

SnapShot

944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona

March 2016 Newsletter



Headlines:

Annual Awards honor excellence

Celebrating Women's History Month

**Air Force actively monitoring ongoing
Zika virus infection**

Tuskegee Airman reflects on diversity

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944th Fighter Wing Monthly SnapShot

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Bringing the Heat

March 2016

944 FW KEY LEADERS

Commander

Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

Vice Commander

Col. Bryan Cook

Command Chief

CMSgt. Rhonda L. Hutson

944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot

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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.

944th Mission

Train and provide Combat-Ready Airmen.

Mission ■ Airmen ■ Family



Command Commentary



The Best of the Best!

944th Fighter Wing Annual Award Winners



Senior Civilian of the year: Ms. Frances Kremer, 944th Force Support Squadron

Junior Civilian of the year: Ms. Terri Clay, 944th Fighter Wing Staff

Field Grade Officer of the year: Maj. James Hunt, 924th Operation Support Flight

Company Grade Officer of the year: 1st Lt. Blake Conley, 414th Maintenance Squadron

Instructor Pilot of the year: Maj. Justin Robinson, 944th Operations Group

Weapon System Officer of the year: Maj. Timothy Foery, 307th Fighter Squadron

First Sergeant of the year: Senior Master Sgt. Francis Albee, 414th Maintenance Squadron

Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the year: Master Sgt. Miguel Gonzales, 944th Medical Squadron and

Master Sgt. Christopher Martin, 944th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

Non-Commissioned Officer of the year: Staff Sgt. Melinda Charlton, 944th Force Support Squadron

Airmen of the year: Senior Airmen Brandon Ritter, 944th Security Forces Squadron

Courage is not a gender

By Colonel Kurt Gallegos, 944th Fighter Wing Commander

Welcome to our March UTA! I want to take a quick moment to congratulate all the 2015 Annual Awards nominees and winners and thank those who had a part in putting our banquet together. It was a great event and if you missed our guest speaker Col. (Ret.) Richard Toliver, Tuskegee Airman legacy, speak, you missed an inspiring message. When you run into our winners over the UTA make sure to congratulate them on the outstanding work they have done for our wing.

This month it's back to work as usual, and another year filled with opportunities to earn the recognition you deserve. I encourage all of you to continue to work hard and strive for your place as the winner in your category next year.

March is Women's History month and I would like to reflect on what women have achieved over the years and how they have contributed to our great Air Force.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women make up 50.8 percent of the nation's population.

That is half our population but in the past, women were limited in the occupations they chose or were allowed to do. As time has passed, their value continues to be recognized and the limits of how far they can go, show no limits.

On Jan. 4, 2016, the Air Force began recruiting women into previously-closed career fields and positions. Courage is not gender or job-specific. Courage is about having the ability to face fear, danger and adversity. As Airmen we all have these characteristics.

Currently women make up 19 percent of the Air Force, the highest of any service. Women have been and are in the fight. Women serve as security forces, drivers and gunners during embattle convoy missions, medics on foot patrols and as members of cultural support and female engagement teams.

Air Force decision-making and operational capabilities are enhanced by diversity and inclusion in our force, making us more agile, innovative and effective. Our ability to hear the voice and efficiently ascertain talents of men and women of different backgrounds is what makes this country great.

This Sunday there will be a Month of the Military Woman brunch at 1100 in the Wing Conference Room. Let's have a safe and productive UTA. Thank you



Photo by Staff Sgt. Nason

Voting is essential

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

944th Warriors! Spring is upon us! For many, Spring is thought of as a rebirth; rebirth of what was sewn during the last season. I prefer to look at Spring as part of a continuous cycle of birth, life and death. A never-ending cycle by which we, as a people, are born, gain knowledge and wisdom, teach others and then are replaced by the next cycle. The political process of our great Republic follows the very same cycle and we are in the midst of birth, the birth of the next Administration. Super Tuesday is behind us but many primaries and much campaigning lay ahead before we elect our next leaders in November.

Every one of us has sworn to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. I am proud of the Oath I have taken and I am proud of each of you for your commitment to our Nation and for your service. You defend America. You defend the Constitution of the United States. But what about "support"? We swore to support and defend. So what have you done to support the Constitution lately?

Thomas Jefferson said, "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves." He believed that the surest guarantee of Liberty was to place the responsibility of governance in the hands of the people. He also admonished, "It is always better to have no ideas than false ones; to believe nothing, than to believe what is wrong." ...*Continued on page 6*



Air Force/Wing News

Annual awards honor excellence



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.

Story by Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plante., 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

As a celebration of outstanding achievements by wing members the 2015 944th Fighter Wing Annual Award winners were honored during a Hollywood black tie gala held at the Wigwam Resort on Jan. 30.

During the event, which was heavily steeped in heritage with a few lighthearted touches, Col. (Retired) Richard Toliver, a "Second Generation" Tuskegee Airman provided the keynote speech for over 420 attendees.

As a 26-year veteran of the United States Air Force, Toliver is a command pilot with 4,000 flying hour to include 446 combat missions in Southeast Asia.

Graduating from the Tuskegee Institute with a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering in the early 60's he was taught and mentored by several original Tuskegee Airmen. He was one of the first five African American 4-F pilots to serve under the famed Tuskegee Airman, General Daniel "Chappie" James, USAF.

Toliver went on to serve throughout the United States, Southeast Asia, Europe, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf and commanded a number of units and held key staff positions in major command of the Air Force.

In a deep and captivating voice Toliver spoke to the large audience about leadership, core values and commitment to excellence.

"This is indeed a fantastic evening. This reminds me of the days we were on active duty. It is indeed a privilege to share this activity and to be here to help recognize these young men and women who have gone above and beyond the norm while meeting a myriad of difficult

challenges," said Toliver.

"As a veteran like you, I am personally grateful that there are young men and women who are still coming forth to serve our great Nation."

Growing up in the 40's and 50's the colonel reflected on how he overcame struggles with racial oppression and poverty. He shared stories about being a young officer and the importance of knowing

everything possible about your assigned job, getting to know those who work with you, and the huge significance of follow-up.

"Core Values matter especially when no one is present or no one is looking. They must be embraced daily, adhered to in practice, and lived faithfully regardless of the temptation to do otherwise. They are the very foundation of who we are as service men and women; they guide us in everything we do - at home, in the community, in the office, and ultimately on the battlefield," he said.

He talked about commitment to excellence which he summed up by saying, "Someone's life may depend on my personal commitment to excellence in the job to which I am assigned."

"Each and every one of you can be proud of the fact you are part of the 1.4 million people in the armed forces and one of over 850 thousand who are in the reserve component. Like every generation of the past, you answer the call. Through difficult circumstances and personal hardship, social unjust and even racial oppression you took that solemn oath. There is no greater love or legacy to service than one who would lay down their life for his country," said Toliver.

He finished his address by adding, "Every generation has the opportunity to be great, to serve their self, and to serve others. This is your time to do what you are doing and to keep staying on course. Ensure you seize the moment!"

944th members have to balance their military service, personal lives and professional careers each and every day. Many have to

March 2016 promotions:

Congratulations to the following

944th Fighter Wing promotees

From Airman Basic:

AMN Blake Bushart, 924 MXS

AMN Gabriel Medina-Martinez, 944 MDS

From Airman:

A1C Ishbel Gonzalez-Alvez, 924 MXS

A1C Christopher Straticoglu, 944 MDS

From Airman First Class:

SRA Nicholas Andsager, 944 LRS

SRA Justin Cameron, 924 MXS

SRA Malia Reddick, 924 MXS

From Senior Airman:

SSgt Jonathan Arnold, 944 SFS

SSgt Gage Carter, 944 FW Det 1

SSgt Jesse Gaun, 414 MXS

SSgt Marchantia Ivey, 944 FSS

SSgt Anthony Lopez, 944 SFS

SSgt Todd Martin, 944 LRS

SSgt Brandon Simmons, 944 FW Det 1

SSgt Rommel Zapanta, 944 MDS

From Staff Sergeant:

TSgt Mathew Dinsdale, 924 MXS

TSgt Joshua Houy, 924 MXS

TSgt Anthony Lopez, 924 MXS

TSgt Steven Melessa, 944 SFS

TSgt Robin Roberts, 944 FW Det1

TSgt Richard Timney, 944 SFS

make hard sacrifices in several areas to ensure the Air Force accomplishes its missions. The individuals considered for the 2015 annual awards clearly demonstrated sustained and superior performance throughout the year.

"Congratulations to the award winners, you are the best of the best," Col. Kurt Gallegos, 944th commander said while closing the ceremony.

Welcome Home!!

Maj. Derrick Young, 944th Mission Support Group, returned home from Southwest Asia



Air Force/Wing News

Celebrating Women's History Month



Courtesy graphic

By Tech. Sgt. Nadine Y. Barclay, 432nd Wing/432nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

It has been said that “you can’t know where you’re going without knowing where you’ve been.” For some, this quote may not mean much, but for the women of the 432nd Wing/432nd Air Expeditionary Wing, who provide the Air Force’s largest remotely piloted aircraft enterprise with support, this statement rings true.

Women’s History Month started as a national celebration in 1981, when Congress authorized the president to proclaim the week beginning March 7, 1982, as Women’s History Week.

In 1987, Congress designated the month of March 1987 as Women’s History Month. Since 1995, Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama have issued a series of annual proclamations designating the month of March as Women’s History Month.

On a daily basis, these women provide intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support; maintain both the MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper; safeguard control centers; administer medications; file records and maintain

secured communications capability. They also command squadrons; fly aircraft and tell the Air Force story.

During March, women and their contributions to national defense are celebrated, regardless of different backgrounds, nations or creeds.

Staff Sgt. Esther Blake was the first female to enlist in the newly formed Air Force on July 8, 1948, on the first hour of the first day women were authorized to join. Since that day, women all over the world have followed in her footsteps.

Airmen like Lt. Col. Mackenzie, who serves as the only female commander at Creech Air Force Base, Nevada. She commands 320 men and women of the 432nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, to include two aircraft maintenance units that provide aircraft maintenance needed to sustain global RPA operations.

Women of the 432nd WG serving in command positions, both past and present, have achieved historic milestones while serving their country.

Women like Lt. Col. Shawna Rochelle Kimbrell, who broke racial barriers when she became the first black female fighter pilot, didn’t have an easy road to success. She joined the Civil Air Patrol, worked at air shows and earned her private pilot’s license.

She was eventually accepted into the U.S. Air Force Academy. She did all of this despite being told there was no such thing as a female fighter pilot. She earned her pilot wings in August 1999.

These women represent the caliber of women serving in today’s officer corps. According to the Defense Department, there are a total of 60 female military flag officers with 21 of those belonging to the Air Force, the most in any military branch.

Female Airmen also serve in key enlisted positions, including command chiefs, first sergeants and chaplain assistants. They continuously work to improve the quality of life for Airmen around the Air Force.

Senior Master Sgt. Christin serves as the only female squadron superintendent at Creech AFB. She is the chief enlisted adviser for nearly 290 aviation and intelligence Airmen and aviation resource management personnel, while integrating Air Force Reserve Command members. Together they provide 24/7 combat support to combatant commanders in multiple areas of responsibility. She also served as Creech AFB’s Top 3 president and vice president, and currently teaches unmanned aircraft system courses at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Despite any misconceptions about women serving in today’s military, in a recent statistics release from the DOD, women make up 29 percent of all Air Force military personnel and 30.5 percent of all civilian personnel, with nearly equal representation in both the officer, 20.3 percent, and enlisted, 18.9 percent, corps.

Of the officers, 55 percent of the female officers are line officers, and 45 percent are non-line officers; and of the 307,001 active-duty personnel, 58,785 are women, with 676 female pilots, 288 navigators and 223 air battle managers.

In a 2015 presidential proclamation, Obama said, “We honor the many patriots who have shaped not only the destinies of other women, but also the direction of our history. Let us resolve to build on their efforts in our own time.”





Air Force/Wing News

Air Force actively monitoring ongoing Zika virus infection

By Air Force Surgeon General Public Affairs Office

The Air Force is closely monitoring the emergence of Zika virus infection in the Americas, Oceania, and Africa to help inform and protect Airmen and their families.

The Department of Health and Human Services, with its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is leading the U.S. response to the worldwide Zika outbreak with support from multiple other U.S. federal departments and agencies including Department of Defense.

“What we know about Zika virus continues to evolve, and we’re focused on providing consistent, science-based guidance to protect our Total Force Airmen and their family members,” said Col. (Dr.) John Oh, Chief of Preventive Medicine, Air Force Medical Support Agency. For example, CDC recently reported that sexual transmission of Zika virus is possible. Colonel Oh said Zika virus updates have been communicated to Air Force Medical Service staff to quickly prevent, detect, and respond to any potential cases in patients.

Humans become infected by Zika virus primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. Only about one in five persons infected with Zika virus becomes ill. Symptoms may include fever, rash, joint pain, conjunctivitis (red eye), muscle pain, and headache. Most infections are mild, lasting several days to a week, with complete recovery the norm, according to CDC. There is new evidence of a potential link between Zika virus infection during pregnancy and a particular birth defect.

“There may be a link between Zika virus infection during pregnancy and the baby having microcephaly, which is a birth defect where the baby’s head is smaller than expected. Babies with microcephaly often have smaller brains that have not developed properly,” said Colonel Oh. “It’s understandable that people are concerned. You have a virus that people have never heard of, it’s

spread by mosquitoes, which makes all of us feel vulnerable, and there may be a link with a devastating outcome in babies,” he said.

The CDC recently advised women who are pregnant to consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing, and women who are trying to get pregnant should consult their healthcare provider before traveling. So far, the few Zika virus infections diagnosed in the Continental United States (CONUS) have occurred in travelers to countries or territories with ongoing Zika virus

spread, according to CDC, and there has not been local Zika infections spread by mosquitoes in CONUS.

For those who are in areas with ongoing Zika virus spread, Colonel Oh said the best way to prevent infection from Zika virus and other mosquito-borne viruses, such as dengue and chikungunya, is to prevent mosquito bites by using air conditioning or window and door screens when indoors, wearing long sleeves and pants, using permethrin-treated clothing and gear, and using insect repellants when outdoors. When used according to product label, insect repellants

registered by the Environmental Protection Agency are safe to use in pregnant women and children.

To prevent Zika virus from spreading to CONUS, particularly in the southern states that have the mosquito species which carries Zika, dengue, and chikungunya, Colonel Oh said we must remove standing water where mosquitoes can breed, such as buckets, birdbaths, dog bowls, old tires, gutters, and other containers.

To prevent sexually transmitted Zika infection, according to CDC, men who live in or have traveled to an area with Zika infection and who have a pregnant partner should abstain from sexual activity or consistently and correctly use condoms for the duration of the pregnancy.

For more information and the latest public health updates on Zika virus, visit the CDC website. CDC Travel Health Notices are updated on their travel notice page.



Courtesy photo

Continued from page 3... He believed it was essential for people to govern themselves through those they elect and the people’s responsibility to understand the beliefs and values of those they elect.

Many people I have encountered in the military across the span of my career believe that their military service precludes their participation in our political process. Nothing could be further from the truth. You swore to support the Constitution. Voting is, of course, an essential piece of this and you should never take that responsibility lightly. The right to vote hasn’t always existed for all of our citizens. The 15th Amendment of our Constitution was ratified on February 3, 1870 and prohibited the Federal and State governments from denying the right to vote to any citizen because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Fifty years later, on August 18, 1920, women were given the right to vote. The last of our citizens to receive this right. So vote. It is your responsibility. So is participating in the political process.

Are there restrictions on your activities, Yes. You cannot do anything that appears to provide Government endorsement of a candidate or party. This means you cannot go to a campaign Head Quarters in uniform or campaign for a candidate while in uniform. You also cannot conduct political activities from a .mil email account. You can donate time and money. You can stuff envelopes, set up and tear down events or any other activity that does not imply Government endorsement of a candidate and is performed as a private citizen. If in doubt, ask our JAG. Through participation you ensure you understand the candidate you vote for, thus avoiding Jefferson’s concern of ignorance and false truths. Just like I have encouraged you to take control of your careers I am now encouraging to take charge of the governance of your town, your county, state and our great country. Learn about the candidates, find one that matches your values and concerns and help get that candidate elected! ‘Til next month Chief



Wing News

Airmen seize opportunity for mentoring, volunteering



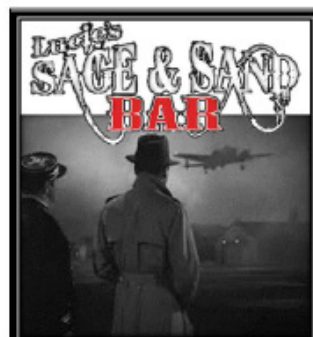
Story and photo Tech. Sgt. Barbara Plan-te, 944th Fighter Wing, Public Affairs
Well over 75 members of the 944th Fighter Wing took advantage of the Speed Mentoring and Volunteer Fair held in hangar 999 on Sunday.

The event, which was presented by the Top Three and Human Resources Development Council, provided wing members with an opportunity to network, talk with subject matter experts and sign-up to volunteer their time with wing and local organizations.

This is the second time the Top Three has been involved with hosting the fair for the wing, "currently we try to put this event on about every 18 months so we can ensure maximum participation. This year's event was even better than the last because we were able to partner with the HRDC and add the volunteer side," said Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Perlak, Wing Inspector General Inspection's office superintendent and current Top Three president.

With more than 20 booths set up at the fair, attendees were able to gather a lot of information in a short amount of time. "The volunteer side of the fair focuses on youth and education platforms and gives Airman the perfect occasion to learn about several volunteer programs in one place," said Staff Sgt. Perla Tapia Cordero, member of the 944 FW Commanders support staff and HRDC member.

As a brand new Airman to both the Air Force and 944 F W, Airman Christopher Straticoglu, 944th Medical Squadron medical technician, this was a perfect one stop shop for information from schools to wing support programs. "It's been great; I got a lot more information here than I thought would be available. I will definitely come back if they have another event."



Please come and say Goodbye to CMSgt Schuldt for his many years of service!!



944 FW Mixer at the Sage and Sand BAR

Saturday, March 5th @ 1800

2016

"Sand and Sage BAR"
13831 W. Glendale Ave
Glendale AZ 85307

Presented by 944 FW Wing Top 3

10 Keys to Happier Living

By Ms. Jessica Paul, 944th Fighter Wing family advocacy manager, toward life.

Many of us often think to ourselves, I would be happy if. I get that promotion, I win the lottery, or I find that special person. But what does it really take to be happy?

Over the years there has been a lot of research done on this very topic. Action for Happiness, a movement of people committed to building a happier and more caring society, has developed 10 Keys to Happier Living based on a review of the latest scientific research relating to happiness. Even though happiness looks different for everyone, these 10 Keys have been identified as consistently having a positive impact on people's overall happiness and well-being.

The first five Keys relate to how we interact with the outside world and the second five come from within the individual and depend on their attitude



Ms. Jessica Paul, 944th Fighter Wing Family Advocacy Outreach Manager

- 1. Giving** - Do things for others
- 2. Relating** - Connect with people
- 3. Exercising** - Take care of your body
- 4. Appreciating** - Notice the world around you
- 5. Trying out** - Keep learning new things
- 6. Direction** - Have goals to look forward to
- 7. Resilience** - Find ways to bounce back
- 8. Emotion** - Take a positive approach
- 9. Acceptance** - Be comfortable with who you are
- 10. Meaning** - Be part of something bigger

By incorporating these 10 Keys into our day to day lives, we can help not only ourselves feel happier but we will have a positive impact on those around us.

For more information on the 10 Keys to Happier Living, visit www.actionforhappiness.org or for more information on this topic, call 623-856-2289 or jessica.paul.4@us.af.mil.



Air Force/Wing News



Courtesy photo

trash on the white sandy beaches at Keesler Field, Mississippi. He had been briefed that although he was in the service and evidently may fight and die for his country, he could neither walk on this beach unless he was working nor could he swim here because it was for whites only.

Now retired Maj. George Boyd, a 28-year combat veteran and Tuskegee Airman, will never forget the hypocrisy of that order. Boyd, now a resident of Wichita, Kansas, was part of the service during the transition from the Army Air Corps to the Air Force.

Boyd served in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. He witnessed the roots of social equality shift within his country and his service; from the integration of the armed forces by President Harry S. Truman in 1948, to the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s.

He recalled the era of segregation; from being refused service at local restaurants to witnessing police brutality in the streets outside the gates of his duty station.

"Most of the time you stayed in the culture that you knew because it was safe," Boyd explained. "It was easiest to operate within those limitations. You lived in a cultural fear. You were afraid of doing something that would get you harmed even though you aren't breaking the law."

Boyd described some of these problems he and many other service members faced, such as not being promoted because they were African-American.

"They gave you a job, and you'd do the job, but instead of giving you the rating they gave everybody else, they'd give you just a (lower) rating," Boyd said. "Well you're not going to get promoted if they do that to you, especially if they have everybody else walking on water."

Despite setbacks, the successes of African-Americans in service, like that exhibited by the Tuskegee Airmen, brought a positive light to the social struggles that inspired a push to utilize everyone's talents regard-

Tuskegee Airman reflects on diversity

By Airman Jenna K. Caldwell,
22nd Air Refueling Wing Public
Affairs

(This feature is part of the "Through Airmen's Eyes" series. These stories focus on individual Airmen, highlighting their Air Force story.)

It was 1944 and the U.S. was in the midst of two battles -- a war on two sides of the world and the onslaught of cultural changes on the homefront.

Meanwhile, a young African-American Soldier picked up

less of race.

"The greatest strength of our Airmen is their diversity," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh. "Each of them comes from a different background, a different family experience and a different social experience. Each brings a different set of skills and a unique perspective to the team."

The Air Force developed programs and policies to ensure equality within the service, such as equal opportunity, with the mission of breaking down social or institutional barriers within the workplace.

As the government and the military put in place specific policies to prevent discrimination, society began to adjust and social changes happened gradually throughout the years.

"It's a whole lot better now because I think they are realizing people's potential," Boyd said. "That's a learning process and it takes some time. Cultural change takes place at your dinner table, in your home. The things you teach your children -- that's culture, that's where the change takes place."

Boyd served for nearly three decades as both an enlisted Airman and a commissioned officer fulfilling in a variety of positions, including detachment and squadron commander, combat management engineer and all-weather jet fighter radar intercept officer.

"I went into the service with two years of high school and came out with two Ph.D.s," said Boyd in regards to education. "The Air Force has a lot of opportunities. I think it's so important."

Boyd continues to share his knowledge with the community. He is currently a colonel in the U.S. Civil Air Patrol and recently retired command of the unit in Wichita. He spent many years promoting the importance of education and contributing to the development of youth within the local community.

Fast forward 60 years after he cleaned that segregated beach in Mississippi, Boyd is standing in a luxury hotel near what is now Keesler Air Force Base. He is standing at the window, his gaze set upon a familiar beach.

A young man once forbidden from even walking on this stretch of land because of his skin color, can now freely stroll the sandy beach in peace. He heads down to the water and takes pictures with his wife. A smile crosses his face as he realizes how far the country has progressed.

"This is the best country in the world, because in no other country do changes take place like they take place here," Boyd said. "I have a view on life that says we can do better, and we are doing better. Try your best, do your best and be the best you can be -- aim high."

944FW PT Challenge hosted by SFS/69FS

Base Track

30 April @ 3pm

944FW AIRMEN MORALE OUTING

SPONSORED BY HRDC

- PLACE: COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE, AZ
- DATE: 29 APRIL 2016
- TIME: 0900-1600
- APPLICATIONS DUE BY COB 10 APR 2016

POC: MSGT KENNETH HENG, 944MDS

SSGT PERLA TAPIA CORDERO, 69FS



Air Force/Wing News

AF implements new DOD-wide changes to maternity leave

By Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

Editor's note: The Office of the Secretary of Defense clarified the expanded maternity leave effective date of Feb. 2.

Beginning Feb. 2, active-duty female Airmen will receive up to 12 continuous, non-transferable weeks of fully paid maternity leave in accordance with Defense Department-wide changes to the policy outlined in Defense Secretary Ash Carter's Force of the Future announcement Jan. 28.

This new policy applies to all Airmen in the active-duty component, and those Reserve component service members on orders to active service for a continuous period of at least 12 months.

"This change, like many others we've forming female Airmen can continue to Force," said Secretary of the Air Force Airmen can concentrate on their family associated with returning to their job on carefully balances mission effectiveness.

Airmen who are currently on maternity leave in conjunction with their maternity leave to non-chargeable maternity weeks.

Commanders may not disapprove maternity leave following a birth event or release event for a continuous 12-week period. commanders or medical professionals excess of 12 weeks if a medical author-

A birth event refers to any birth of member wherein the child or children are retained by the mother. Multiple children resulting from a single pregnancy will be treated as a single event so long as the multiple births occur within the same 72-hour period.

The new policy also protects Airmen from any disadvantages in their career, including but not limited to assignments, performance appraisals or selection for professional military education, as a result of maternity leave taken.

"While some initiatives are force-wide, others are more targeted, but all have the same objective," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III. "Where we can, we will ease the burden on our Airmen by not forcing a decision between either having a family or career. We believe our Airmen should be able to have both."

In addition, DOD is requesting legislative changes to paternity leave. "We will seek authorities to increase paid paternity leave for new fathers from 10 to 14 days, which they can use in addition to annual leave," Carter said.

Airmen with questions can contact their chain of command or local force support squadron for more details on eligibility, applicability and any other specifics related to the new benefit as the Air Force begins incorporating the changes into appropriate regulations and guidance.



Courtesy photo

made, will help ensure our high-per-serve both their families and the Air Deborah Lee James. "In this case, these without the undue stress or pressure a short timeline. This change in policy nesses with our ongoing efforts to retain

ternity leave will automatically be men currently on approved ordinary ty leave are authorized to convert their nity leave, not to exceed a total of 12

ternity leave, which begins immedi- from hospitalization following a birth This policy in no way restricts unit from granting convalescent leave in ity deems that leave is warranted.

a child or children to a female service

Food for thought from the Chaplain

By Capt. David Kreis, 944th Fighter Wing chaplain

Like most residents in the valley of the sun, I have been outside enjoying the spectacular weather and taking the time to work on projects around the house. I have made several trips to the home improvement store which is all set-up for spring. Of course this is a month before our friends and family even get close to thinking about spring cleaning.

I quickly realized that many of my projects are attempt to lessen the severity of the heat. I keep saying to myself, "better fix that before the heat comes." So my projects have included ceiling fans, dry wall, window sun screens, and yard

work to all be ready for when the heat comes.

Perhaps it is more than our houses and property we need to prep for when the heat of life and living happens. Like in chemistry life seems fine until heat is introduced and it causes a reaction. We typically can't control the heat and events of life. Rather when that heat comes, it reveals the true content of our hearts and minds. Heat has a way of getting a reaction out of us. Sometimes good but often also bad.

So maybe when you are out doing your spring cleaning beware of how the "heat" of life effects you. How do you respond to when the temps go up?

HRDC has a new slogan!

The Human Resources Development Council focuses on mentoring and supporting all Airmen by unifying all organizations within the 944FW. This year the team plans to provide an Airmen Morale Outing, volunteering projects, lunch and learn workshops, fundraising events, and much more...

The SUM of all AIRMEN



Support • Unify • Mentor

We are always looking for new HRDC representatives! Join us every Sunday of the UTA at 1000hrs in the Wing Conference Room.

-SSgt Perla Tapia Cordero, HRDC Project Manager.



Volunteers of the Pacer Program, initiated by the Rising Six, help encourage and pace wing members during their PT test. To date, the group has helped 21 airmen hit their goals, whether that was to get 10 percent, 90 percent, or simply to pass, they have been fortunate to get them the necessary seconds to succeed. (Courtesy photo)