

SnapShot

944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona

May 2015 Newsletter



Headlines:

The significance of Memorial Day

Quarterly award winners

924th FG honors DCC's with ceremony

SecAF delivers message of confidence

EOD Airmen sharpen skill set



944th Fighter Wing

Monthly SnapShot

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Bringing the Heat

May 2015

944 FW KEY LEADERS

Commander

Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

Vice Commander

Col. Robert D. Whitehouse

Command Chief

CMSgt. Rhonda L. Hutson

944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot

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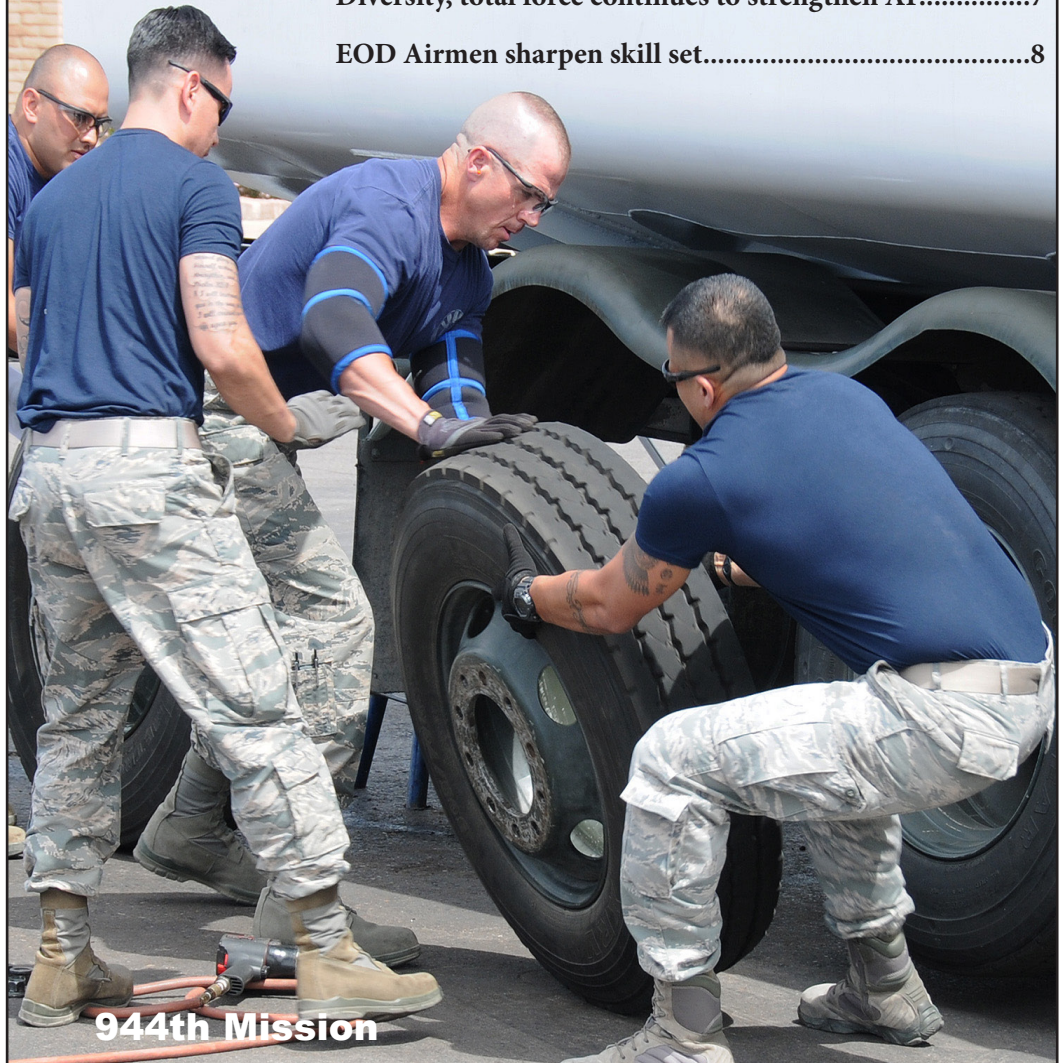
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944th Mission

Train and provide Combat-Ready Airmen.

Mission ■ Airmen ■ Family

Fuels Specialist from the 944th LRS, Luke Air Force Base, compete in a tire changing competition during the Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants Roadeo held at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. April 11, 2015. (U.S. Air Force photo taken by Staff Sgt. Joshua Nason)



The significance of Memorial Day

By Colonel Kurt J. Gallegos, 944th Fighter Wing Commander

Like clockwork every year, the Memorial Day long weekend kicks-off the 101 days of summer safety and the summer vacation season. I would like to take a moment to reflect on Memorial Day and why we celebrate the holiday.

A lot of us relate the holiday weekend with a time to have fun with family and friends. But why is Memorial Day a federal holiday?

The holiday, which is observed every year on the last Monday of May, was formerly known as Decoration Day and originated after the American Civil War to commemorate the Union and Confederate soldiers who died during the war. Eventually, Memorial Day extended to honor all Americans who died while in military service.

Memorial Day is not to be confused with Veterans Day, which celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans. Many of us have family and friends who have died serving our country and use the holiday to visit cemeteries and memorials.

According to the *usmemorialday.org* website, in the traditional observance of the holiday, the United States flag is raised to the top of the staff and then solemnly lowered to the half-staff position, where it remains until noon. It is then raised to full-staff for the remainder of the day. The half-staff position is in remembrance of the more than one million men and women who have given their lives in service of their country. At noon, their memory is raised by the living, who resolve not to let their sacrifice be in vain, but to rise up in their stead and continue the fight for liberty and justice for all.

I hope each of you enjoy the holiday with the people you love, however you choose. I just ask that you also take time to recognize and observe the holiday for what it was intended and teach your young ones the significance of the day.

On that note, I want to wish you a safe, fun filled holiday with family and friends. Remember to drink responsibly and have each others six. Have a great UTA!



Photo by Staff Sgt. Joshua Nason

Plan for the unexpected and stay safe

By Chief Master Sgt. Rhonda Hutson, 944th Fighter Wing Command Chief
944th Warriors!

Wow, where has the year gone. It seems like just yesterday we were talking about the Holidays and now the school year is drawing to an end and summer vacations are right around the corner.

You all know about the 101 days of summer...well, if you're from Phoenix, it's more like the 202 days of summer. In any case, I am going to spend a few minutes talking about safety. Last year we talked about the elements of mental resiliency which included sound decision making. One of the best ways to ensure you make sound decisions during your summer activities is to plan ahead. From simple things like sun block and hats to ensuring you are properly equipped and prepared for summer activities, planning ahead will greatly increase your ability to safely enjoy the summer with friends and family. If you only plan for the expected, the unexpected can ruin your day. When you are planning activities, think through what might go wrong and think about what you can do to lessen the impact if something does go wrong. Take emergency kits, foul weather gear, extra food and water. Just thinking about what could go wrong will make you better mentally prepared should the unexpected occur. So what else should you be thinking about:

Water. Remember to stay hydrated. Make sure you have plenty of water available and that you and your companions drink lots of it.

Alcohol. Enjoy it appropriately but never when driving, boating, biking or participating in other similar activities where alertness and motor reflex are critical to your safety and the safety of others. Always have a designated driver.

Rest. Don't drive if you aren't properly rested and don't try to cover more ground than is reasonable in a day. If you get tired, stop or switch drivers.

Have a Wingman. Don't go it alone. Make sure someone is with you and that others know where you are.

Be alert. Even if you are on the top of your game, mentally alert and physically rested, others may not be. Be ready for the unexpected from those who didn't plan as well as you. The Air Force recently had a very sad occurrence that highlights the importance of this. On April 19, Tech Sgt. Michael Johannsen, a remotely piloted vehicle senior operator with the 91st Attack Squadron, Creech Air Force Base, Nevada, was killed in an auto accident. According to Nevada Highway Patrol reports, Johannsen's vehicle was struck head-on by a driver approaching in the wrong lane. The driver of the other vehicle was also killed.

Plan ahead. Plan for the unexpected and stay safe. Enjoy your summer vacation with your family and friends and be safe. You all are highly valued members of the greatest Wing in the U.S. Air Force and I want every single one of you back on the job each month.

Til next month



AFRC/Wing News

Maj. Gen. Richard Scobee, 10th Air Force commander, receives his second star today at a ceremony held on Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base, Texas.

To his left is his wife, Janis, and on his right is his mother who pinned on his newest stars before an audience of his family, friends and peers.

Courtesy photo



May 2015 promotions: Congratulations to the following 944th Fighter Wing promotees

From Airman First Class:

SRA John Shope, 414 MXS
SRA Sandy St. John, 924 MXS



From Senior Airman:

SSGT Melinda Charlton, 944 FSS
SSGT Jamie Gerardo, 944 LRS
SSGT Aaron Ruthford, 414 MXS



From Staff Sergeant:

TSGT Ryan Garstang, 414 MXS
TSGT Ramon Nuno, 414 MXS



From Technical Sergeant:

MSGT Burton Piper, 944 MSG
MSGT Benjamin Smith, 414 MXS



From Captain:

MAJ Christopher Bisdnack, 944 FW
MAJ Jeffrey Cohen, 944 MDS
MAJ Jason Gentry, 307 FS
MAJ Craig Lussier, 944 MDS
MAJ Derrick Young, 944 FSS



**944TH FIGHTER WING
COMMANDER'S CALL
SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2015
1100 HRS**

BRINGING THE HEAT

**HANGAR 999
A BURGER BURN SPONSORED BY
THE TOP 3 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWS**

Wing Quarterly Award Winners

Congratulations to our Wing Quarterly Award Winners for the 1st Quarter!

Airman of the Quarter:

Senior Airman Brianna Creveling,
944th Medical Squadron

Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter:

Technical Sergeant Brandall Selewesta,
944th Civil Engineering Squadron

Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter:

Master Sergeant Miguel Gonzales,
944th Medical Squadron

Company Grade Officer of the Quarter:

First Lieutenant Julie Browne,
944th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

Field Grade Officer of the Quarter:

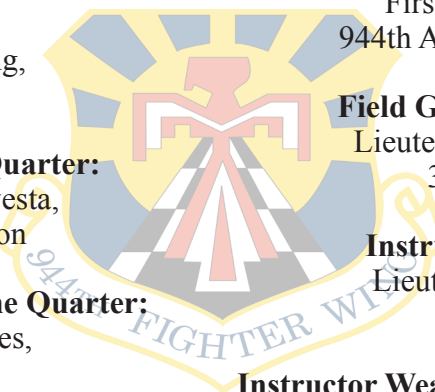
Lieutenant Colonel Eric Ostendorf,
307th Fighter Squadron

Instructor Pilot of the Quarter:

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Brown,
47th Fighter Squadron

Instructor Weapons Safety Officer of the Quarter:

Major Heron Weidner,
307th Fighter Squadron





AF sends aircraft to support disaster-assistance operations in Nepal

By DoD News, Defense Media Activity

The U.S. has sent an Air Force aircraft to Nepal to deliver personnel and cargo in support of disaster-relief operations, according to Pentagon spokesman Army Col. Steve Warren.

A 7.9-magnitude earthquake hit the country yesterday, reportedly leaving almost 2,500 dead, about 6,000 injured and thousands more still missing. In addition, thousands of people are currently reported to be without food, water or shelter.

“This morning at approximately 11:18 a.m., a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster (III) departed from Dover Air Force Base bound for Nepal,” Warren said in a statement released April 26. “The aircraft is transporting nearly 70 personnel, including

a USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team, the Fairfax County Urban Search and Rescue team and several journalists, along with 45 square tons of cargo.”

The flight is expected to arrive at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal, on April 27, according to Warren.

The initial estimated cost for the U.S. Defense Department’s support is approximately \$700,000, and there are currently no additional requests for DOD support, officials said on background.

There are 26 DOD personnel and one U.S. C-130 Hercules in Nepal who were there to conduct a previously scheduled training exercise. All DOD personnel in Nepal are accounted for, officials said.



Courtesy Photo

924th FG honors DCC’s with ceremony

By Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The 924th Fighter Group honored thirteen of their finest 924th Maintenance Squad-crew chief’s April 11 during a dedicated crew chief ceremony, at the 924th MXS hangar.

A DCC is a crew chief that is assigned to an aircraft and is responsible for all the main-tenance actions on it until either the aircraft is no longer in commission or the crew chief is longer with the squadron or is promoted to a supervisory position.

Each DCC was presented a certificate acknowledging the occasion by the pilot assigned to aircraft.

DCC’s are selected by the capabilities they have demonstrated and are assigned by main-tenance squadron supervision while pilots are assigned by fighter squadron supervision.

“We absolutely need to trust our crew chiefs,” said Col. Thomas McNurlin, 924th Fight-Group commander. “The lives of our pilots are in their hands.”

“Here, we in the AFRC own production on the AMXS side along with 40 regular Air Force tive associate members assigned to the unit,” continued McNurlin. “In the back shops or MXS side of the house, we are classically associated and the 355th Maintenance Group owns the process and we are supported as a tenant unit. It’s a structure unique in AFRC and provides many challenges to own part but not all of the process.”

The 924th FG has the luxury of continuity whereas regular Air Force personnel typically PCS every few years. They are the only fighter unit that is both a total force active association and classic association unit.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr





SecAF delivers message of confidence

By Tech. Sgt. Mike Slater, Air Force Space Command Public Affairs

Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James spoke to an audience of military and commercial space professionals, and space enthusiasts at the 31st Annual Space Symposium here April 16, adding to an already familiar message.

“You might think I am here from our headquarters at the Pentagon to bring you the message that space is congested, contested and competitive. I know you’ve heard that before and, yes, I am going to bring you that message because all of that is true,” the secretary said. “But I have an even bigger message today, it’s a message of confidence. Confidence that we, the United States of America working shoulder to shoulder with our allies and partners, will not be bested.”

James spoke about what she sees as the top three takeaways regarding the space domain.

First, is the importance of space, not only to military operations and national security, but to our way of life.

James said all Airmen need to help get the word out to the American people about just how important space is. From precision timing used for ATMs and international banking, to GPS systems in cars and phones. To include weather prediction to satellite communications on international flights -- space affects people in their daily lives. Space is even more important for our military strategy and a key domain for our combatant commanders.

The second, is the space domain is changing rapidly.

“We see a number of threats in space; it’s everything from space debris, where even a small object can do great damage in the event of a collision, to the potential for hostile actors in space,” James said. “Unfortunately, there are some nations that have chosen to demonstrate anti-satellite weapons that not only destroy a satellite, but create debris that threatens the entire space environment.”

The growing importance of space combined with the rapidly increasing and evolving threats in space lead to the secretary’s third takeaway -- the Air Force must change its mindset and think about space differently than in the past.

“We need to be ready. We constantly talk about readiness in the Air Force and readiness in space is no less important than in any other domain,” James said. “We need

to be ready in case a conflict extends to space, while promoting the responsible use of space. We need to wrap our heads around the idea that space may not always be a peaceful domain and respond accordingly.”

The 2015 National Security Strategy talks about enhancing the resiliency of critical U.S. space capabilities. In order to meet that goal, the Air Force accomplished a strategic review of the entire space portfolio. The review looked at threats, capabilities, resources, planned investments, space force organization and the overall space posture.

“Our review told us that our space strategy as it existed was right on the money in some areas, but it was somewhat off the mark in some areas,” James said. “We hit upon three specific focus areas where we felt we needed to make adjustments.”

The first focus area is to posture space for defense.

“Historically, we designed and built our space systems to operate in an environment that was not contested,” James said. “This is no longer the case. We need to change our thinking in order to confront the threat of a possible conflict that one day could extend into space.”

James said responding to a competent space adversary would be quite different than adjusting space operations due to debris or an engineering challenge.

Second is upping the ante on mission assurance.

“We need to ensure our mission can get done despite what could be a very challenging environment, to include challenges of one day having warfare effects in space,” James said. “We must not let potential adversaries ever deny us the use of space.”

The third focus area is an increased commitment to space situational awareness.

“Whether it is debris or other satellites, we must have the ability to maintain awareness within the space domain at all times. Knowledge is power and we need ever-improving eyes in the sky,” James said.

“We will need a change in culture to accomplish a change in posture. Things like: modeling and simulation, training and operational exercises. Non-space people in the audience may say those sound like things we do in every other aspect of the military, and you would be right.”

James explained several other priorities for the space “way ahead.”

Space mission assurance includes many



Courtesy photo

follow-on systems, such as GPSIII, which will provide a more robust civilian signal and a jam-resistant military signal M-Code, and upgrades to existing systems, such as the Joint Space Operations Center Mission System, or JMS.

“We are investing more and accelerating the delivery of JMS to help us continue to process sensor data, but also increase command and control of space operations,” James said.

“Furthermore we are investing in defensive capabilities to detect satellite communication jamming and pin point sources -- information that will help us assure the continued use of our critical capabilities.”

The third focus area, space situational awareness, allows the U.S. and its allies and partners to safely operate in space.

Geosynchronous Space Situational Awareness Program, or GSSAP, tests are progressing well. GSSAP’s mission is to observe objects in geosynchronous orbit. The Space Fence program is another SSA system that will be able to better detect and track smaller objects.

“I want to underscore, it is not just about acquiring new capabilities. It is also about getting more bang for our buck by coming up with new ways to use existing capabilities,” James said. “Today we are leveraging the Space Based Infrared System from its primary use as a missile warning system to deliver what we hope to be game-changing capabilities to combatant commanders with eyes on the battle space.

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Diversity, total force continues to strengthen AF

By Staff Sgt. Devon Suits, Air Force News Service

In honor of the of the Air Force Reserve’s 67th birthday, celebrated on April 14, and in observance of Black Heritage Day, the 22nd Air Force commander represented the Air Force Reserve during pregame events at a Washington Nationals game at Nationals Park here, April 16.

Maj. Gen. Stayce Harris, who is stationed at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, and the Air Force’s highest ranking African-American female officer, was cheered as she walked out to the mound to deliver the game ball to Doug Fister, the Nationals starting pitcher.

“Happy birthday, Air Force Reserve,” Harris shouted with enjoyment.

With the Reserve celebrating 67 years, Harris considers herself fortunate to have served 25 years as a reservist, totaling 32 years of service. During her time, she has seen her share of changes, mostly in the Reserve’s operations tempo, which “has seen a dramatic increase.”

“What’s wonderful is our Airmen that are entering in the Air Force now, and have been since the ‘90s and, of course, 2001, know what that ops tempo is and still have that propensity to serve their nation and that’s what makes me so proud,” she said.

When asked about her participation in the evening’s festivities, Harris said she was, “absolutely honored, knowing that it is in celebration of black (heritage), and (also) in celebration of our 67th birthday.”

“(The 67th birthday) celebrates the total force. The Air Force Reserve has been an integral part of (the Air Force) since 1948, and it has been operating seamlessly ever since,” she said.

Also in attendance for the evening’s events was Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Larry O. Spencer.

“The Reserve, Guard and active-duty (Airmen) are one total team, particularly when you think about the Airmen that are deployed,” Spencer said. “Everyone is working together ... Everyone is shoulder to shoulder getting the mission done. The way we look at it is active, Guard and Reserve -- one team, one fight.”

The total force culture

“Total force is the Air Force Reserve,” Harris said. “Most of us have served on active duty and we choose to (continue to) serve in the Air Force Reserve.”

Throughout her career, Harris was no stranger to the total force culture. She said she experienced it when she flew C-141 Starlifters in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s, which have been maintained and operated by the total force since the 1960s.

“I look at examples like Peterson Air Force Base, (Colorado), where they have a total force command post, where the Reserve and active-duty Airmen seamlessly work together and know each other’s duties,” she said.

“Our Reserve, National Guard and our active-duty Air Force are

operationally indistinguishable. We seamlessly flow in and out ... we train to the exact same standards and that’s what the nation deserves,” Harris said.

Spencer echoed Harris’s message saying “total force is our culture – it is who we are.”

“For example, right now we have 54 fighter squadrons and half of those are Guard and Reserve. We are one Air Force,” Spencer said. “We need all three at the table to be as effective as we can be.”

According to Spencer, the Air Force is also looking at more total force integration by evaluating all the Air Force weapon systems and missions and seeing if it “operationally makes sense” to move from active duty to the Guard and Reserve.

“A good example of this is C-130s (Hercules), where 70 percent of C-130s are maintained and flown by Guard and Reserve units,” he said. “Cyber is another example where it would be beneficial for the Air Force to have a strong presence in the Guard and Reserve.

“It’s not about one or the other – it’s about all three working together,” he said.

A diverse force

“Well I am incredibly proud of the legacy that I have always followed with our Tuskegee Airmen and our Women’s Airforce Service Pilots,” Harris said. “We have come so far that someone who looks like me can be in the position that I am in now and serve as a role model and a mentor to those who want to follow in my footsteps and accomplish any of the dreams that they want.

“Our Airmen right now, especially in the Air Force Reserve, have that diversity of experience from their civilian career fields,” Harris said. “Initially, a lot of them will have

gotten their experience through the military. They were able to transfer their (military) experience into the civilian world. They still have that propensity to serve and still want to be part of that Air Force community. (They then) bring those additional skill sets back into the Air Force Reserve and it just enhances everything they bring to the table, as far as contributing to the mission.”

According to Spencer, diversity isn’t solely based on someone’s race, ethnicity or gender; it is all the active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian Airmen that help maintain today’s Air Force.

Spencer said he also believes that the Air Force continues to become a better service because of all the Air Force specialty codes (AFSC), backgrounds, talents, brain power and strengths that are brought to the table on a daily basis.

“Diversity is strength. A diverse Air Force makes us a better Air Force,” he said. “All studies will tell you that a diverse leadership and a diverse organization make better decisions and actually perform better, and that’s what we’re trying to achieve in the Air Force. We have a really diverse enlisted force, which no one would dispute – we have the best enlisted force in the world.”



Courtesy photo



Wing News

EOD Airmen sharpen skill sets

By Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante
944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

On a warm spring afternoon during the April Unit Training Assembly members of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight stepped out of their building at Luke Air Force Base right into a drab desert setting simulating an Air Field in Afghanistan.

The exercise was on. EOD flight members were briefed that locals had found a unexploded ordnance in one of the villages located near the base. Their mission was to neutralize the situation and remove the hazard without causing significant damage to

the surrounding environment.

Background information the Airmen received was the village had been hostile in the past but had since eradicated all known Taliban forces, there was no sign of enemy activity in the last nine months, and the village was now receiving Coalition assistance in building a school.

This type of training benefits Airmen in keeping their skill sets up. "We want to ensure when we send members down range they are prepared and know what they are doing," said Maj. Orren Squires, 944th Civil Engineer Squadron commander.

After being briefed on the

situation EOD members cautiously went out and found the site. They then carefully evaluated the situation and eventually made the decision to detonate the hazard and remove the remaining debris from the site thus neutralizing the situation.

Successful accomplishment of the simulated mission, with no equipment or technical data deficiencies that preclude completion of the operation, was the desired goal of the exercise. The training was a success.

"They met all of the objectives today and did a very good job," said Senior Master Sgt. Stephen Hunter, EOD program manager.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante

Trainees boost wingman skills by serving others

By Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Being a good wingman sometimes means rolling up your sleeves and getting dirty. Eighteen members of the 944th Fighter Wing Development and Training Flight volunteered for a good old fashion spring cleaning at the Luke AFB Child Development Center during the April Unit Training Assembly.

The Air Force hopefuls volunteered their time to help clean the CDC floor to ceiling, inside and out.

"Volunteering is what we do in the military it is part of being a good Airmen," said Tech. Sgt. Tamika Culpepper, Air Force Reserve Command recruiter with the 944 FW. "By providing the opportunity for the DTF flight to volunteer their time we are showing them Air Force Core Values."

"I feel really good about what we are doing here today, it feels great to get out of an office environment and be able to serve," said Arnold Dockstader, a trainee in the DTF flight who is a native of Ariz. and fulltime student at Central Arizona College.

The Luke AFB Parent Advisory board organized the deep clean of the CDC. "The teachers here give so much and this was a way for us to give back," said Erin Salvador, parent of a child who attends the base facility and a member of the board.

Salvador talked about the CDC and how important it is for Air Force members to have this resource. "The goal for this event is to create an environment that is great for education and is clean and healthy for the children who spend on average 8 to 10 hours per day here. We are supporting parents by giving their children a healthy setting enabling them to better focus on the military mission."

The DTF was created by the Air Force Reserve in 2011 to help civilians transition into military life, manage expectations and increase their success during basic military training and their Air Force career. Before members go to basic training they are introduced to Air Force customs and courtesies, drill and ceremony, dress and appearance, fitness requirements and military life in general.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante

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"I am pleased to announce SBIRS will go operational next summer for intelligence purposes, as well," James said.

James said these goals cannot be achieved by doing it alone. She said we will need strong partnerships with industry and our allies.

"We want two or more domestic launch service providers capable of launching our entire national security space manifest," James said. "To accomplish this we need to continue to partner with industry and make positive adjustments to our launch provider certification process." James wrapped up by thanking our Airmen, who she called, our best secret weapon.

"We have 24,000 Airmen who are working very hard, right now today," she said. "I'm talking about active duty, National Guard, Reserve and civilian Airmen. And we have contractor partners who are also critical to our overall operations. I want to thank all of you, very, very much for all that you're doing."



924th weapons load crew members participate in a load crew competition April 12 at Davis Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. (U.S. Air Force photo taken by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.)

The SnapShot wants to highlight you and/or your unit. If you would like to submit an idea, article, or photo for the SnapShot, please e-mail 944fw.pa@luke.af.mil or call 623-856-5388.



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