



Combat Airlifter

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STAYING READY

Pages 8-10

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Candace Carrico, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management journeyman, adjusts the straps on a protective mask while her colleagues put on their protective suits at Little Rock Air Force Base on June 12. Airmen in emergency management verify each unit is up to date on their emergency management training for crisis situations such as tornados or installation threats.



62ND AS NAMED

AETC TOP OPS SQUADRON

The 62nd Airlift Squadron received Air Education and Training Command's Top Operations Squadron earlier this year.

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GOLD STAR CHILDREN RECONNECT

WITH MEMORIES OF LOST LOVED ONES

Little Rock Air Force Base partnered up with Hearts of Our Heroes Camp to show Gold Star children different career fields and units on base to give them a glimpse of what their lost loved one might have done while serving.

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TLR OPENS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The new Professional Development Center at Little Rock Air Force Base is the first time Airman Leadership School, First Term Airman Center, Honor Guard and the career assistance adviser will all be under one roof.

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Air Force officials announce tour-length changes

By Sarah Loicano

Second Air Force Public Affairs

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss. — After listening to feedback from Airmen and career field managers, Air Force officials are reducing targeted special duty and instructor tour lengths to create a more ready and resilient force.

The tour length reduction from four to three years for military training instructors, military training leaders, Air Education and Training Command technical training instructors with prefix “T”, “J”, or “X” and stateside professional military education instructors was announced July 1, renewing the focus on increasing operational readiness and improving Airmen resiliency.

“The Air Force is committed to returning our experienced and professional workforce to their operational career fields and reducing the unique stressors associated with these special duty tours,” Maj. Gen. Timothy Leahy, Second Air Force commander said. “The decision to reduce tour lengths is about increasing our readiness and lethality while growing today’s Airmen for the force we need.”

All special duty assigned Airmen serving as MTIs, MTLs, TTIs or stateside PME instructors on or after July 1, 2019, will receive a three-year assignment. Airmen already serving in one of these positions on or after July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, will have 30 days to either accept a three-year tour or opt to keep their original four-year tour. Airmen assigned to one of the targeted DSDs before July 1, 2018, or in an



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY KEMBERLY GROUE

Airmen stand in formation during a Military Training Leader course graduation ceremony at the Levitow Training Support Facility on Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., on May 30. The MTL course is responsible for training approximately 120 MTLs per year. Those MTLs are then responsible for training approximately 30,000 Airmen in 49 different locations that fall under Air Education and Training Command.

overseas tour, will finish their original assignment.

Due to the length of time required to get Air Force recruiters trained and certified, the tour length reduction does not currently impact recruiting assignments. Building and maintaining community outreach efforts are critical to Air Force recruiting success, making 48-months the ideal recruiter tour length according to Air Force leadership.

Restoring readiness is one of the Air Force’s top priorities. The tour length change addresses readiness by responding to career field managers’ concerns over retention, loss of operational expertise and assignment-related burnout. The unanimous feedback from a January 2019 survey of career field

managers’ supports a move to a shorter, more manageable tour length for MTIs, MTLs, technical and PME instructors.

“This change is about ensuring we are creating additional opportunities for professional development, establishing a more resilient force and returning trained Airmen, with newly acquired professional and leadership training, back to their specific operational specialty,” said Chief Master Sgt. JoAnne Bass, Second Air Force command chief. “Reducing special duty tour lengths optimizes Airmen’s experience and performance both during their career-broadening experience and their operational career field reintegration.”

Input from across five Air Force training wings was factored into the

decision to reduce tour lengths. A 2019 survey of MTLs and MTIs indicated that while DSD Airmen reported positive experiences with their career broadening positions, assignment fatigue began to sharply increase around the three-year mark. Survey participants cited a challenging work-life balance including shift work, professional demands and responsibilities outside typical duty hours and the time away from their operational career fields as the primary stressors.

Additionally, a review of across other military branches found that in-service instructors and drill sergeants served three-year tours and Army training special duty assignments are currently restricted to two years, with a highly selective third year option.

The move supports Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein’s squadron revitalization initiative and is part of a recent series of AETC transformations including Basic Military Training curriculum changes and a reduction in computer-based and ancillary training requirements.

“Our military training leaders and instructors are crucial to building a stronger, ready and lethal professional force. The Airmen who serve in Developmental Special Duty positions are the epitome of professionalism and represent our Air Force core values,” Leahy said. “The Air Force needs passionate leaders committed to the development of our Airmen, so to those who serve in these demanding roles — you have spoken and we have heard you. We owe it to you to make this change.”

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How to reach us

404 Graham Road,
Jacksonville, Ark. 72076
Phone: 501-982-9421
Fax: 501-985-0026

E-mail:

combatairlifter@arkansasleader.com

Advertising:

combatairlifter@arkansasleader.com

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19th Airlift Wing	Editor and Publisher
Commander	
Capt. Beau Downey	Christy Hendricks
Chief of Public Affairs	Managing Editor

Content provided by 19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs
Contact 19aw.pa@us.af.mil

COMBAT AIRLIFTER OF THE WEEK



NAME AND RANK

Airman 1st Class Justin Hilliard

UNIT

61st Airlift Squadron

DUTY TITLE

C-130J loadmaster

HOMETOWN

Ithica, New York

TIME IN SERVICE

1 year, 5 months

TIME AT LITTLE ROCK

1 year

GOALS

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62nd AS named AETC top ops squadron

By Airman 1st Class Kristine M. Gruwell
19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

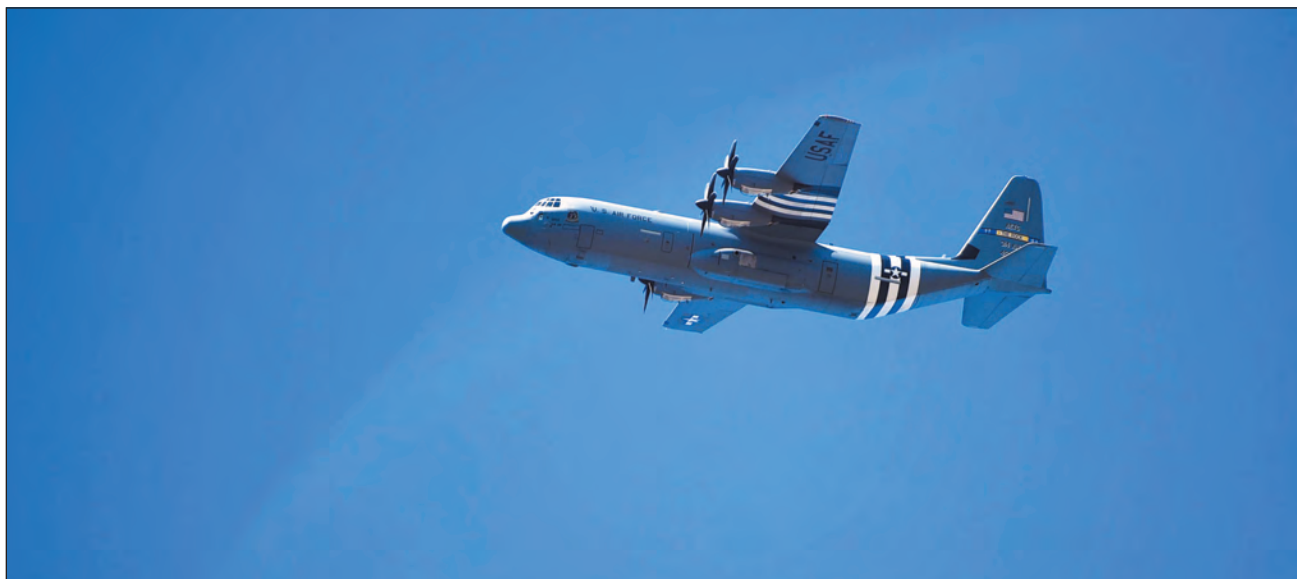
The 62nd Airlift Squadron received Air Education and Training Command's Top Operations Squadron for 2018 at Little Rock Air Force Base earlier this year.

This award is given to squadrons for exceptional execution of the flying training mission. However, the 62nd AS also focused, during this time, on what it means to develop students not just as operators, but as Airmen, too.

"A whole new generation of Airmen is coming through our doors, pushing us to adapt our instruction to sharpen the competitive edge of strategic and tactical combat airlift while creating a teamwork and wingman-ship mentality in each individual Airman," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Shane Saum, 62nd AS director of operations.

Some difficulties flying squadrons face include being

See Top, 6



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. DANA J. CABLE

A C-130J from the 314th Airlift Wing flies over Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas during the fly-in exercise on March 15. Eight C-130J units from around the globe came together to enhance mobility partnerships across the C-130J enterprise during the second-annual C-130J fly-in at Little Rock Air Force Base held March 9 through March 16.

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unable to complete their flight hours due to weather conditions or maintenance. The 62nd AS found ways around those hurdles to further develop Airmen with the competencies and skillsets needed to do the combat airlift mission in a contested environment, leading them down the path toward the award.

Regardless of home station flight conditions, instructors and students flew to other locations such as Louisiana and Tennessee to complete more than enough flight hours.

"We switch aircraft if one has a maintenance issue and go to one of our other flight locations to make sure we complete our flight hours," Saum said. "Never have we flown more hours than we have this last year. That

increase in operations and deliberate training contributed to winning us this award."

The 62nd AS instructed 4,000 sorties, flew over 11,000 hours, graduated about 330 students to seven different major commands and four international students to their respective countries. This increase in flight hours for student loadmasters and pilots necessarily required more focus on safety in flight, and the 62nd AS managed to prevent hard landings and other potentially injury-causing events in 2018.

"The things we do are inherently dangerous," said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. CJ Campbell, 62nd AS operations superintendent. "As instructors, we pride ourselves on a year of flying safely."

Instructors have capitalized on their increased flying hours to give students more experience flying while also recruiting potential students. The 62nd AS has conducted recruiting missions to numerous colleges in Florida,

Virginia and many other states. Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets from those colleges received an incentive flight by the 62nd AS, and new Airmen enlisted in the back of a C-130J as well.

"There're a lot of things we are trying to do to promote 'Herk Nation,' like showing incoming Airmen what it's like to be part of this kind of Air Force family" Saum said. "Our moto is 'Herk Nation Starts Here' because we get that initial phase with the new Airmen who are beginning their C-130J career."

"We're doing things right," Campbell said. "Instead of just going down a checklist and hitting every box, we went above and beyond to ensure mobility Airmen are ready for any operation they're assigned to after coming through our doors. We are already doing a cool job, but when you get recognized for it, that takes our motivation to a whole new level to grow and hopefully get recognized again and again."

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Gold Star children reconnect with memories of lost loved ones

By Senior Airman Rhett Isbell
19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

A van rumbles down hot, summer pavement as children peer out at bedtime stories coming to life.

Stories centered around a parent serving a country they loved and their ultimate sacrifice to preserve the freedoms their children now enjoy. The children got this opportunity when Little Rock Air Force Base partnered up with Hearts of Our Heroes Camp to show Gold Star children different career fields and units on base to give them a glimpse of what their lost loved one might have done, while serving.

"It's a week-long camp that they do," said U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Greg Bishop, 714th Training Squadron instructor loadmaster. "They get to spend the summer together, and the thing that they all have in common is that one of their family members was either killed in action or on duty."

The tour marked the first time in four years the camp teamed up with base members to give the children an opportunity to experience military culture by meeting Airmen and seeing their career fields in action.

"For many of them, they lost that military connection when they lost their parents," said Angela Beason, Hearts of Our Heroes Camp chaperone. "It gives them a chance to think about what the military's like because none of them live near a military base or are directly involved with the military anymore. This kind of gives them a chance to see, with their own eyes, what their loved one did on a daily basis."

One highlight of the day was visiting the aerial delivery flight as they rigged together the parachutes used to safely airdrop equipment and humanitarian aid to those on the ground. The campers experienced firsthand how Airmen are uniquely able to serve in the U.S. Air Force on a day-to-day basis, including sitting

See Memories, 12



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN RHETT ISBELL

Hearts of Our Heroes Camp attendees stand outside of a C-130 flight simulator at Little Rock Air Force Base on June 13. The Gold Star children were able to use the simulator to see what it would be like to be a U.S. Air Force pilot flying over the Arkansas countryside.

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Airmen assigned to the 19th Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management flight put on protective suits in preparation for a sample testing during training at Little Rock Air Force Base on June 12. The emergency management flight is comprised of three different sections: plans and operations, logistics and training.



STAYING READY

19th CES emergency management train Black Knights

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
AIRMAN 1ST CLASS KRISTINE M. GRUWELL
 19TH AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Exercising readiness for emergency situations so Airmen can stay prepared and learn their role when it comes to installation attacks or natural disasters is a high priority at Little Rock Air Force Base. The 19th Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management flight verifies each unit's accomplishments so the mission can continue safely, and effectively, regardless of the environment.

"The fact that we are the readiness flight and the commander's top priority is readiness puts a spotlight on us," said U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Candace Carrico, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management journeyman. "We train everybody in chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive defense to be ready at the drop of a [hat] in case of an emergency."

Emergency management is comprised of three sections devoted to safety and readiness — plans and operations, logistics and training. Each plays an integral role in the overall goal for the 19th Airlift Wing of being a ready, resilient force.

Emergency management representatives are assigned to each unit and communicate with Airmen as part of plans and operations. These representatives track their individual unit's inspections, checklist items and overall training. Plans and operations manages and validates all units for this information.

While plans and operations assist outside units, logistics maintain all emergency management in-house equipment. They ensure everything is calibrated and prepped in order to respond to a crisis.

Lastly, the training section focuses on the general training standard for every Airman. They teach the CBRNE classes and create training for their own unit to be completed once a month.

See Ready, 10



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Kaila Koke, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management journeyman, seals a container with an unknown substance for training at Little Rock Air Force Base on June 12. Airmen in emergency management create and host in-house training once a month to maintain their combat edge by practicing and honing skills that make them more effective.

Ready

Continued from page 9

Airmen in the emergency management flight train internally on numerous tasks from responding to emergency situations to knowing the breakdown of CBRNE substances.

“I love learning the science behind my job, Carrico said. “If I wasn’t in the military, I wouldn’t be able to do any of this, so being around this equipment and the procedures is really unique.”

Whether it’s a tornado or an installation threat, real-world emergencies don’t happen every day at Little Rock AFB. However, emergency management Airmen are always ready and maintain

their combat edge by practicing and honing skills that make them more effective.

“During the Syria attacks last year, I realized we could be attacked with those kinds of weapons and that chemical warfare is real,” said U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Sydney Eleuteri, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management journeyman. “Our job could be the difference between people surviving or not.”

From bolstering base-wide training to knowing the ins and outs of CBRNE weapons, emergency management is always there to make sure that Airmen are ready to react to scenarios that force them to find the best, most efficient way to deliver combat airlift even in a contested environment.



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Candace Carrico, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management journeyman, takes a sample of an unknown substance for training at Little Rock Air Force Base on June 12.



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U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTOS BY SENIOR AIRMAN RHETT ISBELL

(Above) (Left) Bella Cook, Courtney Woodham, and Brianna Brandon, Hearts of Our Heroes Camp attendees, walk onto a C-130 flight simulator at Little Rock Air Force Base on June 13. This was the first time the camp had partnered with the base to give Gold Star children a glimpse of the type of work their lost loved ones may have done while serving.

(Right) Bella Cook, Hearts of Our Heroes attendee, uses a C-130 flight simulator at Little Rock Air Force Base on June 13. Cook got to experience flying over large, simulated stretches of Arkansas. The simulators are also used by students from 30 countries.



Memories

Continued from page 7

inside the dark of a C-130 flight simulator, illuminated only by the screens in front of them, as they learned how to pilot Team Little Rock's trademark aircraft. The simulator is used by over 1,100 students who average about 39,000 flight hours annually.

"They got to learn about some tactics our Defenders use and the training loadmasters undergo," Bishop said. "Then they got to do some hands-on learning using the simulator. I think that was the best part of the day for them."

The children were able to connect directly with the military legacy their family members left behind and found memorable moments scattered throughout the tour, imparting a lasting impression of their loved one and a desire to return again next year.

"It's gratifying on a whole other level to be able to help out during this," Bishop said. "We were attempting to show them what the duties of these different entities on base are so they can derive a connection between them and their loved one. From what I saw, I think we succeeded, and I hope they come back next year."

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TLR opens Professional Development Center



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. DANA J. CABLE

(Above) Little Rock Air Force Base Honor Guard members post the colors during a ribbon-cutting ceremony outside the new Professional Development Center at Little Rock AFB on June 24. This is the first time Airman Leadership School, First Term Airman Center, Honor Guard and the career assistance adviser will all be under one roof, affirming Team Little Rock's commitment to developing Airmen in the Profession of Arms.

(Right) Chief Master Sgt. Justin Strain, 19th Airlift Wing command chief, celebrates the establishment of the new Professional Development Center at Little Rock AFB, on June 24. The center serves as a benchmark leadership initiative, establishing a development focal point, benefitting Airmen through collaboration, networking and mentoring by having Airman Leadership School, First Term Airman Center, Honor Guard and the career assistance adviser co-located.

(Below) Team Little Rock leadership unveil the new Professional Development Center at Little Rock AFB on June 24.



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