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CITIZEN AIRMAN

April 2018

OPSEC IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA AGE

SEE STORY ON PAGE 6



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Official Magazine of the Air Force Reserve

From the Top

 @AFRCCommander

TOGETHER WE MUST DEVELOP EXCEPTIONAL AIR FORCE RESERVE LEADERS

I recently had the opportunity to meet with my top senior leaders to discuss a broad range of critical challenges affecting our Air Force Reserve. Reflecting afterwards, there was one underlying truth that stood out during every discussion: Reserve Citizen Airmen are our greatest strength.

Each of you provides the air, space, cyber and support expertise necessary to counter future competitors. But without the proper programs and policies in place to care for, train and develop each Airman as a leader, we cannot be an effective fighting force. So how do we ensure we are developing our Citizen Airmen to become exceptional Air Force Reserve leaders? I believe it's through emphasizing a culture of trust, optimizing the performance potential of our Airmen and building upon our outstanding workforce talent.

If we achieve success in all three areas, I am confident we will shape the leaders of the future who will pilot the agile, combat-credible forces needed to deter war and project lethality, while protecting the security of our nation and allies.

America's Reserve Citizen Airmen offer an agile and diverse advantage over our competitors through the expertise and experience they bring from their time within the civilian sector. This diverse talent provides the Air Force Reserve with leaders who are able to better understand and respond to changing mission sets and are prepared to innovate, stay ahead of the threat and lead our forces during times of peace and war. It is important that we retain and grow our Airmen by providing opportunities to lead others, ensuring members pursue career development opportunities and attend required professional military education.

In addition, participation in events or assignments that increase understanding of interagency decision-making processes, alliances and coalitions will further enhance our Airmen's understanding of the joint environment. These opportunities will help prepare members for the next level of responsibility in their careers and develop the critical thinking and communication skills necessary as leaders.

Developing leaders requires that we enable the full potential of our Reserve Citizen Airmen. Unleashing their performance potential increases mission effectiveness and retains their operational talent.

Rotate individuals through different jobs and challenge them with unfamiliar ones. They will gain exposure to different experiences and obtain new expertise and skill sets. Let your Airmen take risks, but mentor at every opportunity that presents itself. Even failure offers valuable leadership lessons that can add new skills, improve confidence and refine decision-making processes. Empowering

them with trust will produce great dividends.

Trust is critical in our business and the cornerstone to combat effectiveness. It hinges on the frequent reflection and commitment of our core values – integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do. Frequent reflection of these foundational principles will preserve the common bond which guides all of us as individuals, Airmen and public servants.

Continue to cultivate trust by effectively communicating across all ranks, leading by example and taking care of each other. We live and operate in an environment that is measured by the results of our actions, encouraging a commitment to excellence ensures we continue to build on trustworthy relationships formed at the foundational level.

Together, it is our responsibility to develop exceptional Air Force leaders – Reserve Citizen Airmen who stand ready to rapidly address complex conflicts and who are willing to adapt without jeopardizing our foundational principles.

Preserving a culture of trust, leveraging the strengths and diversity of our Airmen and supporting our workforce talent will result in strong Air Force Reserve leaders who ensure we continue to provide lethality and unwavering defense to compete, deter and win in any contested environment.

We owe this to our nation, joint teammates, allies and ourselves. I ask that you continue to be the best Airmen this country puts forward, standing ready to answer our nation's call.



Maryanne Miller

MARYANNE MILLER
Lieutenant General
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command

Chief's View

 @AFRC.CCC

ENLISTED FORCE DEVELOPMENT MUST REMAIN A PRIORITY

Every Citizen Airman is a vital asset to Air Force Reserve Command and enlisted force development is critical to cultivating leaders to succeed in strategic planning and executing mission operations.

The primary goal of enlisted force development is to strengthen and develop well-rounded Reserve Citizen Airmen who can excel at any leadership level. There are multiple components of enlisted force development to include Professional Military Education, Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education, the Reserve Enlisted Development Plan, the Enlisted Development Education Board and the Key Personnel List.

Airmen who have the internal desire to lead their peers should consider the R-EDP as a roadmap that can outline their career path and provide them an opportunity to receive direct comprehensive feedback from elite senior enlisted leaders throughout the Air Force Reserve. Enlisted Airmen from the rank of technical sergeant to chief master sergeant are highly encouraged to submit their R-EDP annually. This development tool personally guides each Airman on the proper steps to take and assists with advancement to the next level allowing them to compete for key leadership positions.

The EDEB is a secondary option for Airmen to submit an application for Senior Non-commissioned Officer Academy-equivalent PME through our sister services, to include the Coast Guard, Navy and Marine Corps.

Additionally, Airmen can apply to attend NATO, joint, internal and other leadership courses based upon member rank stateside or abroad in Germany. Once the member submits his or her R-EDP and EDEB he or she will personally be vectored by a development team. This team ensures each package is properly screened resulting in the selection of a qualified top-tier candidate.

Members may be eligible for selection to the KPL pending the results from the screening process of their packages. Indicators of the vector include, but are not limited to, enlisted performance reports, decorations, the member's duty history and PME/SEJPME.

The functional KPL is based upon a member's Air Force Specialty Code and is vectored every two years to include grades E-6 and E-7. The command KPL is mandatory for E8 and E9 and occurs on an annual basis.

Enlisted force development is paramount to the growth of our enlisted force. As leaders, we must develop a commitment to our Reserve Citizen Airmen and ensure we continue to excel in mission readiness, maximizing talent management and enhancing our members' leadership skill sets. For more information, contact your local leadership or go to myPers and click on the force development tab.



Ericka Kelly
Chief Master Sergeant
Command Chief Master Sergeant
Air Force Reserve Command



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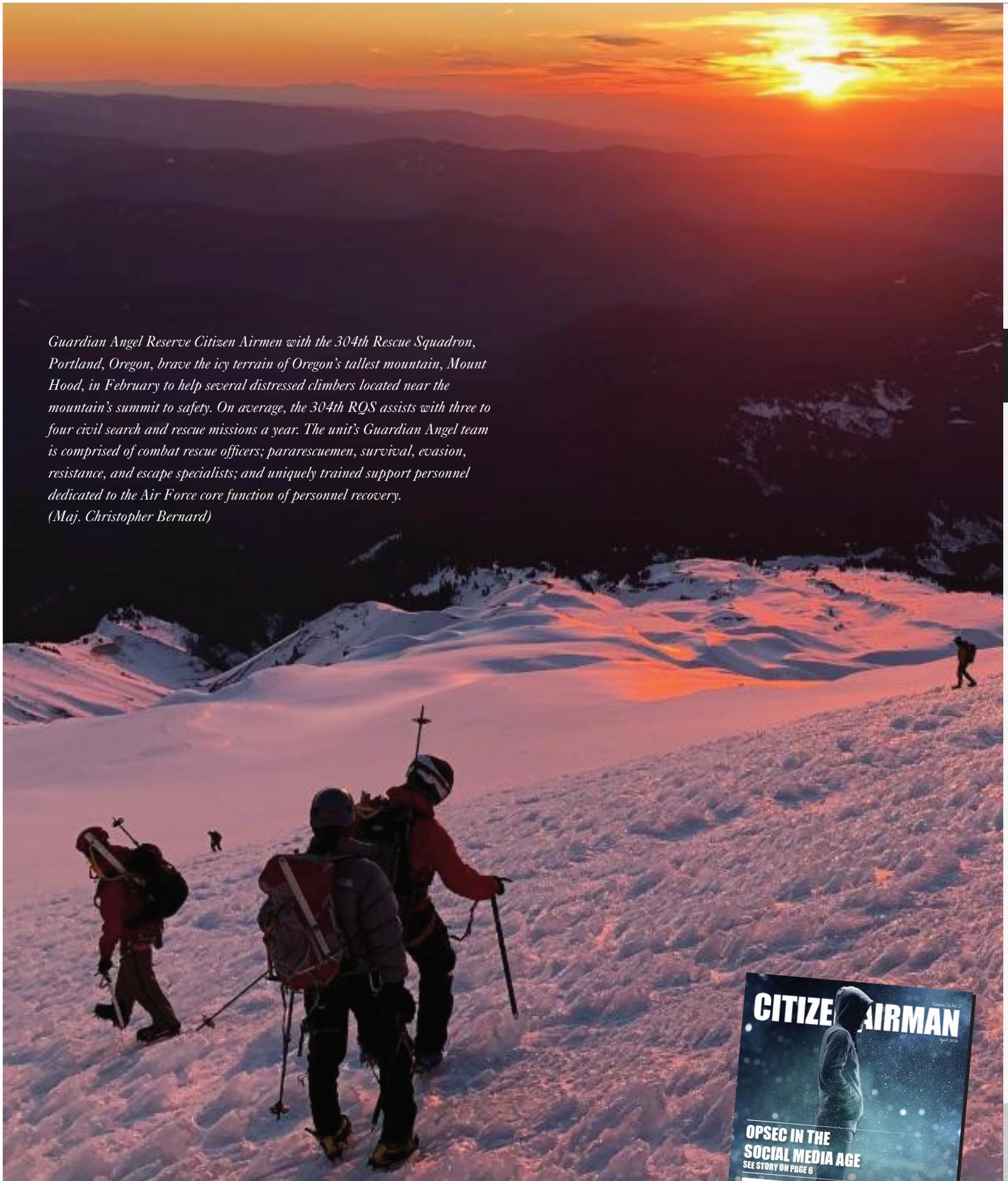
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Guardian Angel Reserve Citizen Airmen with the 304th Rescue Squadron, Portland, Oregon, brave the icy terrain of Oregon's tallest mountain, Mount Hood, in February to help several distressed climbers located near the mountain's summit to safety. On average, the 304th RQS assists with three to four civil search and rescue missions a year. The unit's Guardian Angel team is comprised of combat rescue officers; pararescuemen, survival, evasion, resistance, and escape specialists; and uniquely trained support personnel dedicated to the Air Force core function of personnel recovery.
(Maj. Christopher Bernard)

On the Cover: In recent months, Air Force leaders have called for an increased focus on operational security and the need to protect sensitive and classified information. On page 6, we take a look at ways to increase OPSEC in the age of social media.

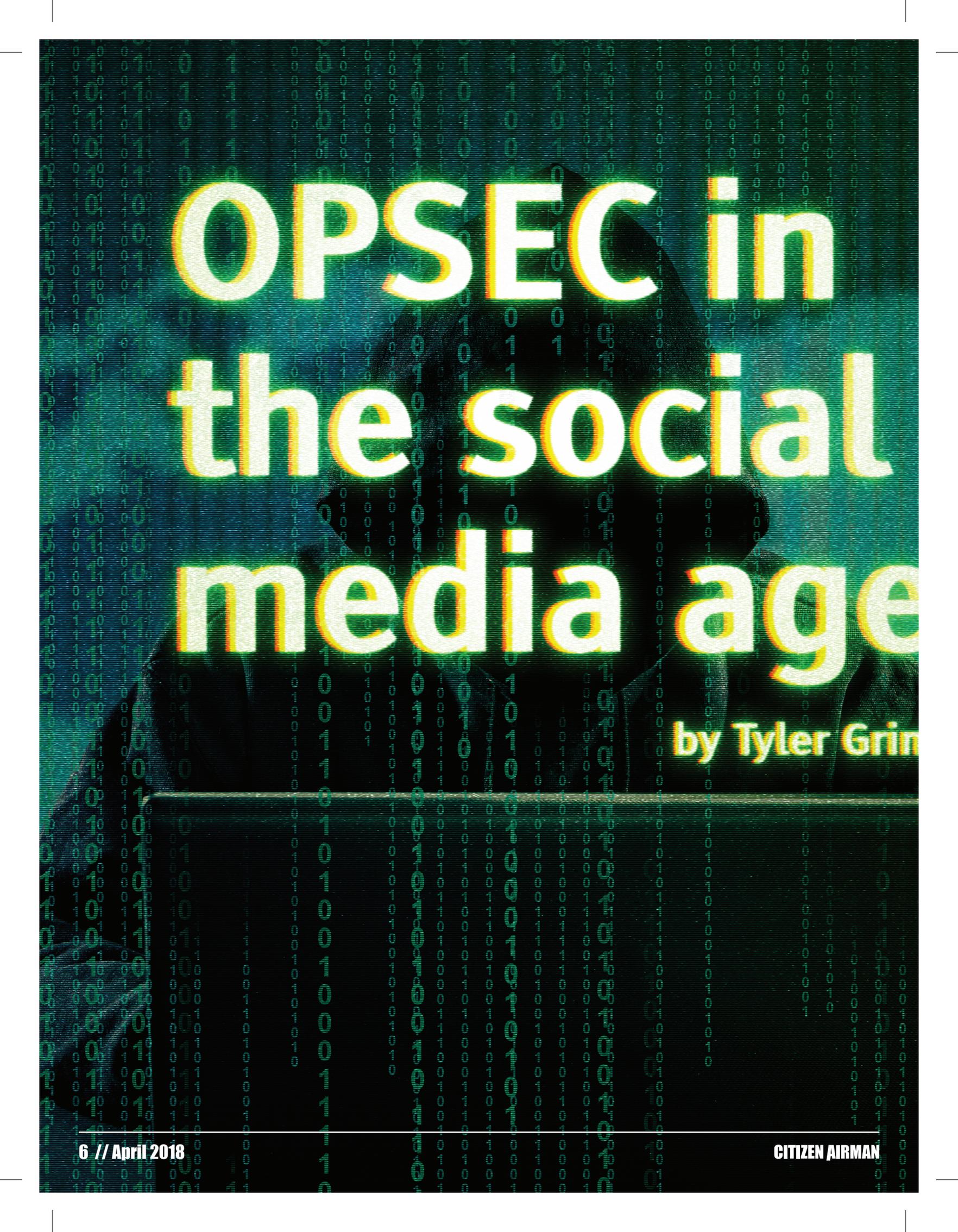


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OPSEC in the social media age

by Tyler Grinn



In late January, Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Heather Wilson and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein released a joint memorandum on operational security and the renewed need to protect sensitive and classified information.

“Clearly in times past, we have sought to protect key operational details, but today’s informative standard should be more cautious, and we need your enduring vigilance to ensure compliance,” the memo stated.

One of the areas Reserve Citizen Airmen must be vigilant in

when it comes to operational security is social media. Erick Holloway, Air Force Reserve Command OPSEC program manager, explained Reservists have a special responsibility to maintain OPSEC even when off-duty in their civilian roles.

“Even though a private sector job may not be as close-hold with the information they share, the same OPSEC principles that are practiced while in uniform should be applied,” Holloway said. “A major take away for

a Reservist is to always be aware of what is discussed around individuals without a need to know.”

In the social media environment, discussions are never private and can become public even without the knowledge of all parties involved. In most instances things posted on the internet and social media are there permanently.

“While it can be fun, entertaining and useful for maintaining relationships, social media has become one of our greatest operational security weaknesses,” he said. “OPSEC should always play a big role in how social media is used. Everyone must remain cautious when posting personal and work-related information.”

He said the goal is not to stop Citizen Airmen from using social media, but to ensure all Reservists are properly trained on the ‘do’s and don’ts’ of posting and communicating on social media.

The type of information an individual should never share on social media includes specific locations of a residence or workplace, detailed job descriptions,

upcoming travel plans, and personal data such as date of birth, social security number and banking information. Other common practices to avoid on social media are listing family members, employment history and job titles, and posting photos of your home or work area.

According to studies cited by Holloway, more than 70 percent of all adults use some type of social media and almost 90 percent of 18 to 29 year olds use social media. In saying that, those numbers encompass the majority of the Reserve force. Regardless of age, Holloway has

additional tips for all Reservists who use social media. He recommends disabling geo-location tagging on applications that use it, never post photos of deployed locations, do not accept friend or follower requests from unknown individuals, always remain professional and report any sensitive or critical information found on social media.

“Although most sites have improved privacy settings, Citizen Airman still run the risk of the wrong people seeing what they post due to complacency or lack of know-how,” he said. “It is each member’s

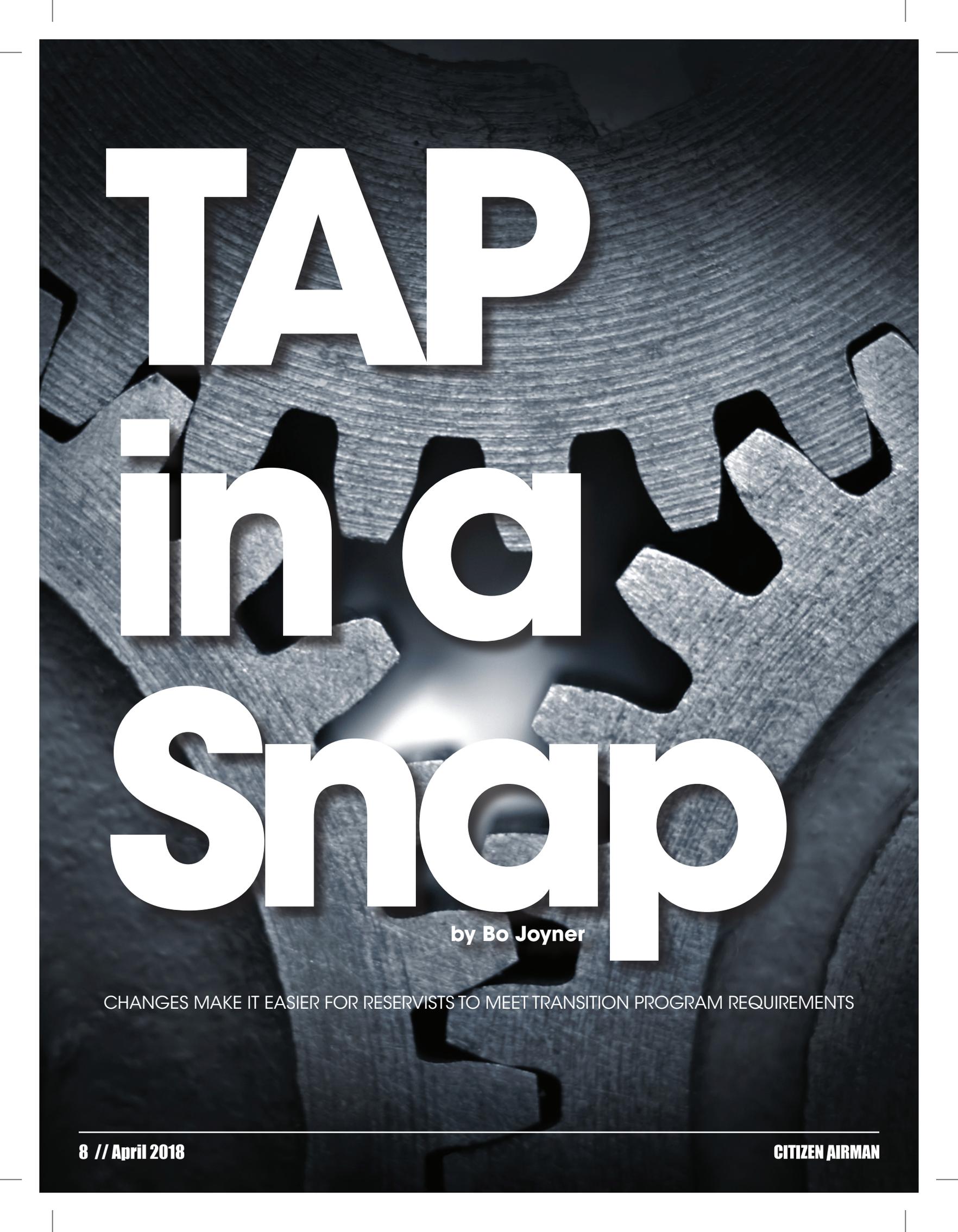
responsibility to ensure external web site applications that are enabled on personal devices only have access to noncritical information.”

As social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, just to name a few, keep advancing technologically, it has become increasingly more important now than ever to practice good OPSEC when online.

With the adversaries’ collection methods becoming more sophisticated in the social media landscape, it can be a challenge to keep up. Holloway suggests if Reservists have questions about practicing good OPSEC while using social media, they should contact their unit-level OPSEC coordinator. If questions still exist, they can consult with the wing or headquarters OPSEC program manager.

“Adversaries are very interested in gathering insight into what vulnerabilities can be exploited,” he said. “The more, that is shared on social media the easier it is for the bad guys to gather critical information.”

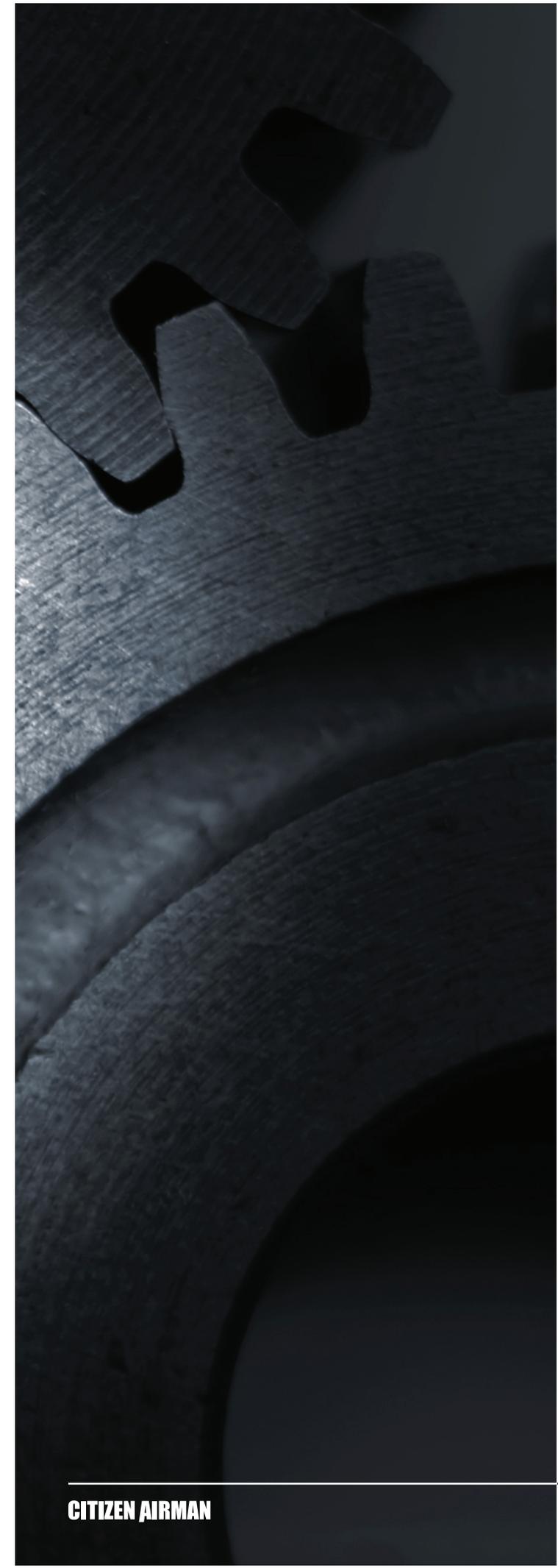
“While it can be fun, entertaining and useful for maintaining relationships, social media has become one of our greatest operational security weaknesses.”



TAP in a Snap

by Bo Joyner

CHANGES MAKE IT EASIER FOR RESERVISTS TO MEET TRANSITION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS



Recent policy changes are making it easier for Air Force Reservists to meet mandatory Transition Assistance Program requirements.

“All Reservists on orders for 180 consecutive days or more are congressionally mandated to complete transition requirements before their orders end,” said Mandie Holovach, Air Force Reserve Command’s Transition Assistance Program manager.

The mandatory transition requirements are to attend a pre-separation briefing, a transition Goals, Plans, Success (GPS) workshop, a Veterans Affairs benefits briefing and a capstone event.

“There were a lot of people who spoke up about the mandatory TAP requirements and their voices have been heard,” Holovach said. “Within the past year, there have been some policy changes that make it easier for Reservists to complete their mandatory requirements.”

There are new exemptions in place for the pre-separation briefing and the VA benefits briefing.

If a member has completed a pre-separation briefing within the last five years, he or she does not have to complete another pre-separation briefing.

“Before this exemption was announced, the pre-separation briefing was only good for one year, which meant each time the member came off orders, he or she would have to accomplish another briefing,” Holovach said.

A second exemption stipulates that if a member has completed a VA benefits briefing within the last three years, he or she does not need to re-accomplish another VA benefits briefing.

The three-day Department of Labor workshop that is held during the five-day transition GPS workshop is a mandatory requirement for all Reservists. However, if a member has a full-time job, is registered in a full-time higher education program or has been to the Department of Labor workshop previously, the member is exempt from attending another Labor Department workshop.

In addition to these exemptions, TAP officials have made completing the mandatory requirements easier by providing members a virtual option for completing the transition GPS workshop and VA benefits briefing.

“Members are welcome to attend at their local Airman and Family Readiness office in person or virtually through the Joint Knowledge Online website,” Holovach said.

Recently, AFRC hosted a continuous process improvement event to further target efficiencies in the transition process. The event focused on ways to improve TAP for Reservists. Ensuring availability of resources and creating education and awareness opportunities for the targeted audience were among the items discussed.

The Transition Assistance Program helps service members and their families successfully navigate through the transition process by providing them with information about the transition services, benefits and resources available to them.

The workshop program also provides members with job search skills, tips on resume writing, networking, interviewing and labor market research. There are even optional two-day tracks available for service members and their dependents, including an entrepreneur training track, a higher education track and a career technical training track.

TAP is not just a program focused on employment. It is an asset to connect members and their families to critical benefits and entitlements. And with the current exemptions, it can be completed within one day.

For more information on TAP, Reservists may contact their local Airman and Family Readiness office or visit <https://afrc.eim.us.af.mil/sites/A1/A1R/A1RY/SitePages/TAP.aspx>. Virtual TAP courses are available at <http://jkco.jfcom.mil/>.

SETTING THE COURSE

Council helps ensure Reserve enlisted force stays on the right track

Story by Bo Joyner, photos by Master Sgt. Stephen Schester



Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly has a lot on her plate. As Air Force Reserve Command's command chief master sergeant, she has to stay on top of all issues regarding the readiness, training, welfare, morale, proper utilization and progress of more than 55,000 enlisted Reserve Citizen Airmen – both for today and for tomorrow.

"We're focused on providing trained and ready Reservists for the fight today, but we can't afford to wait until tomorrow to start planning for tomorrow," Kelly said during a recent interview in her office at AFRC headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia.

Fortunately, the command chief has a group of key advisers she relies on to help her manage the enlisted force today and to make plans for the future. The group is called the Air Force Reserve Senior Enlisted Council and it met recently at Robins to help set the course for AFRC's enlisted members.

AFRSEC gatherings typically follow the Air Force's Corona meetings that bring together the service's most senior leaders for frank, open discussions and decision making about the future of the Air Force.

"I received information from General Miller (Lt. Gen. Maryanne Miller, AFRC commander) and Chief Wright (Chief Master Sgt. Kaleth Wright, chief master sergeant of the Air Force) after Corona and their blend of officer and enlisted perspective, along with their Reserve and active-duty perspective, gives me a very clear optic of what we need to talk about at AFRSEC," Kelly said.

The council most recently met Jan. 25 and 26 at Robins and discussed a host of topics related to Kelly's three focus areas of leadership, development and heritage.

"We really focused on the development of the enlisted force in terms of rank, education and opportunities," Kelly said of the January meeting. "We talked about the Airmen who are just coming into the Air Force Reserve and even those who aren't in the military yet. We talked about the future and what the Air Force Reserve they are going to get should look like. We talked about the middle tier of NCOs and how we can add value to them so they understand how awesome they are and encourage them to continue serving. We also discussed the importance of giving value to the millennials and respecting what they bring to the table. And we highlighted our senior NCOs and what we need to do to earn the trust of our young Airmen so we can help both senior NCOs and young Airmen overcome problems and reach their potential."

Council members also talked extensively about the different Reserve statuses and the unique challenges each faces.

"Part of the conversation included the IMA (individual mobilization augmentee) community and how we can help them," Kelly said. "The council talked about the growing AGR (active guard and reserve) population and how we are going to manage them. Special duties and how we utilize our airmen's talents in the future opportunities was also a part of the conversation. We talked about the ARTs (air reserve technicians) and the stressors they go through with the programs they manage and we talked about the TRs (traditional reservists) and the balancing act they have to juggle every day."

As the command and special staff chief enlisted manager at AFRC headquarters, Chief Master Sgt. Eric Smith is heavily involved with AFRSEC. In fact, Kelly calls Smith the brains behind the board.

"He really deserves a lot of the credit for setting the agenda and communicating with the chiefs from all across the country. He really is

my advisor when it comes to the AFRSEC," Kelly said.

"As an enlisted force, we have to be able to answer our nation's call and be ready to respond to any event that might occur around the world," Smith said. "That's really why the AFRSEC exists – to make sure we are developing Airmen to meet today's threats but also looking ahead to make sure we know what the Airmen of tomorrow should look like as we continue to align with America's developing national defense strategy."

At January's council meeting, AFRSEC members spent a lot of time discussing retention. "One of Chief Kelly's hot topics right now is on retaining Airmen," Smith said. "So at this meeting, we took a long look at the reasons Reservists are leaving and what we can do to keep them from leaving. One of the great things about our discussions is that they are data- and metrics-driven so we can really see the numbers that show us what our challenges are, what our strengths are, what our weaknesses are and what our opportunities are. From there, we can devise action plans."

Force development was another hot topic at the latest AFRSEC meeting. As AFRC's chief of enlisted force development, Chief Master Sgt. Darin Thomas was heavily involved in a lot of the council's discussions.

"Enlisted force development touches almost every issue we discuss," Thomas said. "And now that the chief master sergeant of the Air Force has said that force development is one of his top priorities, we spend a lot of time on this topic at AFRSEC."

"Are we really doing everything we possibly can to develop our leaders? Are we on top of all of the changes that are taking place regarding PME (professional military education) and are we addressing all of the challenges that come with delivering PME to the reserve component? Are we effectively using 21st century technology and speaking to our young Airmen in a language they understand? Young people communicate much differently than older people do so we have to make sure we are communicating with our new Airmen using the tools they use. These are the kinds of things we explore at AFRSEC," Thomas said.

As the Air Reserve Personnel Center command chief, Chief Master Sgt. Jeanette Masters represents both ARPC and the Individual Reservist Readiness and Integration Organization (RIO) at AFRSEC meetings.

"I am honored and humbled to have the opportunity to be a member of this council and represent and serve our Airmen," Masters said. "I love having the opportunity to be an advocate for our Airmen and to champion informed decision making on issues that impact our enlisted members."

Masters brings a lot to the AFRSEC table from the personnel side of the house. "I advise on execution of policy, the delivery of personnel services, including innovations, as well as our focus areas of operations, readiness, people, technology and how we are aligning with General Miller's and Chief Kelly's focus areas," she said.

She sees maintaining the four pillars of comprehensive Airmen fitness – mental, physical, social and spiritual – as one of the biggest challenges facing the enlisted force today.

"The competing demands for our Airmen's time continue to grow while resources needed to meet the mission are shrinking. Our core

values and creed guide our Airmen to accomplish remarkable feats that seem impossible, but they come at a cost. Additionally, in the face of an ever changing operational landscape, we are encouraging our enlisted to take career broadening assignments that may have them change statuses, without a culture that truly supports this model of development. While the council is looking at that, there is still work to be done,” she said.

As the longest serving member on the AFRSEC, Chief Master Sgt. Robert Herman helps bring continuity to the team. “I originally came on board in 2013 when it was called the Chief’s Advisory Council. Then, the name changed to the Reserve Enlisted Board of Directors and then recently we became AFRSEC,” Herman, who currently serves as chief of senior enlisted management at the Pentagon, said.

He said AFRSEC is important because it “provides an opportunity to connect programs at the various levels of the organization.

“It also provides the command chief an opportunity to directly communicate with the enlisted leadership across the enterprise. This venue provides an opportunity for the command chief to provide vectors to these leaders, ensuring we have synchronized messaging and movement.”

“The AFRSEC is one of the most important tools I have available to me,” Kelly said. “I couldn’t do my job without their trusted counsel

and their dedication to our Reserve Citizen Airmen. Our enlisted force is facing a lot of challenges today, but with groups like AFRSEC helping to set our course, I’m sure we can meet any challenges that might come our way.”

For more information on AFRSEC, check out the council’s SharePoint website: afrc.eim.us.af.mil/sites/cc/CCC/AFRSEC/SitePages/Home.aspx.



Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly, Air Force Reserve Command's command chief master sergeant, listens to a discussion at the most recent Air Force Reserve Senior Enlisted Council meeting.



Council members focused on the development of the enlisted force in terms of rank, education and opportunities at its most recent gathering.



Enlisted members throughout Air Force Reserve Command are encouraged to voice their concerns to members of the Air Force Reserve Senior Enlisted Council. Below is a list of current AFRSEC members. Reach out to a council member if you have suggestions or topics you feel need to be addressed.

CMSgt. Ericka Kelly, HQ AFRC/CCC (chair)

CMSgt. Kahn Scalise, AFRC

CMSgt. Eric Smith, HQ AFRC/DSC

CMSgt. Timothy White, 4 AF/CCC

CMSgt. James Loper, 10 AF/CCC

CMSgt. Clinton Ronan, 22 AF/CCC

CMSgt. Jeanette Masters, ARPC/CCC

CMSgt. Wendy Blevins, HQ AFRC/A4

CMSgt. Jason Winer, AFRC/A3NP

CMSgt. Robert Herman, HAF AF/REG

CMSgt. Brad Ferguson, HAF AF/TF-C

CMSgt. Jennifer Koenig, HAF SAF/REP

CMSgt. Imelda Johnson, 94 AW/CCC

CMSgt. Darin Thomas, HQ AFRC A1KO

CMSgt. Conrad Dawes, AETC Barnes Center/CLC

CMSgt. Thomas Zwelling, HQ AFRC RS/CCC

CMSgt. Paul Tomlinson, HQ AFRC First Sgt. Functional Manager

CMSgt. Kelly Kruger, HQ AFRC/A1E

CMSgt. Chin Cox, USAF

CMSgt. Jeremy Shewmake, USAF AF-RE

SMSgt. Stephanie Smith, HQ AFRC FGC/FGX

RESCUE AT SEA

Reserve Citizen Airmen receive rare honor for saving German citizens

By Tech. Sgt. Lindsey Maurice



Gerhard Harder, fifth from left, chairman of the German Maritime Search and Rescue Service, presents Col. Kurt Matthews, third from left, 920th Rescue Wing commander, and his team with the German Medal of Honor on Ribbon for Rescue Missions at Sea in Gold.

A 920th Rescue Wing HH-60G Pave Hawk refuels from an HC-130P/N King enroute to rescuing two German citizens in distress at sea July 7. About 80 wing Citizen Airmen and four wing aircraft helped execute the rescue mission. (Master Sgt. Mark Borosch)

In July, Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 920th Rescue Wing, Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, took part in a daring rescue of two German citizens whose vessel caught fire about 500 nautical miles off the coast of Cape Canaveral, Florida.

In January, Col. Kurt Matthews, 920th RQW commander, and a contingent of six Reserve Citizen Airmen traveled to Germany to accept a prestigious award from the German government on behalf of the 80 unit members who took part in the rescue.

For the first time in 20 years, the German Maritime Search and Rescue Service awarded the Medal of Honor on Ribbon for Rescue Missions at Sea in Gold in a special ceremony to the 920th Rescue Wing Jan. 26, at the German Maritime Museum in Hamburg.

“The Medal in Gold has been awarded only five times since 1955,” said Gerhard Harder, chairman of the German Maritime Search and Rescue Service. “This award reflects all the courage, commitment, compassion, dedication and professionalism that is necessary to make a sea rescue that is 800 kilometers from the coast possible. I feel greatly honored to award the Medal of Honor on Ribbon for Rescue Missions at Sea in Gold to the 920th Rescue Wing.”

“It is an honor to be here today and represent the amazing men and women of the 920th Rescue Wing,” said Matthews. “The lengths our Reserve Citizen Airmen went through to save these men is incredible and I am extremely proud of them.”

“The specific capability of the 920th RQW’s Guardian Angel Airmen, combined with its air refueling and extended-range airpower make it uniquely able to accomplish the mission where few others in the world can.”

Matthews noted the unit was not facing the most ideal circumstances when it received the call for help that morning. The two HC-130s required to transport the Guardian Angel team and refuel the helicopters were broken and the helicopter crews were on crew rest.

However, the team pulled together and within two hours the maintenance crews fixed and launched the first HC-130 carrying the Guardian Angel team and their equipment. Two hours later, the helicopters headed to the scene, while the maintenance crews fixed the last HC-130.

Around this same time, the Guardian Angel team parachuted into the open water out of the back of the HC-130, followed by their zodiac inflatable boat and medical equipment. After reaching the survivors, they provided urgent medical care and transported them to a nearby freighter whose crew volunteered to help. Under the cover of darkness, the HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter teams arrived and their crews hoisted the men into the aircraft bound for the Orlando Regional Medical Center. The survivors spent roughly two weeks in the hospital before returning to Germany.

“I would like to express my heartfelt thank you to my Guardian Angels for rescuing me,” said Karl Meer Jr., the son who was severely injured in the accident. “With my injuries and without water, I don’t think I would have lived another day. I immediately felt so safe, because they knew exactly what they were doing and stayed calm.”

The father and son were able to personally thank some of their rescuers while undergoing care at the Orlando hospital and some additional 920th RQW team members at the ceremony. It was a reunion that touched more than just the rescuers and rescuees.

“This is an awe-inspiring German-American story that unfolded where we didn’t expect it,” said Consul General Richard T. Yoneoka, the U.S. Ambassador’s representative to the German states of Hamburg, Lower Saxony, Bremen, Schleswig-Holstein, and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. “It showcases efficient transatlantic communication channels, the technical material capabilities of the U.S. Air Force and the determination of highly-skilled and superbly-trained individuals to get the job done at great personal risk.”

“To me, today’s event is much more than a festive awards ceremony that honors brave men and women who stood ready when called upon to engage in a rescue mission at sea,” he continued. “To me, above all, this extraordinary rescue story is about a human act of kindness, maybe the most noble, saving another’s life, two lives in fact. True to the motto of the 920th Rescue Wing, ‘These things, we do, that others may live,’ this rescue story is the most meaningful story about German-American relations that I can imagine.”

As the U.S. Air Force Reserve’s sole combat-search-and-rescue wing, the 920th Rescue Wing’s mission is to rescue and recover personnel anytime, anywhere, with combat-ready Citizen Airmen.

(Maurice is assigned to the 920th Rescue Wing public affairs office)



Scan this QR code for the video story of the rescue.

BLACK LETTER DAY

Scott maintainers produce impressive series of discrepancy-free flights

Some Air Force aircraft maintainers can go an entire career without achieving a black letter flight, but a dedicated crew chief at the Air Force Reserve's 932nd Airlift Wing, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, signed his name to three black letter flights within a four-month period recently.

A black letter flight occurs when an aircraft flies with zero discrepancies. Maintainers are required to annotate every discrepancy they find on an aircraft, no matter how minor. Of course, airplanes aren't allowed to fly if they are not safe, but it's not uncommon for aircraft to be turned over to pilots with a number of smaller fixes that have yet to be completed.

Master Sgt. Patrick Alvarado, the dedicated crew chief of the C-40C with tail number 0730 at Scott, had three black letter flights within a four-month period in 2017.

"Flying on a black letter plane is almost an impossible task when you consider we are talking about a machine that is built with more than 600,000 parts that must all be maintained within stringent limits," Chief Master Sgt. Del Deatherage, 932nd Maintenance Group superintendent, said.

"Sergeant Alvarado's technical talent, leadership of maintenance actions on his aircraft and attention to detail resulted in three scenarios where not one single discrepancy existed on his aircraft. This does not happen very often because we often have discrepancies that do not

affect the airworthiness of the aircraft and are just waiting on time and parts, in most cases, to complete the repair action," Deatherage said.

Alvarado was recognized for his achievement at the 932nd AW's November unit training assembly and he praised his fellow maintainers for their hard work and dedication.

"The 932nd Maintenance Group has dedicated crew chiefs responsible for each of our four aircraft. These dedicated crew chiefs are tied at the hip to their aircraft. They are the tip of the spear for our maintenance effort. Sergeant Alvarado takes a great deal of pride in ownership of his jet. He's serious about what he does and he's been doing it consistently for a long time. It's humbling to work with women and men who have a laser focus to ensure the job gets done the right way, every time, all the time," Deatherage said.

Master Sgt. Douglas Hunter, the 932nd Maintenance Squadron crew chief section supervisor, explained some of the things Alvarez and his crew had to accomplish during the four-month period.

"The team supported an engine swap, removal and replacement of the number three window, and the removal, repair and replacement of an inboard trailing edge flap," Hunter said. "All three of these were completed within a week of each other following an A-check inspection. This work by itself is remarkable, but countless other tasks were completed to get the aircraft to the point of perfection.

“Many technical training orders have been planned out and completed by our team members. Hundreds of man-hours have been spent inspecting and re-inspecting every system. This team – our team – does amazing work. This is only one measurement that proves that.”

Col. Sharon Johnson, commander of the 932nd Maintenance Group, is justifiably proud of her team.

“This is my fourth maintenance group command with 36 years of service in the United States Air Force and this is only the second time I’ve had the pleasure of working with a black letter crew chief,” she said. “This accomplishment speaks volumes for Master Sgt. Alvarado’s commitment and the maintenance team’s focus on excellent maintenance practices, policies and support. I walked into an amazing maintenance team and look forward to seeing greatness like this from the entire team.”

(From staff reports)



Master Sgt. Patrick Alvarado, 932nd Maintenance Squadron dedicated crew chief for aircraft tail number 0730, poses for a portrait on the Scott Air Force Base flight line. Alvarado and his crew had three black-letter flights, or flights with no discrepancies, last year. (Lt. Col. Stan Paregien)



Aircraft maintainers with the 932nd Airlift Wing Maintenance Squadron who helped the wing chalk up three black-letter flights last year pose for a photo in front of one of their C-40 aircraft. (Christopher Parr)



Senior Airmen Sarah Neuwirth is assisted by fellow propulsion technicians as they lift the engine cowling in preparation for an oil inspection on a C-40. (Christopher Parr)

LIKE FATHER LIKE SON

Retiring 39th Flying Training Squadron pilot welcomes son to long blue line

By Debbie Gildea



Lt. Col. Joe Mirarchi checks to ensure his son, 2nd Lt. Chris Mirarchi, is correctly situated in the aircraft prior to the lieutenant colonel's final flight, and the lieutenant's first Air Force sortie. (Debbie Gildea)

Some things are just meant to be.

Lt. Col. Joe Mirarchi and 2nd Lt. Chris Mirarchi's story might have been just another example of a young man following in his father's footsteps, taking his place in the long blue line of Air Force pilots except there's more.

Joe, who retired in February after nearly three decades of Air Force service that started with a Reserve Officer Training Corps commission in 1987, is a former F-15 Eagle pilot. He resigned his commission in 1996, ready to focus solely on his family and a civilian pilot career.

He moved his family to California, where he landed a position with Delta.

But, leaving the Air Force wasn't meant to be. At Delta he met longtime friend and colleague Col. William Rial, now retired, who would have a recurring and powerful impact on the Mirarchi family.

In 1998, when the Reserve initiated a new instructor pilot program, Joe's interest was piqued, but he knew the journey would be difficult.

"I had resigned my commission, so I knew I would need help to return," he said.

And he got help. Rial tirelessly crusaded for Joe, helping to secure an interview with the 43rd Flying Training Squadron at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi.

With a strong advocate in his corner, it was nevertheless up to Joe to secure a place with the 43rd. Offered a T-38A/C instructor pilot position, Joe was recommissioned in August 1998, and he resumed his place in the long blue line.

After nearly a decade, however, the double commute required to fly for Delta and the 43rd began to take a toll, drastically limiting Joe's time with his family.

"My success is measured by the happiness of my family," he said.

It was time to look for a better option – one that would allow him to be a full-time member of the family he holds so dear. He interviewed with the 340th Flying Training Group at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph in Texas, and was selected to be the training manager for all T-38 Reserve pilots.

"It was one of the hardest decisions in my career," he said. "Leaving our Columbus family and uprooting my family from their home in Georgia was very difficult."

The move to San Antonio proved to be the best decision for all, though, providing Joe with more family time, opening the door to great successes for the kids, and blessing the family with a host of new friends and relationships.

Joe's story is not unusual. But, coupled with Chris' part in the tale, it's evident that some things are just meant to be.

Chris, whose career is just beginning, long ago set his sights on that Air Force long blue line. Born at Eglin AFB, Florida, where his father flew F-15s, his early interest was obvious and the Mirarchi family albums are overflowing with as many images of airplanes as there are photos of Joe, kids Chris and Brianna, and his wife, Teresa.

It was Chris' decision as a youngster to pursue a private pilot's license, and he pursued that goal with fervor.

"We made a conscious decision to have Chris train with someone other than Joe, partly because Joe's schedule was so busy but mostly because we wanted Chris' pursuit of becoming a fighter pilot to be his own," said Teresa.

Although it was Chris' decision to pursue an Air Force commission, his early passion for flying clearly echoed his father's. From an early age, Joe also knew he wanted to fly, and to make that happen he worked for his

father in the family butcher shop to earn the money for a private pilot's license (which he achieved before graduating from high school). Chris, no stranger to hard work and big goals, earned the money for his license, too. A gregarious, gifted speaker, he thrived as a Natural Bridge Caverns tour guide.

A 2014 University of Texas-Austin graduate, Chris earned a bachelor of science degree in astrophysics and soon after graduation, he let his dad know that he intended to "aim high and be an Air Force officer and fighter pilot."

"Inside, I was so elated. I tried to stay calm outside so that Chris wouldn't feel like I wanted him to do this for me, but to hear him say he wanted to follow this path was amazing," Joe said.

Having made his decision, Chris aggressively pursued a position (like his dad did so many years ago) and his perseverance was rewarded when the Florida Air National Guard selected him to fly the same plane his dad flew: the F-15C.

Because some things are just meant to be, it will come as no surprise that a key player in Chris' pursuit and selection for the Florida Air National Guard position was Rial, who again campaigned and supported Chris, just as he supported his father 20 years ago.

Like his dad's, Chris' civilian career is rooted in the aerospace industry. He will continue to serve as a pilot support tech for ForeFlight LLC, a pilot technology development and distribution company, while simultaneously serving his country in the Florida Air National Guard. But, there's more to the story of Joe and Chris.

A few years ago, when Chris was ready for his solo flight, his instructor was unavailable. He was on a tight schedule to complete his training, so Joe (who is a civilian instructor pilot and who was available) had the enviable opportunity to sign his son off on that solo flight.

In November, Joe commissioned Chris into the Air Force, officially enabling him to take his place in the long blue line.

Joe's original mandatory retirement date was in April 2017. But fate wasn't done with the Mirarchis, and his service date was extended.

Thanks to that extension, in February Joe flew his final sortie for the Air Force, prior to his retirement ceremony, and his wingman Chris flew back seat in ship two (his first Air Force sortie).

Following that remarkable flight, 2nd Lt. Chris Mirarchi officially retired his father, Lt. Col. Joe Mirarchi, enabling Joe to exit the long blue line.

"This is a noble calling," Chris said. "I know I have big shoes to fill, and I am honored and fortunate to be able to accept the torch, and to look forward to a career and the kind of life that my dad and his teammates, friends and coworkers have lived."

But the day was bittersweet for Joe.

"There are aspects that I will miss," he said of his Reserve position at the 39th Flying Training Squadron. "On active duty, you move every two years, and while there is camaraderie, it's not the same as the Reserve. As a member of the Reserve, you live and work with the same people for many, many years - an entire career - and you're more than a team. This is family."

Still, he looks forward to spending more time with his wife, and having passed the torch to his son, he's confident all will be well.

"Our future is in good hands," he said.

Yes, it is. Because some things are just meant to be.

(Gildea is assigned to the 340th Flying Training Group public affairs office.)

PRIOR-SE

GET **1** NOW

SERVICE PUSH

**RECRUITERS FOCUSING ON ATTRACTING
THOSE COMING OFF ACTIVE DUTY
BY MASTER SGT CHANCE BABIN**



Amidst the ever changing landscape of recruiting, Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service has reached its goal for 17 consecutive years. But as the climate in recruiting for the United States military is in constant flux, the service remains flexible and ready to adapt to these changes.

Maintaining an all-volunteer military continues to be a challenge as services fight for young recruits who are also being wooed by an up-surging civilian sector as well as government contractors. All this while each branch is being tasked with growing its numbers.

An alarming statistic for recruiting is that 70 percent of 17-to-24-year-olds in America are currently ineligible to join the military under existing Pentagon requirements. That means that 24 million of the 34 million people in that age group are not eligible to serve. This leaves only 10 million suitable people from which the military can replenish its ranks.

Roughly 59 percent of those who are ineligible are disqualified due to health and physical fitness issues, mostly due to the rising obesity problem, while another 25 percent lack the education required to serve in the military. This dwindling market of young people is also being sought out by major U.S. companies, putting considerable strain on maintaining an all-volunteer force.

One of the ways Air Force Reserve Command hopes to maintain its 17-year streak of making its recruiting goal, is to really focus on the prior-service market – those who have previously served on active duty in any branch of service, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast Guard, as well as in any reserve component.



Lt. Gen. Maryanne Miller, commander, Air Force Reserve Command, presented members of Team Andrews recruiting office with bomber jackets and her personal coin at the Pentagon, March 1. The recruiters won a challenge issued by the general to gain the most accessions from the individual ready reserve in fiscal 2017. AFRC Recruiting Service and the general are making a big push this year to gain more prior-service accessions. (Master Sgt. Chance Babin)

“While the Air Force Reserve will constantly continue to recruit the best and brightest non-prior service members to join our ranks, we are making a concentrated effort to recruit those prior-service members coming off active duty who want to continue to serve as Reserve Citizen Airmen,” said Lt. Col. Clint Bremner, chief of AFRC Recruiting Service’s Advertising and Information Systems Division.

AFRC Recruiting Service is asking for your help. One of the major areas recruiting intends to push hard this year is the Get 1 Now program. The peer referral program allows Reservists and civilian employees to refer a family member or friend to join the Reserve. Once a referral is deemed a qualified lead, the person submitting the lead is eligible for a host of awards.

“The Get 1 Now program has been one of the most successful initiatives that generate accessions from leads in the Air Force Reserve. One in every five leads submitted becomes an accession for the command,” Bremner said. “But the program has been underutilized in generating leads from the prior service. We need to have all of our Reservists to refer their former active-duty colleagues. This is an opportunity for each and every Reservist and civilian employee to become a recruiter and make a difference in keeping AFRC great.”

The Get 1 Now program generates the majority of leads from non-prior service members who join and recommend friends or relatives, but is missing out on those co-workers of the prior-service members who join.

“A challenge within the program is generating more prior-service leads via Get 1 Now. Our first-term Airmen are excited about the program and are leading the way with Get 1 Now referrals producing high-quality non-prior service leads. We want that to continue,” said Col. Timothy Martz, AFRC Recruiting Service vice commander. “However, we would love to increase mid- and senior-level Reserve member participation in the Get 1 Now program to include our civilian employee population.”

While the Get 1 Now program has been around for many years, some people new to the Reserve or even those joining from other services, may not be aware of the program and how it can help AFRC recruiting and the command as a whole.

“Many Reserve members were once on active duty and still have contact with their former active-duty counterparts. Or possibly they have recently deployed and have a friend coming off active duty. We need you to recommend they look into the Reserve,” Bremner said.

“For those who recently transitioned from the active component or sister service, download the app and tell us about your old colleague. You may be new to AFRC and don’t know how to recommend another service member to recruiting. This is a great way.”

For AFRC, getting a prior-service accession has many benefits.

“For us, gaining prior-service members is cost effective. They don’t have to repeat basic training and often will not have to attend tech school,” Bremner said. “We also know we are getting someone with a warrior ethos and possibly bringing in that joint experience that is so important in today’s military.”

The prior-service member also has benefits for continuing to serve. “For those coming off active duty, being a Reservist allows them the flexibility to pursue a civilian career or go to school full time,” Bremner said, “while still being able to continue serving their nation and maintaining that camaraderie of being part of the military.”

Another initiative the Recruiting Service is rolling out this year is something called other-service recruiters. OSRs will be similar to

in-service recruiters, who are located at most Air Force bases and are tasked with attending pre-separation briefings for those active-duty members who are coming off active duty. OSRs additionally meet with all active-duty Airmen as part of their out-processing check list.

The new OSR positions are going to be located in close proximity to some of the largest Army, Navy or Marine bases with anywhere from 15,000 to 50,000 active personnel. In similar fashion they will be tasked with trying to locate and counsel those coming off active duty who may be interested in continuing their military service on a part-time basis.

“We are doing this because AFRC needs to increase prior-service accessions as directed by Lt. Gen. (Maryann) Miller (AFRC commander),” said Master Sgt. Karl Perron, the Recruiting Service’s NCOIC of mapping, goal development and production analysis. “We need to increase our prior-service accessions by about 6 percent over our average for the last five years.”

Perron said AFRC Recruiting Service has a five-year average of approximately 64 percent. He also mentioned that in some instances recruiting may already have recruiters in the area of these other service bases but targeting separating active-duty personnel was not their primary focus.

“The OSR’s sole mission is to recruit separating service members coming off active duty,” Perron said. “They should be spending most of their days on base, post or station attending separation briefings and raising AFRC brand awareness through posters and their presence on base.”

Utilizing the Get 1 Now program and the introduction of OSRs are just two of the ways AFRC Recruiting Service is remaining flexible and adapting to the changing landscape of recruiting.

“Our intent in recruiting is to increase our prior-service accession rates in order for the Air Force Reserve Command to remain a prior service-focused, experienced and cost effective force,” Martz said.

The website for Get1Now is <https://www.get1now.us/>. There is also an app you can download for your phone.

(Babin is noncommissioned officer in charge of public affairs for the Recruiting Service at Robins AFB, Georgia.)



Tech Sgt Anthony White, an AFRC in-service recruiter at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, talks to an active-duty Air Force troop about joining the Reserve. In-service recruiters meet with all active-duty Airmen coming off active duty to recruit them into AFRC. (Master Sgt. Chance Babin)

RECRUITING SERVICE ADDS ENLISTED DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR AIRMEN

By Master Sgt. Chance Babin

Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service is looking for a few good men or women to fill its ranks. A recent initiative developed by the recruiting service in conjunction with Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelley, AFRC command chief, and the Air Force Reserve Senior Enlisted Council will give deserving Citizen Airmen an opportunity to serve a three-year recruiting tour at their home unit.

“It’s an opportunity for an Airman to use recruiting for career development,” said Chief Master Sgt. Thomas Zwelling, AFRC recruiting manager. “This will allow Airmen to get the experience of recruiting for three years and at the end of the recruiting tour bring that experience back to their unit.”

The current plan includes five initial bases: Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona; Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio; Niagara Falls ARS, New York; Nellis AFB, Nevada and Joint Base Andrews, Maryland.

Wing command chiefs at these select bases will be able to nominate a deserving Citizen Airman to do a three-year tour in recruiting. The nominee will then go through the normal new recruiter vetting process. Once the recruiting flight chief at the wing processes the selectee, he or she will proceed to the Recruiting Service evaluation selection course and then go to recruiting school at Joint Base San Antonio, Texas. “Since the command chief nominates the Airman it will benefit recruiting service since the local wing will have buy-in with the recruiting force,” Zwelling said. “There are currently five locations and depending on success of these locations there could be future growth to this program.”

While many of the Citizen Airmen who pursue becoming a recruiter want to move and experience living in a new location, this new program is a great option for those who want to stay at their current location.

“Some of the advantages for those selected for the enlisted development initiative is they will be able to stay at their current unit and not have to do a permanent change of station move,” Zwelling said. “They will also have familiarity with the local area and the wing. Not having to PCS can be less stressful on family and make the decision to become a recruiter easier.”

While having these new recruiters will help the Recruiting Service with current needs in the recruiting force, there are also some valuable gains for the wings and the Airmen gaining this experience.

“Being a recruiter allows them to work with every single squadron and group at their assigned wing,” Zwelling said. “This experience will be brought back to their local squadron and help develop the squadron from this experience. Some of the skills gained by Airmen include the ability to speak to leadership at all levels and knowledge of the wing’s mission, as well as learning to build relationships within the wing and with outside agencies.”

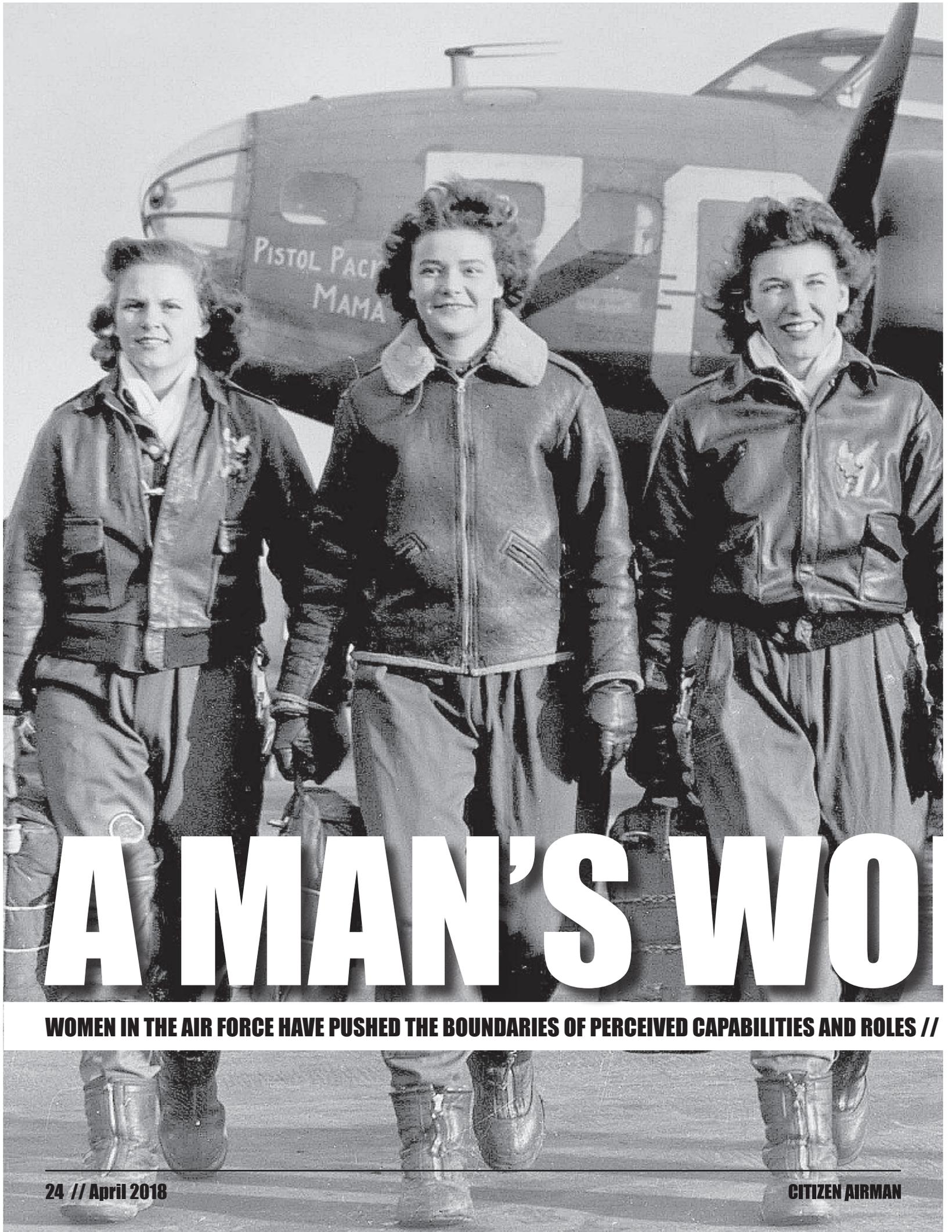


Chief Master Sgt. Thomas Zwelling, AFRC Recruiting Service manager, talks to a group of individual ready reserve members at an IRR muster at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. (Master Sgt. Chance Babin)

The enlisted development opportunity is one path to becoming a recruiter, but for the majority of bases, the traditional path still exists. Anyone interested in becoming a recruiter can contact the AFRC RS program manager at HQAFRC.CPM.Information@us.af.mil or call (478) 327-0147 to begin the application process.

“I can tell you from experience there is no better job in the Air Force Reserve than being a recruiter,” Zwelling said. “Not only do you learn skills that translate well either in the military or in your civilian career, but the main thing is you have the ability to change people’s lives on a daily basis. It is a truly rewarding job.”

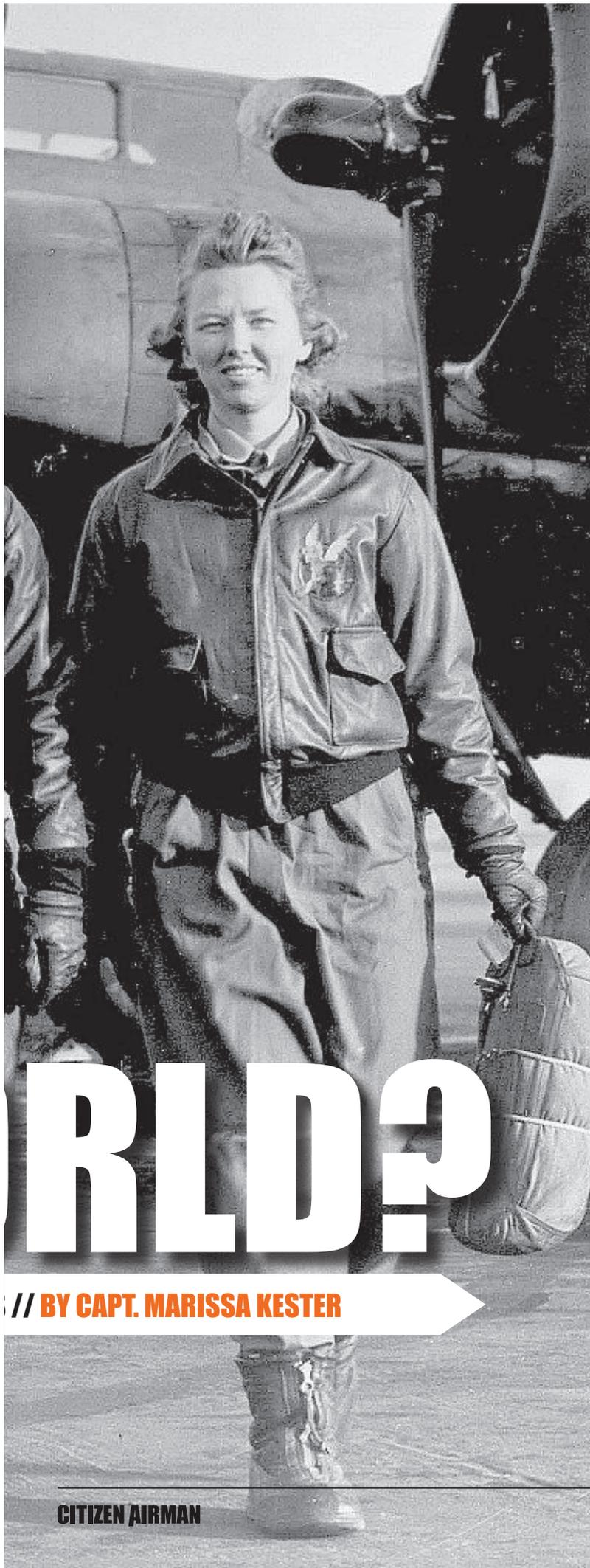
(Babin is noncommissioned officer in charge of public affairs for the Recruiting Service at Robins AFB, Georgia.)



PISTOL PACK
MAMA

A MAN'S WORLD

WOMEN IN THE AIR FORCE HAVE PUSHED THE BOUNDARIES OF PERCEIVED CAPABILITIES AND ROLES //



Since the first immigrants landed on what would become American soil, this country has relied on women in times of need. From the establishment of the colonies through the current war on terror, women have successfully filled not only their traditional gender roles but also those prescribed to men when required.

In wartime, women served as nurses, spies and, on rare occasions, disguised as men in order to fight.

World War I marked the first time women were hired to perform non-nursing jobs for the military, though only as civilian contractors. World War II required the first use of women performing a “man’s job” as aircraft pilots. During the Second World War, 1,102 Women’s Air Force Service Pilots ferried and flew every type of military aircraft and logged more than 60 million miles across the United States.

The integration of women into a traditional, male-dominated culture has not been a gradual process, but instead progress has been the by-product of a cycle in which external crisis necessitated a breakdown of the gendered status quo, and women rose to meet the challenge.

June 12, 2018, marks 70 years since the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act was signed, establishing a permanent place for women in the regular and reserve Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. The act’s primary purpose was to provide a means of mobilizing womanpower in the event of a sudden or large-scale war.

From that directive, the newly established Air Force created the Women in the Air Force, often referred to as the WAF, as a fully integrated entity instead of a separate corps as the other services had done.

The integration act was filled with stipulations concerning the use of women, such as personnel caps and the denial of spousal benefits. It also forbade women from having children or marrying while in the service as well as prohibiting women from wielding any command authority over men.

Geraldine Pratt May, a former Women’s Army Corp member, was selected as the first female Air Force colonel and director of the WAF on June 16, 1948, where she served until 1951.

When President Truman ordered U.S. air and naval forces into the Republic of Korea in June 1950, the newly created Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard were the only resources available to meet the challenge of a war on two fronts.

At the beginning of the Korean War, the WAF had about 4,000 women on active duty and 1,127 in the reserve. By the end, it had 6,000. Despite numerous requests for WAF personnel, the Air Force refused to assign women other than medical evacuation nurses to the combat zone, though later women were assigned to rear-echelon support bases in theater.

For the next decade, a relatively stable Cold War era military began placing more emphasis on WAF feminine responsibilities and roles, essentially duplicating civilian status and employment.

Despite pushing for expanded use and opportunities for women, WAF directors were careful not to rock the boat, understanding their tenuous position as well as the reality that focusing on quality over quantity of WAF personnel only seemed to reinforce the double standard.

As war in Southeast Asia appeared imminent a decade later, the Air Force had no intention of deploying women into theater. However, it did not take long before female nurses were needed to supplement manpower demands. Though many WAF members volunteered for duty in Vietnam, nearly all requests were denied or ignored.

ORLD?

// BY CAPT. MARISSA KESTER

Between 600 and 800 non-nursing women served in Southeast Asia, filling a variety of noncombat jobs including supply, aircraft maintenance, public affairs, administration and intelligence.

Meanwhile at home, the late 1960s and early 1970s were characterized by a growing women's movement and a general reluctance of men to volunteer or serve in the military.

Jeanne Holm, the first female major general among any service, was an incredible influence on expanding roles and rights for women in the Air Force. During her tenure as WAF director, Holm pushed for major policy reforms. WAF strength more than doubled, and assignment opportunities greatly expanded.

Women were no longer automatically discharged for pregnancy, enlistment age and dependent benefits were made equal, and Public Law 90-130 in 1967 repealed rank and personnel caps on women.

The switch to an all-volunteer force in 1973 was a critical turning point for women in the Air Force. The WAF silently dissolved in 1976 as the Air Force opened pilot training

and the Air Force Academy to women, and two years later women began training on Titan missile launch crews.

In spite of progress, by the early 1980s Air Force women still overwhelmingly filled traditional gendered jobs. In the absence of clear law or a congressional decision on combat exclusion, each service devised its own rules concerning the jobs women were allowed to perform. Despite designating entire classes of aircraft as "combat related," the Air Force was pressured to open AWACS to women in 1982, the KC-10 in 1984, and an additional 1,645 positions aboard aircraft previously closed to women in 1986, including pilots and technicians on the RC-135 and EC-130.

As women demonstrated their capability in different types of aircraft and missions, technological innovation made it increasingly difficult to divide combat and noncombat flying missions.

Operation Urgent Fury in 1983, the raid on Libya in 1986 and Operation Just Cause in 1989 involved Air Force female pilots, navigators, boom operators and enlisted crew members aboard tankers and support aircraft in the combat zone.

Despite political efforts to expand the utilization of women, conservative military culture continued to defend the status quo. Women were often isolated and discouraged from female networking, making the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services the primary means for servicewomen to convey their concerns to the top levels. In response to increased pressure from DACOWITS, the Defense Department established a new policy referred to as the Risk Rule in 1988, making 97 percent of Air Force jobs theoretically open to women.

By 1990, women comprised 14 percent of the Air Force, 13 percent of reserve forces and 11 percent of all active-duty military personnel. Despite their expanded numbers, women's roles in large-scale military operations remained unclear until more than 40,000 servicewomen deployed in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990 and 1991.

Though the majority of Air Force women who deployed in support of the war were active duty (7 percent of total Air Force), the highest proportion was in the Air Force Reserve (13 percent of the total force and 21.3 percent of Air Force Reserve officers).

Desert Storm exposed the American public to

An early recruiting poster highlighted women serving in the Air Force Reserve.



contradictions in military policies concerning women, proving they could not be kept safe simply by classifying jobs as combat or not. Dubbed the “Mommy War” by national media, women performed in almost every type of operation except direct combat.

Between 1992 and 1999, the Air Force Reserve was called to respond to regional conflicts, natural disasters and humanitarian crises all over the world. Women’s roles continued to be tested during these operations, although there seemed to be few questions left about what women could or could not do and the value they added to the Air Force mission.

DACOWITS again pushed for the repeal of combat exclusion statutes, arguing the services should be able to utilize all qualified personnel based on ability rather than gender.

In 1993, the secretary of defense opened combat aviation to women, including enlisted aircrew positions, and in 1994 the Risk Rule was replaced by the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule, making women eligible for assignment to all positions for which

they qualified, except for units below brigade level whose primary mission was to engage the enemy in direct combat.

By the turn of the century, 99 percent of all Air Force occupations were open to women.

Operation Enduring Freedom from 2001 to 2014 and Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2003 to 2011 were the first large-scale mobilizations of troops since the Gulf War. The reality of an evolving mission and battlefield again placed women in the center of combat.

In recognition of this reality, the co-location policy was rescinded in 2012 and the DGCDAR in 2013. On January 1, 2016 Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter opened all combat jobs to women, making 4,099 previously closed Air Force jobs – 176 of those specific to the Reserve – open to women.

For the first time in U.S. military history, as long as they qualified and met specific standards, women were able to contribute to the mission with no barriers in their way.

The history of women in the military is filled with brave and relentless women who have sacrificed their reputation, livelihood or even life to push the boundaries of perceived female capabilities and roles.

It took time, circumstance, strong female leadership and ultimately the dedication of the women performing the mission to get where we are as a service today.

(Kester is an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the HQ AFRC History Office at Robins AFB, Georgia. Her sources for this article include Gerald Cantwell’s “Citizen Airmen: A History of the Air Force Reserve, 1946-1994, Jeanne Holm’s “Women in the Military: an Unfinished Revolution” and Evelyn Monahan and Rosemary Neidel-Greenlee’s “A Few Good Women: America’s Military Women from World War I to the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.”)

The history of women in the military is filled with brave and relentless women who have sacrificed their reputation and livelihood to push the boundaries of perceived female capabilities.



An all-female KC-135 aircrew walks to its aircraft on the March Air Reserve Base, California, flight line in December. (Master Sgt. Eric Harris)

ALTER EGO!

RESERVE CITIZEN AIRMAN IS MAKING HIS MARK AS A COMIC BOOK WRITER
BY MASTER SGT. MARK OLSEN

By day, he is a mild-mannered Reserve Citizen Airman wing executive officer.

By night, he is the mastermind behind “The Consultant” and “My Way.”

At first glance, Maj. Jason A. Sterr does not appear to be a comic book writer. His job as the executive officer for the Air Force Reserve’s 514th Air Mobility Wing at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, is certainly not one associated with the comic book and graphic novel industry.

That is until you get to his origin story. Spoiler alert: No parents shot, not the sole survivor of a doomed planet.

But we do get the crisis.

It started in 2011, at Al Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates, where Sterr was the aircraft maintenance unit officer-in-charge of a KC-10 Extender maintenance team during Operation Enduring Freedom.

“We had just finished launching this major exercise. Our commander had come out and said there was no way you could do this,” said Sterr. “We did it. Everyone was laughing, clapping, patting themselves on the back.”

And then reality hits.

“You take that one moment to turn around and look at the absolute devastation that you left behind in order to get things done. You realize you aren’t done and you ask, ‘How much money do I have in my account? Who can I pay to clean this thing up?’”

It is that thought of whom Sterr could call that would become the basis for “The Consultant.”

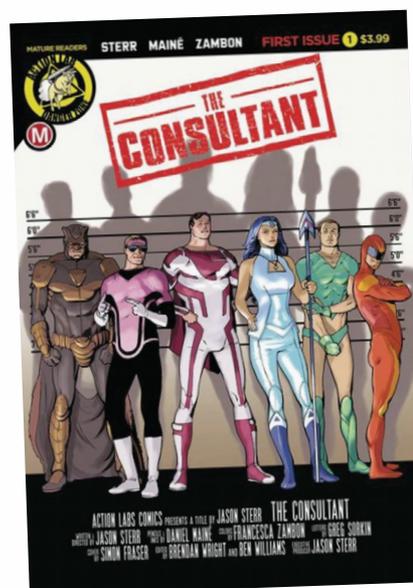
“Growing up on superhero comic books, that was the one thing I wondered about: ‘Who does Superman pay to clean up after his messes?’” said Sterr. “So we finished cleaning up, slept for like 24

hours and then I immediately started writing.”

But we are getting ahead of ourselves; where does Sterr come by his writing talents?

If this was a comic book, the secret identity, as well as the big city tropes, would be subtly woven in to the story. By the way, tropes are common themes used as storytelling building blocks in comic books.

This, however, is reality. No secret identity here, but there is the big city trope. It turns out Sterr received his bachelor of arts degree in investigative journalism from Columbia College in Chicago. Combined with a year and a half of screenwriting in Hollywood for Warner Brothers and the mystery around Sterr’s writing skills is explained. No loose ends.



By day, Maj. Jason Sterr is the mild-mannered executive officer for the Air Force Reserve’s 514th Air Mobility Wing at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey. By night, he is a successful comic book writer. At left is one of his latest comics.



After Sterr completed “The Consultant” it sat and, with the exception of a tweak here and there, the story remained the same – a script, but no pictures to tell the tale.

Then in 2014 Sterr started working with former 514th wing member Charles D. Chenet who created and runs the non-profit Dare2Draw. D2D’s purpose is to get comic book and graphic novel artists, inkers, pencillers, letterers and writers into the industry. Sterr showed the D2D staff his script for “The Consultant” and they found it “darkly hysterical.” That gave him the motivation to get it published.

“I started shipping it around, found an artist I liked, paired up with an editor from Dark Horse and ran,” said Sterr. “It’s been released by Action Lab Entertainment through their Danger Zone imprint.”

The first issue came out in December 2017, and with issues two and three of the four-issue series out, “The Consultant” is a success. Sterr is currently writing the sequel.

“My dad taught me how to read with comic books. To see my own comic book show up on the newsstands is a lot of fun,” said Sterr.

“The story is about Marcus Greenberg. He is the Mr. Wolfe from Pulp Fiction (“I solve problems”) for a team of superheroes called the Guardians,” said Sterr. “This guy’s sole function is to keep these superheroes off the electric chair, off of death row.

“I took advantage of all the fan-boy tropes: How can anybody in a police force actually be okay with a man dressed up as a flying rodent with a teenage sidekick running around attacking the bad guys? How is it not child endangerment? Why isn’t the entire police force dedicated to bring this one guy down?”

This is where *The Consultant* comes in and cleans up the devastation and makes pesky little issues like dead sidekicks go away.

So is *The Consultant* Sterr’s alter ego? Not even close. Despite the twists and turns of his career after graduating from Columbia, it was inevitable that Sterr would join the military.

“I come from a military family,” said Sterr. Sterr earned his commission in 2008 through the Air Force Officer Training School at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. He served on active duty from 2008 until 2013 when he transferred to the 514th and served as the operations officer with the 514th Maintenance Group, and later as the maintenance operations officer for the 514th Maintenance Squadron.

As the wing commander’s executive officer for the 514th AMW, Sterr is responsible for all wing programs and the execution of Air Force Reserve Command priorities.

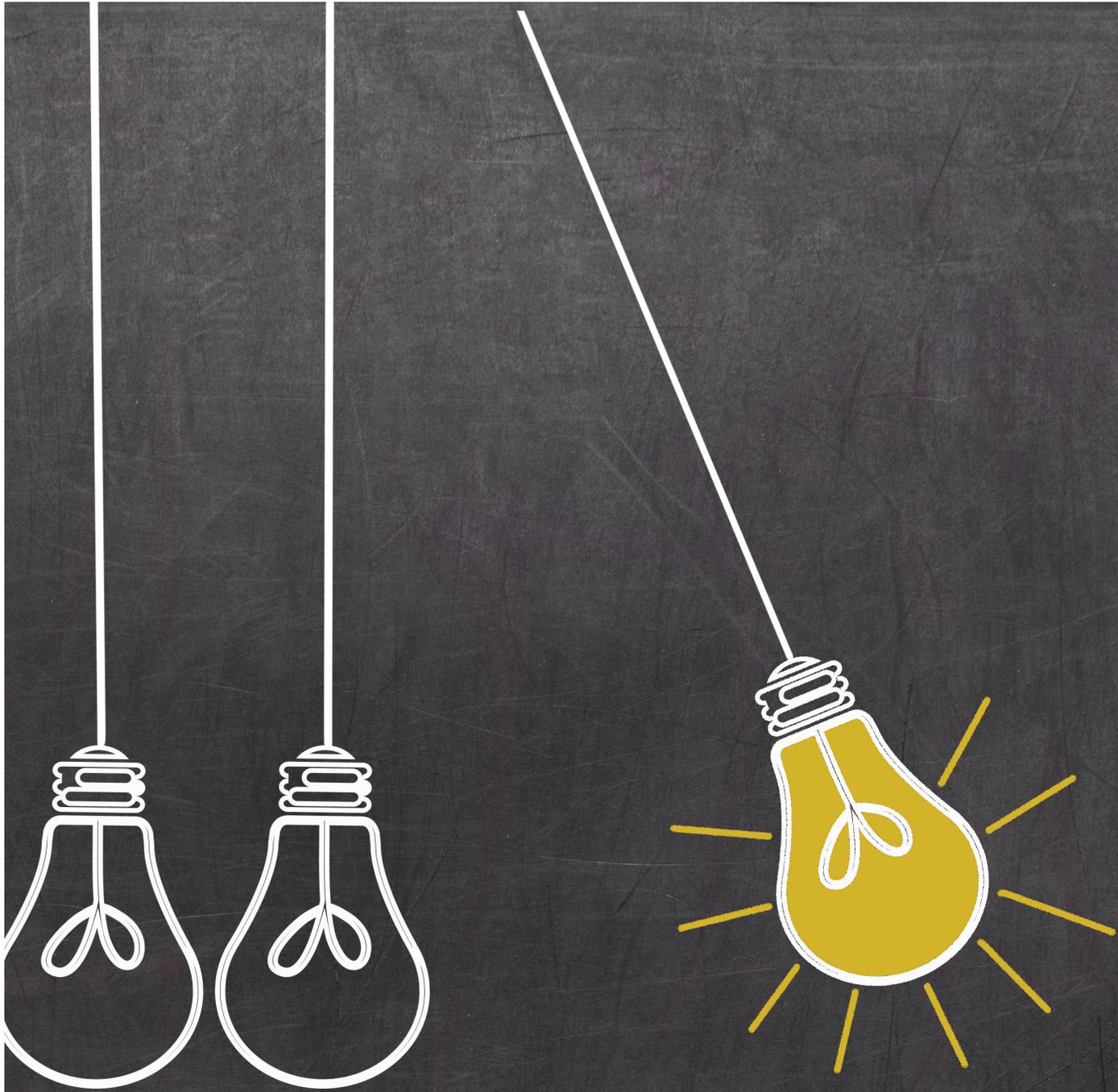
And while his job keeps him busy, it hasn’t slowed down his writing. Sterr’s next project is a story about the Chairman of the Board.

“My Way’ is a fictional retelling of Frank Sinatra’s time as a CIA assassin,” said Sterr. “What’s the best way to hide a hit man? In plain sight. You can’t get any more plain sight than Frank Sinatra in the 1950s, 1960s. The man owned the world.”

The story takes place beginning in the late ‘50s through President John F. Kennedy’s administration and includes all the Rat Pack members.

Sterr has two other projects, but spoiler alert, can’t talk about them. But with “*The Consultant*” out, Sterr’s alter ego is definitely a star to watch for in the comic book industry.

(Olsen is assigned to the 514th AMW public affairs office)



CONTINUUM OF LEARNING 2.0

BY TYLER GRIMES

For many Reservists, keeping up with required military training and education while also pursuing a college degree can be very challenging. With the new Continuum of Learning, however, Reserve Citizen Airmen have much more flexibility to achieve their personal developmental and career goals.

The Continuum of Learning involves the process of combining training, education and experience to equip Airmen with current and future competencies, said Reservist Col. Timothy Owens, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command director of staff. The redesigned Continuum of Learning, or CoL 2.0, was approved for implementation in February 2017.

“I think that the redesigned CoL is important for Reservists because it reshapes the traditional Air Force learning structure, equipping and encouraging Airmen to become lifelong learners,” Owens said. “It leverages opportunities to break education and training courses and programs into manageable portions so Airmen can access material when and where they want. This convenience and flexibility is important as Reservists are balancing their civilian and Air Force jobs. It also aims to value what our Reservists already know and can do.”

The CoL gives credit to Airmen in the form of a certification or badge for the skills and knowledge they have demonstrated in performance both inside and outside of the Air Force. This can specifically benefit Reservists as many have civilian jobs from which they have garnered a wide array of skills and knowledge.

“For example, if a Reservist has a finance degree, then the redesigned CoL will give them credit for the degree, provide them the opportunity to advance or opt out of unnecessary training and to show all learners that this knowledge is highly valued,” he said. “This will be tracked in an Airman’s Learning Record that essentially is a ‘one stop shop’ report where learners will be able to access and keep track of their specialized training programs, on the job or off-duty.”

Dr. Matthew Stafford, vice president of Academic Affairs at Air University, explained that in the past Airmen worked through the CoL components of training, education and experiences in isolation.

“The redesigned CoL initiative attempts to integrate the three components in ways that allow Airmen to learn – and get credit for learning anytime and anywhere. It directly supports lifelong learning and, indirectly, the move to recreate the Air Force as a learning organization.”

The goal of CoL is to develop competencies as a common currency among the three areas of education, training and experience so that achievements in one area are valued in the other two. Lessons learned through experience, for instance, should allow Airmen to bypass classes where those lessons are taught.

Owens said he believes the redesigned CoL will help the Air Force Reserve’s recruiting and retention efforts in a few ways.

“In recruiting, we can assess a learner’s skills, knowledge and abilities, and give them credit for what they know and can do,” Owens said. “This will allow the Air Force the opportunity to match Airmen more closely with the needs of the Air Force mission. As for retention, CoL 2.0 through the ALR will put Airmen in charge of their development and will better align passion to mission.”

In the next two years, Reserve Citizen Airmen at every level will experience some elements of the redesigned CoL with the ultimate goal of creating an Air Force culture of life-long learning. Other developments are coming in the future as well.

“AETC is developing an Air Force Learning Services Ecosystem that will provide a common framework to support Air Force learning at the enterprise level,” Owens said.

“The ecosystem will provide access to learning services providing student and faculty management, course content development, management and delivery, testing, evaluations and feedback,” he said. “It will provide a collaborative environment for Airmen’s learning needs, as well as data analytics, to understand how Airmen are learning.”

The major command will begin testing the new system this summer and Owens projects the system will replace the Air Force Advanced Distributed Learning System or ADLS within three years.



Alonzo Gonzales, a combat medic program emergency medical technician course instructor at the Medical Education and Training Campus at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, lectures students in Alpha Class 70-17 about different obstetrics complications utilizing a specialized OB training mannequin. (Lisa Braun)



Keesler personnel watch a Science on a Sphere demonstration during a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Weather Training Complex, on Keesler Air Force Base, Miss. This latest training aid displays planetary data onto a suspended carbon-fiber sphere helping instructors enhance student's understanding of the atmosphere. (Kemberly Groue)



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RESERVE**

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