Force personnel for outstanding achievement or meritorious service rendered specifically on behalf of the Air Force.

AAFES chief gets dose of Grissom's 'small-town charm'



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

Chief Master Sgt. Anthony Pearson, Army and Air Force Exchange Service senior enlisted advisor, speaks with Senior Airmen Brittany Wick, 434th Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment apprentice, during the chief's visit to Grissom, Aug. 12. During Pearson's visit, he met with service and community members to address issues and inform customers of AAFES benefits.

By Staff Sgt. Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

The small-town charm and a clean and friendly environment of Grissom's Base Exchange recently garnered it some high-level notoriety.

Chief Master Sgt. Anthony Pearson, Army and Air Force Exchange Service senior enlisted advisor, visited Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind., to meet with service and community members to address AAFES related issues, Aug. 12.

"The first thing I noticed was how clean and updated it looked," said Pearson. "Grissom has that small-town charm, and everybody knows each other on a first-name basis; it's a really friendly atmosphere."

Pearson was quick to join that friendly atmosphere by speaking with Exchange customers.

"The primary purpose of my visit is to speak to customers to determine their needs and re-

solve any issues customers and Exchange staff might have," said Pearson. "I also ensure customer satisfaction and inform customers of the benefits provided to them from shopping at the Exchange."

One of those benefits is dividends provided to Army and Air Force morale, welfare and recreation programs.

"For every dollar earned, historically 67 cents comes back to the military community from the dividend the Exchange generates on behalf of Air Force Services," said Pearson.

"Last year there was \$53,000 generated that came back to Grissom's MWR facilities."

In addition to MWR dividends,

the Exchange also provides overseas Department of Defense school meals, bakeries and water plants.

"All of the services provided by the Exchange are a direct result of the customers served," explained Pearson. "That is why it is so important to ensure customer satisfaction."

And, customer satisfaction is one area Grissom's Exchange strives to achieve.

"The chief was able to get some one on one time with every-one on base," said Priscilla Humphrey, Grissom Exchange manager. "This is a great way to measure customer satisfaction and show customers that we care about their needs."

Those customer needs change on a regular basis, and the Exchange is constantly striving to find ways to change with the needs of its customers, said Pearson.

"The big push now is trying to provide products and services that customers want and targeting products for the customers wants and needs," explained Pearson.

"If you have an item that is not selling you might want to replace it; it's a constant readjustment to ensure that you are keeping products that customers want and need."

By speaking to customers, Pearson said he is able to take issues directly to AAFES Headquarters where he works in Dallas, Texas.

"If an issue comes up I have the ability to take it directly back to headquarters to

get a quicker resolution," he said. "Fortunately, during this visit all I heard were great things about Grissom's Exchange."

"Grissom has that small-town charm, and everybody knows each other on a first-name basis; it's a really friendly atmosphere."

- Chief Master Sgt. Anthony Pearson

MXG, GFD team up for rescue training



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

Senior Airman Ryan Reese, 434th Maintenance Squadron fuel cell systems craftsman, checks the air quality of a fuel-cell using a photo ionization detector during a fuel cell extraction exercise at Grissom Aug. 10,.

By Staff Sgt. Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

Right out of a scene from the television series *Dirty Jobs* with an added mix of *Rescue 911*; Grissom Airmen put their skills to the test demonstrating their preparedness to rescue another Airmen.

Members of the 434th Maintenance Squadron teamed up with Grissom Fire Department firefighters for a fuel-cell extraction exercise to demonstrate their ability to respond and execute a confined space rescue from a KC-135R Stratotanker fuel cell here, Aug 10.

"The purpose of the extraction was to ensure that we're able to properly follow our response plan

and effectively remove an incapacitated or unconscious person from the fuel tank we are working in," said Master Sgt. Mary Brooks, 434th MXS fuel cell supervisor.

The annual exercise calls for maintenance and first responders to coordinate efforts in an attempt to rescue a simulated victim from a narrow inner opening to an aircraft fuel cell.

KC-135s have 16 fuel tanks, called cells, throughout the aircraft for inflight refueling.

"Coordination with the fire department is important so that first responders can have the quickest response time possible; even a minute could make a big difference," explained Brooks. "If

someone goes down in the fuel tank, we have to get them out because their lives are in serious danger."

During the exercise Brooks ensured personnel involved knew their responsibilities.

"Maintenance crews are responsible for notifying emergency responders, initiating emergency extraction response and demonstrating their ability to provide proper self aid and buddy care in a timely manner," she said.

When work is being done to a fuel cell, mandatory safety measurements are required to ensure safety of the maintenance team.

"We always have a minimum of three people whenever a fuel

cell is open,” said Brooks. “There is one individual in the tank to do maintenance, another stationed outside the tank called the assistant, and then you have the third person who is referred to as a runner.”

During this exercise, a maintainer, simulated by a mannequin, was working in an aft-body fuel cell while an assistant stood by to ensure his wellbeing.

“The assistant can’t always see the person in the tank, so you have to hear the person working and moving around to ensure everything is okay,” said Brooks. “If things get quiet, that can indicate something is wrong.”

“From outside the tank you can hear the person moving around and tools being used,” she added. “The assistant also does periodic voice checks to ensure the mem-

ber is okay.”

After determining there was an issue with a maintainer inside the aircraft, the exercise assistant sent the runner for help before using a photo ionization detector to determine if air inside the fuel cell was safe for a rescuer to enter the fuel cell.

A PID measures the level of oxygen and lower explosive limit to tell rescuers whether or not they are safe to enter the fuel cell.

“If the levels are too high, the probability of an explosion increases,” said Brooks. “We do a 30-second reading, and during the 30-second reading we can’t enter the fuel cell; we have to know we have a safe level before we can enter.”

When the fuel cell was determined safe to enter, the team successfully extracted the simulated

maintainer and began proper first aid.

“After extracting the unresponsive Airmen, [the maintainers] are responsible for checking all vital signs and then performing CPR, if needed, until first responders arrive,” she said.

Upon arrival, GFD first responders determined if the scene was secure and then took over patient care, said Tim McMahon, GFD assistant fire chief.

“The exercise was extremely successful,” added McMahon. “The team did a great job of getting the patient out in a timely manner and then provided the appropriate patient care.”

“This training is one of the first things new Airmen learn,” concluded Brooks. “Safety always comes first because people’s lives are at stake.”



Grissom Fire Department firefighters Adam Ventsias, left, and Jay Salmons, right, provide patient care to a simulated patient during a fuel-cell extraction exercise at Grissom Aug. 10. The annual exercise calls for maintenance and first responders to coordinate efforts in an attempt to rescue a simulated victim from a narrow inner opening to a fuel cell.

SECAF tours AFRC, discusses Reserve future



U.S. Air Force photo by Tommie Horton

Lt. Col. Bill Gutermuth, Air Force Reserve Command, left, briefs Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James as Brig. Gen. Edmund D. Walker, Force Generation Center commander, listens during her visit to the FGC at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. Aug. 21.

**By Master Sgt.
Shawn Jones**
*Air Force Reserve
Recruiting Service
Public Affairs*

Citizen Airmen have an advocate at the very top of Air Force.

During a visit to Robins Air Force Base, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James discussed several issues related to the Air Force Reserve's future.

As the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard continue to grow in proportion to the overall Air Force, greater integration and collaboration among active-duty and reserve component Airmen is expected, James said.

The Air Force faces a very tight budget environment, which is forcing officials to seek cost efficiencies wherever possible while maintaining

the readiness to provide airpower when the nation calls.

The Air Reserve Components are uniquely positioned to answer that call on an as-needed basis with combat-ready, cost-effective Airmen who do not require year-round, full-time pay and benefits.

The merits of the reserve components aren't news to James, who previously served as the assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs from 1993 to 1998. During her visit to Robins, the secretary visited several units, including Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command.

"Nobody has to convince me," James said. "I'm already there when it comes to the value the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve bring to our Total Force."

In order to capitalize

on Guard and Reserve cost-effectiveness, the Air Force is conducting a mission-by-mission analysis to determine what can be moved from the active component into the reserve components.

"We're going to lean forward and place as much as we possibly can in the Guard and Reserve," James said.

Approximately 80 percent of the analysis will be complete by the year's end, she said.

The increase in the Reserve mission set will be accompanied by an increase in the integration between full-time and part-time Airmen.

Over the past few years, the number of associate units, in which active-duty and Reserve Airmen serve side-by-side, has climbed from 102 to 124. James said she doesn't want to stop there.

"I think we need to kick it up a notch and do more," she said.

Air Force officials are exploring new creative integration models, and James said she expects staffs at all levels, from the major commands down to individual flights, to be integrated where appropriate.

She said it is especially important for senior-ranking Airmen to understand both the active and reserve models of service, and that eventually, candidates to serve as the Air Force chief of staff will have had assignments and experiences that were heavily involved with the Guard and Reserve.

The secretary also raised the topic of career mobility in the active and the reserve component.

"We care about having the best talent in our Air Force, and whether that talent resides in the active duty, or the Guard or the Reserve, it almost doesn't matter to us," she said. "The point is that we capture such talent and retain such talent for our Air Force going forward."

While it is currently possible for Airmen to move from one status to another, the secretary said a number of policies, processes and laws stand in the way, complicating the transition.

"It's not as seamless as it ought to be," she said.

Air Force officials are looking to recommend changes to some of the policies and laws.

"I would estimate over the next year or so we will have very specific proposals to put forward," James said. (AFRCNS)

Grissom reservists make impact with Haitian relief



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

Tech. Sgt. Daniel Costello, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron vehicle operator, stacks boxes of supplies on pallets as he and several other Grissom Airmen prepare to ship cargo overseas aboard a KC-10 Extender aircraft here Aug 9.

By Senior Airman Jami Lancette
Public Affairs staff

From home to abroad, the Air Force projects global vigilance, reach and power, and with that, Airmen have opportunity to have a positive influence around the world.

Reservists from Grissom and Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, made such an opportunity a reality as they helped deliver more than 91,000 pounds of food, clothes and supplies to more than 13,000 people in Haiti as part of a humanitarian relief mission Aug. 14.

"Most of us join to help out the United States," said Staff Sgt. Michael Walden 49th Aerial Port Flight aerial port specialist. "It's awesome to see a group of us get together to help over 13,000 people in need in other countries, too."

The work was done under the Denton Program, a part of 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.

"Sometimes it's hard to explain to family and friends what we do exactly," said Walden. "So when we're able to tell them what we did to support this mission and how we were able to help people, it shows them the bigger picture of what we do."

With that bigger picture in focus, it was an all-hands on deck operation to get everything packaged and transported to Haiti.

"The process actually begins when the donating organization puts in for approval through the Denton program at Charleston," said Master Sgt. Laurie Latchaw, 49th APF deputy superintendent. "And, in this case we had three separate shipments of donations that were approved at the same time."

"Once they get approval then the Denton cargo folks will go and ask for the closest Air Force or military installation that will accept the Denton cargo for airlift," Latchaw added. "Once we accepted the mission then we had the tedious process of actually getting it staged here at Grissom and ready for our folks to come in on our unit training assembly."

After the cargo made its way to Grissom, a little math, maneuvering and muscle came from Airmen around the 434th Air Refueling Wing to put the pieces together.

"While we're building the pallets it was crucial that we actually knew where we're going to place them, because we have a lot of restrictions on this particular aircraft that they opted to fly our cargo out with," said Latchaw. "The KC-10 has a lot of height restrictions; it has contours, so we have to build the cargo to fit the airplane."

With the pallets built and restrictions met, Airmen said they finished the mission with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

"When you begin to plan a humanitarian mission, people are raising their hands to help," said Latchaw. "They have a sense of accomplishment when it's done, and they take that home and share that with their families."

"It's just a wonderful opportunity for people to remember that we volunteer to come out here, and to have such a mission when you go home at night and say 'yeah I'm tired but it was for a great cause,'" she added.

FSS members take to the field for training



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

Master Sgt. William Archer, 434th Force Support Squadron services specialist, lays the floor for a single palletized expeditionary kitchen, or SPEK, Aug. 8.

By Tech. Sgt. Douglas Hays
Public Affairs staff

Members of the 434th Force Support Squadron may have gotten out of the kitchen, but they still rattled pots and pans during the August unit training assembly.

Approximately 25 434th Sustainment Flight Airmen set up a single palletized expeditionary kitchen, or SPEK, as part of annual field training Aug. 8.

“From the time it hits the ground until we are serving a meal should take four hours,” said Chief Master Sgt. William Somers, 434th FSS superintendent. “We did just that, serving dinner to about 50 people that night.”

The training provided the 434th FSS Airmen with skills useful in a deployed environment.

“This is what we deploy with to bare-base locations,” Somers explained. “It gives us an opportunity to serve a hot meal almost anywhere.”

In addition to setting up the SPEK, the teams also trained in setting up tents, mortuary affairs, lodging, and recreation and fitness functions in a field environment.

“It was a great training experience, and one that is required annually,” said Master Sgt. William Archer, 434th FSS services specialist.

The 434th FSS is comprised of the mission support flight, sustainment flight and civilian personnel. The unit blends military and civilian personnel functions along with services to support the 434th Air Refueling Wing’s home station and deployed requirements.



Airmen from the 434th Force Support Squadron lift a tent as they set up a single palletized expeditionary kitchen, or SPEK, as part of their annual field training Aug. 8. The training provided the men with skills useful in a deployed environment.

Grissom firefighters climb high to protect base

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

It's been said the good guys always take the high road, but some of Grissom's best go even higher to save lives.

Sometimes dangling over a hundred feet up from a small rope, more than a dozen of the Grissom Fire Department's 49 firefighters are certified rescue trained, allowing them to conduct rescues from high angles, low angles, in confined spaces and from under collapsed

structures.

"Grissom is surrounded by a lot of unique structures like water towers and confined space work areas that can be extremely dangerous, especially if someone is caught with a medical emergency," said Mark Fackler, GFD deputy fire chief. "If someone was to get stuck on our radar tower or air traffic control tower, we have the capability to save them."

That capability is not as common as one might think as the nearest fire department with the ability to carry out such rescues is in Kokomo, Indiana, more than 20 miles away from Grissom. The GFD also has the only hazardous materials team in Miami County.

While their main mission is to support the flying mission at Grissom, when other local fire departments request their support, especially when a life is teetering in the balance, the GFD can be called upon to support through mutual aid agreements, said Fackler.

Both the GFD's high-wire skills and their mutual aid were called upon last week to rescue a man trapped in a tree.

"A guy, just off base, had climbed 40-45 feet up into a tree trying to get his cat down, and got himself stuck," said Fackler. "We were able

to go up and get him."

To employ such skills, members of the GFD rescue squad undergo specialized training at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas.

"It's a very intense secondary school that adds onto the basic firefighter course," explained the deputy chief. "They spend a lot of time knot tying, rigging, setting up of harnesses and rappelling.

"They also get more in-depth training on aircraft, confined space and structural collapse rescues," he added, pointing out the business of saving lives is a team sport. "Everyone's got a vital role to play, not just the guy doing the rescue – there are the guys holding the ropes, setting up the harnesses and watching over things to make sure everyone comes back safe."

However, the training doesn't end with their time in Texas. GFD firefighters routinely train on base to keep their proficiency.

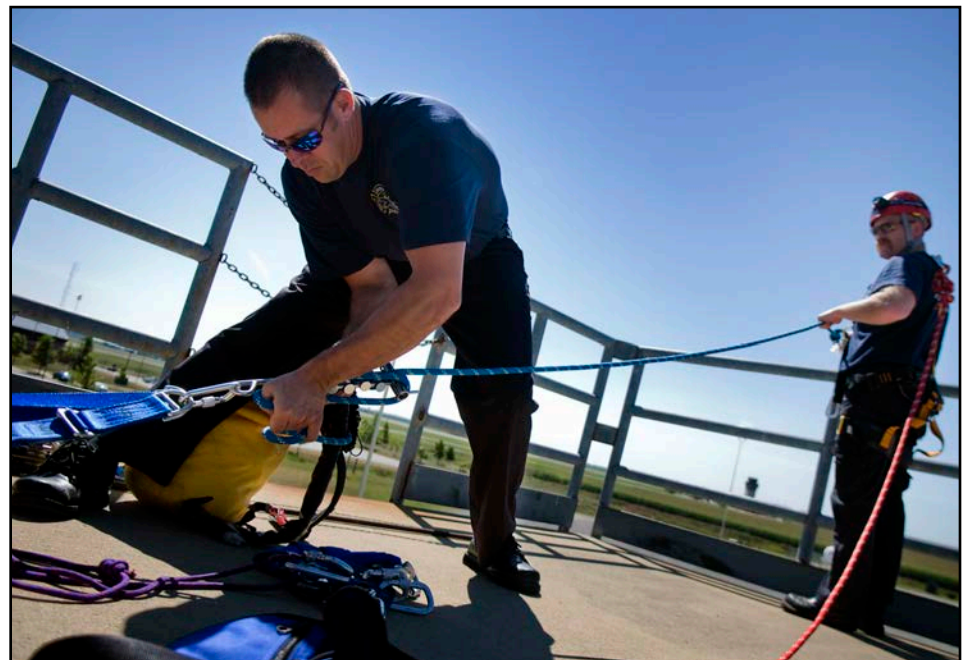
They also don't keep that training to themselves, as they've trained local government agencies.

"Last time we trained with Kokomo Police Department SWAT team as they were putting together a team that conducts high-angle entries into buildings," recalled Fackler. "I think we're going to partner with them again really soon."



ABOVE: Jamie Lay, Grissom Fire Department firefighter, rappels down a fire training tower at Grissom Aug. 15.

RIGHT: Capt. Jay Salmons, left, and Jamie Lay prepare for rappel training on a fire training tower at Grissom Aug. 15. Both are firefighters with the GFD.





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

Winging it...

Two A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft from the Air National Guard's 122nd Fighter Wing in Fort Wayne, Ind., fly off the wing of a KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft from the Air Force Reserve's 434th Air Refueling Wing at Grissom during a refueling mission over the Hoosier state Aug. 20. Indiana's two flying wings partnered together to fly 37 employers of guardsmen and reservists on a boss lift aimed at educating them about their employees' military service and responsibilities.

Grissom announces Airman promotions

By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota
Public Affairs staff

Twenty-five enlisted Airmen from the 434th Air Refueling Wing recently earned their next stripe.

The following Airmen received promotions:

To senior master sergeant:

- Todd Moore, 434th Force Support Squadron

To master sergeant:

- William Cook, 434th Maintenance Squadron
- Adam Evans, 434th Air Refueling Wing
- Derek Page, 434th Commu-

nications Squadron

To technical sergeant:

- Eric Baker, 434th CS
- Christie Kurka, 434th FSS
- Mark Magajne, 49th Aerial Port Flight
- Andres Pazcolina, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Charles Turner, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Amanda White, 434th FSS

To staff sergeant:

- Brandy Brown, 434th LRS
- Jessie Eastham, 434th Security Forces Squadron
- John Hentgen, 434th FSS
- Reginald Milam, 434th FSS

To senior airman:

- Marcel Cooper, 434th AMXS
- Dillon Easley Frederickson, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron
- Maurice Kendall, 434th SFS
- Brandon Smith, 434th MXS

To airman first class:

- Brian Bagrowski, 434th SFS
- Ashley Bowman, 434th AMXS
- Arman Johnson, 434th AMXS
- Francisco Moreno, 434th FSS

To airman:

- Stephanie Briones, 434th FSS
- Christopher Heet, 434th CS
- Andrew Sislo, 434th CES