

COMBAT AIRLIFTER

FRIDAY, JAN. 3, 2020



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT. JESSICA CICHETTO

Aircrew members from the 41st Airlift Squadron walk toward a simulated decontamination area during Phase IIB of ROCKI 20-01 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Nov. 16, 2019. Phase II was divided into two sub-phases: Phase IIA stressed Airmen's ability to survive and operate in a simulated chemical environment; Phase IIB stressed their ability to survive and operate in a simulated radiological environment.

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW: JULY-DECEMBER

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41st AS: Most outstanding Airlift Squadron in AMC

By Airman 1st Class Jayden Ford
19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The 41st Airlift Squadron was awarded the 2018 General Joseph Smith Trophy for being the most outstanding airlift squadron in Air Mobility Command last year.

The squadron led the largest wing exercises in a decade, delivered the most prevalent overseas airdrop in 5 years, and had the lowest C-130J mishap rate for eight years. These award-winning efforts came about in part because of the culture surrounding the squadron.

“It’s the culture of the unit – excellence,” said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Jonathan Esses, 41st AS interim commander. “Your best is never good enough, and you want your best to get better. You’re always working to do more.”

The honor of receiving the trophy did not come without challenges, especially while the squadron was deployed for over a quarter of the year.

“There’s always fog and confusion in war,” Esses said. “The enemy always gets a vote in what you do, especially in Afghanistan. There’s the risk of aircraft damage or injury to personnel.”

Despite these obstacles, the Airmen from the 41st AS found a way to persevere and come out victorious.

“All these challenges go into trying to make sure we have the right people in the right place to do the mission that is required,” Esses said. “This year we had all the right people in all the right places.”

Part of the squadron’s culture includes fostering an environment where Airmen



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

The 41st Airlift Squadron was awarded the 2018 General Joseph Smith Trophy for being the most outstanding airlift squadron in Air Mobility Command last year. The 41st AS has been an integral part of the combat airlift mission at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, for over a decade providing aggressive combat airlift—anywhere, anytime.

are empowered to develop their own competencies, ultimately making a more effective and productive unit.

“What we like to do here is let the Airmen run,” said U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Ronald James, 41st AS superintendent. “We give them borders,

but we let them grow themselves with a little bit of help and advice from leadership. We allow them to fail and grow from their failures.”

With the trophy secured, the Airmen in the squadron feel a deep sense of pride in being a part of Herk Nation and great

accomplishment from all the hard work they put in to make it happen.

“I have an entire squadron of people who worked very hard for this,” Esses said. “I am extremely proud of the people who put the energy in to make it the best airlift squadron in AMC.”

EDITORIAL POLICY

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

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Courtney Wagner, 61st Airlift Squadron loadmaster, was named the 2018 Staff Sgt. Henry E. “Red” Erwin Outstanding Career Enlisted Aviator of the Year at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Aug. 12, 2019. Wagner was selected for this honor based on her outstanding accomplishments, leadership and self-improvements in relation to aviation service.

61st loadmaster wins 2018 Outstanding Career Enlisted Aviator award

By Staff Sgt. Dana J. Cable

19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

A 61st Airlift Squadron loadmaster from Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, was named the 2018 Staff Sgt. Henry E. “Red” Erwin Outstanding Career Enlisted Aviator of the Year.

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Courtney Wagner was selected for this honor based on her outstanding accomplishments, leadership and self-improvements in relation to aviation service.

“It’s an honor to have even been nominated,” Wagner said. “It’s against all the enlisted flyers in the Air Force, so I’m going against boom operators, flight attendants – pretty much anyone that is an enlisted aviator.”

This award is given annually to a CEA for their outstanding support of enlisted aircrew operations.

“The ‘Red’ Erwin for a CEA is probably the biggest award that is out there,” said

U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Jeramiyah Yurick, 61st Airlift Squadron superintendent. “It’s a huge pool of people to start with, and it’s also awarded to Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve – it’s the pinnacle for enlisted aviators.”

Yurick said submitting Wagner for the award was an easy choice because of her outstanding work ethic.

“She’s the go-to for everything – from training, to loadmaster’s knowledge, she is one of our best and brightest,” Yurick said. “She did all the work, we just put the words on paper and it shined through as it went up, so it was an easy choice.”

During 2018 Wagner was able to fly and support airlift missions all over the world.

“I feel like we are actually contributing when we take supplies and people to where they need to be,” Wagner said. “The opportunities are endless – it’s

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CMSAF Wright joins LRAFB Airmen for Wingman Day

By Staff Sgt. Dana J. Cable
19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright visited Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Oct. 3-4, 2019, to meet with Airmen and take part in the base's Wingman Day.

Wingman Day was the culminating event for Phase I of the 19th Airlift Wing's Resiliency Campaign Plan. The RCP is the 19th AW's method of connecting Airmen to not only the mission, but also to the resources and community required for cultivating a culture of Ready Warriors.

Upon his arrival, Wright visited multiple units across the installation including the 19th AW, 314th AW, 189th AW, and 913th Airlift Group to learn about how Herk Nation's singular focus on Combat Airlift is underpinned by the foundation of training that happens here and is manifested in the day-to-day operations supported around the world.

"Having the opportunity to see all four of the mission sets that you have here with the three wings and the group has been an amazing experience," said Wright. "I got the opportunity to connect with quite a few Airmen today and yesterday -- I appreciate what you guys do."

For all Airmen, Wingman Day started with taking a wing-wide Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey. The 19th AW partnered with the 711th Human Performance Wing from Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, to provide a more detailed survey to approximately a third of Airmen, focusing on unit culture and mental health.

"We wanted to solicit direct feedback from members across the wing," said Col. John Schutte, 19th AW commander. "We will take that feedback and use it to inform what our efforts will be over the course of the second phase of our RCP."

To kick off Wingman Day, Wright augmented Security Forces members helping check identification cards while greeting Airmen at the gate.

Following his time with the defenders of the base, Wright visited Camp Warlord – Team Little Rock's

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U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT. JESSICA CICHETTO

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright speaks with members from the 189th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Oct. 3, 2019. Wright visited multiple units across the installation including the 19th AW, 314th AW, and 189th AW to learn about Herk Nation's singular focus on Combat Airlift.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT. JESSICA CICHETTO

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright simulates flying a C-130H in a Multi-Mission Crew Trainer, with Master Sgt. David Long, 189th Operations Support Squadron instructor flight engineer, at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Oct. 3, 2019. Wright visited multiple units across the installation including the 19th AW, 314th AW, and 189th AW to learn about Herk Nation's singular focus on Combat Airlift.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT. JESSICA CICHETTO

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright augments Security Forces members from the 19th Security Forces Squadron, helping check identification cards while greeting Airmen at the gate at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Oct. 4, 2019. Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright visited Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Oct. 3-4, 2019, to meet with Airmen and take part in the base's Wingman Day.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT JESSICA CICHETTO

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright speaks with members from the 3714th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Oct. 3, 2019. Wright visited multiple units across the installation including the 19th AW, 314th AW, and 189th AW to learn about Herk Nation's singular focus on Combat Airlift.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS AARON IRVIN

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright arrives at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Oct. 3, 2019. Wright visited multiple units across the installation including the 19th AW, 314th AW, and 189th AW to learn about Herk Nation's singular focus on Combat Airlift.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN KRISTINE M. GRUWELL

C-130Js, KC-135 Stratotankers, C-17 Globemaster IIIs and a KDC-10 line up on the flight line during Mobility Guardian 2019 at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, Sept. 27, 2019. The aircraft taxied in an "Elephant Walk" formation where multiple aircraft such as the C-130J, KC-135 and C-17, lined up on the flight line and flew in formation.



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

Maj. Abraham Umanah, 34th Combat Training Squadron air mobility liaison officer, goes over flight plans during Exercise Mobility Guardian 2019, Sept. 24, 2019. Umanah serves as the airspace planning lead for Exercise Mobility Guardian 2019. The airspace planning cell reserves the airspace and develops flight plan routes for all aircraft operating within Mobility Guardian and works very closely with the FAA to make sure all flight plan routes are vetted and passed along to the mission planning cells for execution. Exercise Mobility Guardian is Air Mobility Command's premier, large scale mobility exercise.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN CHARLES T. FULTZ

U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Ronnie James, right, and Airman 1st Class Noah Keene, 41st Airlift Squadron loadmasters assigned to Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, pull in parachute lines on a U.S. Air Force C-130J Super Hercules, assigned to Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, after conducting a Joint Forcible Entry (JFE) training scenario, Sept. 14, 2019 at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, in support of exercise Mobility Guardian 2019. Exercise Mobility Guardian is Air Mobility Command's premier, large scale mobility exercise. Through robust and relevant training, Mobility Guardian improves the readiness and capabilities of Mobility Airmen to deliver rapid global mobility and builds a more lethal and ready Air Force.

TLR plans, assesses, exercises at MG19

By Senior Airman Kristine M. Gruwell
19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Exercise Mobility Guardian 2019, Air Mobility Command's premier large – scale mobility exercise created an environment from September 8-28, 2019, where Team Little Rock became Ready Warriors alongside joint and international partners to ensure they could deliver rapid global mobility now, and in the future.

Mobility Airmen from across the globe integrated at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, to continue the momentum of readiness by keeping their global, competitive edge through exercising in contested, degraded and operationally-limited environments.

“We got a lot of training objectives done, but the biggest thing was watching the individuals build relationships with international partners and other Mobility Airmen such as the tanker community and C-17 community,” said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Jonathan Esses, 41st Airlift Squadron director of operations. “In the future, when these Airmen run into each other in real-world scenarios, their communication and teamwork will be that much stronger.”

Approximately 250 pilots, loadmasters, aerial porters and maintenance Airmen from TLR participated in MG19 throughout the three-week exercise. Little Rock Air Force Base's Ready Warriors were only one piece of the 4,000 Mobility Airman puzzle that formed MG19.

U.S. Army airborne paratroopers, riggers and field artillery personnel from across the nation, international allies from Australia, Canada, Chile, United Arab Emirates and many more countries around the world, added to the 4,000 - participant team which made up MG19.

“Practicing with our joint service and international allies lets us take advantage of our strengths, and notice the weaknesses to make the best strategic decision while enhancing the vital partnerships we rely on to accomplish the mission,” said U.S. Air Force Col. Shane Haughian, 19th Operations Group commander.

These participants exercised airdrops, aeromedical evacuations, contingency response and many more mobility missions. Not all members of TLR were training, some of them were performing assessments to ensure Mobility Airmen are always ready.

Members of the 34th Combat Training Squadron, along with their augmentees, arrived seven days before the exercise began, and stayed seven days after it ended to prepare the environment and injects for the incoming Airmen.

The 34th CTS Airmen's role in MG19 was to observe, coach and train the Airmen as they performed the tasks required of them in a contested, austere environment. These observers, coaches and trainers also wrote assessments for senior leadership so the next MG can be improved further.

Not only are these assessments going to enhance

future MG exercises, the knowledge gained by the participants will set a foundation for the 19th AW's own biannual exercise – the ROCKI.

“Now we can really step it up for the crews who already have this experience,” Esses said. “With this baseline, we'll be able to step up the enemy threat capability at the next ROCKI and exercise against it.”



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN RYAN LACKEY

A C-130 Hercules crew from Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, prepares to unload cargo at the start of Air Mobility Command's Mobility Guardian 2019 exercise at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, Sept. 8, 2019. Through robust and relevant training, Mobility Guardian is designed to build full spectrum readiness and develop Air Mobility Airmen to ensure we deliver rapid global mobility now and in the future.

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ROCKI 20-01 readies warriors

By Airman 1st Class Mariam K. Springs
19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The landing gear comes down as the nearly 113-foot C-130J Super Hercules prepares to bring the last of the Airmen home from their simulated deployment where tents, sleeping bags and Meals Ready to Eat were the way of life. These Airmen proved themselves to be Ready Warriors.

The 19th Airlift Wing full spectrum readiness exercise, ROCKI 20-01, came to a successful close Sunday at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas. The exercise provided the opportunity for 19th AW Airmen to prove their ability to project and sustain agile combat airlift in any environment.

“ROCKI 20-01 was a successful comprehensive exercise that tested and validated the 19th AW’s readiness skills in a contested environment,” said Maj. Kelly Franklin, 19th AW director of inspections. “It is important for Airmen to understand the process of moving into and sustaining operations in a deployed location in a quick and efficient manner.”

The exercise was divided into three distinct phases, deliberately designed to test Airmen in different ways while honing their overall warfighting effectiveness.

“Phase I taught our Airmen how to task and expediently process over 500 personnel out the door and onto a plane in the least amount of time possible,” said Senior Master Sgt. Tiffany Sargent, wing inspection team lead for the 19th Mission Support Group. “This process is complicated and involves moving parts from several units for it to work. Perfecting it now ensures we get it right when supporting the fight down-range in the future.”

The exercise grew more intense as Airmen armed up with M4s and M9s using simulated rounds, and began to reinforce structures with sandbags in anticipation of upcoming simulated enemy attacks at the Realistic Training Area known as Camp Warlord— marking the beginning of Phase II.

“Simply learning your deployed job will not physically or mentally prepare you to deal with the stress of working long hours in

difficult conditions, under fire and in your gear,” Sargent said. “Phase II accomplished this by pushing Airmen out of their comfort zones, teaching them to accomplish their mission while also dealing with realities of war.”

Ground threats and simulated occurrences of chemical and radiological contamination were a large part of this training.

“With the overwhelming threat of nuclear attacks from adversaries, it’s imperative that we prepare our Airmen to respond,” Sargent said. “Phase IIB focused on nuclear threats and our ability to quickly and decisively respond to them. Going forward, we’re really excited to see how the nuclear portion of the exercise will grow and expand.”

In a new twist for a ROCKI exercise, two C-130Js brought 30 Airmen and the supplies needed to survive in a simulated austere environment at their forward-deployed location — Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. The operation tested the ability of combat airlift to provide rapid global mobility through the establishment and resupply of a distributed network of bare bases within a highly contested theater of operations.

“My job is to assist the wing commander and inspector general in planning and executing an effective and realistic exercise that allows Airmen from all Air Force Specialty Codes to practice and perfect their deployed mission before they’re faced with it down range,” said Sargent.

The semiannual exercise validated the 19th AW’s Ability to Survive and Operate within both chemical and radiological environments.

“ROCKI 20-01 demonstrated the 19th AW’s ability to project and sustain agile combat airlift within a highly contested theater of operations, as described by the National Defense Strategy,” said Col. John Schutte, 19th AW commander. “The 19 AW is committed to remaining at the leading edge of operational excellence. We are educating and training our Airmen so they are prepared to compete with adversaries in every domain — It’s why we call them Ready Warriors.”



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS AARON IRVIN

(Above) U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Brittany Coburn, 41st Airlift Squadron loadmaster, prepares to execute an airdrop over Arkansas during phase II of ROCKI 20-01 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Nov. 14, 2019. Phase II was divided into two sub-phases: Phase IIA stressed Airmen’s ability to survive and operate in a simulated chemical environment; Phase IIB stressed their ability to survive and operate in a simulated radiological environment.

(Left) U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Santino Cozza, 19th Operational Medical Readiness Squadron bioenvironmental engineer, briefs deployed leadership in the Wing Operations Center on the radiological protection procedures during Phase II of ROCKI 20-01 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Nov. 15, 2015.

(Below) Members of the 19th Logistics Readiness Squadron petroleum, oil and lubricants flight fuel a C-130J Super Hercules before flight during Phase II of ROCKI 20-01 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Nov. 13, 2019. Airmen were tested on their ability to survive and operate within a simulated chemical and radiological environment during phase II.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT. JESSICA CICHETTO



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT. JESSICA CICHETTO



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN KRISTINE M. GRUWELL

(Above) U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Taylor Moore, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal team leader retrieves a simulated weapons cache during ROCKI 20-01 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Nov. 15, 2019. During the exercise, Airmen were tested on their ability to survive and operate within a simulated chemical and radiological environment.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JAYDEN FORD

(Right) U.S. Air Force Special Agent Russ Ward provides simulated medical attention to Senior Airman Robert Taulman, 19th Security Forces Squadron patrolman, during ROCKI 20-01 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Nov. 17, 2019.

(Below) U.S. Air Force military working dog, Iwo Jima, and his handler, Senior Airman Ashley Evans conduct a simulated hostile traffic stop during Phase II of ROCKI 20-01 at Little Rock Air Force Base, Nov. 16. The full spectrum readiness exercise was divided into three distinct phases, deliberately designed to test Airmen in different ways while honing their overall warfighting effectiveness.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT. JESSICA CICCHETTO

CMSAF

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training complex where semi-annual full-spectrum readiness exercise are held to gain a better understanding of where Airmen practice and hone their expeditionary readiness skills.

Wright then stopped by the 19th Medical Group for a surprise visit to meet LRAFB's medical professionals.

Next, Wright was able to join Airmen at the Herk Nation Mission Expo — a festival style display connecting junior Airman to their vital role in Combat Airlift.

“The expo gave everyone a chance to see the bigger picture,” said Senior Airman Matthew Head, 189th Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management journeyman. “It’s a good way of building community — to take a day just to reflect on what we’re doing. The mission’s important, but most effective when everyone has a clear mind and an understanding of why we’re here.”

After the Expo, Wright joined in for Operation DORM STORM, bringing more than 400 supervisors and base leaders to conduct small repairs and beautification efforts to the dorms; demonstrating leadership’s commitment to the health and well-being of Airmen.

“Operation DORM STORM is all about visibly demonstrating to Airmen at the lowest level that leaders from across the base want to dedicate our time and our efforts to take care of Airmen,” said Schutte.

Before departing, Wright sat down with Airmen for lunch at the Hercules dining facility where they spoke about their personal stories and their outlooks on the Air Force.

Wingman Day ended with a family-friendly Oktoberfest celebration for TLR to strengthen the bonds of community and celebrate the successes of Phase I of the RCP.

“Whether it’s Wingman Day or what we did with the Resiliency Tactical Pause, we all need to just stop for a minute and kind of reassess where we are and what we’re doing,” said Wright. “I like that part of your Wingman Day was helping Airmen around the installation connect to the primary mission.”

The 19th AW plans to leverage the momentum of the RCP by continuing to focus on a culture where Airmen feel connected, protected and respected.

“As we end the first phase of our RCP, I hope Airmen enjoyed Wingman Day as much as I did,” said Schutte. “In addition to having the honor of sharing in these events with Chief Wright and some of our elected representa-

tives, this was an excellent culmination of efforts from across our wing over the past two months to really focus in on what unites and connects us.”

Phase 2 of the RCP will be a multi-faceted education effort; redoubling efforts in Airman Leadership School, Flight Leadership Course, Key Spouse Training, various other Developmental and Leadership seminars and courses, and forging Ready Warriors through Full Spectrum Readiness exercises.

Outstanding

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never Groundhog Day. There is always something new.”

Along with taking supplies and personnel where they need to be to accomplish the mission, Wagner says one of the most rewarding parts of her job is enabling aeromedical evacuations.

“It’s very heart-wrenching and humbling any time you take in patients,” said Wagner. “It’s an eye-opener. You don’t know their story, but you know that something happened, and we are lucky enough to transport them. The sense of pride that you get when you take them where they need to go and get them the help they need definitely motivates you from within.”

Wagner, originally from Jeannette, Pennsylvania, obtained a bachelor’s degree in political science – pre law and was accepted into law school before enlisting in the U.S. Air Force.

“Originally when I enlisted I was just going to do four years, get some more schooling and be done,” Wagner said.

Wagner is now on track to graduate in December with her master’s degree in law and public policy and says she plans to retire from the military.

Wagner says she has thoughts of commissioning but isn’t ready to give up being a loadmaster just yet.

“I just extended another year because I want to do one more deployment as a flyer, and then I plan on taking my Air Force Officer Qualification Test to keep my options open,” Wagner said. “Commissioning is definitely an option, but I just love my job so much that it would be really hard, and I’m not ready to give it up. I’ve had a great year being a flyer.”

According to Wagner, she didn’t win this award on her own and thanks her friends, family and leadership for their constant support.

“Just like every big achievement in the Air Force, I don’t think anyone does it alone,” Wagner said. “My leadership played a big role in me getting the award, I have learned so much as a loadmaster from them. Growing up through the squadron I definitely got to where I am because of them.”