

SnarShot



944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona

October 2017 Newsletter



AFRC Command Chief Returns to Luke

Ninjas get new commander

FSS Provides CSS training

A shift in pre-deployment training

Air Force Reserves Profiles in Leadership:

Tech. Sgt. Perla Tapia

944 FW KEY LEADERS

Commander

Col. Bryan E. Cook

Vice Commander

Col. Robert R. Tofil

Command Chief

CMSgt. Jeremy N. Malcom

944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot

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Bringing the Heat

October 2017

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Cover Photo: Tech Sgt. Perla Tapia, 944th Operations Group command support NCO in-charge, poses in front of a building at Dysart High School Sept. 10, 2017. Tapia teaches chemistry at DHS and was selected to be featured in the Air Force Reserves Profiles in Leadership. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder)

Do you know
the signs?



Learn the warning signs of abuse. Talk to us. Help is available.



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

by 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz -- Since 1981, October has been commemorated as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The observance serves to educate communities, individuals, couples and families about Family Advocacy Program services and other community resources that can help prevent, raise awareness of community responsibility and resources for addressing domestic abuse.

Military OneSource has an all-inclusive tool kit with information, assistance needs and resources regarding domestic abuse and violence.

If individuals on base have questions regarding services through the 944th Family Readiness Program, they can call 623-856-8324. The Luke AFB domestic abuse victim advocate is available 24/7 at (602) 789-3355.

Click [here](#) to visit the Military OneSource Domestic Violence Awareness Month page. (Graphic by Military OneSource)

Wing gets new mission/vision



By Col. Bryan Cook, 944th Fighter Wing commander

It's Halloween time again! That means a new fiscal year, the temperature, although just barely, is finally below 100 degrees, the leaves are turning and it's Unit Effectiveness Inspection time. This UTA we have the honor of hosting the Air Force Reserve Command Inspector General team for our bi-annual UEI. This is our time to shine,

and show AFRC that the 944th Fighter Wing is ready to execute our mission at a moment's notice.

This month, I want to let you know about our new vision and mission statements and touch base on a couple of hot topics that are hitting the news. In September the 944 FW senior leadership got together to review our Vision and Mission statements, and to address the road-blocks that hinder our ability to effectively train every month. Our Vision statement is where we think we are going, the end state, the place we want to be. Our new Vision:

“Provide mission-ready Reserve Citizen Airmen anytime, anywhere”

The vision is a big statement on where we need to be in the future. That means we are ready to execute the mission wherever and whenever our Nation calls. No limfacs, no excuses, we are just ready to go! It also highlights the fact that we are Reserve Citizen Airmen. We have taken up the challenge to balance not only our military service, but a civilian job, person-

al obligations, and our families. Being part of the Air Force Reserve is a complication and dedication that not everyone can take on and I applaud you for accepting this challenge.

Our mission, the thing we do every single day, the reason why we serve:

“Forging combat Airmen to fly, fight and win”

This is the statement of what we do every time we put on the uniform. We are continuously developing our Airmen, flying, fighting and winning at everything we do. By being in a continuous loop to develop us into combat ready Airmen, we are not only executing the mission, we are constantly moving towards achieving our vision. Very soon you will see the vision and mission statements all around the Wing and on our annual UTA cards.

This past month you have probably heard a lot about sexual harassment. It is all over the news and some very high profile individuals have been implicated. I think is a great opportunity to reiterate the Air Force and 944 FW policy on sexual harassment.

IT IS NOT TOLERATED.

In today's environment with an ever changing threat, continuing war on ISIS and operating in a resource limited environment we do not have time to deal with any type of sexual harassment. When I say it is not tolerated, I mean it. No person should have to worry about being put in an uncomfortable situation, or feel that they have to defend themselves against unwanted comments, gestures, or contact. One of our pillars to success is Family, both at home and in the Air Force. We do not treat our own family that way, we take care of our family.

So we have a new vision and mission statement that will help lead and guide us into the next year. In the coming months I will address in more detail our priorities and pillars to success, as well as some of the big objectives we are working towards at the Wing level. This weekend, please be sure to let the AFRC IG team know what you do and how proud you are of the 944 FW and our mission. I am extremely proud and humbled by your sacrifice and service. Keep “Bringing the Heat!”

Families are an important part of the wing

By Chief Master Sgt. Jeremy Malcom 944th Fighter Wing command chief

Last month, I had the pleasure of attending one of the Yellow Ribbon events in Boston. The 944th Fighter Wing has a group of our folks headed downrange in the coming months and these events help them and their families prepare for the time apart. This was my first event as part of the leadership team, giving me the freedom to sit in on several seminars and give feedback on how effective each breakout session is to our Airmen.

One of the session was entitled “Warrior Support”. This breakout was primarily filled with spouses, parents and members of the Key Spouse Program from several different wings across Air Force Reserve Command. Of the many topics discussed, the one that hit home with me was what our families know about what we do at the base. Some of the comments were, “I think he work's around the jets somewhere” and “she works at the hospital, but I don't know what she does”.

This highlights something that we all need to get better at. Many of us live far from the base and do not often get a chance to show our families what we do. I encourage you all to talk to your spouses, significant others and families about your job and what you do for the Air Force. It is important that they know what your mission is and how you contribute to the fight. Additionally, please make sure they have important contact information (supervisor, first sergeant) in case they need to contact someone at the base.

As we approach the end of this year, there will be opportunities for family events at your respective units. Please make an effort to take your loved ones into your shops and show them where you go and what you do on UTA weekends. I'm sure our families are out telling everyone how proud they are of what we do for our country, let's just help them tell the story.



Warrior of the Month



(U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael Lahrman)

Tech. Sgt. Sara Douglas, 944th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

Duty Title: Mental Health Technician

Time in Service: 10 years

Time with the 944th Fighter: 7 years

Civilian Job: Part time Montessori teacher and stay at home mom

Hometown: Dover, Ohio

Hobbies: Cooking, listening to music, dancing, and shopping

Home-life: Hanging out with my 2 year old daughter, husband, and our pets.

Commander's comments: TSgt Douglas improved essential Unit Type Code readiness by 85 percent as tactical intro manager. She in-processed five medical professionals and filled critical mission and manning needs. She briefed 30 unit deployment managers on the Automated Neurological Assessment Metric (cognitive performance testing) which directly impacted 140 deploying members bringing their medical readiness to 100 percent. She also educated prior Navy and Marine members on Air Force Culture and standards increasing unit cohesion and esprit de corps.

Why did you join the Air Force Reserves? I got off active duty in 2010 to complete my Bachelor's in Business Management. I transitioned into the reserves because I wanted to continue to make a positive impact in the world.

How does your job support the mission of the 944th Fighter Wing? I administer ANAM psychological testing to pre-deploying members along with managing the unit newcomer's program.

If you were on a deserted island.....? I would hope my family was with me and I would do lots of writing using whatever supplies I could find.

Emotional Regulation

From Dr. Julie Reese, 944th Fighter Wing director of psychological health

Have you ever thought to yourself, "I am such a cryer," "I have anger issues," or "I am so emotional?" Emotions are a natural and important part of who we are as individuals, and are derived from our circumstances, mood, and/or relationships. When thinking about emotions, we understand that there is no right or wrong way to feel; however, regulating the extent and length of processing time is important. While it is essential to allow emotions and not suppress them, it is also important to regulate them to ensure appropriate responses. Big reactions to small incidences are not typical and support the need for more self-regulation.

As Airmen, there are many times when emotions become triggered by stress, colleagues, family situations, or just a rough start to your morning, and the need to express these emotions appropriately is important. Most importantly, keep moving forward! Do not allow yourself to stay stuck in any emotion too long. Utilizing calming techniques, such as deep breathing, soothing self-talk, physical exercise, and appropriate communication with family and/or friends assists us in channeling those emotions in a healthy manner. Have a great UTA weekend!



October 2017 promotions: Congratulations to the following 944th Fighter Wing promotees

From Airman Basic:

Airman Lora Weaver, 944 FSS

From Airman:

Airman First Class John Bauman, 414 MXS

From Airmen First Class:

Senior Airman Stephen Choy, 944 SFS

Senior Airman Austin Noble, 944 SFS

Senior Airman Obed Pena Mayboca, 944 CES

Senior Airman Jay Tucker, 924 MXS

Senior Airman Marco Velardebanuelos, 944 CES

From Senior Airman:

Staff Sergeant Demetrice Fair, 414 MXS

Staff Sergeant Daniel Juarez, 944 CES

Staff Sergeant Sergio Tosi, 944 ASTS

Staff Sergeant Raymundo Trujillo, 944 SFS

Senior Airman Samantha Vannote, 414 MXS

From Staff Sergeant:

Technical Sergeant Todd Boothe, 944 ASTS

Technical Sergeant David Cruson, 944 AMXS

Technical Sergeant Eric Jameson, 924 MXS

Technical Sergeant Roderick Knox, 944 CES

Technical Sergeant Allen Long, 944 MXS

Technical Sergeant David Menotti, 944 CES

Technical Sergeant Ashley Oviatt, 944 LRS

Technical Sergeant Denise Willhite, 944 MXG

Technical Sergeant Dane Williamson, 414 MXS

From Technical Sergeant:

Master Sergeant Christopher Childs, 944 MXS

Master Sergeant Karol Gaona, 944 FW

Master Sergeant Jason Keim, 414 MXS

Master Sergeant Sara Lackey, 944 MSG

From Master Sergeant:

Senior Master Sergeant Brian Sudkamp, 944 CES

AFRC Command Chief Returns to Luke

By Tech. Sgt. Nestor Cruz, 944 Fighter Wing Public Affairs

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. -- The Air Force Reserve Command's top enlisted Airman came back for a brief visit to where her career started nearly three decades ago.

Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly, AFRC command chief, visited Luke's Reserve Citizen Airmen during the September unit training assembly to find out what their concerns are and offer guidance on achieving their career goals.

During her visit, Kelly had breakfast with junior enlisted Airmen, welcomed newcomers to the wing, toured various units across the wing and had lunch with non-commissioned officers.

"It's important to me to go beyond simple meet-and-greets," Kelly told the Airmen she visited. "I want to spend quality time with you and connect with you."

Part of making that connection was sharing the command chief's "core" or who she is as a person. Kelly shared with Airmen her background as a member of law enforcement, her journey from Guatemala to the United States and her role as a single mother.

When asked about the challenges she faced as a woman in the Air Force, Kelly gave a simple yet powerful answer.

"I am an Airman first," Kelly said. "Don't let your gender or ethnicity define who you are. Let your actions do that for you."

Kelly's genuine personality and sincere concern for her Airmen was felt by those she met during the visit.

"Chief Kelly has such a warm and contagious personality that brings to surface questions about one's own leadership and readiness skills," said Master Sgt. Maria Guillen, 944th Fighter Wing Yellow Ribbon Program representative. "As I looked around the room, I could clearly see her speech was not only being heard but I could also see the wheels turning in people's heads and they're thinking how and where can we be better."

Kelly stressed to Luke Airmen the importance of taking care of others and taking ownership of one's career.

"Don't chase the stripe, but rather prepare for the next one," she said. "I progressed through the ranks not because I chased the stripe but because the stripe caught up with me."



Command Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly, Air Force Reserve Command, shares with newcomers her background in law enforcement and her role as a single mother Sept. 9 at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. The command chief visited Luke Airmen to find out what their concerns are and provide guidance with their careers. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Nestor Cruz)

A shift in pre-deployment training

By Tech. Sgt. Michael Lahrman, 944th Fighter Wing

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz.- Five percent of vehicles sold in the United States are equipped with manual transmission, according to a 2016 report from U.S. News and World Report. So it should not be a surprise that the same report stated only 18 percent of American drivers are equipped with the know-how to drive a manual car. In the face of the stick-shift decline, the 944th Logistics Readiness Squadron is now the proud owner of a new five-speed, 1100cc all-terrain vehicle that is specifically outfitted to teach individuals to drive a manual car.

“We have a Force Support Squadron Airman deploying soon,” said Senior Master Sgt. Stephen Brook, 944 LRS transportation manager. “A line remark on their orders requires them to be able to drive manual transmission vehicles.”

Such a requirement on deployment orders is not common, according to Brook. “This is the first I’ve seen it,” he continued. “I’m amazed that it’s even a line remark, but I can see the reason for it.”

“Having this new training tool really adds to our readiness,” said Maj. Melissa Greene, 944 FSS commander. “We strive hard to set our Airmen up for success when they deploy. Since we never know exactly what they will be doing when they get down range, having them ready for anything and everything helps alleviate a lot of stress. The LRS capability to train our folks over UTA weekends is amazing. Taking this class outside the gate can cost the member anywhere from 200-400 dollars. This saves our deploying Airmen time and money.”

While the skill of driving a manual transmission is not

necessary in the U.S., Brook estimates well over 80 percent of the vehicles in Southwest Asia deployment locations are manual transmission. He also said the training needs to be done right, just as it would be for a forklift or other special vehicle driver.

“People normally getting deployed are taught on the fly by people already there,” said Brook. “It’s not the optimum but that’s how we’ve done it in the past. The fact that we actually have a line remark means that I can’t send them downrange without them knowing how to drive a stick because now we have a deficiency. So I have to meet – or attempt to meet – that training requirement before they deploy.”

Meeting the training requirement means using appropriate equipment. Prior to ordering the Renegade R-4 from the Phoenix-based company, Joyner, the only manual transmission vehicles in

the 944th fleet were a ten-ton tractor and a rollback wrecker – both equipped with 18-speed transmissions, and neither suitable as training aids. “That would be like trying to train somebody, who has never driven before, on a Ferrari or a high-performance sports car,” said Brook.

By simply adding the utility vehicle to the inventory as an “Other Than Government Military Vehicle Conveyance” – a process that took just two months from research to delivery – the 944th Fighter Wing is capable of deploying all Airmen with the confidence and knowledge they need to succeed. That includes when they get behind the wheel and feel that almost-rare third pedal under their boots.



Ninjas get new commander

Story by Maj. Elizabeth Magnusson, 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz.- During an early morning ceremony September 8, Lt. Col. Eric “Bodhi” Puels took command of the 944th Operations Group Detachment 2 from Lt. Col. Sean “Hooligan” Holahan here.

The formal ceremony, attended by family, friends, and personnel from both the 56th and 944th Fighter Wings, was presided over by Col. Korey Amundson, 944 OG commander.

“Hooligan, you’ve been here since the beginning and should be proud of what you and the Ninjas have built,” Amundson told Holahan. “You have a lot of sweat equity in this program, and you’ve led with class and created a culture where people want to come to work each and every day. I congratulate you and we thank you...mission accomplished.”

Amundson went on to address Puels during his comments, “Bodhi’s finger prints are literally on almost every F-35 Ops structure here at Luke...the 61st, 62nd, 63rd, Academic Training Center, and of course the Foreign Military Sales. When it came time to select the next Nin-

ja 1, it was a no-brainer. Bodhi, you are qualified, motivated, and you are ready. Thank you for all your hard work standing up this program and congratulations on your command....I’m excited to see where you take the Ninjas in the coming years.”

The 944 OG Det 2, known as the Ninjas, is a team of Reserve and active duty Airmen, civilians, and contractors responsible for executing the F-35 FMS program, training and advising fighter pilots from Israel, Japan and South Korea. Additionally, the Ninjas provide highly experienced F-35 instructors, aligned with the 56 FW in supporting the F-35 partner nation training.

“Ninja’s, you played a lead role in standing up every single F-35 squadron on this base. You built the world’s first F-35 Foreign Military Sales squadron from the group up” said Holahan. “You created the Ninja brand and developed our culture. You’ve authored tactics manuals and syllabi for the U.S., Australia, Norway, Italy, Israel, Japan and South Korea, and set the foundation for how we train the next generations of warriors.”

Holahan conclude his speech by saying, “I am left with no doubt that the victories you have claimed at the tactical level will continue to have strategic impact in both the Middle East and the Pacific Rim for years to come. I can’t think of a better warrior to lead the Ninjas to future victories than Lt. Col. Puels.”

Puels received his commission from the U.S. Air Force Academy and went on to earn his wings and was selected to become an F-16 pilot. He later graduated from the first F-35 instructor pilot course at Luke. Over the years his



career has included multiple assignments as an F-16 and F-35 instructor pilot both on active duty and as a Reservist. Puels has over 200 combat hours in Iraq supporting Operations Southern Watch and Iraqi Freedom.

“The Ninjas consist of all three flavors of full and part-time Reservists, both officer and enlisted, active duty officers and enlisted, civilians, and contractors. We train Israel, Japan, and Korea, often simultaneously,” said Puels. “Our maintenance is provided by a record breaking team of Lockheed Martin maintainers and we fly and train in Japanese and soon Korean jets on U.S. soil. That, folks is the definition of Total Force Integration and while it may have been difficult to follow, what you need to know is that it works.”

“The full gravity of command over what we do here and the true quality of the Ninja team is not lost on me,” Puels continued. “The truth of it is, many of the International pilots we train here, will go on to lead their country’s Air Force and military. The partnership and relationships we build here are crucial to the future defense of the free world and I for one am humbled to be a part of it.”



944TH FIGHTER WING



BRINGING THE HEAT

UTA Schedule

Oct. 21-22 2017	Apr. 7-8 2018
Nov. 4-5 2017	May 5-6 2018
Dec. 2-3 2017	Jun. 2-3 2018
Jan. 6-7 2018	Jul. 14-15 2018
Feb. 10-11 2018	Aug. 4-5 2018
Mar. 3-4 2018	Sep. 8-9 2018

Important Phone Numbers

Wing Command Section 623-856-0944
 Chaplain 623-856-5303
 Command Post 623-856-5600
 Equal Opportunity 623-856-5560
 Financial Management 623-856-5716
 Inspector General 623-856-6682
 Public Affairs 623-856-5388
 Staff Judge Advocate 623-856-5333
 Reserve Recruiting 623-856-5339
 Customer Services (IDs) 623-856-5358
 Training/Education 623-856-5318
 Family Readiness 623-856-8324
 Help Desk 623-856-8024
 Sexual Assault Hotline (24/7) 623-856-4878
 Wing Key Spouse 515-988-7951
 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

FSS Provides CSS training

944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. -- Over 50 Airmen and civilian command support staff members from Luke, Seymour Johnson, and Davis-Monthan Air Force Bases along with Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Command Test Center personnel attended a week long training event here September 11 – 15.

The CSS training hosted by the 944th Force Support Squadron served several different purposes. One of the most important reasons was to provide a stronger foundation for new CSS members on every facet of their job recently defined by the latest group manpower study.

“As the functional managers for personnel, we wanted to be certain CSS members were not only aware, but had the tools they needed to be successful,” said Maj. Melissa Greene, 944 FSS commander.

Part two of the training was to allow the newest members to meet face to face with other members of their force support team.

“Most of our communication is done via email or phone, so it is nice to put a face to a name,” said Chief Master Sgt. Michelle Harvey, 944 FSS superintendent. “Especially for our geographically separated units. Spending time together keeps Airmen in our career field unified and consistently focused on the common goals.”

The training included all ranks from Lieutenant Colonel to Airmen Basic and not only encompassed traditional personnel programs, but programs related to the services, finance, and communication functional areas as well.

The third purpose was to provide refresher training on many programs that have changed in the past year. All programs are constantly being modified and streamlined, and keeping up with all the changes can be daunting to some. The training gave the opportunity to review changes to programs that even the most seasoned personnel may not have known about.

Some of the programs the CSS members are responsible for are lodging, Air Force Personnel Accountability and Assessment System, Defense Travel System/Reserve Travel System, Government Travel Card, and Base Records Management.

There was a lot of information given this week, which helped generate plenty of questions and cross talk, clearing up many misconceptions.

“The FSS leadership appreciates the Commanders’ support for this training,” concluded Greene. “We hope to facilitate a training like this every fall. The more cohesive our FSS and CSS personnel are, the better we will all be able to provide premier customer service to our Wing.”



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.

Enlisted Force Structure Review: Command initiative focused on finding most effective, efficient mix of NCOs

By Bo Joyner, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command Public Affairs, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia

Citizen Airman/Oct. 2017 -- Officials from across Air Force Reserve Command are working hard on a new effort to make sure the command's enlisted force structure is designed to meet the needs of AFRC and the Air Force, both now and in the future.

In January 2016, now-retired Lt. Gen. James Jackson, AFRC commander at the time, directed a continuous process improvement event to examine the enlisted force structure and determine if it was meeting organizational needs.

"This was the first time in nearly 20 years that AFRC conducted a corporate-level review of how decisions were made in the process of structuring the enlisted force," said Brett Clark, a policy analyst at Headquarters AFRC who is working on the new enlisted force structure project.

During this corporate-level review, officials discovered that, over time, a great disparity had developed between the unit type code-driven, requirements-based grades distribution of all enlisted positions and the authorization-based grades distribution of all enlisted funded positions. AFRC hires enlisted members based on the number of authorized positions.

"Comparing these two distributions, we learned that in every rank category except staff sergeants and below, there were more stripes distributed to authorized positions than the Air Force actually required to complete the mission," said Lt. Col. Dave Ubelhor, another policy analyst assigned to the enlisted force structure project. "The question then became, 'How can AFRC improve the distribution process of authorized rank/grade positions and more strategically structure and manage its indispensable enlisted force?'"

"We needed a flexible and transparent process that would preserve, build and shape the Air Force Reserve, maximize force development, and provide career progression and leadership opportunities commensurate

with various levels of responsibility for each enlisted rank and grade," said Jeffrey Pennington, AFRC director of staff. "We also needed a standard, well-understood and consistent method to process requested exceptions to policy (requests to distribute positions differently within an Air Force specialty or directorate)."

After the corporate-level review, AFRC decided to implement a fundamentally new approach to structure the enlisted force — one that focuses on how to better distribute the funded enlisted positions across the command by rank/grade and within each career field.

At the heart of this new approach is a new Enlisted Grades Council, which requires AFRC enlisted leaders to be actively and intricately involved in how decisions are made for the people they represent.

"For the first time in AFRC's history, the chief enlisted managers are empowered to strategically and deliberately structure, distribute and manage the enlisted force across the various rank and grade categories," said Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly, AFRC's command chief master sergeant and the chair of the Enlisted Grades Council.

Under the new enlisted force structure construct, chief enlisted managers will collaborate with multiple subject-matter experts — career field managers, major

command functional managers, functional area managers and numbered Air Force command chiefs — to examine the requirements-based grades distribution for each Air Force specialty. They then propose an authorization-based grades distribution for all the positions in that career field. They will repeat this process for every Air Force specialty within their directorate's portfolio.

The proposed distributions for each Air Force specialty are reviewed and finalized by the Enlisted Grades Council and submitted to the AFRC commander and other senior leaders for approval.

Plans call for the new Enlisted Grades Council to convene approximately every two years to review the command's enlisted grades structure and recommend redistribution if necessary. The council's first meeting is set for 2018. Details of how the council will be implemented are still being finalized.

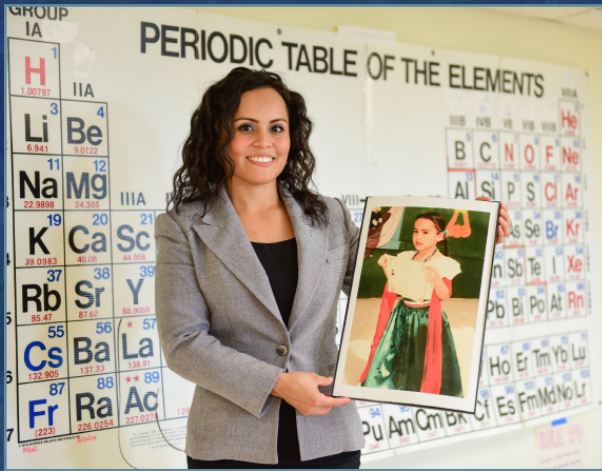
"I'm excited about the work our enlisted force structure working group has generated over the last year and a half, and I'm looking forward to seeing the work our new Enlisted Grades Council will produce to make sure we have the right mix of enlisted forces in place to meet our requirements in the years to come," said Lt. Gen. Maryanne Miller, AFRC commander.



Photo by Master Sgt. Stephen Schester

Air Force Reserves Profiles in Leadership

Tech. Sgt. Perla Tapia



LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz.- A student asked, what is your life-long dream Ms. Tapia? With a smile, she replied; I'm living it.

The military was never part of her long-term plans when, Tech. Sgt. Perla Tapia, 944th Operations Group, command support staff, decided to join the military in 2010. Her main goal was to become a naturalized citizen. However, within a few years, she earned several accolades including the 2013 Airman of the Year for Tenth Air Force and now the Air Force Reserve has become more than just a job.

Growing up, Tapia always dreamed of continuing her education and having a professional career. In 2006, she was one of the many undocumented students affected by Arizona immigration laws which forced her to drop out of college. Tapia was the first person in her family to graduate from high school and in May 2015, Tapia walked across the stage as a Magna Cum Laude graduate and received her Bachelor's degree in Chemistry.

Tapia is currently a high school chemistry teacher in El Mirage, Arizona. She serves 200 students every school year, continues to volunteer in local youth organizations and is always looking for opportunities to mentor others. She is currently pursuing her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership through Arizona State University and is expected to graduate in the summer of 2018. "My vision is to continue to lead and inspire others to help make the community I live in a better place," said Tapia. "It is true that America is the home of opportunities and it is most visible when you accomplish them yourself."



Photos by Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder

Erin Sandmann

944th Fighter Wing Honorary Commander

Assigned to Col. Bryan Cook, 944 FW Commander

Place of business: Navigate for Success, LLC

Duty Title: Founding President

City where you reside: Peoria, AZ

Where you were born/grew up: Clifton Park, NY

Family: Doug, husband; Eric and Devin, sons.

Erin Sandmann is the founding president of Navigate for Success LLC. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science and a minor in secondary math education from SUNY Buffalo, New York; was the business manager at a top producing dental practice; has consulted in computer software, personnel management, and human resource law compliance; received “Bridges out of Poverty” training; and co-facilitated the content for Certificate of Employability. Erin’s speaking engagements have included *Too Busy to Stay Organized*, *Managing Women: Hormones to Harmony*, *Workplace Communication Solutions*, and *Take Control of Your Budget*. These audiences included the Saratoga Dental Congress, Pashley PTA, Proctors Theater, Ellis Hospital, City Mission of Schenectady, Schenectady ARC, Union College, and military.

Navigate for Success LLC, is dedicated to the support and development (personal and professional) of individuals. This is a solution-oriented approach to systems and processes encouraging increased staff retention, productivity and satisfaction. A combination of coaching and connecting to available resources provides an environment for removing barriers to individual’s success. In January 2015, the Albany Business Review featured her in an article titled *Turnover Stops with Her*.

Her hobbies include sharing free time with friends and family; paint glassware; hike, travel, and flipping houses with her husband. Her sons are both graduates of Arizona State University.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder

Words from our Honorary Commander...

As an Honorary Commander I am looking to better understand how the Air Force functions, and the demands which are placed on the men and women in service. I am consistently impressed with the commitment, dedication, and appreciation I observe at every event I have the privilege to attend. While I seek to assist in any way that I can, I am humbled to know that it will never compare to these men, women, and their families.

Thank you all for all that you do.

Around the wing

(Below) An F-35 Lightning II prepares for take-off at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Oct. 13, 2017. The aircraft was on its way to the 2017 Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition in South Korea. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Heather Redman)



Japan-American AF Goodwill Association

(Above) Nine members of the Japan-American Air Force Goodwill association visited Luke Air Force Base. The retired Japanese Air Force Self Defense Force general officers toured the 944th Fighter Wing and visited the 944th Operation Group Detachment 2 F-35 program as part of their visit. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.)



F-35s land at Hickam



JASDF's 500th Sortie

(Below) The 944th Operations Group Detachment 2 and the Japanese Foreign Military Sales Aircraft Maintenance Unit completed their 500th sortie at Luke Air Force Base, Sept. 8th, 2017. The flight was flown by Lt. Col. Daniel Daehler, 944th OG Det 2 instructor pilot. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.)

ROK visits Luke



(Above) The Republic of Korea Air Force delegation poses for a photo in front of the Academic Training Center at Luke Air Force Base Oct. 12, 2017. The ROKAF also visited facilities at the 944th Fighter Wing. (Photo by Maj. Elizabeth Magnusson)



The 47th Fighter Squadron performed a fly over for the Pennsylvania State University vs. University of Pittsburgh NCAA football game Sept. 9. (Courtesy photo)

