

Afghan, Airman overcomes ...

# ADVERSITY

PAGE 6



# Work to practice patience, understanding

Commentary by  
Lt. Col. Joseph Quinn  
60TH SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON

You may have noticed recently we temporarily closed the North Gate, but perhaps you were unaware of why. Modernizing our gates provides additional mitigation for our defenders to protect the base populace from the ever-present threat of gate runners. Your defenders are constantly evaluating our public service, which routinely involves gate access procedures. Approximately a year ago, the 60th Security Forces Squadron conducted a continuous process improvement initiative that

researched the following, installation gate traffic studies, unit manning, training and staff and flight-level duty schedules. There were several take aways that increased the overall force protection of the installation. The one item Team Travis was most interested in though, was posting an extra installation entry controller to check IDs in the third inbound lane at the Main Gate during peak traffic hours to facilitate traffic flow. Our research determined on average it only takes 11 seconds for our entry controllers to properly verify vetting on the ground by observing the vehicle approach, making contact with occupants and scanning the credentials via the Defense

## Commander's Commentary

Biometric Identification System. I mention this interesting fact so the next time you are waiting in line to enter the base, you'll remember the amount of time required for your defenders to assess and grant entry onto our installation. It's a short wait to ensure the protection of all. Your proud and professional defenders will always do their best to adjust operations to meet mission requirements. An example of this occurred this past weekend as we adjusted installation access control procedures

to meet the mission demands of our brethren in the 349th Air Mobility Wing. In order to alleviate a traffic flow delay at the Main Gate on Sunday between 6:15 and 6:45 a.m., 60th SFS and 349th SFS members utilized all three inbound lanes at the Main Gate and we opened up and utilized two inbound lanes at the Hospital Gate, which is usually closed on weekends. Your defenders remain flexible to meet mission requirements, but we also recommend a staggered approach when making plans for your morning commute, especially during these construction projects. We appreciate our community's support in making the

## Gate closures

The installation schedule is as follows:

- North Gate: Feb. 26 to March 29.
- Main Gate: April 2 to May 2.
- Hospital Gate: June 8 to July 11.
- South Gate: Aug. 16 to Sept. 19.

installation safe. We also ask for your continued patience and understanding as you access the base through our gates as we enforce vetting procedures to ensure the base populace is never vulnerable to an unnecessary force protection or safety risk.

# Leadership matters most when it's dark and cold



Commentary by Senior Master Sgt. Erin Panas  
60TH SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON

Nineteen years ago, I was in the field with my fellow Misawa Air Base, Japan, defenders for our sixth combat employment readiness exercise. From June to November of 1999, we were in full readiness mode, spending one week training and one week deployed to the field each month. One frigid and dark midnight shift, I was crouched down inside a freezing defensive fighting position; boots caked with mud and bone-cold. Growing up in Michigan, I was used to the freezing cold, but this was the coldest I had ever been. My buddy, Airman 1st Class Castillo, and I were

## Enlisted Commentary

joking about how the mission-oriented protective posture gear made us colder when, suddenly, our commander and first sergeant surprised us at our position, grabbed our M-16 rifles and told us to go get a hot shower and hot chow. That night, our leaders took turns manning everyone's position so we could get out of the elements. They were in full battle rattle and spent only a few minutes in each of our positions, but their leadership by example inspired me often these last 19 years.

The leadership stories from my years at Misawa could fill a book. I've shared many of them with my fellow Defenders, Airman Leadership School students and even sprinkled them into Enlisted Professional Military Education lessons over the years. I wake everyday excited to lead Defenders because of the solid leadership I received during my years at Misawa. Our Commander consistently led by example and everyone below him emulated him. I observed a direct correlation to this leadership and the success our squadron and Defenders achieved during my time at Misawa. The 35th

Security Forces Squadron earned back-to-back Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, an "outstanding" rating on the Combat Employment and Readiness Inspection and multiple MAJCOM level awards those two years. There are so many memories from Misawa I have witnessed reappearing in the leadership exhibited by my Airmen at both my previous and current assignment as a security forces operations superintendent. Whenever I see one of my flight chiefs working the gate so

See PANAS Page 19

# Travis beta tests lasers as tool for paint removal

Staff Sgt. Amber Carter  
60TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Travis Air Force Base, California, prides itself on leading the way in innovation and continues to look toward the future with a laser removal process that has enhanced the 60th Maintenance Squadron aircraft structural maintenance section's efficiency since the arrival of two lasers in April 2017. The 60th MXS is one of only two bases chosen to test the Clean Laser 1000 and the Clean Laser 300 as a new way to remove paint and corrosion on aerospace ground equipment. "The main difference with this laser is that it can remove corrosion without removing metal," said Tech. Sgt. Brian Brown, 60th MXS aircraft structural maintenance corrosion manager. "Sanding and grinding remove additional material while the laser burns off corrosion without taking any metal with it." This important difference creates a safer and more efficient way to navigate deep-rooted corrosion in equipment.



U.S. Air Force photos/Staff Sgt. Amber Carter

Airman 1st Class Levi Gordon, 60th Maintenance Squadron aircraft structural maintenance, uses a Clean Laser 1000 to remove paint from a sheet of metal March 7 at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. The 1,000-watt laser can remove paint and corrosion. It reduces the waste created from sanding paint by 90 percent. Travis was chosen as one of two bases to test the capabilities of the laser.

"Our traditional method is to use an orbital sander or blasting machine," said Brown. "For the orbital sander, you have to be suited up in a full Tyvek suit, full face respirator, force air respirator and nitrile gloves." Tests were performed to ensure the

correct personal protection equipment is worn. "We did a week's worth of testing to determine what type of PPE is needed while using the laser," said Chuckran. "We had to be fully suited up, we took air samples and used the laser to

collect data while testing the air quality to make sure we are safe." The tests resulted in another improvement when compared to the hand sanders. "Now we don't wear the Tyvek suit," See LASERS Page 23

## Tailwind



Travis AFB, Calif.  
60th Air Mobility Wing

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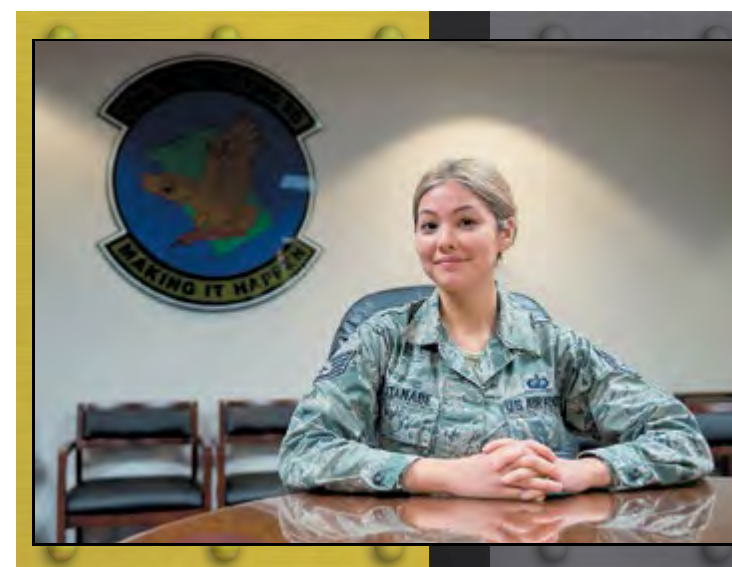
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## On the cover

Airman 1st Class Mohammad Javad from the 60th Aerial Port Squadron, Travis Air Force Base, Calif., poses March 6 with keepsakes he collected during his time as a linguist with U.S. forces.

U.S. Air Force photo/Louis Briscese



U.S. Air Force photo/Louis Briscese

## WARRIOR OF THE WEEK

**Name:** Staff Sgt. Yen Watanabe.

**Time in service:** Five years.

**Unit:** 60th Contracting Squadron.

**Family:** Dog, Muka.

**Duty title:** Contract specialist.

**What are your hobbies?** Drawing, painting, baking, hiking, going to the beach, traveling, food.

**What is your greatest achievement?** Airman of the Year for Honor Guard, Commandant Award during Airman Leadership School.

**Hometown:** Gloucester, Massachusetts.

**What are your goals?** To become a contracting expert, get my degree in business administration, create an art business and travel the world.

# Voting Office provides assistance

## Installation Voting Assistance Office

Armed Forces Voters Week is June 27 to July 5 and the Travis Air Force Base, California, Voting Office is here to help with all voting needs.

Located at the Airman and Family Readiness Center, Bldg. 660, Maria McIntosh, installation voting assistance officer, can provide assistance with the following:

- Military and civilian voter registration;
- Military absentee ballot requests;
- Federal write-in absentee ballots and;
- Local voting assistance, however this is not a polling location.

The Federal Voting Assistance Program is a Department of Defense organization that works to ensure service members, their eligible family members, and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to successfully do so from anywhere in the world.

FVAP assists voters through partnerships with the Military Services, Department of State, Department of Justice and election officials from 50 states, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia. State and local governments administer U.S. elections, including those for federal offices. FVAP supports state and local election officials by providing absentee voting information, materials, training and guidance.

Voters can contact FVAPs call center at 703-588-1584, toll free 1-800-438-VOTE or DSN 425-1584 or email [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov). Toll-free phone numbers from 67 countries are listed at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov). Find FVAP on Facebook at [facebook.com/DoDFVAP](https://www.facebook.com/DoDFVAP) and Twitter [twitter.com/fvap](https://twitter.com/fvap).

For more information, contact McIntosh at 707-424-2976, the A&FRC staff at 707-424-2486 or email [vote.travis@us.af.mil](mailto:vote.travis@us.af.mil) or contact a group voting representative.

See SUMMIT Page 19



U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Christian Conrad

Attendees of the Spark Innovation Summit at Travis Air Force Base, Calif., wait during a pause between briefings March 6. Among those who attended the summit were members of senior leadership from every major command in the Air Force.

# Travis hosts innovation summit

**Airman 1st Class Christian Conrad**  
60TH AIR MOBILITY WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Representatives from each major command in the U.S. Air Force met March 5-7 at Travis Air Force Base, California, for an innovation summit focusing on the implementation of the Spark Innovation program at various bases across the Air Force.

Travis' Phoenix Spark, took center stage at the summit and one of its creators, Maj. Anthony Perez, 60th Operations Support

Squadron KC-10 Extender pilot, offered tips to major command leaders who aspire to create their own Spark Hubs at their respective bases.

"What we're trying to do with (Phoenix Spark) is take that buzz word, 'innovation,' and make it actionable," said Perez. "What (Phoenix Spark) is is an idea incubator internally, a network builder externally and then facilitates the relationship between those two ideas."

The summit, billed as a "cross-talk event led, briefed and facilitated by

the Airmen fostering grassroots innovation efforts" by Travis' Facebook, featured guest speakers from Travis, AFWERX and Silicon Valley.

Providing both opening and closing remarks for the three-day event was Col. Matthew Leard, 60th Air Mobility Wing vice commander and Phoenix Spark's "O-6 champion," a colonel tasked with heading a base's Spark program.

"The Spark Summit and the idea of base-level innovation is a reaction to the fact that we need to get smarter," said Leard. "The

reality of it is, whoever we face in the future, they'll likely be numerically superior to us with technology that is nearing or even surpassing our own. It comes down to individual Airmen rapidly solving the problems we have at the time we need. Our advantage has and always will be our Airmen, and this innovation program aims to make the most out of that advantage and give individuals the tools and knowledge they need to build tomorrow's Air Force today."

Supporting Travis in

# Sergeant prepares to tackle 26.2-mile march

**Tech. Sgt. James Hodgman**  
60TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Participating in a death march, even a memorial one, may not sound appealing to some people, but that's exactly what Tech. Sgt. Nikki Webb, a native of Stanford, Kentucky, will do March 25.

The self-proclaimed "nonathletic" noncommissioned officer in charge of resource management for the base chapel at Travis Air Force Base, California, plans to participate in the 76th annual Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico.

"I've always wanted to do a marathon and I thought this would be the perfect one," said Webb. "I'm always up for a good challenge."

According to the BMDM website, the march is 26.2 miles through high desert terrain and sand. The event has been held every year since 1989 to honor the service members who defended the Philippine Islands during World War II, many of whom died during an approximate 65-mile forced march known as the Bataan Death March in April 1942. During the march, thousands of Filipino and American Soldiers perished after they were subjected to harsh treatment from Japanese guards.

One moment, Webb said what she's really looking forward to, is meeting survivors of the Bataan Death March. Seven survivors will attend the event, including retired U.S. Army Col. Ben Skardon. Skardon, now 100 years old, survived the death march and three years as a prisoner of war. He served during the Korean War and retired from the Army in 1962. He is the only survivor who participates in the memorial march every year.

"It will be so amazing to meet them, talk to them and hear their experiences firsthand," said Webb. "We talk about how important it is to be resilient, but they epitomize resiliency. They probably thought they were going to die every

See MARCH Page 23



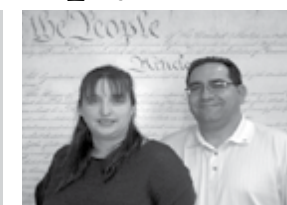
U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. James Hodgman

Tech. Sgt. Nikki Webb, left, 60th Air Mobility Wing, hikes down a hill March 11 at Pena Adobe Regional Park in Vacaville, Calif., with her cousin, Senior Master Sgt. Jenny Hendry, 60th Aeromedical Squadron. Hendry joined Webb on a 10-mile hike as she prepared for the Bataan Memorial Death March on March 25.

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# Airman makes move from Afghanistan to Air Force

Louis Briscese

60TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Imagine having to conceal your identity in order to feel safe and protect the ones you love, changing the route you take to work, wearing disguises so you won't be recognized or reducing the amount of vacation you take because you know it's safer to be at work than not.

For many, this way of life would seem far-fetched or unrealistic, but for one Airman, this was his reality. Airman 1st Class Mohammad Javad, 60th Aerial Port Squadron, transportation journeyman, used to be an Afghan national working as a head interpreter with U.S. forces at Forward Operating Base Shin-dand, Afghanistan. As the head interpreter, Javad was relied upon for his expertise, which meant he was on all the important missions.

"I would go out on missions and it was like I was actually in the Army," said Javad. "I would go weeks without a shower, I would carry 100-, 150-pound bags of ammo, sleep on the ground, walk all day, climb mountains and jump out of helicopters."

Despite the constant diligence to remain obscured, in 2013, the locals somehow figured out Javad was working

with U.S. forces.

"Once they knew who I was, my family and I were no longer safe," said Javad. "My life was threatened by the insurgents, my wife was accused of helping infidels and was threatened with kidnapping. I knew after that, I couldn't work here anymore."

Thus began a courageous and remarkable journey that led Javad to America and enlisting in the U.S. Air Force.

Javad was born in Afghanistan during the war with the Soviet Union. His family fled to Iran because the war between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan made it too dangerous to stay.

"We left in 1989 when I was 2 during the Soviet-Afghan War because it was too dangerous for my family to stay," said Javad "We came to Iran under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, so we were discriminated against."

There were not many educational opportunities for Javad growing up in Iran because of his refugee status. His parents decided to return to Afghanistan in 2004 since it was safer.

"We came back to Afghanistan so I could seek higher education because neither of my parents had that opportunity," said Javad. "They wanted that



U.S. Air Force photo/Louis Briscese

**Airman 1st Class Mohammad Javad from the 60th Aerial Port Squadron, poses for a photo Feb. 28 at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. Javad was a linguist for U.S. forces while living in Afghanistan and fled to the United States in 2014. He enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 2015.**

option for me. I got my education, my bachelors and a double major in chemistry and biology."

After completing his education, Javad still found it difficult to find meaningful work.

"Afghanistan had a new government and it was corrupted," said Javad. "It was difficult to get jobs unless you knew the right people."

Javad had taken classes on

computers, language and received a certification in accounting. This helped him find a job where he could now provide for his family.

"After graduating college, I worked for an accounting firm," said Javad. "After a year and half, I was promoted to general manager."

Unfortunately, after a horrific motorcycle accident kept him

in the hospital for six months, Javad lost his job as a general manager with the accounting firm.

"I knew that without knowing anyone in the government, I was going to have to start from the bottom again," said Javad. "The only other option I had was to become a linguist with U.S. forces."

The day Javad applied for the linguist position, over 200 others were attempting the same.

"There's a written and verbal skills test, interview and security background check," said Javad. "Only 10 of us made it through those stages. Once you get through that, there's another few months of security screening with the Central Intelligence Agency and medical exams."

Javad's first assignment was with the USAF at FOB Shin-dand.

"I was assigned to the Base Defense Operations Center for the Air Force," said Javad. "I was translating all the daily,

See **MOVE** Page 24

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Courtesy photo

**Children participate in the Piggy Bank Pageant March 9 at the Airman and Family Readiness Center. The pageant was part of this year's Military Saves Week campaign.**

## Pageant encourages kids to start saving

Dr. Lisa Rich

AIRMAN AND FAMILY READINESS CENTER

The Airman and Family Readiness Center, in partnership with Friends of Family Services, held the Piggy Bank Pageant in conjunction with Military Saves Week to encourage military children to set money goals and begin saving.

Eleven children from Travis Air Force Base, California, entered the competition by building piggy banks using materials such as milk cartons, water bottles, mason jars and paint.

Maj. Jared Mitchell, 60th Comptroller Squadron commander, announced the winners during a ceremony on March 9 and emphasized the importance of saving.

Athena Barsabal won first place in the 7-and-under age group with her "Piggerina" bank inspired by the movie "Leap." She said it took her four days to construct and that she will be using her piggy bank to save for a trip to Hawaii.

Other winners included Leena Le Howard taking top spot in the 8-12-year-old group. Emery Howard claimed the runner-up spot with the most votes.

Each winner received \$50 from Friends of Family Services to kick-start their savings and begin developing good saving habits.

"The sooner your child makes saving a habit, the more likely it will become a habit that lasts into adulthood," said Jerry Quinn, head of Wells Fargo Military and Veterans Programs.

To help parents engage in financial literacy conversations with their children, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau website provides several activities and conversation starters adapted from "Money as You Grow," focused on building money skills, habits and attitudes that can serve them well as adults.

Military Saves, a component of the nonprofit America Saves and a partner in the Department of Defense's Financial Readiness Campaign, seeks to motivate, support and encourage military families to save money, reduce debt and build wealth. Visit [www.militarysaves.org](http://www.militarysaves.org) for more information.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau aims to make consumer financial markets work for consumers, responsible providers and the economy as a whole. Visit [www.consumerfinance.gov](http://www.consumerfinance.gov) for more information.

For more information about Military Saves Week or programs offered at the A&FRC, contact 707-424-2486.

# Challenge gets children outside

Angelina Casarez

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION SUPPORT CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-LACKLAND, Texas — The Air Force Services Activity is partnering with the National Park Trust to bring

the Buddy Bison Great Outdoors Challenge to military families at installations.

The Buddy Bison program encourages children and families to participate in programs such as camping, canoeing, fishing and hiking while exploring local, state

and national parks.

Thanks to funding from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Military Community and Family Policy, the Air Force is piloting the program at: Moody Air Force Base, Georgia; Hurlburt Field,

See **OUTSIDE** Page 21

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# AAFES offers prizes

Jessica Jones

ARMY AND AIR FORCE EXCHANGE SERVICE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

What's better than Fridays? Winning a great prize from the Army and Air Force Exchange Service's Free Friday giveaway.

Airmen who follow the Exchange's main Facebook page have a chance to win every week in 2018.

The Exchange plans to give away more than \$28,000 in prizes on Fridays this year, including a Troy-Bilt EZT 54 riding lawnmower and a Husqvarna Z254 turn riding mower, both valued at \$2,999. Other planned prizes include Briggs and Stratton electric pressure washers, Weber and Char-Broil barbecue grills and a Bel Air patio furniture set.

"Airmen and their families at Travis AFB work hard and the Exchange wants to help them get the work done at home and relax," said Phonda Bishop, Travis AFB Exchange main store manager Phonda

Bishop. "If you follow facebook.com/shopmyexchange, you won't miss out on Free Fridays and it would be great to have someone at Travis AFB win one of these great prizes."

In 2017, the first year of the Free Friday promotions, the Exchange gave away more than \$15,000 in prizes to Soldiers, Airmen, military families, retirees and honorably discharged veterans.

Photos and descriptions of the prizes are in the weekly sales fliers viewable at www.shopmyexchange.com/savings-center/weekly-ads. Authorized shoppers can also sign up to receive the fliers via email.

To enter the contests, authorized shoppers simply post a comment with their name, city, state and local exchange to each Free Friday post at facebook.com/shopmyexchange. Entries made by 9:59 p.m. on the day of the posting will be entered into the drawing. Drawings are held on Mondays after each Free Friday giveaway.

# Airman earns medal for rescue

Samuel King Jr.

TEAM EGLIN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — In total darkness, with temperatures only in the high 30s and in the midst of a monstrous rainstorm, Tech. Sgt. Phillip Dyer waded into rapidly moving, chest-deep and rising waters to save a trapped flood victim on the verge of hypothermia and drowning.

That is how the explosive ordnance disposal instructor spent the night after Christmas 2015. Dyer, 366th Training Squadron Detachment 3, was awarded the Airman's Medal March 9 for his heroic efforts.

"I have such great admiration and respect for Tech. Sgt. Dyer and it is an honor to serve with him," said Brig. Gen. Ronald Jolly, 82nd Training Wing commander from Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, who presented the award. "This Airman stepped up and put his life at risk to save the life of another. He deserves this medal and I'm proud I was able to present it to him."



U.S. Air Force photo/Samuel King Jr.

Brig. Gen. Ronald Jolly, 82nd Training Wing commander, pins the Airman's Medal onto Tech. Sgt. Phillip Dyer during a presentation ceremony March 9 at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

Dyer was in rural Missouri visiting his older brother and family when the torrential rain began. The rain would eventually flood the only road and bridge to and from Dyer's location. The flooding happened so quickly, it separated Dyer's wife, son and sister-in-law,

who'd gone into town earlier in the day.

That afternoon, it was determined Dyer's family couldn't return home. Throughout the rest of the day, Dyer and his brother checked the road and the bridge, above the flooded

See RESCUE Page 25

# AMC names interim command chief

Air Mobility Command

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. — The Air Mobility Command commander selected Chief Master Sgt. Larry C. Williams, Jr. as the interim AMC command chief master sergeant.

Williams assumed his new duties Feb. 26, replacing Chief Master Sgt. Shelina Frey, who retired Feb. 16.

"Chief Williams has a tremendous record of leadership performance and a long and distinguished career of selfless service within the mobility enterprise," said Gen. Carlton D. Everhart II, AMC commander. "He will continue to serve as a vital voice for our Airmen and his appointment enables uninterrupted advice and counsel on enlisted and mission impacting issues."

As command chief, Williams is the principal advisor

to the commander and his senior staff on matters of health, welfare and morale, professional development, and the effective utilization of more than 38,000 active duty and 71,000 Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard enlisted personnel assigned to the command responsible for rapid global mobility and worldwide reach.

"As a career-long mobility Airman, I am humbled and honored to serve in this capacity," said Williams, whose background includes duty as a C-5 crew chief, flight engineer and career enlisted aviator. "I am focused on enhancing and ensuring Airman readiness across the command. I also want to encourage and foster an environment receptive to 'disruptive innovation.'"

Williams entered the Air Force in 1989 and has more than 28 years' experience in Mobility.



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Robert L. McClirath

Senior Airman Kristyn Widger, 82nd Aerospace Medical Squadron physiology technician, gives instructions to Pilot Training Next students during a hypobaric chamber flight March 1 at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

# Pilot training lands at Sheppard

Senior Airman Robert L. McClirath

82ND TRAINING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SHEPPARD AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — With technology constantly advancing, the Air Force is breaking barriers with the way it trains pilots.

The Pilot Training Next program is made up of 15 officers and five enlisted Airmen who have begun an experimental training program designed to use emerging technology combined with a new paradigm for

pilot training intended to discover ways to create what is being termed fighter training unit-ready Airmen.

The program is based at the Reserve Center at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in Austin, Texas.

Since Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph isn't set up for aerospace and operational physiology training, the 20 Airmen took a trip to Sheppard Air Force Base to get their initial required guidance.

The first seven days of pilot

training are reserved for aerospace and operational physiology training, which trains future pilots how to physically and mentally deal with the unique stressors placed on their bodies in an aerospace environment, including oxygen deprivation.

"We didn't scale back our training at all," said Maj. John Lavin, Aerospace and Operational Physiology flight commander. "For pilot training, whether it's a regular class that's 15 months long or the

See LANDS Page 19

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# People most important to success, say leaders

**Jim Garamone**  
DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY

WASHINGTON — Speaking at a forum here March 12 on issues surrounding the president's fiscal year 2019 defense budget request, the three service secretaries agreed that the Defense Department's most crucial need is continued investment in people.

Army Secretary Mark T. Esper, Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson told the Center for Strategic and International Studies that the American military's most crucial advantage is its people and that investment must continue to attract and retain them.

All three service leaders said the fiscal 2018 budget goes a long way toward repairing the damage done by the Budget Control Act spending cuts and that the 2019 request will begin the road to modernization.

"At the end of the day, people are what makes everything work, and we really have to focus on this," Spencer said.

War for Talent  
The services will be in a war for talent with the private sector, other portions of

government and each other, the Navy secretary noted.

"We are all going to be looking for more people to do more things in a more intelligent manner," he said. "We are going to have to figure out a way to adopt and adapt those people that we have."

Esper noted that the budget request supports the National Defense Strategy announced last month. He said the world is entering a "dynamic environment" with the return of great-power competition with Russia and China and the threats from Iran, North Korea and terrorism.

The Army must be capable of countering terror threats as well as those posed by near-peer competitors, he said.

The Army must be able to fight across the spectrum of warfare, and it must be fast, Esper said. He pointed to the stand-up of the Army Futures Command later this year as a defining moment for the service.

"It will be the biggest reform in the Army since 1973 in terms of structure," he said. "It promises to really reduce the time it takes to ... field a new piece of equipment [and] to do



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Mozer O. Da Cunha

Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson is briefed by 2nd Maintenance Squadron Airmen during a tour Nov. 14, 2017 at Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

it at less cost, and in time for the Soldier to be able to use it."

Joint Force Evolution

Wilson stressed that the services are continuing the evolution to a truly joint force. When she first joined the Air Force, she said, being joint meant having to serve in an assignment

with people from other services, and joint operations meant deconflicting a battlespace.

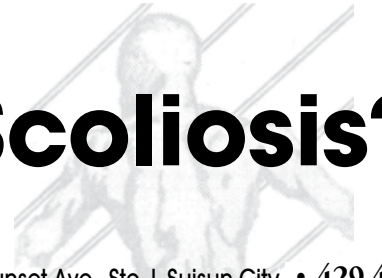

"I would say the services are on the cusp of becoming integrated – not just interdependent, not just joint – but integrated in our operations," she said. "Because if we can do

that – if we can gather information faster, decide faster and act faster, then we are going to prevail in 21st-century conflict. I think we are on the cusp of being able to think and move in that direction."

See PEOPLE Page 19

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# Airmen feedback key to future Air Force

**Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs**

WASHINGTON — Select total force Airmen will be chosen to participate in one of two surveys supporting the Invisible Wounds Initiative.

The 2018 IWI Culture Assessment Survey and the 2018 Invisible Wounds Needs Assessment are confidential, voluntary surveys that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Feedback received from the IWI Culture Assessment will enable an understanding of the culture surrounding invisible wounds which includes post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injuries and other cognitive, emotional or behavioral disorders associated with trauma experienced by an

individual. This will assist the IWI in developing strategies to improve the perceptions of invisible wounds within the Air Force and increase the support Airmen receive.

Air Force leaders will also understand Airmen's non-medical supportive needs from the Invisible Wounds Needs Assessment which will enable the IWI to provide Airmen with a smoother road to recovery and increase resiliency via peer-led support groups.

"Optimizing human performance is critical to the future of our Air Force," said Michelle Padgett, director of warrior wellness and policy integration.

Airmen selected to participate in one of the surveys will receive a direct email from the IWI with a link to participate.



Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright walks down the aisle of the base auditorium during an all-call March 6 at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. Wright spoke on matters concerning Airmen such as uniforms, professional military education and physical fitness standards.

## Wright talks resilience

Audrey Jensen

21ST SPACE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Airmen arrived early to fill the base auditorium seats at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, for an all-call March 6 with Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright.

Wright addressed several topics he wanted to emphasize, including Air Force resiliency, being a wingman, new uniforms, an initiative released by the Defense Department and studying the feasibility of warrant officers.

After asking Airmen their opinion on bringing back warrant officers, Wright said there is a team of researchers studying whether or not this would be beneficial for the Air Force.

"In this day and age when it comes to warfighting, and warfighting excellence, I could certainly see the need for warrant officers in career fields like space operations, contracting, cyber and some parts of aviation," Wright said. "So if the study reveals that bringing warrant officers back into the United States Air Force makes us a more lethal, ready, fighting force, I think we should be willing to explore it."



Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright addresses a packed base auditorium March 6 at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

Though Airmen know well what resiliency means, Wright explained why he believes it's important.

"Hopefully you've heard me talk about this before; it's something that's near and dear to my heart," Wright said. "Something I think is important for all of us as Airmen is: how do we continue to be good teammates? How do we continue to take care of not only ourselves but each other?"

From here on out, being in the Air Force will only get more challenging, Wright said, adding the top threat to U.S. National Security is no longer

terrorism, but strategic competition from adversary countries.

"It's going to take a very resilient force, not just in the sense of our ability to move forward as an Air Force, but as individual Airmen."

Because of these ongoing potential threats, there will be more deployments, which will affect Airmen and their families, Wright added.

When he visits other bases, Wright said he always asks the Airmen what day their Wingman Day is. His answer: every day.

See RESILIENCE Page 20

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# Clinic answers call for invisible wounds

Iika Cole

TEAM EGLIN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — In the month of brain injury awareness, construction of a facility to treat traumatic brain injury is well underway at the 96th Medical Group.

Thomas Piazza, invisible wounds clinic medical director, and his staff prepare to deliver the Air Force's first comprehensive TBI center as part of its Invisible Wounds Initiative.

The construction of the temporary TBI facility and hiring of staff will progress throughout the summer.

The clinic's goal is to provide support and care in a trusted environment and encourage Airmen and regional service members to seek early treatment for TBI and post-traumatic stress.

Clinical care, telemedicine and educational partnerships will be key components of the clinic.

"The clinic's mission is to serve as a regional hub for active duty TBI and PTS care and to provide a

complementary approach to treating pain," said Piazza.

The fear of stigma associated with a patient's symptoms often keeps them from seeking care. Patients also avoid treatment for fear of being considered unfit for duty and other adverse career impacts.

The TBI center and the special operations leadership community seek to reduce the stigma associated with these injuries by supporting early TBI evaluation and treatment in order to preserve the individual's active duty status.

"Unfortunately, a delay in care can lead to worsening TBI complications and greater impairments in functioning. This leads to outcomes worse than if the service member sought care sooner," said Piazza. "These psychological injuries decrease military readiness and take them out of the fight. That's not just a problem for military readiness, it's a problem for the individual and their families. The service member wants to be a part of their work and unit missions, but they just can't."



Australian Army Maj. Chris Lingard, left, Task Group Taji Victor 4 training squadron commander, and U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Wayne Collier, 370th Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron joint terminal attack controller, monitor an approaching vehicle during an Iraqi-U.S. Air Force joint terminal attack controller qualification course March 4 at Besmayah Range, Iraq.

## Exercise enhances capabilities

Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.

COALITION AVIATION ADVISORY AND TRAINING TEAM PUBLIC AFFAIRS

BESMAYA RANGE, Iraq — The first coalition live-fire exercise for the Iraqi Forward Air Controller course took place March 4-8 at Besmaya Range, Iraq.

The Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve, in conjunction with the Coalition Aviation Advisory and Training Team, coordinated the exercise to certify newly trained Iraqi Forward air controllers. The exercise showcased the progress the IFACs have made since their training started in December 2017.

"The coordination that occurred during planning sessions leading up to the live-fire events and the actual execution of the mission signals positive commitment to building a capable and professional Iraqi Security Force to integrate and control airborne strike assets," said Col. James Howard, 370th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group commander. "This builds legitimacy into the Iraqi program and fosters enduring relationships among partners

in the fight against (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria)."

The event marked significant first-time milestones as the IFACs called-in coalition aircraft strikes in a controlled environment and the first-time coalition aircraft have employed munitions on this range.

Both the live-fire exercise and IFAC course have proven to be a successful, multinational collaboration. The course is coordinated by Task Group Taji, and is comprised of Australian and New Zealand Army Corps personnel, who are assisted by U.S. Air Force Tactical Air Control Party joint terminal attack controllers.

The U.S. Army's 449th

Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Hurricanes, contributed support during the live-fire exercise by providing an AH-64E Apache Guardian to conduct close air support techniques and close combat attack training with IFAC students.

"This is important to building partner capacity and supports (Iraqi Security Force) stability operations," said U.S. Army Maj. Warren Green, 449th CAB assistant operations and partnership officer. "The course also facilitates unity of effort across coalition forces and ISF."

Green expressed how growing the IFACs will help the ISF

See EXERCISE Page 19

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# AFRL partners with entrepreneurs to help warfighter

Holly Jordan

AIR FORCE RESEARCH LABORATORY MATERIALS  
AND MANUFACTURING DIRECTORATE

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — Nearly everyone has used a common glow stick to light up the night sky, or even as part of a highway emergency kit. But these handy devices are also useful in the battlefield, and Air Force Research Laboratory researchers have discovered a way to make this useful tool even better.

Larry Brott, AFRL Materials and Manufacturing Directorate materials engineer,

recently led an effort to improve glow stick technology for use in military applications. More commonly referred to as “chemlights” in military circles, these handy devices can be used for a variety of applications. They can be used as a wand for directing vehicles or providing emergency lighting, or the fluid inside can be splashed onto a surface to mark routes or positions.

These lights work through chemiluminescence, a reaction that produces light through the combining of chemical substances. In chemlights, this reaction is typically triggered by breaking or snapping an inner

chamber to allow two substances to mix together. Depending on the mixture ratio, these devices can provide light for anywhere from a few minutes up to several hours. Chemlights can be dyed various colors or even made with dyes invisible to the naked eye.

While useful for a multitude of purposes, a problem with traditional chemlights is that they are single-use, meaning that users in the field may have to carry hundreds of them to accomplish a singular task. It is also somewhat awkward to use the chemiluminescent fluid to write messages or draw complex figures.

The AFRL team sought to address these issues through an innovative solution: microencapsulate the chemical substances and encase those capsules in a medium that can be used for writing or applying the material, much like a crayon or a lip balm applicator. The pressure of writing easily breaks the tiny capsules, creating the glowing effect. By packaging the materials in this fashion, a single stick can be used precisely and accurately many times, resulting in numerous benefits for the military.

Brott was inspired to investigate microencapsulation of chemiluminescent materials through his previous work in the automotive adhesives industry, where he became an expert in the technique. After coming to AFRL, he began to research ways to use microencapsulation to benefit the warfighter.

“This is such an intuitive use for this technology,” Brott said. “By packaging these materials in this form, we’re saving three things for the warfighter: volume, weight and cost.” Brott and his team were awarded a patent for their work in 2012.


To further advance its development and use, the AFRL Materials and Manufacturing Directorate Technology Transfer

office, led by Sunita Chavan, identified the researchers’ work to the Technology Acceleration Project. TAP is a pilot project of the Entrepreneurs Center, a Dayton-based technology incubator that seeks to bring together researchers and entrepreneurs who are interested in taking technologies to the next level.

“We strive to make the most of our technologies. If the breakthroughs we achieve within AFRL can go forward into the commercial sector, we can better advance them to the benefit of everyone,” said Chavan. “This benefits the entrepreneur, that can apply and use the technology for commercial products, and the military, that benefits from the resulting technology maturation and reduced production costs.”

Battle Sight Technologies LLC, a Dayton, Ohio-based startup company founded by military veterans, seized the opportunity to partner with AFRL to bring improved chemiluminescent materials to the warfighter.

“As a former U.S. Army soldier and warfighter, I instantly saw the impact this technology could have for the end users,” said Nick Ripplinger, Battle Sight Technologies president.



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**Airman**



**Howard Thagard**  
22nd Airlift Squadron  
**Category I civilian**



**Staff Sgt. DeAnte Lever**  
21st Airlift Squadron  
**NCO**



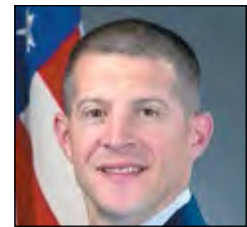
**Andrew Wright**  
60th Air Mobility Wing  
**Category II civilian**



**Senior Master Sgt. Lucero Stockett**  
6th Air Refueling Squadron  
**Senior NCO**



**David Lin**  
60th Civil Engineer Squadron  
**Category III civilian**



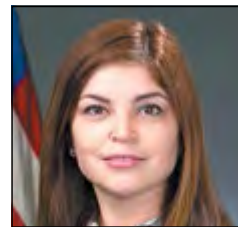
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**First sergeant**



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**Master Sgt. Jason Masiclat**  
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**First sergeant**



## Lands

From Page 9

Pilot Training Next that's less than half that time, it's still the first seven days of training."

According to Lavin, flying is very demanding. Flying a four-hour sortie is equivalent to working eight hours on the ground.

"It's important to know and understand the environment they will be operating in, whether high altitude or low altitude, crew resource management, acceleration or just even exercise or fitness in relevance to flying," he said. "The more they know before they start their training over on the flight lineside, we give them the

foundation in which to operate in that environment."

Enlisted aircrew members usually get an abbreviated two-day course on health hazards while flying, while pilots always get seven days of instruction.

"If these officers were all attending (Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training), they would be doing the exact same thing but without the enlisted participants," Lavin said. "It's definitely cool seeing enlisted in there. We haven't seen flying sergeants since World War II."

For one of the enlisted Airmen, being selected for this course is the chance of a lifetime.

"I am pretty excited," said Airman 1st Class Jack Pepper.

## Exercise

From Page 13

integrate Iraqi fixed wing and rotary wing assets into the ground scheme of maneuver, which increases their combat effectiveness on the battlefield.

During a March 6 visit with coalition and Iraqi service members participating in the live-fire exercise, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Harrigian, Air Forces Central Command commander, observed the ICAFs calling in practice air strikes and noted the progress being made.

"I'm impressed with the progress our Iraqi partners are making as they work to improve their combat capabilities," said Harrigian. "Throughout the fight to liberate Iraq, the ability

to effectively call in air support was a critical enabler as Iraqi ground forces advanced against the enemy. Our efforts to help them hone this and other vital skills will pay dividends down the road as they take the lead in safeguarding their country from threats."

In December 2017, a similar live-fire event took place at which IFACs practiced calling in close air support from both fixed and rotary wing Iraqi air assets from their Air Force and Army Aviation Command.

"This exercise helps bridge the gap between the Iraqi Security Forces being able to call in close air support from their own assets to expanding their capability to call in support from the coalition," said Howard.

## Summit

From Page 4

their effort to perpetuate the ideas of innovation integral to the fabric of the Spark program and AFWERX network are members of the Air Force's senior leadership including Vice President Mike Pence.

Pence, along with Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Heather Wilson and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein,

recently visited Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, to attend an event meant to underscore the importance of innovation to the Air Force moving forward.

"Innovation is deeply ingrained in the heritage of the United States Air Force in the pioneers and the explorers and the trailblazers to break barriers in the skies above us, to achieve the impossible, to bring the future into the present," Pence said at the event. "We can't predict the threats we are going to face tomorrow, but one

thing is certain: To defeat our enemies and protect this country, we need a stronger and more agile and smarter military than ever before."

For Leard and Perez, that stronger and smarter military starts at the grassroots.

"Travis Air Force Base is not unique," said Perez. "Every base - every Airman has the capacity to come up with incredible solutions to problems facing the Air Force now or could face in the future. It's up to us as officers, supervisors or even fellow

Airmen to empower each other to make those strides and facilitate the processes that allow us to do so."

Along with briefings aimed at educating and offering insight into innovation foundations, tools and pathways, summit attendees were encouraged to network with each other in an effort to build the Spark program into an Air Force-wide initiative whereby Airmen from every base can contribute their thoughts and ideas to the future of the service.

## People

From Page 11

"What distinguishes our military, what makes us the premier fighting force in the world - which guarantees it will prevail in any conflict - is the quality of our service members," Esper said. "They are - bar none - the best in the world. They're smart, they're aggressive, they're resourceful, they are persistent and they have a lot of grit."

All of the secretaries said the services need some personnel reforms. Wilson noted that it takes 150 days to hire a civilian employee and said the backlog for security clearances has doubled over the past 18 months.

The Air Force secretary said she wants organizational shifting to stop while the service implements acquisition reform.

## Panas

From Page 2

their Airmen can take care of training or grab a hot meal, I smile and recall my first flight chief, Tech. Sgt. Nick, relieving me from main gate one mid-shift to take my career development course pre-test and grab a meal. When our newly minted first-line supervisors return from ALS and enthusiastically lead and develop their Airmen, I fondly remember my first Supervisor, Staff Sgt. Poti, returning from ALS and spending countless hours leading and developing us into sharp Airmen who would grow into leaders one day.

Today, as I enter the final years of my career, I hope the leadership by example the Misawa defenders displayed all those years ago, continues to live on. The Airmen you lead will respect your rank and position, but to earn their complete trust and respect, you must lead by example. Brave the elements with them, send them to get a hot meal or man their gate for a few minutes. The five minutes you spend with them in the coldest, muddiest or toughest conditions garners more respect and admiration than any rank or position you can attain. Will you be the leader they grow to emulate and share your leadership moments with those they lead?





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## March

From Page 5

day and somehow found the strength to survive. I'm looking forward to meeting them and saying "thank you."

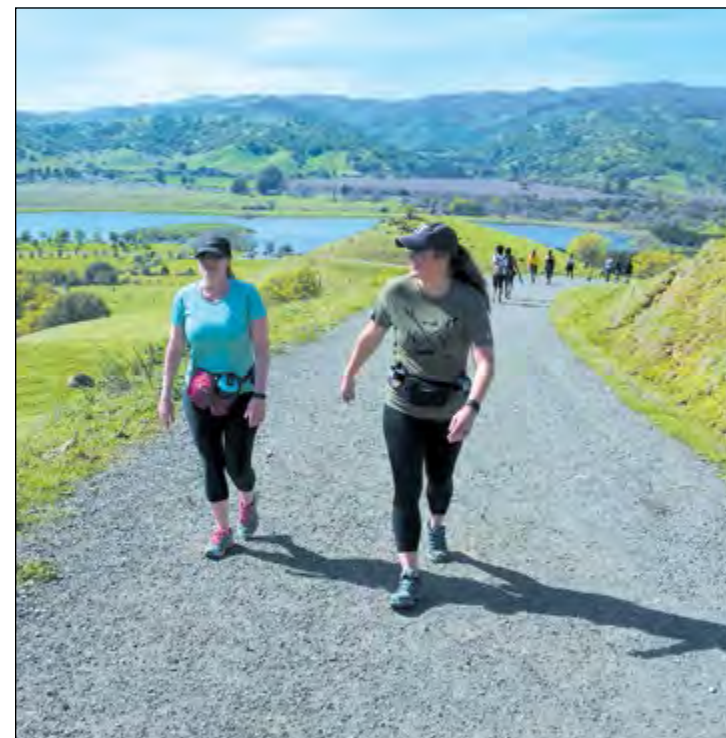
"I want to thank them for having the strength to survive, for fighting to return for their families and for everything they've done for our country," she said.

Webb will be joined on her journey by one of her childhood friends, Tiffany Lipinski. After deciding to participate in the BMDM, Webb asked Lipinski to join her.

"Nikki has had a strong desire to do a marathon for quite some time and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to share in that bonding experience with her," said Lipinski. "I also enjoy participating in races that celebrate and honor our military and family members, both past and present. The Bataan Memorial Death March is a perfect event for that cause."

"I am extremely proud of Nikki's decision to participate in the Bataan Memorial Death March and of all the hard work she has put into her training," she said.

To prepare to complete the 26.2-mile route, which features numerous hills, steep climbs and miles of sand, Webb has relied on a variety of different



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. James Hodgman  
**Senior Master Sgt. Jenny Hendry, left, 60th Aeromedical Squadron, hikes up a hill March 11 at Pena Adobe Regional Park in Vacaville, Calif., with her cousin, Tech. Sgt. Nikki Webb, 60th Air Mobility Wing.**

training methods.

Along with hiking and running a few times each week, she also does spin and combat-ready classes at the Travis Fitness Center. On weekends, she goes on long hikes, often in the hills of Pena Adobe Regional Park in Vacaville, California.

She recalled a recent hike in the Redwood Forrest that was kind of a preview of what's to come.

"We were hiking in the Redwood Forest and we took a wrong trail at about mile 19 and wound up hiking about 24 miles," she said. "I also twisted my ankle and had to hike the final three miles through rain and hail."

Webb also ran out of water at mile eight, so she had no means of hydration for about 16 miles.

"I learned after that

experience that I need to pack more water and more snacks as well," she said. "While finishing that hike was amazing, it was painful. I still have blisters on my feet and a sore back. Because that was the first time (I hiked) that far."

Webb said her and Lipinski plan on completing the BMDM, which begins at about 7 a.m., on March 25, in 7 hours and 30 minutes. She also said, no matter how difficult the march becomes, failure is not an option.

"I want to prove to myself that I can do a full 26.2 miles and quitting is not an option," said Webb. "It's also about me doing my part. This memorial march is a small fraction of what the Soldiers who marched in the actual death march endured. No matter how much I'm dealing with, whatever I'm going through, it will be nowhere near as difficult as it was for the survivors of the Bataan Death March."

"Participating in patriotic races means a lot to me and I am so excited to get to participate in the Bataan Memorial Death March," added Lipinski. "I will be thinking of the American and Filipino

Soldiers, those lost and those that survived, as well as all our veterans and current service members. I will be thinking of those I knew who have lost their life while serving, as well as their loved ones they have left behind—our Gold Star families. I will start and end the event incredibly thankful."

Webb and Lipinski will join a record number of marchers at this year's event as 8,380 people have registered, an increase of more than 1,000 from 2017 according to Lisa Frankson, a recreation specialist with the White Sands Missile Range Garrison Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation office and the BMDM director.

Event participants can march as individuals or in teams in light or heavy categories, she said. They will have about 13 hours to complete the full 26.2-mile route. Anyone who fails to make water point 10 at approximately mile 21 will be pulled off the course.

Webb stressed, while some people may experience being pulled from the course, she and Lipinski won't be among them.

"The course will be challenging, but we will finish," she said. "There's no other option."

## Lasers

From Page 3

said Chuckran. "All we need are specialized glasses, hearing protection and gloves. It's a major improvement especially in the summer when the Tyvek suit becomes a sauna suit."

The lasers are currently being used on all support equipment for the airframes at Travis, such as air conditioning units, hydraulic carts and the -86 power generator, which provides power to the aircraft. These same tests are currently being performed on old panel from a C-5M Super Galaxy.

"I see the lasers as the future of removing paint and corrosion," said Chuckran. "It will definitely have a huge impact once we can begin using them on the aircraft."

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## Move

From Page 6

weekly and monthly security reports.”

While assigned there, Javad met Senior Master Sgt. Michael Simon II, who was serving on a 365-day deployment as a Mi-17 crew chief air advisor.

“Javad was assigned to the FOB as an interpreter, translating from Dari or Pashto to English,” said Simon. “We worked together on several occasions in support of the Afghan Air Force training and advising missions.”

What Javad didn't know at the time was that Simon would play an instrumental role years later as he transitioned from Afghanistan to America. During his time at FOB Shindand, the USAF was replaced by the Army, and his duties and

responsibilities changed significantly.

“We were given the option to resign or accept new roles,” said Javad. “Sure enough within a month I was riding in convoys outside the wire. Things were a lot different now.”

Javad spent three years at FOB Shindand and witnessed some horrific things.

“I saw Army soldiers get shot and killed. I saw Afghan civilians get shot and killed,” said Javad. “I was the head interpreter and was always going out with Battalion commanders and other high-ranking officials.”

Despite the difficulties of his job and awful experiences he witnessed, Javad felt something for the first time.

“I was a local,” said Javad. “I wasn't a U.S. citizen, but they never treated me like a stranger. They trusted me, they worked with me. That was a feeling I'd

never had in my life before until I worked there.”

After his identity was disclosed and Javad knew he was no longer safe in Afghanistan, he applied for a Special Immigrant Visa so he could come to America. This wasn't an easy decision because Javad was living as an upper middle class citizen in Afghanistan.

“I was a homeowner with lots of land,” said Javad. “I owned a car and motorcycle. Unfortunately, I couldn't sell anything because no one would buy anything built with the money from America. I was choosing between my belongings or my life.”

In the summer of 2014, Javad took his pregnant wife with only the belongings they could fit in a suitcase, the \$800 they received for selling their wedding bands and traveled to the United States to begin a new life.

“When we arrived in Colorado Springs, Colorado, we had nothing,” said Javad. “I needed a sponsor for my SIV and Simon agreed. With the help of Simon, we were able to sustain some sort of normalcy until we could get on our feet.”

Simon got donations from his church and the local refugee service in Colorado Springs. Lutheran Refugee Service lined up a starter apartment with basic furnishings.

“My sister had coordinated with a group of close friends and churches to get a lot of items needed outside of the basics already provided,” said Simon. “Then the rest was up to Javad and his determination to succeed.”

Despite having an education, Javad found it hard to find work.

“I had to find a job because I barely could afford a month's rent,” said Javad. “Nobody would give me a job because I didn't have a history of work in the U.S.”

After meeting a family who had a local business, Javad found some temporary work, but more importantly, a life-long friend.

“They ended up being like family to us,” said Javad. “They called me son and they were the only ones who came to my graduation at basic training.”

Working in a warehouse didn't bring in a lot of money for Javad and he struggled to make ends meet.

“For the first four months, I didn't have a car,” said Javad. “I had to walk four miles one way, work eight hours, and walk another four miles back, in the winter, in Colorado Springs.”

After a year in the U.S., Javad felt that serving in the armed forces may provide a better life for him and his family.

“I worked four years with the U.S. Forces in Afghanistan and had a little sense of what life was like in the military,” said Javad. “I know there's a lot of sacrifices you have to make when serving your country, but in the end, I wanted to give back to the country that helped me a lot.”

Javad decided to enlist in the USAF and entered basic training in February 2016.

“I wanted to be part of a really big picture,” said Javad. “I did it mainly because the U.S. military saved my life and I wanted to do my part.”

The decision to join the USAF did not surprise Simon because his commitment, dedication and hard work align with the USAF core values.

For Javad, to start from scratch with just a suitcase and dedicate his efforts to providing for his family is the true American dream,” said Simon. “Now he's a member of the 1 percent club who voluntarily choose to serve this great nation. To say I'm proud of Javad would be an understatement.”

A week before graduating basic training, Javad received an unexpected gift.

“I was notified that I was officially a U.S. citizen,” said Javad. “I was overwhelmed with pride. When I saw the flag being raised at graduation and we saluted, I couldn't stop myself from crying because I finally had a flag I could be proud of.”

After basic training and technical school, Javad arrived at his first duty station here at Travis Air Force Base, California. He's enjoyed the people, mission and the area.

“My unit treats me like any other Airman,” said Javad. “They don't see me as a person from Afghanistan, they see me as an Airman.”

Javad has yet to deploy since joining the USAF, but said he would like to return to Afghanistan as an Airman and citizen of the U.S.

“I would be happy to deploy to Afghanistan because I know the mission over there is important,” said Javad. “I would love a special duty assignment as a linguist and use my language skills to help my fellow Airmen.”

Javad's short-term goal is to help his parents get to the U.S.

“My parents had to escape Afghanistan and flee to another country,” said Javad. “I feel responsible because I come from a culture where your kids are your retirement, so now they are struggling until I can find a way to bring them to America.”

Once Javad secures his family in the U.S., he plans on achieving his long-term goal which is to become an officer in the USAF.

“I couldn't become an officer when I enlisted even though I had the education because I wasn't a citizen,” said Javad. “Now that I have my citizenship, I will pursue officer training school and get my commission.”

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## Rescue

From Page 8

creek, to see if it was passable. At around 8 p.m., the brothers discovered a vehicle washed off the road and half submerged in the flooding waters.

“The only thing keeping it from washing away was an old barbed-wire fence,” said the 37-year-old Fort Walton Beach resident.

The driver of the vehicle struggled through the current to get to his wife, Christi, who was a double-leg amputee. The scene was visible only by Dyer's vehicle headlights on bright. He got Christi out of the vehicle and onto their roof. The man, in his 50s, looked exhausted from the effort, according to Dyer.

The brothers were told by the 911 operator that due to their location, it would take paramedics and rescue an hour and a half to reach them. Christi had been in and around the cold, rushing water for approximately 15 minutes at that time.

“In an hour and a half, she would be hypothermic or washed away,” said the 17-year Airman.

Her husband and another man on the scene tried to rescue Christi, but could not carry her above the water. With the waters rising toward the couple's roof and no chance to tow the vehicle without possibly losing his own, Dyer made a call.

“I told my brother, ‘they are going to drown her, I am helping,’” said Dyer. “If we waited for rescue personnel, she would have either succumbed to the cold or been washed away. There was no more time to wait. She needed help right then.”

When Dyer reached Christi, he said she was very cold and turning blue. The Airman took her from the two men and used a fireman carry to get her through the nearly freezing current to a less-deeply flooded area. Then Christi began to panic.

“I carefully put her down and sat in the water with her,” said Dyer. “I explained to her ‘I can only help if you stay calm.’”

At this point, Dyer said much of his military training took over. The self-aid buddy

care, combat life saver, operational risk management and his own EOD technician composure allowed him to accomplish the specific mission he had before him.

“My training helped me stay calm in a torrent of rushing water, pouring rain and darkness not knowing when the situation could go from bad to worse,” he said.

He quickly briefed the two men who attempted to rescue Christi earlier, on how to perform a chair carry. At this point, Christi was so weak, she couldn't hold herself up. One man held her back, while Dyer and the other rescuer performed the carry to remove her from the current and get her to safety.

“I was worried, at least up until I heard him take complete control of the situation,” said John Dyer, Phillip's brother. “Once he got in the water, there was no misunderstanding who was in charge. Phillip may have been afraid, but the only thing he showed was calmness.”

They immediately wrapped her up in a blanket and tried to warm her up. Christi and the rescuers went back to Dyer's brother's home to wait on the emergency responders. When rescue personnel arrived, they said Christi's vehicle was totally submerged by the water. The water would rise another 8 feet before subsiding.

The following day, Christi's son visited Dyer and personally thanked him for saving his mother's life.

Dyer set aside the event as something that just needed to be done. He wrote it up as just another good enlisted performance report bullet. His former superintendent, retired Chief Master Sgt. Martin Cortez, saw the potential in the act and began the process to get Dyer recognized for his heroism.

“It is amazing to see him finally honored and I couldn't be prouder,” said Cortez, who attended the ceremony. Dyer's brother, John, who couldn't attend the ceremony, also added praise for his brother and all military members.

“If this is even a small cross-section of the type of men and women serving our country, we should all be proud,” he said.



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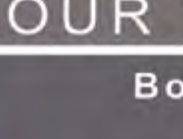
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1) Col. John Klein, center, 60th Air Mobility Wing commander, works on a hydraulic pulley with Senior Airman Robert Caldwell and Master Sgt. Brian Pino, both from the 60th Maintenance Squadron accessories flight, March 9 at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. Klein visited with the Airmen as part of his wing Leadership Rounds initiative where he and the command chief master sergeant spend time in different units.

# HYDRAULIC

... shop sees visit from leadership

2) Col. John Klein, left, 60th Air Mobility Wing commander, works on a hydraulic pulley with Senior Airman Robert Caldwell, 60th Maintenance Squadron aircraft hydraulics specialist, March 9 at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. 3) Klein works on the hydraulic pulley with Caldwell.



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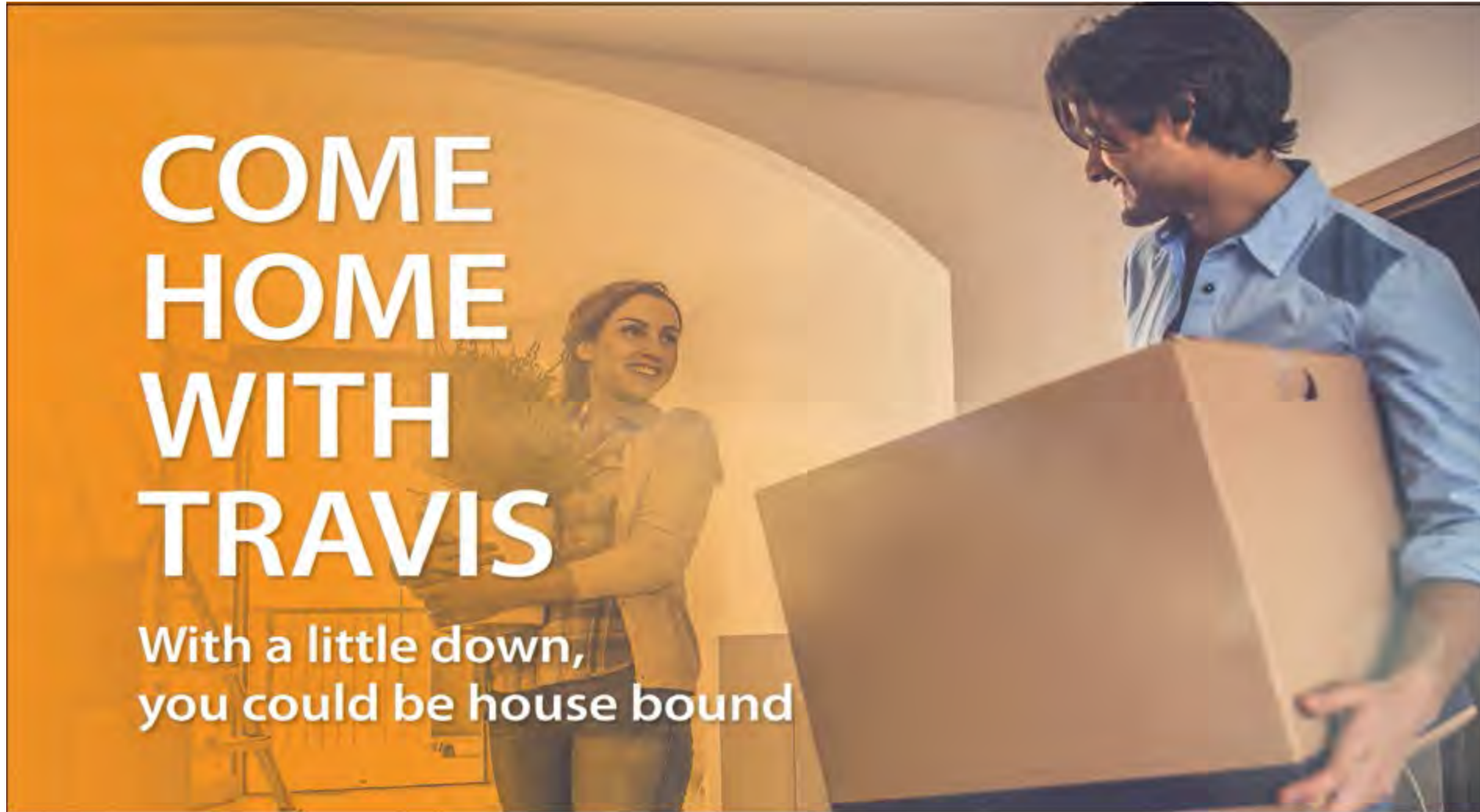
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