



Combat Airlifter



COVID-19 UPDATE

Information on the coronavirus pandemic.
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WAVES OF GRIEF

Air Force Reserve Tech. Sgt. Alexandria Erwin was doing her best to prepare for the inevitable.

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AIR FORCE BAND CONNECTS WITH LOCAL STUDENTS

Air Mobility Command's Airlifter Brass, the Brass Quintet of the U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America, performed for about 40 students at Little Rock Central High School on March 11.

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Airmen from the 41st Airlift Squadron and 19th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron visited the Manila American Cemetery in Manila, Philippines, on Feb. 18. The Airmen visited the cemetery to pay tribute to 19th Bombardment Group and 41st Troop Carrier Squadron Airmen who lost their life as prisoners of war or went missing during World War II.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN ERIC PARKER



COVID-19 CORONA VIRUS DISEASE 2019

March 2020 // Talking Points Special Edition
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ABOUT COVID-19

On Jan. 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a public health emergency of international concern for the 2019 novel coronavirus, or COVID-19. On Jan. 31, 2020, the secretary of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency in the United States and announced new measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The current epidemic, which originated in mainland China, has demonstrated the capacity of COVID-19 to spread globally. While supporting other government agencies' response to the COVID-19 threat, the Department of the Air Force is responding appropriately to protect the health of the force and maintain operational readiness.

COVID-19 QUICK FACTS

- On 3/11/20 WHO publicly characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic.
- It is not yet known if weather and temperature impact the spread of COVID-19.
- COVID-19 is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold.
- Older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes and lung disease are at a higher risk.

HEALTH PROTECTION MEASURES

Situation	HPCON	Example Health Protection Measures
Normal Baseline	0	Routine: Standard precautions such as routine hand washing, cough on sleeve, diet, exercise, vaccinations, education, stockpiling, planning, routine health alerts, etc.
Report of unusual health risk or disease	A	Limited: Health Alert, communicate risk and symptoms, review plans, verify preparation, training, stocks, posture, prepare to diagnose, isolate and report new cases
Outbreak or heightened exposure risk	B	Moderate: Strict hygiene (no handshaking, wear disposable use gloves), if exposed, self-isolate (cover mouth or refrain from), avoid contaminated water/food in risk areas, social control
High morbidity epidemic or contamination	C	Substantial: Social distance (limit meetings, wearing TDYs, shelter in place indoors, no if directed, don't reassess), mass distribution of medical countermeasures, if applicable
High mortality epidemic or containment	D	Severe: Restrict movement (quarantine), mass evacuation, mass decontamination, subsist on secure food/water sources

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

SYMPTOMS* OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

Patients with 2019-nCoV have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.



Fever



Cough



Shortness of Breath

IF YOU'VE TRAVELED TO A HIGH-RISK COUNTRY OR A COUNTRY WITH A LEVEL-3 TRAVEL HEALTH NOTICE WITHIN THE PAST 2 WEEKS AND DEVELOP SYMPTOMS, CALL YOUR DOCTOR.

COVID-19 RESOURCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
Department of Defense: <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Spotlight/Coronavirus/>
Department of the Air Force: <https://www.af.mil/News/Coronavirus-Disease-2019/>

COVID-19 PREVENTION



Currently there is NO vaccine to prevent COVID-19.



The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.



Everyone has a role to play in getting ready and staying healthy, visit www.cdc.gov for more tools to aid in prevention preparation.

STANDARD PRECAUTIONS



Clean your hands often with soap and water and/or hand sanitizer.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid close contact, putting distance between yourself and other people.



Stay home if you're sick, except to get medical care.



Cover coughs and sneezes.



Wear a face mask if you are sick.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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COMBAT AIRLIFTER OF THE WEEK



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

RANK AND NAME

Airman Jessica Crawford

UNIT

19th Comptroller Squadron

OFFICIAL DUTY TITLE

Budget analyst

HOMETOWN

Abilene, Texas

TIME ON STATION

9 months

TIME IN SERVICE

1 year, 1 month

HOBBIES

Reading, cooking, hiking, swimming and being outdoors.

GOALS

Earning a master's degree in a STEM program.

19TH AIRLIFT WING PRIORITY PORTRAYED AND WHY?

As a budget analyst, Crawford manages funds for 17 different agencies. She reconciled \$41,000 in disbursements and reimbursements restoring Air Force funds and streamlined payments to members.



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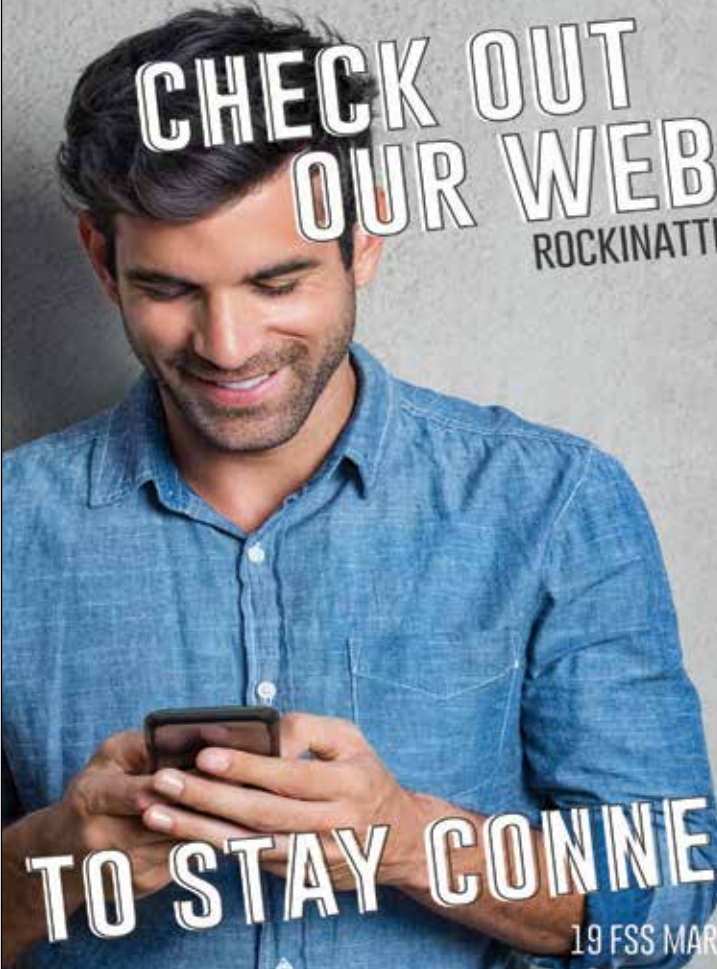


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Waves of Grief: Tech. Sgt. Alexandria Erwin

Story and photo by Maj. Ashley Walker
913th Airlift Group Public Affairs

Life often blindsides you with tragedy. For Air Force Reserve Tech. Sgt. Alexandria Erwin, she was doing her best to prepare for the inevitable.

Her younger brother Ryan, was losing his 10-year battle with brain cancer. At just 28 years old, Ryan was fighting not only a secondary brain cancer which was a direct result of previous treatment, but doctors also found a third cancer in both his esophagus and lungs. In an effort to focus treatment on the emerging issues, the medical care for the brain cancers were diminished.

Unfortunately, since moving from Washington State to Arkansas it had been quite a few years since Erwin and Ryan had last seen each other.

“Before I left for my deployment in 2018, I had the opportunity to visit my family in Wisconsin. That gave Ryan and me the chance to catch up,” said Erwin.

Once she returned home from her deployment, Erwin would fly back to Washington State to visit her family and reconnect those family bonds.

By the fall season of 2019, Ryan was battling three different brain cancers as well as the cancer in both his lung and esophagus.

“Unfortunately his quality of life was diminishing at a fast rate and I was faced with planning another trip home to spend quality time with ‘Ry’ before he declined further,” Erwin said. “It was tough watching my little brother struggle with simple day-to-day tasks. He wanted to make the most of my trip, but to make it through the day he had to take multiple medications just to give him enough energy to get out of bed. By the end of the day using his walker was a struggle and he’d end up swapping over to his wheelchair.”

Ryan continued to push through and refused to give up doing the things he loved, but as time went on Ryan’s condition deteriorated, requiring hospice care.

Late one evening, Erwin was woken by a frantic call from her brother, Zach. Erwin assumed the worst had happened and Ryan had passed away. She braced herself for the initial shock and wave of grief to hit.

See Grief, 6



Tech. Sgt. Alex Erwin, 96th Aerial Port Squadron air transportation specialist, reenlists in the cargo area of a C-130J on April 15, 2019. Erwin has served as a Reserve Citizen Airmen for seven years and recently returned from a 6-month deployment.

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THE NATURAL STATE

Grief

Continued from page 5

“My brother was hysterical, asking if I had seen the text messages from our mother.” Said Erwin. “Trying to wake up, I scrolled through my cell phone quickly realizing that I was reading my mother’s suicide note sent to both, Zach and I, in a group text.”

Doing her best to stay calm while this tragedy unfolded, Erwin directed her brother to call 911. Immediately after hanging up with Zach, she attempted to get her mom to answer her phone. Without success, she frantically wakes up her husband telling him to call 911, only to be directed to Arkansas dispatch.

"I kept calling over and over hoping she would finally pick up, and eventually she did," Erwin said. "I begged her to tell

me where her fiancé was; I begged her to go get help; I begged her to help herself.

"It is difficult to be on the phone with someone who at the time doesn't want your help or refuses to help themselves. As powerless as I felt, I did the only thing I could think of and kept her talking and awake until I could either motivate her to get help or until help arrived," said Erwin.

After what felt like an eternity, Erwin was able to find her fiancé's number and her husband took over keeping her mother talking as she called to alert her mother's fiancé. He had been downstairs in the basement the entire time. Luckily, as he ran to Erwin's mother's aid, both her brother and the ambulance were arriving.

Her mother made it to the hospital in time and received the help and care she needed, and has continued to receive the support she needs.

“My brother and I were panicked, but I believe that our prevention and interven-

tion training helped me to keep a clear enough mind to direct others to help," Erwin said.

Just as the wave of shock began to subside, two and a half weeks later her brother, Ryan passed away.

“We all knew this day was coming, but I really didn’t have a chance to breathe between tragedies,” said Erwin. “I took only one day off after my mother’s suicide attempt and took the following day off after the passing of my brother. I thought I could handle everything and decided to use work as a distraction.”

Members of the 96th Aerial Port Squadron chipped in to help Erwin with airfare and some brought meals for her family. Others offered their sympathies and emotional support.

“Master Sergeant Schmidle offered to watch my four kids, which I never had any intention of using,” Erwin said. “He was persistent though. Both he and his wife took on an additional

four kids one weekend, planned full of games and movies. It finally allowed me to decompress and let out some of my bottled up emotions.”

As the stress and grief surged, the unit came together to hold her afloat. Erwin admitted she didn't know how she would have been able to get through all of the recent events without everyone's support.

“The smallest action can sometimes have the greatest impact,” said Erwin. “A fellow Port Dawg lost a family member recently and she simply shared a passage talking about how grief comes in waves and this particular passage hit right at home with me. It fit perfectly.”

Erwin went on to encourage others to reach out to their fellow squadron members and to seek professional help.

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<https://myairforcebenefits.altesrmy.mil/>



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U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN KAHLIN DAWSON

Airmen from the 41st Airlift Squadron and 19th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron salute during a ceremony at the Manila American Cemetery in Manila, Philippines, on Feb. 18. The Airmen laid wreaths on the graves of previous 19th Bombardment Group and 41st Troop Carrier Squadron members to pay tribute to the sacrifices they made during World War II.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN KAHLIN DAWSON

U.S. Air Force Capt. Matt Jones, 41st Airlift Squadron C-130J Super Hercules pilot, stands in front of a wall with names of military members who went missing or were prisoners of war in the Philippines at Manila American Cemetery in Manila, Philippines, on Feb. 18. Airmen from the 41st AS and 19th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron visited the graves of three 19th Bombardment Group and nine 41st Troop Carrier Squadron Airmen to honor the sacrifices that Airmen from their lineage have made.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN ERIC PARKER

Pilots from the 41st Airlift Squadron fly over Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, on Feb. 16. During their trip to the Philippines, the Airmen flew the same routes their predecessors flew 75 years ago during World War II.

CORREGIDOR ISLAND

19TH AW HONORS A LEGACY OF HEROES

BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JAYDEN FORD
19TH AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

As the sun rose over the South Pacific on a warm February day, the flight crew onboard a C-130J Super Hercules, decorated with the nose number X41 and the words “Jungle Skippers” on the side, departed for their next destination. The crew flew on the same flight path their predecessors did during World War II — high above the clouds focused on the mission to be accomplished.

Airmen from the 41st Airlift Squadron and 19th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron flew to the Philippines to partake in a commemorative event marking the 75th Anniversary of the retaking of Corregidor Island, while also honoring three members from the 19th Bombardment Group, now 19th Airlift Wing, and nine members from the 41st Troop Carrier Squadron, now 41st AS, on Feb. 18.

In December 1941, the Japanese attacked the Philippines, where the 19th BG was stationed. The surprise attack on Pearl Harbor gave the 19th BG Airmen forewarning and they scrambled their bombers into a holding pattern to await further orders. Running low on fuel, they landed and rapidly loaded bombs for their next mission.

After four months of grueling battle, the Japanese overwhelmed and captured the remaining 76,000 ground forces, forcing them to endure a 70-mile march. Today, this event is known as the “Bataan Death March,” in which almost 20,000 lost their lives. Many survived the Death March, only to perish in prison camps. Among those who perished were Airmen from the 19th BG.

Airmen from the 41st TCS flew C-47s nonstop to resupply those troops in contact with the Japanese in the Southwest and Western Pacific — including the Airmen from the 19th BG.

The events that the 41st AS and 19th AMXS Airmen participated in allowed them to better understand what Airmen from the same units they serve endured 75 years ago.

“I appreciated that fact that we were able to spend a good amount of time at the Manila American Cemetery,” said U.S. Air Force Capt. Michael DeSandre, 41 AS pilot. “We really felt connected to our heritage, especially when we saw the white marble Latin cross headstone with the 41st Troop Carrier Squadron engraved on it. You see the heritage and you see where it comes from — the legacies left from those who have come before us.”

The 41st TCS provided support to ground troops in the Philippines — including Airmen from the 19th BG — decades before they would become geographically connected again by both units being reassigned to Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas.

The Airmen who recently went to the Philippines were able to better understand the long-standing connection between the 41st AS and the 19th AW by seeing grave sites of Airmen from each unit buried merely yards away from each other.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN KAHLIN DAWSON

(Above) Airmen from the 41st Airlift Squadron and 19th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron stand in front of U.S. Army Air Forces Sgt. R.L. Tyler's grave at the Manila American Cemetery in Minila, Philippines, on Feb. 18. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced Sept. 12, 2019, that Tyler, 22, of Denton County, Texas, who was captured and died in captivity during World War II, was accounted for Sept. 10, 2019.

(Right) Airmen from the 41st Airlift Squadron and 19th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron visited U.S. Army Air Forces Sgt. R.L. Tyler's grave at the Manila American Cemetery in Minila, Philippines, on Feb. 18. In 1942, Tyler was a member of Headquarters Squadron, 19th Bombardment Group, when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands during World War II and was captured as a prisoner of war.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN ERIC PARKER

Heroes

Continued from page 9

the story of future generations by connecting Airmen to the rich history that surrounds their respective units.

"This trip gave me insight as to why I am here — to carry this tradition forward and honor these men," Dawson said. I hope that we can pass the importance of our heritage down to more of our Airmen."

The Airmen that took part in the ceremony discussed the events that they took part in with great pride — believing it is important to reflect on those who have come before them and learn from the courage and heroism displayed by the unsung heroes from their unit's past.

"I can see how much pride and appreciation the Airman who went on the trip have for the job they do now, especially when they tell the story from their trip," said Maj. Jarrod Jones, 41st AS pilot.

"It is easy for us to become wrapped up in our daily tasks. Many times, when we go on the road, we are always talking about war stories from Afghanistan or Iraq. Those kinds of conversations did not happen on this trip, because it was not about us — it was entirely about them and their legacy."

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SURVIVORS LUNCHEON

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



U.S. Air Force Col. Will Clark gives opening remarks during the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Survivors Luncheon at Little Rock Air Force Base on March 12. Two survivors of sexual assault shared their stories with the hopes of leaving attendees with a greater understanding and awareness of how words or lack of words impact victims' process of healing.



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. (Ret.) Aerial Dandridge, shared her survival story of sexual assault and provided the audience with messages of hope and encouragement during the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Survivors Luncheon at Little Rock Air Force Base on March 12, 2020.



U.S. Air Force Capt. Bree McFadden, 19th Logistics Readiness Squadron Material Management Flight commander, shared her survival story of sexual assault and provided the audience with messages of hope and encouragement during the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Survivors Luncheon at Little Rock Air Force Base on March 12.

The end of an era... but
The Leader
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As of March 31st, after over 60 years of publication, the LRAFB has decided to discontinue the base newspaper currently known as the Combat Airlifter. It has been our privilege to serve as their printer and distributor.

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This new addition to our newspaper will have local articles of interest to our military personnel at the Air Base, Camp Robinson and all off base personnel and retirees.

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Air Force Band connects with local students

Story and photos by Airman 1st Class Mariam K. Springs
19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Air Mobility Command's Airlifter Brass, the Brass Quintet of the U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America, performed for about 40 students at Little Rock Central High School on March 11.

March is designated as "Music in our Schools" month for Air Force bands, designed to target recruiting. The Airlifter Brass performed for the students and talked about their own personal experiences before and after joining a military band.

With the traditional instrumentation of two trumpets, a French horn, a trombone and a tuba plus percussion, the ensemble is known for its versatility and musicianship. A component group of the Band of Mid-America, their performance range spans five centuries, from the antiphonal sounds of the Renaissance to the diversity of American musical styles.

"The greatest part is seeing the students witness something new," said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Laura Brown, Airlifter Brass Quintet of Mid America NCO in charge. "A lot of kids aren't aware that there are military bands. I think it's exciting for them to see the opportunity to play music beyond high school and college."

The band's primary mission is to tell the Air Force story through the music at home and while deployed overseas. The Band of Mid-America performs up to 400 missions annually at venues throughout a ten-state region from the upper peninsula of Michigan to Arkansas.

Following the band's performance members of the band interacted with the students and answered any questions they had about the band, Air Force, or music.

"The students get the opportunity to hear professional musicians who make a living whether they are conducting or playing an instrument," said Brice Evans instrumental music director at Little Rock Central High School. "I think seeing the positive things military members are doing is important. It's a great way to outreach to the community."

In addition to Little Rock Central High School, the Airlifter Brass visited the University of Central Arkansas and Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare Center.

Air Force bands visit different communities that create venues to bring people together and to connect Airmen and the community.

"Music in our schools is a lot of fun because often times we target from elementary school to college," said U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Brandon Holts, Band of Mid America flight commander. "We generally carry a broader, larger message about the Air Force and Air Mobility Command to our general public. Our mission is to honor, inspire and connect, and connectedness is one of the largest things we do during community relations tours. It's really special having an opportunity to talk to music students about what an Air Force career in music is like. They can understand not only the message, but the music."



The Airlifter Brass Quintet of Mid-America plays for students at Little Rock Central High School on March 11. Airlifter Brass is the Brass Quintet of the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America whose primary mission is to tell the Air Force story through the music at home and while deployed overseas.

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U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Laura Brown, Airlifter Brass Quintet of Mid-America NCO in charge, takes questions during a visit to Little Rock Central High School on March 11. March is "Music in our Schools" month for the bands, designed to target recruiting.



U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Brandon Holts, Band of Mid America flight commander, speaks to students at Little Rock Central High School on March 11. Air Force bands visit different communities that create venues to bring people together and to connect Airmen and the community.

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