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Vol. 43, Issue 4

## Weather

Friday	Saturday
Partly Cloudy High 58°F Low 28°F	Cloudy High 58°F Low 41°F
Sunday	Monday
Cloudy High 62°F Low 46°F	Mostly Cloudy w/chc Rain High 59°F Low 50°F
Forecast provided by the 14 <sup>th</sup> OSS Weather Flight	

## News Briefs

### 2018 Annual Awards Banquet

The 2018 Annual Awards Banquet will start at 6 p.m. Feb. 8 at the Columbus Club. Please come out and help recognize our 2018 Annual Award winners and congratulate them on their outstanding achievements! Use <https://einvitations.afit.edu/inv/anim.cfm?i=432282&k=0662400B7355> to RSVP by Feb. 5.

### SUPT Class 19-06 Graduation

Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 19-06 graduates at 10 a.m. Feb. 15 at the Kaye Auditorium.

### Wing Newcomers Orientation

All new active-duty service members are required to attend the Wing Newcomers Orientation starting at 8 a.m. Feb. 26 in the Columbus Club. The Wing Newcomers brief is a great way to learn all the different organizations on base and get a feel for how Columbus operates. Spouses are also encouraged to attend.

## Inside



Feature 8

The Annual Award Nominees are highlighted in this week's feature.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Gross

**Chief Master Sgt. Raul Villarreal, Jr., 14th Flying Training Wing command chief, welcomes attendees to the first Enlisted Partnership dinner, Jan. 24, 2019, at Thai by Thai, in Columbus, Mississippi. Community civic leaders and 14th FTW leadership thanked everyone who helped make the partnership a reality and hope to continue to make it a better experience for all.**

# Airmen gain new way of connecting with local community

**Airman Hannah Bean**

14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Members of the local community welcomed Airmen, friends and family members to the first Enlisted Partnership dinner Jan. 24 at Thai by Thai in Columbus, Mississippi.

The Enlisted Partnership Program helps connect enlisted

personnel with civic leaders from the Columbus-Lowndes community and provide new Airmen with a home away from home.

Community leaders and 14th Flying Training Wing leadership welcomed everyone in attendance, adding thanks to everyone who helped make the partnership a reality. They hope

See **PARTNERSHIP**, Page 3

## COLUMBUS AFB TRAINING TIMELINE

PHASE II		PHASE III		IFF		WING SORTIE BOARD			
Squadron	Track Select	Squadron	Graduation	Squadron	Graduation	Aircraft	Required	Flown	Annual
37th (19-20)	Feb. 7	48th (19-06)	Feb. 15	49th (19-DBC)	Jan. 31	T-6	2,200	2,302	8,592
41st (19-21)	Feb. 22	50th (19-06)	Feb. 15			T-1	870	769	2,959
Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., Assistant to Pacific Air Forces Commander, will be the guest speaker for Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 19-06's graduation at 10 a.m. Feb. 15, 2019, in the Kaye Auditorium.						T-38	1,001	958	3,468
						IFF	323	407	1,368

\* Mission numbers provided by 14 FTW Wing Scheduling.

**To advertise in Silver Wings, call 328-2424**



# Thunderbird commander reminds graduated pilots teamwork is critical

**Airman 1st Class Keith Holcomb**  
14th Flying Training Wing  
Public Affairs

Lt. Col. Kevin Walsh, U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron commander/leader, spoke at Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class's 19-04/05 graduation Jan. 25, in the Kaye Auditorium.

Walsh, who graduated pilot training at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, in 2003, told three stories about the importance of connection in today's Air Force.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein spoke to the Thunderbird team one year and asked the team if they saw their job as just another job or as a calling.

"It got the team thinking," Walsh said. "If you were working for the airlines and your spouse got sick, would anyone call to see how she's doing? If you have a family emergency would anyone from the airlines watch your dog? In the military, they

would."

He explained how the military pilot community is connected and how the Air Force cultivates the family connection between all Airmen through the wingman concept.

Walsh began his next story setting the scene. It was his third combat deployment down range and he said it felt pretty comfortable since he was a recent weapons school graduate. He explained how his team headed to help some Marines who were being ambushed.

Walsh and his wingmen worked with an AH-64 Apache, reconnaissance aircraft and the team on the ground to help eliminate the threats.

"It was a complete team effort across different services," Walsh said. "Fast forward later in Afghanistan ... a combat outpost was being overrun ... so we launched our fleet to help the guys and gals on the

See GRADUATION, Page 3



U.S. Air Force photo by  
Airman 1st Class Keith Holcomb

**Lt. Col. Kevin Walsh, U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron commander/leader, speaks to Col. Samantha Weeks, 14th Flying Training Wing commander, before Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class' 19-04/05 graduation Jan. 25, 2019 on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Walsh and Weeks have both flown for the Thunderbirds.**

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat/Sun	Long Range Events
4	5 C-130 Static Display, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. @ SAC Ramp	6	7 Andy Christiansen Couple Life Event, 8:30 a.m.-noon @ Club	8 Annual Awards Banquet, 6 p.m. @ Columbus Club	9/10	Feb. 18: Presidents' Day
11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. @ Chapel Annex	15 SUPT Class 19-06 Graduation, 10 a.m. @ Kaye	16/17	Feb. 25: ALS Begins  Feb. 26: Wing Newcomers  Feb. 28: Hearts Apart  Mar. 1: Employee Appreciation Day  Mar. 1: SUPT Class 19-07 Assignment Night  Mar. 1: Daedalian's  Mar. 15: SUPT Class 19-07 Graduation  Mar. 19: Wing Newcomers

Silver Wings

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Submission Deadline  
The deadline for submitting copy for next week's SILVER WINGS is noon Monday. Articles may be dropped off at the public affairs office or e-mailed.  
  
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The SILVER WINGS staff reserves the right to edit or rewrite all copy submitted when necessary. All photos are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise stated.  
Submit all advertising to the Columbus, Miss., Commercial Dispatch advertising department one week prior to desired publication date. The advertising department can be reached at (662) 328-2424.

# Flying High: Texas cadet is first graduate of CAP's new Cadet Wings Program

**Sheila Pursglove**

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. — Emma Herrington became the first Civil Air Patrol cadet to earn her private pilot's certificate through the new Cadet Wings program January 24. The Cadet Wings Program is part of the organization's Youth Aviation Initiative, funded by the Air Force.

Herrington, a Texas Wing cadet, earned her certificate after passing her Federal Aviation Administration private pilot practical test. It's an early birthday present: She turns 18 Feb. 1.

She first took to the skies in childhood, with her father — a pilot, an airframe and powerplant mechanic and owner of an aircraft ignition repair station.

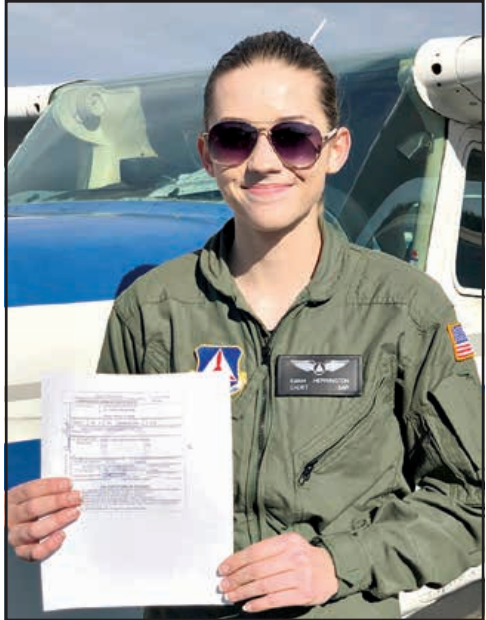
"Aviation is the family trade," Herrington explained. "These factors, combined with a fascination with anything that flew, nudged me in the right direction. I was 4 when I first started flying with my dad and I've been hooked ever since.

"Flying is a sensation unlike anything else I've ever experienced — I love every aspect, from rotation to the chirp of the tires on the pavement. It's my happy place. I love seeing the world from a different angle, something many people don't ever get to experience."

**A passion for flight**

With this passion for flight, Civil Air Patrol was a natural fit for Herrington. She is a cadet chief master sergeant with the Texas Wing's Sulphur Springs Composite Squadron and is on her way to becoming a cadet second lieutenant.

She joined the Sulphur Springs squadron in April 2017 at age 16, drawn by the commander's enthusiasm for her aviation aspirations and the fact the unit has a Cessna 172.



Civil Air Patrol photo

**Emma Herrington, a Civil Air Patrol cadet, holds her temporary airman certificate after her successful flight.**

"I knew CAP flew missions, but I didn't know you could train out of CAP aircraft, so when orientation flights were first mentioned, I was ecstatic," she said.

"I had no idea my first flight with CAP would lead to many more. O-flights are the most important part of a cadet's journey through CAP, and most importantly, they are free."

**Opportunity to fly with CAP**

After taking advantage of all five orientation flights offered to cadets, Herrington attended the Shirley Martin Powered Flight Academy in Nacogdoches, Texas, one of CAP's national flight academies. Through

the Martin academy, she received the opportunity to achieve her dream of earning her private pilot's certificate in the Cadet Wings program.

An important part of Cadet Wings is acceptance is based entirely on merit and motivation, Herrington said. "It gives aviation-crazy cadets who have drive and discipline the chance to get their license. It's the answer for those who cannot afford flight training but are desperate to fly.

"The best thing about Cadet Wings is that you're trained to fly CAP aircraft and all expenses are covered. Without the help of Cadet Wings, I would have been unable to afford my flight training — sadly, this is a problem many cadets face," she said.

Cadet Wings is just one of many amazing opportunities that can be found nowhere else, Herrington added. "I recommend CAP to every teen I know," she said. "CAP changed my life, and I think that's something everyone should experience. Aspiring aviators especially should take advantage of the Cadet Wings program, as the opportunity for a full paid ride is once in a lifetime."

**High-achieving cadet**

Although Herrington joined CAP at 16 rather than the earliest eligible age, 12, she has more than made up the lost time. Honor Cadet of the 2017 Texas Wing summer encampment, Honor Cadet of the 2017 Southwest Region Honor Academy, Air Force Association Cadet of the Year for her squadron and a distinguished graduate of the 2018 powered flight academy, she is also her squadron's cadet commander.

"All of my greatest achievements have been through Civil Air Patrol — but the most rewarding is getting my private pilot's license," Herrington said. "I've been fortunate to achieve much in the short time I've been involved, something others can do, too."

"I like the fact CAP is what you make it," she added. "The organization is overflowing with opportunities for all interests, all the while teaching important life lessons. The cadet program is geared toward the benefit of cadets and helping them find success whenever you join. CAP is a robust organization full of opportunities. It offers leadership positions no other organization does."

Herrington enjoys watching cadets grow as individuals and as a team. "My favorite activities include aviation (National Cadet Special Activities), staffing encampments and working one-on-one with cadets in my squadron," she said.

Herrington has applied to the U.S. Air Force Academy; and if that doesn't pan out, she will attend flight school at LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas.

"I want to be a pilot, either military or civilian," she said. "Flying is my passion!"

News Around Town

Panic! At the Disco  
Panic! At the Disco, an American pop-rock group, will be performing at 7 p.m. Feb. 6 at the FedEx Forum in Memphis, Tennessee. Tickets for sale online.

Monster Jam  
Monster Jam will be Feb. 8 at the Bancorp South Arena in Tupelo, Mississippi. Tickets for sale online.

Smithsonian Exhibit at the Tenn-Tom Waterway Museum  
Join the Mississippi Humanities Council Jan. 22-March 8, 2019 for the Smithsonian's Water/Ways Exhibit at the Tenn-Tom Waterway Museum! The Water/Ways Exhibit is a Museum on Main Street exhibition and brought to you by the Mississippi Humanities Council. For additional information on this or any other Columbus events, contact Nancy Carpenter, CEO, Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau, (662) 329-1191 or (800) 327-2686, or nancy@visitcolumbusms.org.



Columbus Air Force Base Information and Events

Join our Facebook page at Columbus AFB Living, Twitter at @columbusafbliving, Instagram at columbus\_afb\_living, or visit our website at www.columbusafbliving.com to keep up to date with all the great events happening around base. Check out the calendar on the website for important Airman and Family Readiness Center events. For more information, contact 434-2337.

Get Connected with Your New Base App!

As a way to connect people together, Columbus Air Force Base launched a new app to connect Airmen and families to the mission and community! The app is available on all app stores and can be found by searching 'Columbus Air Force Base'.

Winter Reading Program

Register at the library and enjoy a winter of stories, activities and tons of fun! For more information, contact 434-2934.

Lunch Buffets at the Overrun

Enjoy daily lunch buffets Tuesday – Friday at the Columbus Club. Daily buffets include: Tuesday – Taco and Nacho \$9, Wednesday – Chicken Wings and Pasta \$10, Thursday – Southern Style \$10 and Friday – Fried Catfish \$10. Club Members receive a \$2 discount. For more information, contact 434-2489.

The Big Game Watch Party

Join us Feb. 3 starting at 4 p.m. for the biggest night in football, purchase your tickets at the Event Center, pre-sale tickets are \$10 for club members, \$12 for non-club members, \$15 at the door, Kids under 10 are free. OVER \$3000 in prizes will be given away!! Call 434-2489 for more information.

Flashback February 5K

Flash back in time and join The Fitness Center's monthly 5K Feb. 8 starting at 7 a.m. For more information, call 434-2772.

UFC Fight Night

Join us at the Overrun in the Event Center for UFC 234 Whittaker vs. Gastelum Feb. 9, doors open at 6:30 p.m. Food and drink specials. Club members receive a \$5 food voucher! Call 434-2489 for more information.

Best Laid Plans Murder Mystery Dinner

Join us on Feb 14th for this interactive dinner, wear your best flapper dress, zoot suit, feather boas and fedoras...or not! Be part of this fun evening of mystery and intrigue and you decide who-dunnit! Limited seating \$55 per person includes: 2.5 interactive show, 3 course dinner, soft drinks and childcare. Call 434-2489 or 434-2771 or stop by the event center to get your tickets and for more information.

Theme Thursdays at the Overrun

Featuring \$0.45 wings on Thursdays at the Overrun, Drink specials and sports games on TV's. Call 434-2489 for more information.

Wood Shop is OPEN!

The Wood Shop is back in business! They are open Monday-Thursday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m.-4 p.m., call 434-7836 for more information.

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Bar will be open

packages at ITT? Packages include Universal Studios and Disney destinations. To book your vacation, visit or contact your ITT office at (662) 434-7861.

Storytime Schedule

The Base Library is offering Storytime on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. for ages 3-6 years and Fridays at 10 a.m. for children up to 2 years old. For more information, contact 434-2934.

Force Support Squadron Gift Cards

Make your shopping easier! Purchase or redeem your Force Support Squadron Gift Card at the following locations: Arts and Crafts, Bowling Center, Café at Whispering Pines, Child Development Center, Columbus Club, Information Tickets and Travel, Outdoor Recreation or the Youth Center. For more information, stop by any of these locations.

Game Night at the Library

The Base Library is offering a free game night at 5 p.m. the second Thursday of each month. For more information, contact 434-2934.

Horse Boarding Available

The Columbus AFB Riding Stables usually has stall space available. For pricing and more information, contact Outdoor Recreation at 434-2505.

Laser Bowling

The Strike Zone offers laser bowling every Friday and Saturday

night starting at 5 p.m., stop in for a great time! Call 434-3426 for more information.

Free Mango Languages

Learn a new language today! Free Mango Languages available at the Base Library; real-life conversations in over 70 languages. For more information, contact 434-2934.

Play Paintball

Outdoor Recreation offers paintball for groups or individuals. You must book twenty-four hours in advance; 17 years old and under must be accompanied by an adult. The cost is \$15 per person for party of 10 or more; \$20 per person for party of nine or less. You must purchase paint balls at Outdoor Recreation for \$50 per case of 2,000. For more information, contact 434-2505.

The Overrun Open Friday Nights

The Overrun is open Fridays 4:30 p.m. until midnight. For more information, contact 434-2419.

Lawn Mower and Bicycle Repair

Outdoor Recreation is now offering lawn mower repair and self-help bicycle repair. For more information, contact 434-2507.

Hobby and Craft Instructors Needed

Do you have a hobby or craft project you can share with others? Arts & Crafts is looking for craft instructors. For more information, contact 434-7836.

Referees Needed

Referees needed for various sports at the Fitness Center. For more information or to sign up, contact 434-2772.

RV Storage Lot

Don't clutter your home space, park with us. Outdoor Recreation offers a great place to store your RV year around. You will have 24-hour access and can pay monthly or yearly. For more information, call 434-2505.

Instructors Needed

The Youth Center is seeking instructors for tumbling classes, dance classes, piano and guitar lessons. For more information, contact the Youth Center.

Fitness on Request

The Fitness Center offers a truly comprehensive group fitness platform that is available all day and completely customizable to meet your needs with 119 different classes on the Fitness on Request system. For more information, call 434-2772.

Space A Lodging

The Magnolia Inn usually has openings for Space A family and single units. Contact the lodging desk at 434-2548.

Ride in Style

Information Tickets and Travel offers a shuttle service to the airport of your choice. For more information, contact 434-7861.

Transportation for Assignment Nights

Reserve the bus of van through Information Ticket and Travel for assignment nights. Reservation must be made in person, the cost is \$30 per hour with a four hour minimum. Price includes Columbus and local areas. For more information, contact 434-7861.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Gross

**Gary Laughlin, 14th Flying Training Wing honorary command chief and an independent auditor and consultant, thanks everyone for attending the first Enlisted Partnership dinner Jan. 24, 2019, at Thai by Thai in Columbus, Mississippi. Community civic leaders and 14th FTW leadership welcomed everyone in attendance, thanking everyone who helped make the partnership a reality and hope to continue to make it a better experience for all.**

PARTNERSHIP

(Continued from page 1)

to continue to make it a better experience for all.

“Take advantage and become involved in the community,” said Gary Laughlin, 14th FTW honorary command chief and an independent auditor and consultant. “Get to know people, let them help you and share with you the experience of what (this city has to offer).”

Laughlin added that the enlisted are a major part of the base and pilots cannot be created without aide from enlisted members.

“My focus at Columbus AFB has been, to the greatest extent possible, taking care of the enlisted,” Laughlin said. “You don’t produce pilots without a lot of enlisted work. It takes the whole team to make it work.”

Col. Samantha Weeks, 14th FTW commander, highlighted the close-knit relationship of the city and base, thanking those who took the initiative to find a new way to connect Airmen with the community.

“You guys are permanent party and that’s why we changed the mission to Cultivate Airmen first,” Weeks said. “It has to be about each and every one of us to make sure that we are stronger, better for our national defense and our Air Force through this assignment, so that we can go on and continue to serve in a greater capacity for our Air Force and our nation.”

Weeks added that she hopes Airmen will utilize this opportunity to not stay on base

*“My focus at Columbus AFB has been, to the greatest extent possible, taking care of the enlisted,” Laughlin said. “You don’t produce pilots without a lot of enlisted work. It takes the whole team to make it work.”*

during their time off. To help with that, Barbara Bigelow, director of Main Street Columbus and 14th FTW honorary commander, talked about various events and community activities going on in the upcoming months.

“I hope that you will get out, get into town, see everything that they have to offer and really draw those ties even tighter together so that the next generation of Team BLAZE Airmen have an even more phenomenal experience in Columbus, Mississippi,” she said.

After the opening remarks from Laughlin, Weeks and Chief Master Sgt. Raul Villarreal, 14th Flying Training Wing command chief, Airmen socialized, dined and interacted with people from the community.

GRADUATION

(Continued from page 1)

ground. There were all sorts of unmanned aerial vehicles, A-10 (Thunderbolt IIs), F-15 (Strike Eagles), everyone was there.”

He described the intense weather conditions in the mountains, the team on the ground was yelling over the radio for various forms of assistance, and how the firing didn’t stop until a B-1 Lancer made two passes across the terrain.

“Some of our guys had been hit, our helicopters couldn’t make a landing because of the weather,” Walsh said, “then a female voice comes on the radio flying a C-130 Hercules, and I thought ‘What on earth is a C-130 doing here.’”

Walsh explained how he witnessed the C-130 land in the dirt, grab all the people and equipment then proceeded to bring everything back to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

“It was an unbelievable show of teamwork,” Walsh said.

Following the mission, he volunteered to help in the hospital and saw the ground team he had just helped save. Across the same hospital room, they saw some enemies who’d been injured as well. The Air Force was providing medical care for everyone.

Walsh began to talk about the last example of connection in his career. He explained the finale of the Thunderbirds routine and how Thunderbird 4’s maneuver works.

“Unfortunately No. 4 starts his ‘split S’ and did not pull out of the maneuver and we lost No. 4 that day,” Walsh said. “It was the most alone I had ever felt in my career. I let the team fly home and I stayed overhead as long as I could.”



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Keith Holcomb

**Lt. Col. Kevin Walsh, U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron commander/leader, speaks at Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class’ 19-04/05 graduation Jan. 25, 2019 on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Walsh spoke about the importance of every mission connecting, every family connecting, and every Airmen connecting to those around them, because the Air Force is stronger together.**

Later when setting up the memorial, a C-17 Globemaster III brought over 100 people from across the world to celebrate Maj. Stephen Del Bagno, the fallen Thunderbird pilot. Fighters, refueling aircraft and cargo aircraft crews made the trip as well.

“This is the kind of environment you have entered,” Walsh said. “It’s not a club, it’s a family, a family you earned your way into, a family people have sacrificed for, it’s a family that people aspire to be in.”

He tied together the three stories and explained how the connection to this family stretches outside uniforms and into communi-

ties. Walsh mentioned the impact everyone feels when lives are saved down range and the impact felt when Airmen pay the ultimate price. He reminded the students through everything they will always have a connected family around them.

He then left the graduates with words of advice and a congratulations.

“Stay hungry, this is but the beginning,” Walsh said. “You are going to do amazing things before you know it and from a squadron commander’s perspective, we just want to see motivation to improve yourself and your wingman. If you have that, we will take care of the rest.”



# Nigerian Air Force leadership visits Columbus AFB, views pilot training program

Senior Airman Beaux Hebert

14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Columbus Air Force Base's Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training program produces some of the world's greatest aviators for the U.S., but also helps develop aviators of our international partners.

Air Vice-Marshal Aliyu Bello, director of training for the Nigerian Air Force, and other members of the Nigerian Air Force visited Columbus AFB, Mississippi, Jan. 24 to get a firsthand view of the training program and check on a Nigerian student who is currently in class.

"The Nigerian and U.S. Air Forces have had a long stand-

ing history," Bello said. "Nigerian pilots who have went through training here have excelled (and) peaked in their careers."

Bello and his group began their visit by checking out a T-6 Texan II simulator. This was a chance for them to see how the simulators aid student pilots throughout the training process.

After the simulator tour, the group was able to check out the various flying squadrons and learn about their operations and history.

While visiting the flying training squadrons, Bello and his team saw the new virtual reality equipment SUPT pilots are using to train. After giving it a try himself, Bello seemed pleased and excited with the new technology.

"We are very impressed with the innovations and technology used here to help student pilots train," Bello said. "We plan to send more [Nigerian student pilots] here in the future."

Lt. Col. Nathan Smith, 50th Flying Training Squadron commander, met with Bello and his team during their visit and said he thought it was successful.

"It's great for our international partner to visit and understand what their pilot trainee is going through," Smith said. "I think the tour went outstanding, they certainly enjoyed our VR technology that we are starting to incorporate into our training and it sound like they are interested in something like that for their own training."



Maj. James Stillwagon, 37th Flying Training Squadron instructor pilot, shows Squadron Leader Adedamola Onalaja, Nigerian Air Force, how their virtual reality training works Jan. 23, 2019, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The Nigerian Air Force members visited Columbus AFB to check on one of their students and to see the different aspects of pilot training.



Air Vice-Marshal Aliyu Bello, director of training for the Nigerian Air Force, center, speaks with Lt. Col. Nathan Smith, 50th Flying Training Squadron commander Jan. 23, 2019, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Bello and his team visited Columbus AFB to see how their student pilot was progressing in her training.

## Air Force Readiness Programs

(Editor's note: All activities are offered at the Airman & Family Readiness Center unless otherwise specified. For more information about any of the activities listed, call 434-2790.)

### Air Force Recovery Coordination Program

A Recovery Care Coordinator (RCC) will be providing assistance from noon-5 p.m. Feb. 6; 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Feb. 7; and 8 a.m.-noon Feb. 8 at the A&FRC. The Recovery Coordination Program (RCP) streamlines and improves the way care and support is delivered to wounded, ill, and injured Airmen and their families. The RCP provides the support of a RCC who guides the Airman and family along their road to recovery. Those eligible include wounded, ill and injured Airmen who: (1) have a serious illness or injury, (2) are unlikely to return to duty within a specified amount of time, (3) may be medically separated from the military. Additional details are available by contacting the Columbus AFB A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Bundles of Joy

The next Bundles of Joy workshop is from 1-3:30 p.m. Feb. 21 in the A&FRC. This program is designed for active duty AF members and/or their spouses who are pregnant or have a child 4 months old or less. Attendees will learn about finances, labor and delivery, and infant care. A \$50 gift card sponsored by the Air Force Aid Society will be provided for each qualifying child. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Wing Newcomers Orientation

The next Wing Newcomers Orientation is from 8 a.m.-noon Feb. 26. This event is mandatory for all newly arrived active duty and civilian personnel, and spouses are encouraged to attend. The orientation is held at the Columbus Club. To register or for more information, please call the A&FRC Relocation Manager at (662) 434-2701/2790.

### Hearts Apart

The next Hearts Apart is from 5-7 p.m. Feb. 28. This monthly social event is for family members whose sponsor is deployed, on a remote tour or TDY for more than 30 days. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Transition Assistance Program GPS (Goals, Plans, Success) Workshop

The next Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshop is from 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. March 4-8 and includes seminars on: Transition, Military Occupational Code Crosswalk, Financial Planning, Health Benefits, Mississippi Department of Employment Security, Department of Veterans Affairs, Disabled TAP and Department of Labor. Preseparation counseling is required before attending, and recommended at-

## Enlisted Partnership dinner



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Gross

Barbara Bigelow, director of Main Street Columbus and 14th Flying Training Wing honorary commander, talks to attendees during the first Enlisted Partnership dinner Jan. 24, 2019, at Thai by Thai in Columbus, Mississippi. Community civic leaders and 14th FTW leadership welcomed everyone in attendance, adding thanks to everyone who helped make the partnership a reality and hope to continue to make it a better experience for all.

tendance is 12-24 months prior to separation/retirement. Spouses are encouraged to attend with their sponsor. To register or for more information, please call the TAP Manager at (662) 434-2631/2790.

### Career Exploration & Planning Track Workshop

The next Career Exploration & Planning Track workshop is from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. March 11-12 in the A&FRC. This workshop helps members identify skills, increase awareness of training and credentialing programs, and develop an action plan to achieve career goals. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Federal USA Jobs Workshop

The next Federal USA Jobs workshop is from 9-10:30 a.m. March 13. This is a workshop on writing resumes, applications, and job search using the USAJobs website. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Heart Link

The next Heart Link is from 8:30 a.m.-noon April 11 in the A&FRC. This half-day program is open to all spouses of active duty military members assigned to Columbus AFB. Attendees will receive information about life in the Air Force, in the local area and at Columbus AFB from local subject matter experts including spouse leaders. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Entrepreneurship Track Transition Workshop

The next Entrepreneurship Track Transition

workshop is from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. May 9-10. This workshop is conducted by the Small Business Administration for veterans and all base personnel interested starting up and operating their own business. To register or for more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Pre-Separation Counseling

This counseling is a mandatory briefing for personnel separating or retiring, and is to be completed at least 90 days prior to separation. It may be completed up to 12 months prior to separation or 24 months prior to retirement. Counseling is held daily at 8:30 a.m., and it takes approximately 60 minutes. Please contact A&FRC at (662) 434-2790 for more information.

### Employment Workshop

An employment workshop on local and base employment opportunities is held every Wednesday, 1-2 p.m. This program provides military families and DoD civilian members individual assessment and career counseling to assist with local employment, preparation for future endeavors via education, job search, or self-owned business objectives in the local area. For more information, please call A&FRC at (662) 434-2790.

### Personal Financial Readiness

Need help with financial matters? Want to make the most of your money? The Personal Financial Counselor (PFC) can help you and your family: manage finances, resolve financial problems and reach long-term goals such as education, buying a home and planning for retirement. PFC services are at no cost, private and confidential. Please contact the PFC at (662) 998-0411/434-2790 or e-mail PFC.Columbus.

USAF@zeiders.com, located in the A&FRC.

### Key Spouse Program (KSP)

The mission of KSP is to provide information and resources to military spouses, supporting families in successfully navigating through the military life cycle. The KSP is a CC's program. The CC establishes and maintains the program within the unit, to include choosing team members. Once selected as a KS in writing, you will need to attend initial/refresher KS training and continuing education. For more information, please call (662) 434-3323.

### Installation Voting Assistance Office

A&FRC houses the Voting Assistance Office (VAO) which is open Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and closed weekends/holidays. The VAO offers voting assistance including voter registration, absentee ballot requests and voting, change of address, and provides answers for other general voting questions to uniformed service members, their family members and civilians with access to A&FRC. Assistance includes but is not limited to aid in preparing and submitting Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) SF-76, Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) SF-186 and National Mail Voter Registration Form (NVRF). The VAO also leads and trains all installation unit voting assistance officers. For more information, please contact the Installation VAO at (662) 434-2701/2790 or e-mail: vote.columbus@us.af.mil.

## Chapel Schedule

Whether you are new to Columbus Air Force Base or have been around for a while, our parish communities welcome you to join us as we worship, fellowship, and encourage one another. For more information, please call 434-2500.

### Catholic Community

#### Sundays:

3:30 p.m. – Religious Education, grades K-9 (Start in Fall)  
4 p.m. – Choir Practice  
4 p.m. – Confession (or by appointment)  
5 p.m. – Mass  
1st and 3rd Sunday - Fellowship Meal following Mass

#### Tuesdays:

11:30 a.m. – Daily Mass (Phillips Auditorium)

#### Wednesdays:

11:30 a.m. – Adoration (Phillips Auditorium)  
2nd Saturday of each month - Faith Ablaze

### Protestant Community

#### Sundays:

9 a.m. – Adult Sunday School  
10:45 a.m. – Community Worship Service (Donut Fellowship following)  
3rd Sunday of Each Month - Protestant Faith Ablaze

#### Wednesdays:

6 p.m. - AWANA: Begins September 26th (Open to all denominations)

#### Thursdays:

5:30 p.m. – Student Pilot Bible Study (Open to all denominations)

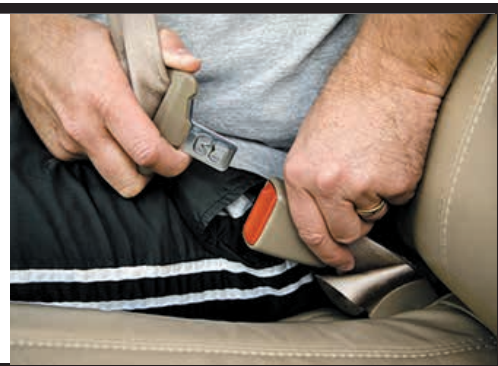
## 14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED

As of press time, 47 TEAM BLAZE members are deployed worldwide. Remember to support the Airmen and their families while they are away.

Deployment numbers provided by the Installation Personnel Readiness Office.



**Buckle  
up!  
It's the  
law.**





# Airpower: A Generational Trust

Col. Bill Denham

14th Flying Training Wing Vice Commander

In the Air Force, we often talk about how airpower is a team sport. Completely true. I like to add that airpower is also a family business – without the support of our families, no Air Force member can get the job done. Furthermore, the Air Force operates as a family by taking care of its own and forging close-knit bonds of friendship that last a lifetime. I want to add a third element for you to consider; airpower is not only a team sport and family business, but also a generational trust.

A generational trust means that all Airmen today stand



on the shoulders of the Airmen that preceded us. One of my favorite examples is how the lessons from aerial combat over Vietnam affected future generations. The fighter pilots who fought in the skies of Vietnam were equipped with aircraft, namely the F-4 and F-105, which were not designed for the role of air superiority and therefore at a disadvantage when entering a turning fight with the more nimble MiG-21. These events fed the development of the F-15 Eagle as a no-compromise air superiority fighter, designed and built according to the philosophy of “not a pound for air-to-ground.” In the next war that required air-to-air combat, Operation Desert Storm in 1991, USAF F-15s scored 34 kills without suffering a single loss. That level of combat dominance was possible not only because of an exceptional aircraft, but primarily because of the lessons learned, the tactics developed, and the countless hours of briefing, flying, and debriefing that took place between the Vietnam War and Desert Storm. Think about the fact that none of the fighter pilots who scored kills

in Desert Storm had ever flown in combat, and certainly had no experience from Vietnam. How did they learn to be so lethal? The most important factor was that the Airmen from Vietnam ensured the next generation was ready to prevail. A generational trust.

What about you? Do you recognize the fact that you, regardless of your specialty or job at Columbus, are part of a long blue line that always has the implied task of preparing the next generation to prevail, no matter the location or intensity of the conflict? All of our attitudes, words, and actions matter on a daily basis. Each and every one of us are truly part of something much bigger than ourselves. Every combat sortie and every weapon employed all around the globe carry a little of all of us. The mighty sword of airpower our nation wields is only sharpened by the proper training of the next generation – across all the specialties.

As a young F-15 pilot, I recall hearing the old Eagle guys recount the lessons they had learned from Vietnam-era fighter pilots. Now I am that old guy, trying to pass on what lessons I have. May it always be said of Team BLAZE that we prize the opportunity to mentor the next generation – the future of airpower for the US and its allies depends on it!

## Commander's Action Line 434-1414

In an effort to stay Connected, the Commander's Action Line is your direct link to the commander for comments and suggestions on how to make Columbus AFB better.

Although the Commander's Action Line is always available, the best way to resolve problems is through the chain-of-command. The Commander's Action Line can be reached at 434-1414. Leave your name and phone number or email if you would like to receive an answer. All names will be kept confidential.

If you would like to remain anonymous, please submit your inquiries through our base application in the 'Our Wing' then 'Contact the CC' tab or you can submit through the webpage at [www.columbus.af.mil](http://www.columbus.af.mil). Click "Contact Us" at the top left of the page and select "Commander's Action Line" in the Recipient drop down menu.



U.S. Air Force photos by Melissa Doublin

**Richard “Sonic” Johnson, former 14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs chief, addresses those in attendance during his retirement ceremony at the Kaye Auditorium Jan. 25, 2019, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Johnson served as the 14th FTW Public Affairs chief since 2004.**



**Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Stephen Wilson pins the Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award onto Richard “Sonic” Johnson, former 14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs chief, during Johnson's retirement ceremony at the Kaye Auditorium Jan. 25, 2019, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Wilson officiated the retirement ceremony.**

## VCSAF makes stop at Columbus AFB to retire former PA chief

Airman Hannah Bean

14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Stephen Wilson visited Columbus Air Force Base Jan. 25 to officiate the retirement ceremony of Richard “Sonic” Johnson, the former 14th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs chief.

Wilson, a former BLAZE 1, reminisced about his time here as the wing commander from 2004-2006 and his working relationship with Johnson. He said over the years Johnson has provided countless advice and mentoring hours to many wing commanders, young pilots and many others who have had an opportunity to work with him.

“Not one, not two, not three, but 11 wing commanders have relied on Sonic over the years,” Wilson said. “We relied on him as it has become increasingly more important on how we communicate in this digital fishbowl era.”

With Columbus AFB being one of the busiest pilot training bases, Wilson said the wing required the very best support staff and that's what Johnson was in the public affairs realm.

“All those wings commanders relied on him because they trusted him,” Wilson said. “They trusted him with fostering relationships. Relationships that communicate our mission and is able to speak in a language that we all can understand.”

Wilson went on to showcase the impact Johnson had on the base over the years as chief of public affairs.

Wilson noted that the Johnson had the tools and knowledge in hand to build a legacy that influences not only Airmen, but the community around it as well. One of those programs Johnson initiated that is still widely popular today is the Pilot Partner Program. The program helps connect pilots that are

just starting Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training with the community. A community business typically sponsors a class.

“It might be what right looks like, and a model program of how you build both base and community relationship and make both of them better,” Wilson said.

Wilson added that Johnson's ability to connect, build trust and establish relationships sets him apart from others and it's been unmatched.

“When I look back at my time here, and Katrina struck while we were here, it was Sonic who wielded his rolodex of common sense to help rally all of us to help those in need the most,” Wilson said. “That's when he stepped in and just did it. He did really amazing things.”

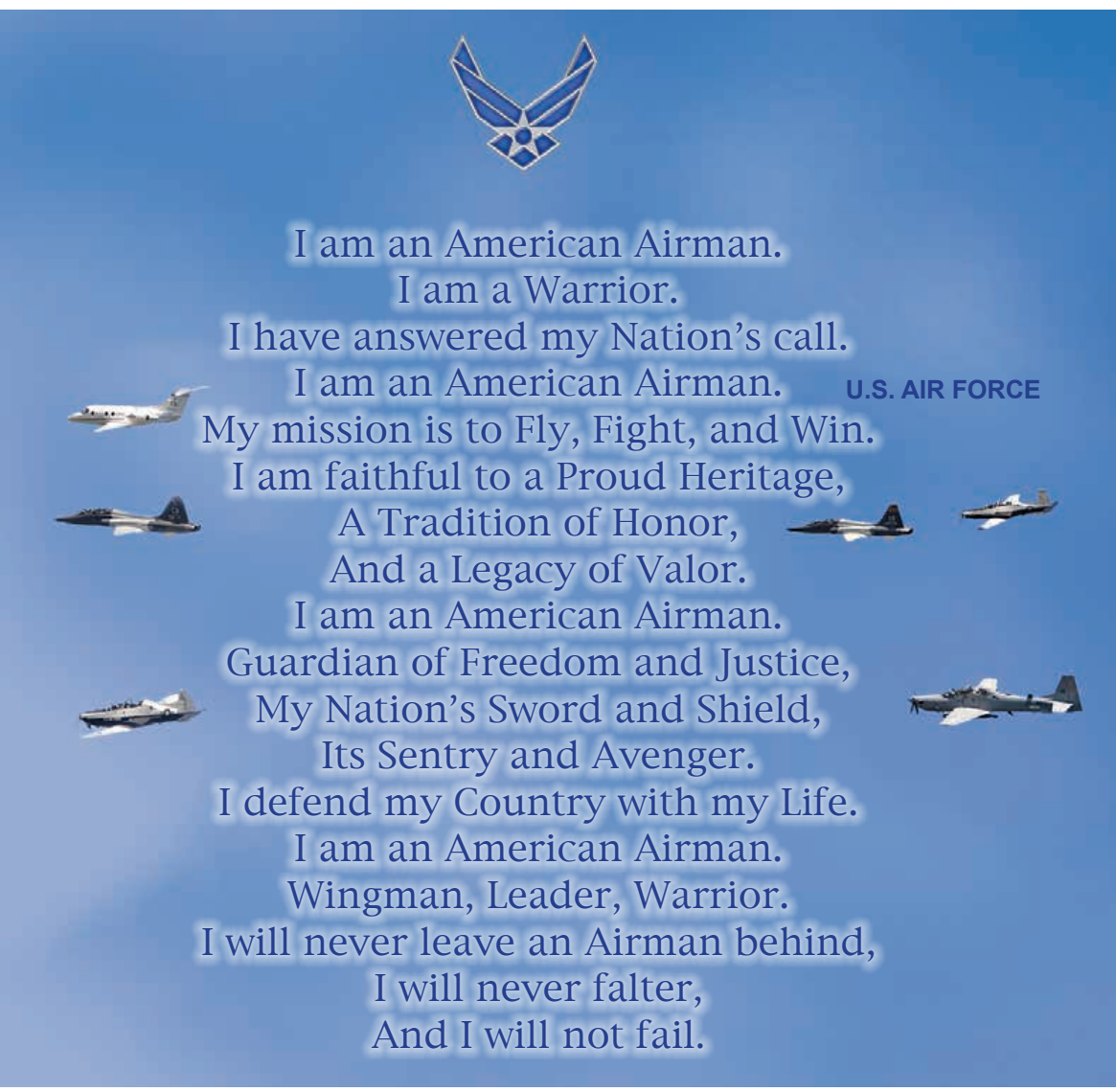
At the end of his speech Wilson thanked Johnson for all that he has done for tens of thousands of people and added that Columbus, Mississippi sets the bar for community relationships on how to do it right.

Upon receiving his retirement pin and the Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award, Johnson thanked all those in attendance, which included past commanders, wingman and members of the local. Johnson's commitment to enhance relationships between the community and base has helped commanders and community leaders to connect and also learn from one another.

Johnson, who also served for more than 22 years as an active-duty Air Force pilot, said he enjoyed his time as the public affairs chief, a position he assumed in 2004. However, he said it was time that he invest time back into his family, who has also sacrificed so much for him during his active-duty and civil service careers.



**Col. Samantha Weeks, 14th Flying Training Wing commander, hands Richard “Sonic” Johnson, former 14th FTW Public Affairs chief, a retirement memento during his retirement reception Jan. 25, 2019, on Columbus AFB, Mississippi. The photo was surrounded by almost all of the student patches from Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training classes since he was the public affairs chief at Columbus AFB.**





# What's a 1Charlie?

**Airman 1st Class Keith Holcomb**  
14th Flying Training Wing  
Public Affairs

Student and instructor pilots line the step desk as they organize their first flights for the day; through the window, the Mississippi sun can be seen casting a golden glow on aircraft as maintainers inspect and prepare them for launch.

Continuous clicks of a mouse can be heard as an airman first class and a major check flight statuses to ensure the pilots are cleared to take off for their training mission. Two buildings over, three Airmen are simultaneously thoroughly inspecting, correcting and updating hundreds of pilots' paperwork before they even step on the flightline.

These meticulous Airmen are commonly referred to as '1Charlies' based on the Air Force specialty code, 1C0X2, aviation resource managers.

Though making sure paperwork is satisfactory seems mundane or easy, allowing someone to fly without the right training can lead to incidents or worse. Staff Sgt. Michael Smith, 49th Fighter Training Squadron NCO in charge of aviation resource management, explained this career field demands attention to detail and stresses no Airmen should ever become careless of their work.

A 1Charlie can work in a variety of areas. Those assigned to flying training squadrons handle squadron aviation resource management (SARM) documents and day to day training missions.

"Coming to work in the squadron, you see how valuable you are to the flying missions," said Senior Airman Kelsey Ganter, 37th Flying Training Squadron aviation resource manager. "(Pilots) can't leave unless we see confirm their flight documents are correct. Catching the small things and making sure they are flying safe is really rewarding."

The 14th Operations Support Squadron 1Charlies work in the host aviation resource management office. There, they in-process new students and out-process graduated U.S. Air Force pilots.

Each 1Charlie is not only responsible for their work, but their wingman's work too. Double or triple checking coworker's documents is not only critical to a successful flying mission, it's required.



U.S. Air Force photos by  
Airman 1st Class Keith Holcomb

**Airman 1st Class Joseph Lucero, 14th Operations Support Squadron host aviation resource manager, helps a captain with flight records Jan. 30, 2019, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. The 14th OSS host aviation resource management (HARM) office will in process students and out process graduated U.S. Air Force pilots.**

Our team keeps track of each pilot's flying records, said Airman 1st Class Joseph Lucero, 14th OSS host aviation resource manager (HARM). The 1Charlies here create the student's first folders that holds information from their flight hours, total sorties, aircraft flown, flight pay, medical documents, aeronautical orders and more.

At the end of student pilots' time on Columbus AFB, HARMs do a final process of their documents and give them their pilot rating. It's a folder that will follow them around for the rest of their career.

"Getting to work with aircrew and pilots is always a really good time," Smith said. "As long as you have their trust and do what you're supposed to do they're going to have your back when you have to unfortunately tell someone they can't fly that day for whatever reason."



**Senior Airman Brianna Cook, 37th Flying Training Squadron aviation resource manager, checks pilots' currencies (flight documents) before a training mission Jan. 30, 2019, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Aviation resource management specialist Airmen are commonly referred to as '1Charlies' based on the Air Force specialty code - 1C0X2.**

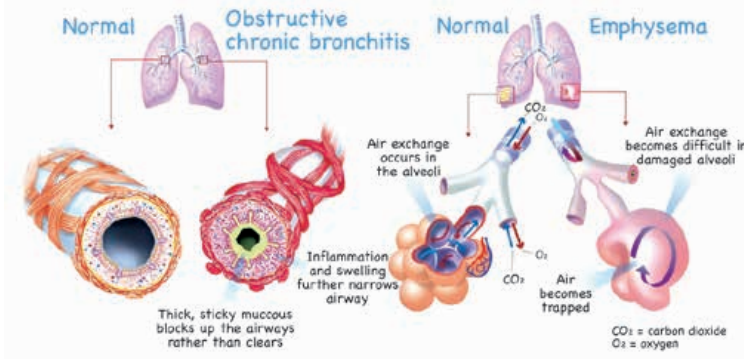


**Senior Airman Chelsee Vargne, 49th Fighter Training Squadron aviation resource manager, checks pilots' flight records before a training mission Jan. 30, 2019, on Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Aviation resource managers that are assigned to flying training squadrons handle squadron aviation resource management documents and day to day training missions.**

## Medical Corner HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

### COPD is a preventable disease

Smoking is the biggest risk factor for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema. It increases your risk of both developing and dying from COPD. Approximately 85 to 90 percent of COPD cases are caused by smoking. Female smokers are nearly 13 times as likely to die from COPD as women who have never smoked; male smokers are nearly 12 times as likely to die from COPD as men who have never smoked.



#### Other risk factors for COPD include:

- Exposure to air pollution
- Breathing secondhand smoke
- Working with chemicals, dust and fumes
- A history of childhood respiratory infection

#### If you are concerned about getting COPD, there are steps you can take to protect yourself:

- If you are a smoker, STOP SMOKING. Quitting smoking is the single most important thing a smoker can do to live a longer and healthier life.
- If you don't smoke, don't start. Smoking causes COPD, lung cancer, heart disease and other cancers.
- Avoid exposure to secondhand smoke. Make your home smoke-free. You'll not only protect yourself, but your family too.
- Be aware of other dangers. Take care to protect yourself against chemicals, dust and fumes in your home and at work.

#### Key Points:

- COPD is chronic. In other words, you live with it every day.
- It can cause serious long-term disability and early death.
- There is no cure for COPD, but it is often preventable and treatable.
- COPD is sometimes referred to as chronic bronchitis or emphysema.

Preventing COPD. Retrieved from <https://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/copd/symptoms-causes-risk-factors/preventing-copd.html>.

#### Ready to quit smoking in 2019?

**Every smoker has his or her own personal motivation for quitting. Think about what is most important to you.**

**Your Health.** According to the Surgeon General, quitting smoking is the single most important step a smoker can take to improve the length and quality of his or her life. As soon as you quit, your body begins to repair the damage caused by smoking.

**Your Wallet.** It's expensive to smoke cigarettes. In some places, a pack of cigarettes costs more than \$10—and prices keep rising. Even if a pack costs "only" \$5 where you live, smoking one pack per day adds up to \$1,825.00 each year.

**Your Convenience.** Smoking is a hassle. More and more states and cities have passed clean indoor air laws that make bars, restaurants, and other public places smokefree.

**Your Friends and Family.** Cigarette smoke harms everyone who inhales it, not just the smoker. Whether you're young or old and in good health or bad, secondhand smoke is dangerous and can make you sick. Children who live with smokers get more chest colds and ear infections, while babies born to mothers who smoke have an increased risk of premature delivery, low birth weight and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Life is just better as a nonsmoker!

**Reasons to Quit Smoking.** Retrieved from <https://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/i-want-to-quit/reasons-to-quit-smoking.html>

### A personal message from your health promotion Health Myth Busting Team



Dear Health Myth Busters,  
*I just had a visit with my doctor because of a cough that won't go away. The doctor said that I have bronchitis because I smoke. I thought I was coughing because of the winter weather. Look, I've been smoking since I was in 9th grade. I hear people say that smoking might cause lung cancer later in life for some people. I'm 29. I never heard about any problems at my age.*

Sincerely,  
Still a Youngster

Dear Youngster,  
Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease. There are some serious long term effects of smoking, such as cancer and emphysema. There are also serious effects that start earlier such as asthma, colds, wheezing, and pneumonia.

Smoking affects your entire body and can cause problems with your blood pressure, heart, brain lungs, stomach, skin, bones, reproductive system, mouth and throat.

The good news is that you can halt or even reverse some of these effects by quitting tobacco. It is never too early or too late to quit. January is a time that a lot of people make resolutions. Quitting smoking is a healthy resolution and there are lots of resources to help you achieve that goal. Talk with your healthcare provider about available nicotine replacement therapy or medications to assist you. Your health care provider will have information about other resources to help you.  
**Here are some resources to get you started:**

Learn what counseling services, tobacco cessation products and other resources are available to help you quit. Visit <https://tricare.mil/HealthWellness/Tobacco>.

Get the support, tips, tools and expert advice you need to quit smoking long-term. Visit <https://smokefree.gov/>. Learn more about tobacco and its health effects, and find resources to help you quit. Visit <https://betobaccofree.hhs.gov/>.

Call to connect directly to your state's quit line. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) or visit <http://map.naquitline.org/> for more information on state quit lines. Call 1-844-426-3733 or visit <https://www.freedomquitline.org/> to see if you are eligible as a TRICARE beneficiary to get smoking cessation counseling and free nicotine replacement therapy.

Wishing you a healthy New Year.  
Sincerely,  
Health Myth Busters



# BLAZE Hangar Tails: U-2 Dragon Lady

## Mission

The U-2 Dragon Lady provides high-altitude, all-weather surveillance and reconnaissance, day or night, in direct support of U.S. and allied forces. It delivers critical imagery and signals intelligence to decision makers throughout all phases of conflict, including peacetime indications and warnings, low-intensity conflict, and large-scale hostilities.

## Features

The U-2 is a single-seat, single-engine, high-altitude/near space reconnaissance and surveillance aircraft providing signals, imagery, and electronic measurements and signature intelligence, or MASINT. Long and narrow wings give the U-2 glider-like characteristics and allow it to quickly lift heavy sensor payloads to unmatched altitudes, keeping them there for extended periods of time. The U-2 is capable of gathering a variety of imagery, including multi-spectral electro-optic, infrared, and synthetic aperture radar products which can be stored or sent to ground exploitation centers. In addition, it also supports high-resolution, broad-area synoptic coverage provided by the optical bar camera producing traditional film products which are developed and analyzed after landing.

The U-2 also carries a signals intelligence payload. All intelligence products except for wet film can be transmitted in near real-time anywhere in the world via air-to-ground or air-to-satellite data links, rapidly providing critical information to combatant commanders. MASINT provides indications of recent activity in areas of interest and reveals efforts to conceal the placement or true nature of man-made objects.

Routinely flown at altitudes over 70,000 feet, the U-2 pilot must wear a full pressure suit similar to those worn by astronauts. The low-altitude handling characteristics of the aircraft and bicycle-type landing gear require precise control inputs during landing; forward visibility is also limited due to the extended aircraft nose and “taildragger” configura-

tion. A second U-2 pilot normally “chases” each landing in a high-performance vehicle, assisting the pilot by providing radio inputs for altitude and runway alignment. These characteristics combine to earn the U-2 a widely accepted title as the most difficult aircraft in the world to fly.

The U-2 is powered by a lightweight, fuel efficient General Electric F118-101 engine, which negates the need for air refueling on long duration missions. The U-2S Block 10 electrical system upgrade replaced legacy wiring with advanced fiber-optic technology and lowered the overall electronic noise signature to provide a quieter platform for the newest generation of sensors.

The aircraft has the following sensor packages: electro-optical infrared camera, optical bar camera, advanced synthetic aperture radar, signals intelligence, and network-centric communication.

A U-2 Reliability and Maintainability Program provided a complete redesign of the cockpit with digital color multi-function displays and up-front avionics controls to replace the 1960s-vintage round dial gauges which were no longer supportable.

## Background

Built in complete secrecy by Kelly Johnson and the Lockheed Skunk Works, the original U-2A first flew in August 1955. Early flights over the Soviet Union in the late 1950s provided the president and other U.S. decision makers with key intelligence on Soviet military capability. In October 1962, the U-2 photographed the buildup of Soviet offensive nuclear missiles in Cuba, touching off the Cuban Missile Crisis. In more recent times, the U-2 has provided intelligence during operations in Korea, the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq. When requested, the U-2 also provides peacetime reconnaissance in support of disaster relief from floods, earthquakes, and forest fires as well as search and rescue opera-

tions.

The U-2R, first flown in 1967, was 40 percent larger and more capable than the original aircraft. A tactical reconnaissance version, the TR-1A, first flew in August 1981 and was structurally identical to the U-2R. The last U-2 and TR-1 aircraft were delivered in October 1989; in 1992 all TR-1s and U-2s were designated as U-2Rs. Since 1994, \$1.7 billion has been invested to modernize the U-2 airframe and sensors. These upgrades also included the transition to the GE F118-101 engine which resulted in the re-designation of all Air Force U-2 aircraft to the U-2S.

U-2s are home based at the 9th Reconnaissance Wing, Beale Air Force Base, California, but are rotated to operational detachments worldwide. U-2 pilots are trained at Beale using five two-seat aircraft designated as TU-2S before deploying for operational missions.

## General characteristics

**Primary function:** high-altitude reconnaissance  
**Contractor:** Lockheed Martin Aeronautics  
**Power plant:** one General Electric F118-101 engine  
**Thrust:** 17,000 pounds  
**Wingspan:** 105 feet (32 meters)  
**Length:** 63 feet (19.2 meters)  
**Height:** 16 feet (4.8 meters)  
**Weight:** 16,000 pounds  
**Maximum takeoff weight:** 40,000 pounds (18,000 kilograms)  
**Fuel capacity:** 2,950 gallons  
**Payload:** 5,000 pounds  
**Speed:** 410 mph  
**Range:** more than 7,000 miles (6,090 nautical miles)  
**Ceiling:** above 70,000 feet (21,212+ meters)  
**Crew:** one (two in trainer models)  
**Unit cost:** classified  
**Initial operating capability:** 1956  
**Inventory:** active force, 33 (5 two-seat trainers and two ER-2s operated by NASA); Reserve, 0; ANG, 0



A U-2 Dragon Lady flies a training mission Sept. 12, 2018, at Beale Air Force Base, California. The 9th Reconnaissance Wing is responsible for training U-2 pilots, so they can deploy to one of the many downrange components of the wing. While deployed the U-2 provides high-altitude reconnaissance in support of U.S. and allied forces.



A U-2 Dragon Lady and T-38 Talons fly in formation during the Capitol City Airshow at Mather Airfield, California, Sept. 22, 2018. The T-38s are used in a companion program with the U-2 designed to allow U-2 pilots to keep their flying hours current.

U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Tristan D. Viglianco

## Scholarships for Military Children entries due soon

Application deadline Feb. 15

Mike Perron

DeCA public affairs specialist



FORT LEE, Va. – Students should be finishing up their preparations to apply for one of the 500 available \$2000 Fisher House Foundation Scholarships for Military Children, as the deadline is approaching. Applications are being accepted through Friday, Feb. 15.

The Scholarships for Military Children Program was created in 2001 to recognize the contributions of military families to the readiness of the fighting force and to celebrate the role of the commissary in the military family community. The program is administered by Fisher House Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides assistance to service members and their families.

This year is the first in which the entire application process is online, said Jim Weiskopf, Fisher House vice president. “We are excited with the initial results from the online application process. We can track, in real time, the number of applications started and completed at each commissary. We are on target for another highly competitive selection year.”

Eligibility for the program is determined using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database. Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current military dependent ID card. The applicant must also be planning to attend or already be attending an accredited college or university, full time, in the fall of 2019 or be enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program.

Applicants who are awarded a full scholarship to attend a college or university or receive an appointment to one of the military academies or affiliated preparatory schools are not eligible to receive funds from this program. A full scholarship is usually defined as one that provides for payment of tuition, books, lab fees and other expenses.

Among requirements of the application process is providing a short essay. This year’s request is military lifestyle-related: “Please cite two examples of how being a child of a military service member has influenced your educational goals.”

All rules and requirements for the program, as well as links to frequently asked questions and the application are available at MilitaryScholar.org.

Fisher House also recently added a custom scholarship search engine to the site, tailored to military families, called “Scholarships for Service.” It’s free, easy to use, and available on mobile devices or computers at militaryscholar.org.

Students enter brief background information and educational goals and the search tool will identify military-affiliated scholarships they may be eligible for based on their input. Once the search is complete, students receive a list of scholarships with a summary of eligibility requirements, points of contact and links to the scholarship provider’s website. Students can elect to have a PDF file of the results immediately emailed to them for use in selecting which scholarships to apply for.

The Scholarships for Military Children program is managed by Scholarship Managers, a national, nonprofit organization. If students have questions about the scholarship program application, they should call Scholarship Managers at 856-616-9311 or email them to militaryscholar@scholarshipmanagers.com.

No government funds are used to support the Scholarships for Military Children Program. Commissary vendors, manufacturers, brokers, suppliers and the general public donate money to fund the program.

## ‘Tell us your story’ From Feb. 1-28, commissary, exchange patrons can compete for a scholarship honoring historic Tuskegee Airman

Kevin L. Robinson

DeCA public affairs specialist

FORT LEE, Va. – In observance of Black History Month, commissary and exchange patrons will be eligible to enter a social media contest telling their military service story for a chance to win one \$5,000 or one of three \$1,000 scholarships.

The “Share Your Service Story” contest, sponsored by Coca-Cola in partnership with the USO and Mondelez International, honors the legacy of Tuskegee Airman Maj. Charles B. Hall, the first African-American pilot to shoot down an enemy plane during World War II.

To enter, participants must be authorized commissary and exchange patrons. They must submit their story in one of two ways on social media from Feb. 1-28:

Create a Tweet including a photo or video (maximum 2 minutes in length) telling a little of “your service story” or the service story of one of your relatives and share it on Twitter including the hashtag #ShareYourServiceStoryContest (your “Submission”).

Create an Instagram post including a photo or video (maximum 2 minutes in length) telling a little of “your service story” or the service story of one of your relatives and share it on Instagram including the hashtag #ShareYourServiceStoryContest (your “Submission”).

Once the contest period begins, military resale patrons will see contest displays in their local commissaries and exchanges. Also, on Feb. 1, Coca-Cola’s “Tell Us Your Story” webpage will be active for more information on contest rules.

“Maj. Hall’s service as a Tuskegee Airman is historic and inspiring,” said retired Rear Adm. Robert J. Bianchi, DOD special assistant for commissary operations as well as director and CEO of the Navy Exchange Command. “This contest not only gives back to our military community with substantial scholarships but also gives our patrons a chance to share their awesome stories of military service.”

Coca-Cola became aware of Hall’s story by way of a photo in the National Air and Space Archives of him holding a bottle of Coke after a mission during the war, said Michael R. Pelletier, Coca-Cola North America senior shopper and marketing manager.

“What we found was this incredible story of Major Charles B. Hall, it was an amazing story and one that we felt needed to be told,” Pelletier said. “In a time of segregation in his own country Hall not only fought for his freedom but he also fought for us all. “So many of us grew up learning about the amazing



Maj. Charles B. Hall

achievements of Dr. Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Jesse Owens and many, many more influential African American change agents,” he added, “but who has heard of Major Charles B. Hall? We have an amazing story to tell, and we’re going to honor Major Hall by telling his story and inspiring others to tell us their service history as well.”

Hall’s story began with the 99th Pursuit Squadron in Tuskegee, Alabama, the first group of African-American pilots in World War II, historically known as the Tuskegee Airmen. The Tuskegee Airmen’s combat record is legendary: They shot down 112 enemy aircraft, and the pilots were awarded 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 744 Air Medals, eight Purple Hearts and 14 Bronze Stars.

The 99th deployed to French Morocco in April 1943. On July 2, then 1st Lt. Hall entered the history books when he shot down two German fighters while his squadron was escorting U.S. bombers over Sicily.

Hall would eventually fly 198 combat missions over North Africa, Italy and other areas in Europe. By the end of the war, he had been promoted to major and became the first African-American to be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

His story is a pivotal part of the progress African Americans made in their journey to be treated as equal members of the military, said Mahlon Smith, president, Charles B. Hall Chapter, Tuskegee Airmen Inc., Oklahoma City.

“This program gives deserved recognition to Maj. Charles B. Hall for service to his country while fighting the myths and segregations of the armed forces in the U.S.,” Smith said. “His actions that day helped to bring about the diversity currently in our military that make it second to none. Our chapter is proud to carry his name and that legacy through our youth programs and community education of the Tuskegee Airmen.”

After his military service, Hall moved to Oklahoma City, where he worked with the Federal Aviation Administration on nearby Tinker Air Force Base until his death on Nov. 22, 1971.

For Hall’s daughter, Kelli Jones, her father’s legacy is something she hopes will resonate with a new generation of youth. “This program is so important because it has the ability to reach young people who can read my dad’s story and hopefully be inspired to reach their own dreams.”



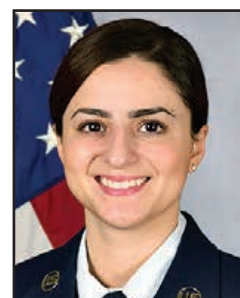
# 2018 Annual Award Nominees



## Airman of the Year



**Senior Airman Glen Simmons**  
14th Operations Group



**Senior Airman Kiara Rodriguez**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Staff Sgt. Jonathan Rosales**  
14th Medical Group



**Senior Airman Andrew Langness**  
14th Wing Staff Agencies

## Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year



**Tech. Sgt. Curtis Bingham**  
14th Operations Group



**Tech. Sgt. Quincy Harris**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Staff Sgt. Bryce Cook**  
14th Medical Group



**Tech. Sgt. Aubery Daniels**  
14th Wing Staff Agencies

## Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year



**Master Sgt. Charles Virgil**  
14th Operations Group



**Master Sgt. Kevin McGinnis**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Master Sgt. Latoria Mathis**  
14th Medical Group



**Master Sgt. Angelique McCreary**  
14th Wing Staff Agencies

## Company-Grade Officer of the Year



**Capt. Joel McKenzie**  
14th Operations Group



**2nd Lt. Riley Quinlan**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Capt. Daniel Wilson**  
14th Medical Group



**1st Lt. Kara Crennan**  
14th Wing Staff Agencies

## Field-Grade Officer of the Year



**Maj. Eric Scott**  
14th Operations Group



**Maj. Stephen Osakue, Jr.**  
14th Medical Group



**Maj. Ryan Brewer**  
14th Wing Staff Agencies

## Flight Commander of the Year



**Maj. Nicholas Ervin**  
14th Operations Group



**2nd Lt. Riley Quinlan**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Capt. Jamion Lewis**  
14th Medical Group

## First Sergeant of the Year

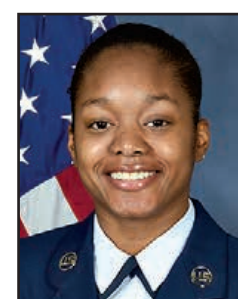


**Master Sgt. David Pennington**  
14th Operations Group



**Master Sgt. Nathan Sullivan**  
14th Medical Group

## Honor Guardsman of the Year



**Senior Airman Kelsey Ganter**  
14th Operations Group



**Senior Airman Kichae Farr**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Staff Sgt. Brianna Brown**  
14th Medical Group



**Ms. Pamela Brantzeg**  
14th Operations Group



**Ms. Cristy Treece**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Mr. David Ross**  
14th Medical Group

## Category I (Sup) Civilian of the Year



**Mr. Will Gray**  
14th Mission Support Group

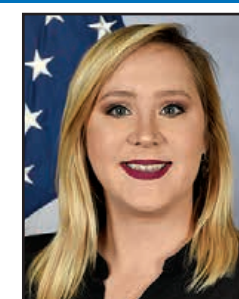
## Category II (NS) Civilian of the Year



**Ms. Emily Pennington**  
14th Operations Group



**Ms. Latoria Reid**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Ms. Torrie Gates**  
14th Medical Group



**Ms. Billie Jo Spears**  
14th Wing Staff Agencies

## Category II (Sup) Civilian of the Year



**Mr. James Rackley**  
14th Mission Support Group

## Category III (NS) Civilian of the Year



**Mr. Benjamin Pitts**  
14th Operations Group



**Mr. Timothy Turner**  
14th Mission Support Group



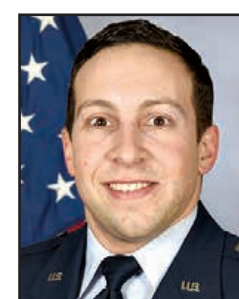
**Mr. William Cunningham**  
14th Wing Staff Agencies



**Mr. Kevin Billingsley**  
14th Operations Group



**Mr. Randall Bailey**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Maj. Joseph Halpern**  
14th Operations Group



**Mr. Jeff Johnwick**  
14th Mission Support Group

## Team Innovation of the Year



**Transition Flight**  
14th Operations Group



**Comm Operations**  
14th Mission Support Group



**Resource Management Office**  
14th Medical Group



**Spark Cell**  
14th Wing Staff Agencies