



Nose Dock Gym promotes ...  
**FITNESS**

**PAGES 14-15**



# Re-imagining agile combat employment

**D**YESS AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — Threats in the Pacific Theater have evolved rapidly during the past few years.

North Korea has aggressively expanded its ballistic missile program and has conducted numerous test launches into the Sea of Japan and even the Western Pacific.

China continues to ramp up military activity in the South and East China Seas and Russia is exerting its influence in the region through more frequent and aggressive long-range aircraft



**Commentary by Col. Thomas Kirkham**  
7TH MAINTENANCE GROUP

deployments.

These new and emerging threats have essentially shrunk the theater and now bases in Guam, Hawaii and even Alaska must be considered on the front lines.

With this in mind, we must re-imagine how we deploy and maneuver our forces during a crisis or conflict so we can seize, retain and exploit the initiative in a contested environment against a great power adversary.

To counter these new threats, Pacific Air Forces recently validated a new concept

## Commander's Commentary

called Agile Combat Employment, aka ACE. The intended purpose of ACE is to ensure forward-deployed forces are prepared to survive a potential attack with little warning.

Where PACAF has traditionally generated airpower from a few main operating bases, the ACE concept enables those bases to disperse aircraft to austere locations, re-arm, re-fuel and get back into the fight. ACE builds upon several existing concepts to include adaptive basing, protection and assured command and control.

Currently, the ACE concept has only been tested and validated through the deployment of fighter aircraft with a small number of tanker and airlift assets in support.

Rapid Raptor was first introduced in 2013 and has been tested several times since. However, it was limited in scope and primarily focused on testing F-22 logistics support and fuel capabilities at a remote location. Command and control and operational maneuver were not a part of the Rapid Raptor concept.

Agile Combat Employment builds upon the Rapid Raptor experiment and not only tests logistics capabilities, but also focuses on the protection

of assets at an austere location as well as the development of command and control procedures to ensure aircraft at remote locations can still tie into the bigger picture of a major theater combat operation.

But why not take it a step further and include bombers in the Agile Combat Employment concept? The sheer magnitude of combat firepower that bombers could immediately bring to bear would be game changing. The ability to execute area denial – land or sea, standoff attacks, or precision strikes – would be a huge force multiplier. In addition, with most of the land area in the Pacific consisting of small islands

See **KIRKHAM Page 22**

# Sergeant overcomes long odds, learns to persevere



**Commentary by Tech. Sgt. Matthew Knef**

314TH AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

**L**ITTLE ROCK AIR FORCE BASE, Ark. — My Air Force story is one unlike any other.

It's a personal testimony of how hard work and perseverance can overcome enormous odds. It's a story of how a couple of bad decisions could have derailed a promising young Air Force career, but instead created the rocket fuel which propelled a real life Air Force success story.

I am the walking, talking, thriving, embodiment of what resilience is all about. The trials and tribulations I faced have shaped the man, leader and Airman you see today.

## Enlisted Commentary

In April 2007, I received a DUI at my first duty station, Hurlburt Field Air Force Base, Florida. I was an 18-year-old airman 1st class and had only been on base for a couple of weeks.

When the designated driver decided to take an alternate ride home, I made a foolish and irrational decision to get behind the wheel of my car to drive myself and my other inebriated co-workers back to the dorms.

In retrospect, it is evident how immature and reckless that decision was. I cared about the wrong things in life and obviously wasn't ready for the responsibility of being independent and making adult decisions.

While I knew the next several months were going to be tough, I also knew that I put myself in this mess and the only way out of it would be to put my head down, not ask too many questions and work my tail off. That's exactly what I did.

It seemed like no matter how hard I worked, I could not change certain people's perspective of

how they viewed me. All they saw, it seemed, was the kid who got the DUI, not the person who had a genuine passion for being a part of the Air Force.

I deeply hated the negative perception that followed me, but also understood its origins. In my heart and mind, I knew that wasn't the Airman I was.

Becoming frustrated with it all, in February 2008, I decided to drive my car off base to get something to eat. When I returned to base, I was stopped for driving with

See **KNEF Page 26**

# Chaplains set to host Harvest Festival

**Airman 1st Class Cameron Otte**  
60TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The 60th Air Mobility Wing chapel will host the second annual Harvest Festival from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 26 at the First Street Chapel parking lot.

"We want to help Airmen enjoy their time here at Travis and morale events like these can really help make a difference in someone's perspective, especially if they can meet new people and make new friends," said Capt. Johann Choi, 60th Air Mobility Wing chaplain.

Attendees from last year are looking forward to what this year's festival has to offer, especially the Battle of the Bands.

"I'm so excited for this year's Harvest Festival," said Airman 1st Class Natalie Heredia, 60th Operations Support Squadron aviation resource manager. "I can't wait to see fellow Airmen perform with their groups on stage, showing everyone what they can do."

This will be Travis Air Force Bases first ever Battle of the Bands event where multiple bands will compete for the grand prize.

"There will be five bands made up of members from the Travis community participate in this showdown," said Choi. Active duty Airmen won't be the only ones signed up. There will also be contractors and veterans who put their own bands together to compete in this competition."

Along with the Battle of the

U.S. Air Force graphic/Airman 1st Class Cameron Otte

Bands, another large attraction will be a tribute to Filipino Heritage Month.

"For Filipino Heritage Month, we set up a pavilion tent filled with Filipino artifacts from World War II," said Robert Asercion, 60th

AMW chaplain. "We will give tours to groups of about 12 people at a time throughout the festival. At the end of the tour, there will be samples of authentic Filipino foods the guests get to taste."

In addition to the main

attractions, there will be other activities for guests to enjoy during their visit.

"The festival will have carnival games, bouncy houses, a petting zoo, an arcade and church groups will be bringing their own

activities and treats to the festival," said Choi.

Hot dogs and hamburgers will be available at the festival for guests, free of charge.

Parking will be in the gym parking lot, off Travis Avenue.

## Tailwind

Travis AFB, Calif. | 60th Air Mobility Wing

**Air Force**

**Col. Jeff Nelson**  
60th Air Mobility Wing commander

**2nd Lt. Mike Longoria**  
Officer in charge of command information

**Tech. Sgt. Traci Keller**  
NCO in charge of command information

**Tech. Sgt. James Hodgman**

**Senior Airman Jonathon Carnell**

**Airman 1st Class Cameron Otte**  
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### On the cover

**Senior Airman Joshua Knutson, 60th Force Support Squadron fitness specialist, performs a battle rope work out Oct. 11 in the Nose Dock Gym at Travis Air Force Base, California.**

U.S. Air Force photo/Heide Couch

U.S. Air Force photo

## WARRIOR OF THE WEEK

**Name:** Senior Airman Kelvin Powell.

**Unit:** 60th Aerospace Medicine Squadron.

**Duty title:** Bioenvironmental engineering journeyman.

**Hometown:** Chesapeake, Virginia.

**Time in service:** Two years.

**Family:** Spouse, Kimberly; child, Nigel.

**What are your goals?** Complete bachelor's degree and commission as an officer of the United States Air Force.

**What are your hobbies?** Playing volleyball and video games.

**What is your greatest achievement?** As the confined space program manager, I identified an area on the KC-10 that historically was not identified as a confined space. I then worked with fire and safety to conduct an evaluation and establish training procedures that ensured the safety of Airmen.

## Panda Express joins options at Travis BX food court

Col. Victor Beeler, 60th Mission Support Group commander, speaks Oct. 15 at the grand opening of the Panda Express in the Travis Air Force Base Exchange food court.

Courtesy photo



Marisa Wolfe Conner  
ARMY AND AIR FORCE EXCHANGE SERVICE

Airmen and families have a new dining option at the Travis Air Force Base Exchange food court, Panda Express.

Col. Victor Beeler, 60th Mission Support Group commander, joined Robert Rice, Exchange West Coast regional vice president, as well as local Army & Air Force Exchange Service managers in cutting the ribbon Oct. 15 on the fast-casual Chinese restaurant.

Panda Express features popular entrees such as orange chicken, Beijing beef, kung pao chicken and honey walnut shrimp.

"The Exchange is committed to offering our Airmen and their families dining options that work for them," said Phonda Bishop, Travis BX general manager. "We're excited to give the Travis community more choices."

Panda Express also offers healthier options including string bean chicken breast,

broccoli beef, grilled chicken teriyaki and mixed vegetables, each coming in at 300 calories or fewer.

All of the Exchange's more than 1,700 restaurants offer better-for-you menu choices to support warfighters' readiness and resiliency.

The Travis BX Panda Express is at 461 Skymaster Circle, Bldg. 648, and is open from 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday.

## 97th ARS reactivates at Fairchild

Staff Sgt. Dustin Mullen

92ND AIR REFUELING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

FAIRCHILD AIR FORCE BASE, Wash. — Fairchild Air Force Base reactivated the 97th Air Refueling Squadron that has been deactivated for 15 years, along with an Assumption of Command ceremony Oct. 18 at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington.

The reactivation is due to an increase of KC-135 Stratotankers being transferred to Fairchild along with more than 400 Airmen and their families.

Fairchild was chosen to support the new squadron and tankers due to a multitude of factors, including infrastructure, local area, current operations and much more.

"Fairchild is the perfect fit for these new tankers because of our demonstrated capability to provide responsive air refueling across the globe," said Col. Derek Salmi, 92nd Air Refueling Wing commander, in a previous article. "Through hard work and dedication, our Airmen have established Fairchild as the Air Refueling Center of Excellence and we will continue to carry forth this legacy as the world's largest tanker wing."

The new squadron will expand Fairchild's mission of Global Reach, and enhance its lethality and capabilities as the world's largest air refueling wing.

"[Fairchild] will be a strategic hub for KC-135 refueling operations



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Dustin Mullen

Lt. Col. Cindy Dawson, 97th Air Refueling Squadron commander, returns the squadron's first salute Oct. 18 during the squadron's reactivation ceremony and assumption of command at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. The new squadron will expand Fairchild's mission of global reach as well as enhance its lethality and capabilities as the world's largest air refueling wing.

for decades to come," said Maj. Gen. Sam Barrett, 18th Air Force commander, during a meeting with Fairchild AFB Airmen earlier this year. "It's extraordinary that we take these weapon systems, with our innovative Airmen, and employ them all around the world with near-perfect mission

execution. This base is truly the center of excellence for the KC-135."

The squadron was deactivated 15 years ago in 2004. This ceremony marked the reactivation of the new squadron, however, activities for squadron members have already begun.

"We have been working very hard to set up our squadron, with a new building and new furniture, setting up our processes, [all while] we have already received taskings to send our Airmen downrange to support the

See 97TH ARS Page 18



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Mariam K. Springs

Airman 1st Class Corey Calkins, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron firefighter, prepares to train his skills as a firefighter Oct. 11 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas. Calkins grew up around a firehouse where his father worked, which inspired him to follow in his dad's footsteps.

## Airman follows dreams to become firefighter

Senior Airman  
Kristine M. Gruwell

19TH AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

LITTLE ROCK AIR FORCE BASE, Ark. — A young boy walks through a firehouse with boots laid out and fire gear hung across the hooks one after the other, waiting to be donned by firefighters in response to whatever disaster has interrupted the lives of the public.

The speakers ring so loud the boy presses his hands firmly against his ears to protect them. Firefighters rush in through the doors in response. Among the men is the boy's father, the firefighter he looks up to the most.

His father leaves with sirens wailing and lights flashing, to save whoever's life is on the line, while his son watches completely inspired by the heroism he just witnessed.

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Corey Calkins, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron firefighter, recalls the fast-paced environment of the firehouse his father worked at in South Hadley, Massachusetts, throughout his childhood.

"I grew up around a firehouse and I always looked to everyone there as role models, especially my dad," Calkins said. "I wanted to follow in my father's footsteps, he was a firefighter for 32 years."

As Calkins became old enough to establish a career, he was conflicted between two professions — joining the Air Force or becoming a firefighter, so Calkins began to look into both career options.

According to Calkins, he knew joining the Air Force would mean serving his country and becoming a firefighter would mean continuing his family heritage.

"I saw things from both sides and was very conflicted, so I went to check out my options," Calkins said. "After further research I realized I could do both, which is when I decided to become a firefighter in the Air Force."

Following basic military training and firefighter technical training, Calkins received orders to the 19th CES as a firefighter at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas. Throughout his training and experience, he realized combining his aspirations was the best choice to make for his career.

"This base provides us regular training because we don't have many incidents that require us to utilize all our skills necessary to be a firefighter," Calkins said. "When we had a large fire on base, my heart was racing and I froze for a second, but I was confident I could be the

See FIREFIGHTER Page 23

# Veterans Day Tribute

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# Air Force formalizes officer developmental categories

**Air Force News Service**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Air Force announced Oct.

21 it formally established six distinct officer developmental groupings for active component line officers, which will

take effect in March 2020 for the lieutenant colonel promotion board.

The historic decision comes after months of work by Air Force officials to reconfigure the single Line of the Air Force category, enhancing

the officer talent management system and enabling tailored and agile development.

“This is an important step forward in the way Air Force leaders are developed,” said Secretary of the Air Force Barbara M. Barrett. “The

team has done exceptional work to get us to this point and I look forward to implementing this together.”

Over the summer, Air Force officials traveled to more than a dozen bases to hold 42 town-hall sessions talking with more than 3,700 Airmen about the proposed developmental categories change and captured feedback. Based on that feedback, the new categories were established on Oct. 7th.

The Line of the Air Force category will be expanded into six categories: Air Operations and Special Warfare, Nuclear and Missile Operations, Space Operations, See **CATEGORIES** Page 19

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# TAP improves through refresh

**Senior Airman Tristan Truesdell**  
341ST MISSILE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE, Mont. — The Transition Assistance Program received new curriculum and a slight makeover as of Oct. 1.

Before, TAP could be accomplished no later than 89 days before a military member's separation date. Now, individuals can take advantage of the program 12 to 15 months before their final out — nearly a year difference.

“A new federal law came out: the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019,” said David Burger, 341st Force Support Squadron TAP manager. “This caused TAP to completely change. Anyone who went through TAP before will see

significant changes.

“Whether you were enlisted or an officer, everyone got the same information,” Burger said. “Now it's a case-by-case management style.”

**New additions to TAP**

“The new program allows us to reach out to members 15 months prior to their separation or retirement date,” said Michael Primo, 341st FSS transitions counselor. “The transition process starts by conducting a one-on-one, face-to-face initial counseling session.”

Military members who are within the 12 to 15 month range will first receive a questionnaire via email to help identify what they need to do before

See **TAP** Page 18

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# ADAPT helps Airman back from brink

**Airman 1st Class  
Rhonda Smith**

48TH FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ROYAL AIR FORCE LAKENHEATH, United Kingdom — “Laying in a hospital suffering from alcohol poisoning, I started to realize how bad of a situation I put myself in,” said Staff Sgt. Bryan Hersey, 100th Comptroller Squadron budget analysis personnel assigned to RAF Mildenhall.

Hersey had been an alcoholic for years. Drinking became as common as brushing his teeth. It wasn't about the taste for him, rather, the challenge of whether or not he could handle his next drink.

“Any reason I had ... I would drink,” Hersey said. “Whenever I became stressed I would drink, and whenever something good happened, I would drink more.”

Last year he went from drinking recreationally to drinking dangerously.

His reckless drinking began after experiencing the loss of a friend and mentor.

“I didn't want to think Chris had passed away and how unready I was to face the world without him,” Hersey said. “I just felt like the world was closing in on me, and I went over the edge. I never had a good father figure, and this guy was like my father figure in the workplace. I felt like life had cheated me.”

Feeling lost, hopeless and alone, Hersey turned to alcohol.

“That weekend, I had drank seven bottles of whiskey,” said Hersey. “I went to the hospital for seven hours, I had to be on anti-seizure medication and an IV Gatorade banana bag that had so many nutrients because I was so sick from withdrawal.”

A representative from the Alcohol and Drug Abuse



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Rhonda Smith

**Staff Sgt. Bryan Hersey, 100th Comptroller Squadron budget analysis personnel assigned to Royal Air Force Mildenhall, poses Oct. 3 at RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom. Hersey, a recovering alcoholic, went through the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Treatment program this past year.**

Prevention Treatment program visited him in the hospital, which helped him begin his journey down the road to recovery.

“I was in a rehab for a month with a therapist who helped me work through the cause. It was like a safe place,” Hersey said. “Ultimately they helped me realize I was grieving, that this moment isn't forever and he

wouldn't want me to live like this.”

ADAPT not only helps individuals who are suffering from alcoholism and drug abuse, but their mission is also to promote responsible drinking, prevent alcohol and drug related incidents and educate individuals about the effects of misusing alcohol and drugs.

“We offer individual and

group therapy here, on site, and for higher or more intensive care, we refer participants to off base facilities capable of providing the support they need,” said Tech. Sgt. Vaiolo Swanagan, 48th Medical Group ADAPT specialist.

Hersey was considered self-referred because he admitted himself into the

**See ADAPT Page 18**

# Motorcycle mishaps hit rare lows

**Susan Merhege**

AIR FORCE SAFETY CENTER

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. — Riding a motorcycle is an inherently dangerous activity that claims the lives of Airmen every year. Recently, the Air Force achieved a significant safety milestone when motorcycle mishaps reached historic lows.

In fiscal year 2019, the Air Force experienced a 69% reduction in motorcycle fatalities and a 41.5% decrease in lost-time injuries over a 10-year period. Fatalities dropped from 13 in 2010 to four in 2019 and lost-time injuries during that same period decreased from 224 to 131.

“We have well over 22,000 motorcycle riders in the Air Force this year. While one loss is too many, four fatalities for 2019 is phenomenal,” said Michael Eckert, Air Force Safety Center Traffic Safety and Outreach Branch chief. “Our motorcycle safety program is effective and making a difference.”

Eckert went on to credit this major accomplishment to motorcycle riders, motorcycle safety representatives, leadership and safety offices working together on a program that provides Airmen the skills and knowledge necessary to operate motorcycles safely beyond beginner rider's skills.

Since a change in Department of Defense guidance in 2013, Air Force safety efforts have required riders to complete training based on a lifelong learning approach; a result from multiple national studies, which found riding motorcycles a “perishable skill” that diminishes over time if not used.

“If you want to ride a motorcycle while in the Air Force, you have to be familiar with our training ranges, courses and motorcycle safety reps,” said Michael Ballard, Air Force chief of occupational safety. “The Air Force takes the lifelong learning approach

**See MOTORCYCLE Page 18**

# ACC announces finalists for Spark Tank

**Tech. Sgt. Nick Wilson**

AIR COMBAT COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE LANGLEY-EUSTIS, Va. — Air Combat Command announced its two 2020 Spark Tank finalists moving on to compete in the finals in Washington, D.C.

The finalists competed against four other teams of contestants from a multitude of career fields and experience levels. They will move on to the finals at AFWERX, where they'll compete against winners from other major commands at the Air Force level. From there, the judge's panel will choose six finalists from a pool of more than 20 semi-finalists – two from each MAJCOM, plus two AFWERX wildcards.

Airman 1st Class Brett Geisler is a 9th Maintenance Squadron electrical and environmental journeyman from Beale Air Force Base, California. Geisler pitched an idea to Spark Tank judges for a latch-seal track case. The latch-seal track case is an assembly Geisler crafted with computer-aided drafting at home.

Geisler's idea is projected to prevent failures during operational inspections of aircraft



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Nick Wilson

**Senior Airman Brett Geisler, left, 9th Maintenance Squadron electrical and environmental technician, Beale Air Force Base, California, and Tech. Sgt. Jean-Paul Trevino, 9th MXS electrical and environmental NCO in charge, present their idea to the judge's panel during Air Combat Command's 2020 Spark Tank competition Oct. 16 at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia.**

canopies and save thousands of dollars and cut man-hours on the flightline by 26%.

“It feels great,” Geisler said. “It feels like I actually put my name out there and accomplished something. I was really hyped to see all of the other ideas because they were awesome.”

Geisler also described how enthusiastic his fellow Airmen will be when they see his idea come to fruition.

“They're definitely going to be happy,” Geisler said. “My coworkers were excited about my idea before I even entered into this competition.”

“They hated redundant

maintenance actions just as much as I did,” he continued. “At the end of the day, it's more promising to see that our parts are going to be in a secure location.”

The second finalist, Tech. Sgt. Daniel Caban, a 1st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

F-22 Raptor crew chief from Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, articulated an idea to the judge's panel for portable magnetic aircraft covers, or PMAC. Caban said his idea came from the desire to help pilots bring their large, bulky aircraft covers with them in flight to use during arrival to deployments and temporary duty assignments.

“It feels good to see my product move forward and come to life,” Caban said.

Not only does Caban's idea increase F-22 readiness, PMAC can also be used on any fighter aircraft in the Air Force's inventory. Caban's idea is projected to cut individual costs of aircraft covers by more than 50%. It will also eliminate the unit cost of aircraft cover transport.

Caban's leadership also showed how proud they were of the Spark Tank results.

“Caban is known to be an innovator,” said 1st Lt. Marlene Myers, 1st Fighter Wing aircraft maintenance officer. “He has a lot of great ideas and we're just really excited for him to be able to showcase PMAC. I think he's inspired younger

**See SPARK TANK Page 17**

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## New TACP training unit now activated

Andrew Patterson

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-LACKLAND, Texas — The Tactical Air Control Party Formal Training Unit officially activated during a ceremony at the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland's Medina Annex Oct. 17.

The TACP FTU will synchronize, standardize and streamline training to ensure readiness of TACP maneuver and command and control force multipliers in order to meet the needs of the Air Force, joint force and coalition partners.

Air Force TACP specialists embed with Army and Marine units on the front line and are responsible for directing air and artillery strikes from forward ground locations. These highly trained experts go through intense physical, mental and technical training in order to withstand the demanding conditions of battle and provide their team with the firepower they need for continued success on the battlefield.

"It is evident that as the battlefield changes and our adversaries increase their capabilities, so must the TACP," said Capt. Daniel R. Hill, 6th Combat Training Squadron, Detachment 2 commander. "The activation of this unit will increase readiness and lethality of the Air Force special warfare TACP and optimize advanced skills training and education to ensure a full-spectrum, high-end and fully qualified focused force ready to meet combatant commanders' requirements."

The new training unit will streamline training and foster unity and standardization throughout the TACP career field, increasing readiness and

See TACP Page 17

## First of 12 KC-135s lands at Fairchild

Airman Kiaundra Miller

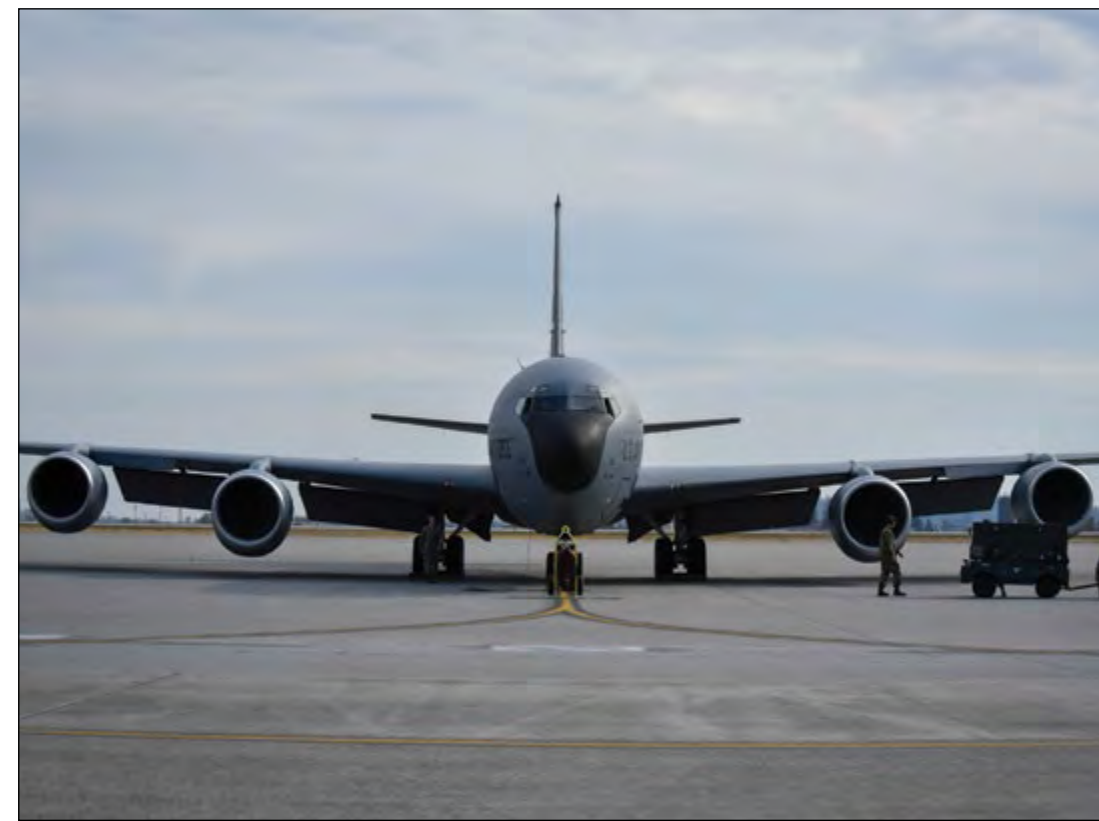
92ND AIR REFUELING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

FAIRCHILD AIR FORCE BASE, Wash. — Team Fairchild received the first of 12 additional KC-135 Stratotankers from the 916th Air Refueling Wing, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina, Oct. 16, here.

Fairchild is already the largest air refueling wing in the world, and the additional KC-135s will increase base aeromedical evacuation, airlift, and air refueling mission capabilities to deliver strength and hope around the globe.

"We've been talking about increasing our KC-135 [numbers] for a couple years now; we've always talked about it in the future tense. The future is now and we're excited to be receiving our first aircraft," said Col. Gene Jacobus, 92nd ARW vice commander. "As the largest KC-135 wing in the Air Force, we are the center of excellence for air refueling, the backbone of our global reach capability."

Fairchild was selected by U.S. Air Force officials as the new home for these KC-135s because of its strategic location, high air refueling mission demand and lower construction



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman Kiaundra Miller

92nd Maintenance Group Airmen prepare a KC-135 Stratotanker from the 916th Air Refueling Wing at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina, for aircrew to disembark Oct. 16 at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. Fairchild received the first of 12 additional KC-135s to join the base fleet. The remaining aircraft are scheduled to arrive by the end of February 2020.

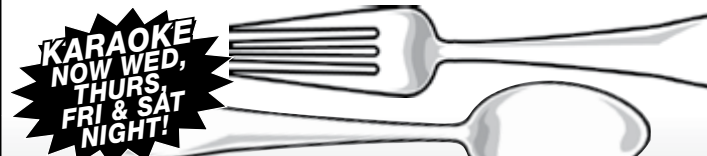
and renovation costs.

"Having additional aircraft will enhance our mission in ways that we haven't had in a long time; more aircraft means

more opportunities to help the warfighter, to ensure that air refueling is being done in a more significant way, and enhance our ability to train aircrews,"

said Col. Russell Davis, 92nd Operations Group commander. "Having more aircraft available to fly means we'll have a more proficient Air Force."

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# Air Force tries preburner for liquid rocket engines



Courtesy photo

The Air Force Research Laboratory successfully tested a state-of-the-art rocket engine preburner to elevate the U.S. technology base for high performance, oxygen-rich staged combustion.

## 88th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — The Air Force Research Laboratory has successfully tested a state-of-the-art rocket engine preburner to elevate the U.S. technology base for high-performance, oxygen-rich staged combustion.

The preburner was designed, developed and tested under the AFRL Hydrocarbon Boost program with prime contractor Aerojet Rocketdyne and supported by the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center. Testing was conducted

at NASA Stennis Space Center facilities.

The HCB preburner success was a culmination of two decades of AFRL research into oxygen-rich staged combustion to advance the high performance, robust and reusable domestic rocket engine technologies.

The preburner harnesses energy to power other engine systems and is subject to extreme oxygen environments that conventional metals cannot survive. The HCB preburner is the highest pressure rocket combustor ever tested in the U.S.

“The HCB preburner pushed the boundaries of these extreme conditions and redefined state-of-the-art for these challenging systems,” said Dr. Shawn Phillips, AFRL Aerospace Systems Directorate chief of rocket propulsion.

AFRL used advanced technologies, such as super-nickel alloys for high-strength and burn resistance. Leveraging lessons from the HCB subscale preburner test campaign was key to achieving this successful test.

The HCB test article was

See **PREBURNER** Page 17

## Goldfein honors 2019 Cadet of the Year

### Staff Sgt. Jeremy L. Mosier

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ARLINGTON, Va. — Second Lt. Kirsten Cullinan comes from a family so rich in military accomplishments – father served 30 years as an Air Force pilot, mother served in the Army, both siblings are Air Force officers – that rising above that impressive history would seem difficult.

Yet, Cullinan made her own substantial mark Oct. 22 by being honored as the 2019 Cadet of the Year by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein at a ceremony at the Pentagon.

To put the award in perspective, Cullinan was selected from a rigorous competition open to more than 3,000 Air Force Academy, Reserve Officer Training Corps and Officer

Training School cadets.

In her remarks, Cullinan said, “it was an honor” to receive the award, but she also said it was slightly awkward because she felt any of her fellow cadets at the University of Notre Dame could have earned the prestigious award.

“It was a team effort, and I feel that it’s not only me getting recognized but Detachment 225 as a whole getting recognized for all of our accomplishments,” she said.

That ideal was present in the audience, where three of her fellow cadets from Detachment 225 at Notre Dame came to the Pentagon to show their support for their friend and fellow officer. Their presence, she said, reflected the spirit, cohesion and support that contributed to her personal success.

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1) Tanya McCormick, 60th Force Support Squadron fitness and sports center manager, delivers her remarks during the ribbon cutting ceremony of the Nose Dock Gym Oct. 15 at Travis Air Force Base. The new gym at Bldg. 844 was facilitated through existing base funds, equipment donations and volunteer work by the 60th Mission Support Group.

U.S. Air Force photo/Heide Couch



# 60th Mission Support Group adds new gym

**Heide Couch**

60TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

For years, Tanya McCormick, 60th Force Support Squadron fitness and sports center manager, dealt with the challenge of a base population that was too large for the square footage of one gym facility.

Since 2002, a planned addition to the existing fitness center had yet to receive military construction funding.

“It wasn’t a priority and kept getting buried, yet our customer base continued to increase, especially impacting us during peak hours,” McCormick said.

McCormick approached Col. Victor Beeler, 60th Mission Support Group commander for more gym space. Beeler concurred that something needed to be done.

“I noticed that people were working out elbow to elbow and I was getting plenty of feedback,” he said.

Instead of relying on outside funds to solve the problem, Beeler had to look for a solution using resources currently existing on the base.

“There are so many bases looking for MILCON funding, and the realistic chance of that happening is just about zero,” Beeler said. “At that point in time, it was a matter of going through all of the facilities on base and looking for opportunities.”

The Department of Defense’s MILCON program includes all work necessary to build complete and usable facilities or complete usable improvements to existing facilities funded from appropriations provided by the Appropriation Act or comparable legislation.

One of Travis’ hangars was found to be underutilized due to its size. It was not large enough for any of Travis’ aircraft. It served as a nose dock hangar, where maintenance was performed on only the nose landing gear.

Beeler spearheaded a plan to transform the space into a gym and met with the Travis Facility Board, which allows leadership to

prioritize construction projects.

“We went and visited every unit gym,” Beeler said. “They have to be inspected. They have to be up to code. It was so interesting to me because that is where we got some of the push back. Some of these gyms are the size of a closet. You could maybe do a push up and store a 10-pound dumbbell in there. But there is risk running a unit gym. At the end of the day, the professionals at FSS run the gyms.”

“Once we got the keys from maintenance, it was a combination of effort from basically the entire support group,” Beeler said. “Civil Engineering did a lot of self-help, but it really falls in the wheelhouse of a lot of the young Airmen.”

Airmen from the 60th Civil Engineer Squadron structures shop demolished the existing makeshift mobile offices. Contractors power-washed and painted the entire interior. CE electricians ran electricity and put in all new LED lighting. Then the fire department went through to make sure the building was up to code.

Chief Master Sgt. Matthew Pulsipher, 60th MSG interim superintendent, organized a team from the 60th Logistics Readiness Squadron who picked up and moved gym equipment that had been donated from Vacaville High School.

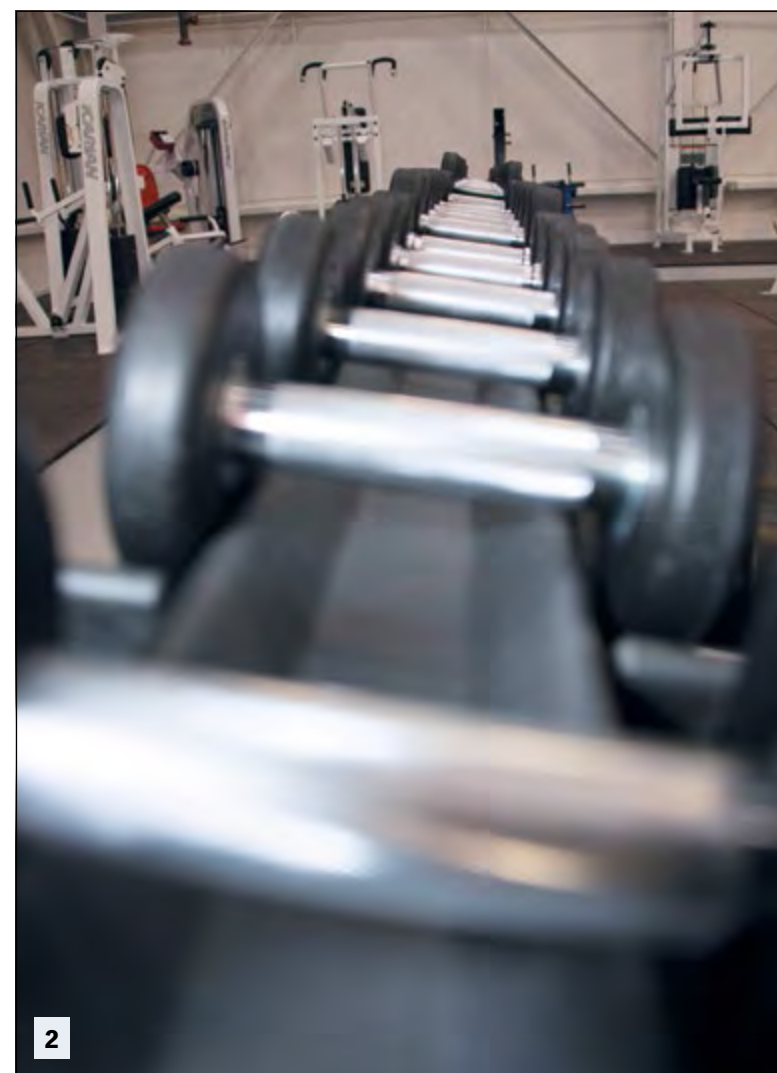
Beeler gave McCormick, along with Barbara Green, 60th FSS programs director, a blank slate to design and implement the floorplan of the new gym, repurpose exercise equipment from the fitness center, order and install new equipment and see the plan through to completion.

“These two have been the rock stars in all this,” Beeler said. “They have been working non-stop from the beginning.”

“We just did the fun part,” Green said.

The entire cost of the project was covered by existing base funds, according to Beeler. The labor was mostly self-help. From start to finish, the entire project took 90 days to complete.

“It’s money we already had in the fiscal 2019 operating budget,”



2) Dumbbells sit on a rack in the Nose Dock Gym Oct. 11 at Travis Air Force Base. The new gym at Bldg. 844 was facilitated through existing base funds, equipment donations and volunteer work by the 60th Mission Support Group.

said Pulsipher. “That’s much easier when you are using innovative thinking to get things done.”

Beeler considers it a true team effort.

“The gym offers another opportunity for individuals and units to exercise and build resilience through strength and conditioning of the body, not to mention the benefit of stress relief,” McCormick said. “This will open up space and allow customers to be able to work out and hopefully not have to wait in line to get on a piece of equipment.”

Airman 1st Class Alejandro Ramos, 60th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron C-5M Super Galaxy crew chief, stopped by the new gym to get a sneak peek before the grand opening.

“This gym looks really nice,” Ramos said. “I was excited when I found out that the base was going to open one here. With our hours, when we get off at 7 a.m., the main gym is always packed. This is a lot better.”

The Nose Dock Gym grand opening ceremony was Oct. 15. Current operating hours are 6-8 a.m. and 4-8 p.m., subject to change. Professional staff from the 60th FSS will maintain the facility. Initially, the gym is for active duty members only.

The new facility is located on Nose Dock Lane off Ragsdale and V Street. Parking is available in front of the building.



3) Crews from the 60th Civil Engineer Squadron structures shop dismantle old mobile offices July 2 inside Bldg. 844 at Travis Air Force Base. The refurbished hangar houses the new Nose Dock Gym. 4) New cushioned flooring covers the Nose Dock Gym Oct. 11 at Travis. 5) From left to right, Col. Victor Beeler, 60th Mission Support Group commander, Barbara Green, 60th Force Support Squadron programs director, Tanya McCormick, 60th FSS fitness and sports director, and Chief Master Sgt. Matthew Pulsipher, 60th MSG interim superintendent, stand inside the Nose Dock Gym Oct. 11 at Travis.



4) New cushioned flooring covers the Nose Dock Gym Oct. 11 at Travis.



5) From left to right, Col. Victor Beeler, 60th Mission Support Group commander, Barbara Green, 60th Force Support Squadron programs director, Tanya McCormick, 60th FSS fitness and sports director, and Chief Master Sgt. Matthew Pulsipher, 60th MSG interim superintendent, stand inside the Nose Dock Gym Oct. 11 at Travis.

U.S. Air Force photo/Heide Couch





## Preburner

From Page 12

highly instrumented to understand the technology trade space, rather than the development of a point design for operational use. This approach allowed AFRL researchers to study fundamental technical issues hindering engine development efforts today, such as combustion stability and thermal management.

Air Force ownership of the HCB preburner design,

hardware and test data enables this foundational knowledge base to be directly applied to new engine design tools, academic research and transitioned across U.S. industry for future engine development efforts or block upgrades.

AFRL's Rocket Propulsion Division at Edwards Air Force Base, California, has played a key role in advancing rocket engine technologies for the nation, since 1952. Nearly every liquid rocket engine developed in the U.S. traces its roots to these AFRL technologies and experimental demonstrations.



Courtesy photo

**Capt. Daniel Hill, 6th Combat Training Squadron, Detachment 2 incoming commander, addresses the audience during the activation and assumption of command ceremony for the formal training unit Sept. 17 at Joint Base San Antonio-Medina Annex, Texas.**

## TACP

From Page 11

lethality of Air Force Special Warfare TACP Airmen. The demand for fully qualified personnel is increasing with the current combat environment and the demands of the future will require an increased level of qualification and proficiency.

The FTU achieves the future capability faster by reducing the training timeline from 18 months to 21 weeks. Operator production increases from 220 partially qualified to 270 fully qualified operators annually.

The unit will optimize training through a single source that relieves operational units of initial qualification training, allowing for a significant savings

in time and funding that can be reapportioned for combat readiness and Airman proficiency.

"Ultimately, this stand-up is going to produce lethal and more survivable joint terminal attack controllers by the end of it for combatant commanders to make their decisions and be able to utilize in the future," said Lt. Col. James R. Kappes, 6th CTS operations officer.

This activation is critical to standardize advanced skills and mission qualification training of the TACPs to ensure a full-spectrum capable, high-end focused force. The future training construct will put all training and qualification at the front end to deliver fully qualified TACP Airmen ready to employ to meet combatant commander requirements.



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Nick Wilson

**Gen. Mike Holmes, Air Combat Command commander, speaks to judges during ACC's 2020 Spark Tank competition Oct. 16 at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. Six teams of Airmen from across ACC presented their ideas. The winning teams will move on to the finals in Washington, D.C., to compete at the Air Force level against finalists from other commands.**

## Spark Tank

From Page 9

Airmen to come forward with good ideas that they have."

Air Force senior leaders and AFWERX created the competition to spur innovative ideas for operational implementation worldwide. Spark Tank also identifies opportunities for Airmen at all levels to save time and money, maintain readiness, increase lethality and ensure cost-effective modernization across the service.

The annual Spark Tank competition empowers Airmen to constantly examine functions and missions, as outlined in the ACC Strategic Plan. In terms of forward-thinking, this ensures Airmen foster a culture of process-improvement within their units and work centers.

"We're looking forward to make things better all the time," said Chief Master Sgt. Jason P. Colón, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing command

chief master sergeant, Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait. "Evaluate. Re-evaluate. Never maintain that status quo."

By driving Airmen to examine capabilities and identify areas for improvement, Spark Tank competitions help the Air Force streamline processes to enhance lethality, readiness and air superiority.

"I think the risk is in not considering those ideas because nobody has a monopoly at any echelon on good ideas," said Col. Brian J. Tyler, Commander of the 70th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. "To the extent we create experts within our fields, those are the Airmen who are closest to the problem. Those are also the ones who are probably most in tune with providing solutions that are feasible."

Gen. Mike Holmes, commander of ACC, thanked the semi-finalists for developing and submitting their ideas up the chain.

"We're really proud of you

for putting your brain power to work and for having the confidence to come forward and bring a suggestion to us," Holmes said. "Supervisors and commanders were willing to listen to suggestions, help shape them and bring them forward."

Overall, AFWERX judges and Air Force senior leaders make their selections based on which projects have the highest probability of delivering a game-changing impact to the Air Force within six months to two years. Some of the criteria Spark Tank judge's panels are looking for include: potential for impact, solution feasibility and the ability for contestants to articulate a path forward.

The six Air Force level winners will then move on to the final round early next year at the Air Force Association Air Warfare Symposium in Orlando, Florida, where Airmen will not only present to Air Force senior leaders but also industry experts and famous investors from the CBS TV show "Shark Tank."

## ADAPT

From Page 8

hospital. Even though he was self-referred, he was hesitant due to fear of repercussion.

“When I walked in, I immediately thought, ‘this is it, I’m going to get some kind of paperwork,’” Hersey said.

Although the ADAPT program at the Liberty Wing has helped over 200 people this year, many individuals fear or

hesitate to go to ADAPT, but Hersey would advise differently.

“They changed my life for the better, and I would advise anyone who thinks ADAPT can help them in any way to just go because it will make every aspect of your life so much better,” Hersey said. “If you don’t put yourself first, your career and everything around you will suffer. Finding yourself will make you an overall better person.”

## Motorcycle

From Page 8

seriously and the data shows it. Not only do we have a record low for fatalities, but our lost-time injuries are also at an all-time low of 131.”

“Not only do we put the training opportunities in front of our riders often, but we try to make sure they have a great time doing it,” Ballard added.

The new training elements have three parts that focus on providing the right training, at the right time, on the right bike. Initial training takes an Airman from zero motorcycle knowledge to being able to balance and safely ride in traffic. This course occurs within 30 days of request and Airmen must have a motorcycle permit

or license to attend. However, initial training is not required if Airmen already have a motorcycle license endorsement.

“A development many people may not realize is (that) the Air Force is moving away from providing the initial training and concentrating on intermediate and advanced training with riders using their own bikes, as long as they have a motorcycle license endorsement,” said Arthur Albert, Air Force motorcycle program manager. “This helps to ensure all attendees have made a commitment to motorcycle riding before showing up at the training.”

Intermediate training helps the rider fine-tune their skills and is provided within 60 days of request and never more than one year after completing initial training or being identified as a licensed rider.

## TAP

From Page 7

they separate.

Then, a face-to-face interview will be conducted to fine-tune the level of assistance the member needs before they transition to a civilian lifestyle.

“The questionnaire is a template for us,” Primo said. “Once we talk to you, we can verify what you actually need. This takes out the ‘everyone gets the same information’ aspect the old program had and makes it much more individualized because we truly get to those small details.”

After the questionnaire and interview have been completed, individuals are designated a tier level depending on the amount of assistance needed and the characterization of the military member’s discharge:

Tier 1: The member is transition ready and does not have to attend all five days of TAP. They are only required to do the first three days.

Tier 2: The member is near transition ready but needs assistance. They are only required to do the first three days of TAP and are recommended to attend one or more of the additional courses.

Tier 3: The member is not transition ready. They must attend the three-day TAP

course and is mandated to attend additional courses.

As TAP is now a three-day workshop, changes in the curriculum have been made to accommodate the refresh.

The first day of TAP is called Department of Defense day, which includes the military occupational code cross-walk, financial counseling and resiliency discussions.

The second day of TAP is now Veterans Affairs day, for discussion of veteran benefits, which previously was the fifth day.

The third day is now a Department of Labor session to learn how to write a resume and search for a job.

The extra time with this new program also allows separating or retiring members to attend TAP and the corresponding tracks as often as needed, according to Primo.

Remaining features from previous program

After the first three days of TAP, multiple two-day tracks are still offered but slightly updated to coincide with trends in the civilian sector, according to Primo.

One of the tracks is Career Technical Training and Exploration, where members explore careers with the DOL and are informed of what is needed and how the DoD can be used to be successful.

Another one is the

entrepreneur track, called Boots to Business, where small business administration works with members on what benefits are out there in order to start a business as a veteran.

“Upon completion of this track, members are enrolled in an eight-week, free of charge online business class on how to start a business,” Burger said.

The third track, Assessing Higher Education, has education services to inform members of what schools are available in and outside of the local area, if the school accepts the GI Bill, which GI Bill is ideal and contact the veteran’s representative in the area.

“Any of the workshops we offer are open to dependents,” Primo said. “If they need assistance, as far as education, employment, resume writing and such, they can receive similar benefits and can attend these workshops.”

Other components that remain include pre-separation counseling and a capstone project. Military members with less than eight years of service will still need to contact the in-service recruiter before separation.

“With this change, the entire DoD is now on the same page in regards to transitioning out of the military,” Primo said.

OCTOBER 25, 2019

OCTOBER 25, 2019

## Categories

From Page 6

Information Warfare, Combat Support and Force Modernization.

“This change is about ensuring we maintain a winning team,” said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein. “The existing Line of the Air Force category has served our Air Force well and molded the excellent leaders we have today. As we look to the future of warfighting, we must have an agile system that allows for a wider range of development paths to ensure officers have the needed skills and expertise to fight and win. This sets us on that path.”

Before this change, the LAF category was comprised of more than 40 officer Air Force specialty codes, and accounted for about 80% of the officer corps. The LAF category has remained virtually unchanged since the establishment of the Air Force as a separate service in 1947.

Now, rather than competing for promotion against 40 different career fields with varied job requirements, officers will compete against officers in other fields that have similar progression milestones, experiences and mission area focus. The new categories will allow each career field the freedom and agility to better tailor officer development to meet job demands without compromising competitive position at a promotion board.

The Air Force has released several reforms over the last couple years as part of a larger talent management system reform. Goldfein said the next phase of the reforms will address performance management.

“We believe maximizing the development of all Airmen is about having the right education, training and experiences. Getting this right enhances individual and unit performance,” Goldfein said. “Our goal through these efforts, and others, is to unleash the capabilities of our people to be ready for tomorrow’s fight.”

Categories for judge advocates, chaplains and medical personnel will remain unchanged.



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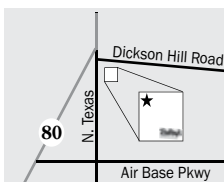
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## 97th ARS

From Page 4

fight,” Dawson said. “We have a lot to do to get our squadron operating like a normal day-to-day squadron, but the fight doesn’t stop. We are jumping right in to being part of that.”

The 97 ARS has over 70 years of history. It was previously a bomber squadron, and was one of the first Air Force air refueling units in 1949.

“The tankers are one of our most strategic assets for the Air Force,” Dawson said. “We have fantastic fighters and bombers that can bring air power anywhere in the world, but they can only get there with the help of tankers.”

The squadron’s new commander is eager to lead her Airmen to success.

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 • KID'z CHURCH Grades K-5th  
 • 10:00 AM WEDNESDAY SENIOR PRAYER  
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**Suisun Campus**  
 601 Whispering Bay Lane,  
 Suisun City, CA 94585  
 Sunday Worship Services, 11:00am  
 Bible Study  
 Tuesdays @ 12:00noon  
 707-425-1849  
 www.mcbcf.org for more information

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*Jesus said, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; John 11:25*  
**Sunday Morning Bible Study ..... 9 AM**  
**Sunday Morning Worship ..... 10 AM**  
**Sunday Evening Worship ..... 6 PM**  
**Wed. Evening Bible Study ..... 7 PM**  
*Homeless ministry at Mission Solano*  
**Rescue Mission 1st Friday of month 6-8 PM**  
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 DGMC Chapel  
 (1st Floor North entrance)  
 Sunday 1600-1630  
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 707-535-6979

**ISLAM**

**Islamic Center of Fairfield**  
 1945 Kidder Ave., Fairfield, CA. 94533  
 "THERE IS NO DEITY WORTHY OF WORSHIP EXCEPT ALLAH (GOD)"  
 Imam: Faridbeg Mirza  
**(707) 688-3999**  
**Friday - Jumuaah Service**  
 English Lecture: 1:00PM  
 Khutbah: 1:30PM  
**\*Daily Prayer Schedule**  
 Fajr-Dhuhr-Asr-Maghrib-Isha  
 \*Actual prayer times are listed in Website-Download Section.  
<http://www.fairfieldmasjid.com>  
 Email: [Fairfieldmasjid@gmail.com](mailto:Fairfieldmasjid@gmail.com)  
**Islamic School**  
**Mon-Tue-Wed-Thurs: 4:00-5:30PM**  
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**EPISCOPAL**

  
**Grace Episcopal Church**  
 1405 Kentucky Street  
 Fairfield, CA 94533  
**Sunday Services:**  
**8:00 a.m.**  
 Holy Eucharist Rite I  
**9:15 a.m.**  
 Pastor's Forum  
**10:00 a.m.**  
 Holy Eucharist Rite II  
**Tuesday Service:**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
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[mychurch@gobethany.com](mailto:mychurch@gobethany.com)  
 Worship Services:  
 Sunday: 10:00am with Bible Studies and Sunday School for all ages at 9:00am  
 Fellowship: 11:15am  
 Communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month @ 621 S. Orchard Ave., VV  
**Pastor Dann Etner**  
**Bethany Lutheran Preschool**  
 451-6678  
[myschool@gobethany.com](mailto:myschool@gobethany.com)  
[www.gobethany.com](http://www.gobethany.com)  
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**Worship With Us... St. Paul Baptist Church**  
 1405 Kentucky Street  
 Fairfield, CA 94533  
**Rev. Dr. Terry Long, Pastor**  
**Sunday**  
 Sunday School: 11:00 a.m.  
 Morning Worship Service: 12:00 p.m.  
 Children's Church: 11:30 a.m.  
**Tuesday**  
 Prayer Meeting: 6:30-7:00 p.m.  
 Bible Study: 7:00-8:00 p.m.  
**Web Site:** [www.stpaulfairfield.com](http://www.stpaulfairfield.com)  
**Email:** [stpaulbfairfield@comcast.net](mailto:stpaulbfairfield@comcast.net)  
**Church Phone:** 707-422-2003

  
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**7:00 p.m. Wednesday Evening Bible Study**  
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 Rev. Dr. Dan Molyneux, Pastor

**NON-DENOMINATIONAL**

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 1500 Alamo Drive  
 Vacaville, CA 95687  
 (707) 448-8838  
[www.vacavillechurchofchristalamodrive.com](http://www.vacavillechurchofchristalamodrive.com)  
 Sunday Morning  
 Bible Classes.....9:30 am  
 Assembly Worship.....10:45 am  
 Evening Assembly Worship .5:00 pm  
 Wednesday Evening  
 Bible Classes.....7:00 pm  
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 Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 AM  
 Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 PM  
 Wed. Evening Bible Study 7:00 PM  
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**Website: [cumcfairfieldca.org](http://cumcfairfieldca.org)**  
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[sonrise-vv.org](http://sonrise-vv.org)  
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 Evening Worship 5pm  
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 Prayer Meeting 7pm  
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**Pastor Ben Smith**  
**www.vacavillebiblechurch.com**  
**office@vacavillebiblechurch.com**

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 4800 Horse Creek Drive  
 Vacaville, CA 95688  
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[www.unityvacaville.org](http://www.unityvacaville.org)  
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**Kirkham**

From Page 2

spread out over thousands of miles, the long-range capability of strategic bombers lends itself particularly well to the vast distances that would need to be traveled to carry out combat operations.

For these reasons, 7th Bomb Wing leadership has decided to embark on a new journey and will soon test our ability to deploy small contingency packages of bombers to various remote locations.

The goal is to provide theater combatant commanders with a new menu of options that will complicate the enemy's problem set and ultimately deter acts of aggression.

The time has come for us to re-imagine Agile Combat Employment by incorporating long range bombers into the concept of operations, and Team Dyess will lead the way.

It's an exciting time to be a part of the 7th Bomb Wing and we are counting on each and every one of you to make this dream a reality. Hang on for the ride, it's going to be fun.

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**Airmen assigned to the 19th Civil Engineer Squadron fire department extinguish a simulated aircraft fire Oct. 9 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas.**

U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Mariam K. Springs



**Firefighter**

From Page 5

person to help that family because of the training I received here."

Not only does Calkins feel ready for unknown daily challenges, the support and bond between him and his fellow Airmen make the long hours worth the sacrifice.

"Unlike your typical jobs, we don't usually get the holidays off," said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Sylvester Dass, 19th CES

fire inspector and Calkins's supervisor. "When we don't get that time off to spend with our family, we spend it with our work family. The camaraderie and brotherhood that we have makes us feel at home every day."

It's that brotherhood and camaraderie that keeps Calkins motivated.

"Every day, when I walk into work I know I made the right choice to follow in my father's footsteps of becoming a firefighter and do so while serving my country," Calkins said.

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# Knef

From Page 2

a suspended license. In the weeks following, I was given an Article 15 and reduced to airman basic.

At this point in my career, it would have been really easy to just give up on myself and the Air Force. My squadron could have given up on me, but they didn't. They saw the potential in me that I knew was there. I just needed to start showing it.

I had been in for roughly

one and a half years at this point and my whole career boiled down to two terrible decisions. At this low moment in my life, I made a vow to stop feeling sorry for myself, stop making excuses and to always be accountable for my actions.

The road ahead was not going to be easy, but I was just grateful for the opportunity. At this point I had already finished my CDCs ahead of schedule and wanted to take full advantage of every opportunity I had to better myself.

People began to see me for

what I was able to bring to the team, not just the rank. I was put in for an Achievement Medal for my superior performance during my deployment.

I was given back a stripe early and removed from the control roster in May 2009. People were finally beginning to see me for who I truly was and it was one of the most gratifying experiences of my life. I worked so hard to rebuild a tarnished reputation and have carried that with me throughout the rest of my career.

Looking back at the trials, tribulations and the achievements that have brought me to where I am today, I am proud of the resiliency I have shown and grateful for opportunities to excel. I can truly attest to

the fact that I have lived up to the vows I made in 2008.

I have not received any form of paperwork, judicial or non-judicial punishment since the transgressions over 11 years ago and I have become a highly accomplished Airman over my 13 year career.

I have transitioned from a time of fighting for my career and proving doubters wrong to being a key decision maker and a pivotal asset to the team. I didn't get to where I am today by luck or happenstance. I believe I am standing here today for a purpose and I believe that purpose is to serve. Serve my country and serve my fellow Airmen by way of example - demonstrating that extraordinary results can be achieved

in the face of adversity.

The challenges I have faced have instilled in me the sense of importance in leading with empathy. Through various travails I have encountered, I believe the number one priority as a leader should be placed on building trust.

We all have weaknesses and struggles - even leaders. Leading from a place of empathy and compassion is not leading from a posture of weakness, but a posture of strength. Leading from this position breaks down communication barriers that nearly always impede a cohesive team. Embracing what makes Airmen vulnerable will only build the trust they have in us.

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1) Capt. Kyle Evans, 3rd Airlift Squadron pilot, reviews his flight instruments during a training flight aboard a C-17 Globemaster III Oct. 16 at Laguna Army Airfield in Yuma Proving Ground, Ariz. Pilots from the 3rd AS at Travis Air Force Base, Delaware, and 21st Airlift Squadron at Travis Air Force Base conducted low altitude training during Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course 1-20. WTI is a seven-week training event hosted by Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One, which emphasizes operational integration of the six functions of Marine Corps aviation in support of a Marine Air Ground Task Force.

# Travis, Dover pilots train ... TOGETHER

U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Esteban Esquivel

2) Pilots from the 3rd Airlift Squadron at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, and pilots from the 21st Airlift Squadron at Travis Air Force Base discuss preflight coordination prior to flying Oct. 16 at Travis. 3) Capt. Robert Day, 3rd Airlift Squadron pilot, maneuvers a C-17 Globemaster III at low altitudes Oct. 16 at Laguna Army Airfield in Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona.



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