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The

AIR NATIONAL GUARD

AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Skibird



Magazine of the 109th Airlift Wing, Stratton Air National Guard Base, Scotia, N.Y.

Airman development and readiness



Spring / Summer 2015



Wing continues to impress with numerous accomplishments

By Col. Shawn A. Clouthier
109th AW Commander

A long, cold winter has come to an end along with another successful ODF season by the men and women of 109th Airlift Wing, as we are fully immersed in our most current Greenland season.

We accomplished a great deal during the past six months including a successful 27th Operation Deep Freeze season, more leadership development for our Airmen, the first ancillary training rodeo for the base, a mass physical process and a second year supporting Canada with Operation Nunavut.

We deployed seven LC-130 ski-equipped aircraft and 575 Airmen during this most recent five-month deployment in support of the National Science Foundation. During this past ODF season there were many distinguished visitors who we escorted to Antarctica, to include Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James and Director of the Air National Guard Lt. Gen. Stanley E. Clarke III. Once again they all came away thoroughly impressed by your dedication to the mission and your embodiment of the Air Force core value of service before self.

On Jan. 28, 14 Airmen, E-3s through E-5s, were part of the first Airman Development Course held at the 109th AW a little more than a year after the 109th AW's successful launch of the Leadership Development Course for mid-level Airmen. These

Airmen received briefings on benefits they were entitled to, information on the evaluation process, conflict resolution, teambuilding, Air Force heritage, 109th AW history and instruction on public speaking, which culminated with the students giving speeches in front of their peers. These leadership development courses will help the 109th AW meet the challenges of the 21st century by proactively shaping our future leaders ensuring the wing's vitality heading into the new millennium.

200 Airmen of the 109th AW received hands-on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training along with self-aid buddy care training during the 109th Airlift Wing's first ancillary training rodeo during the wing's April Unit Training Assembly. The mass training began with the trainees receiving CBRN and then SABC instruction followed by the hands-on portion. This first-ever rodeo will provide the capabilities necessary to guard America at home and defend freedom worldwide.

This past April the 109th AW supported for the second time Canadian Forces during their annual Operation Nunavut exercise. By the time the mission ended on April 19, the 109th had flown 26 flights, and transported 91,000 pounds of cargo and 49 passengers. For the second year in a row Operation Nunavut showcased the 109th's incredible and unique mission capabilities demonstrating excellence in all we do.

This year the Greenland mission is in full swing with the 109th AW providing Airmen



File Photo

and LC-130 ski-equipped aircraft to the Arctic region in support of the National Science Foundation. This allows us real-world training out of Kangerlussuaq, Greenland to better support Operation Deep Freeze in Antarctica during the winter months.

This was another busy year for the men and women of the 109th AW as we continued to serve our nation and state, while continuing to develop adaptable Airmen. Let's all make sure that we take some time to safely enjoy the summer months at home with our family and friends enjoying the various outdoor activities. Watch out for one another during these "101 Critical Days of Summer" as we all look forward to another busy and successful year here at the 109th AW.



109th Airlift Wing



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Vice Commander

Col. Alan Ross

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On the cover:

A collage of what the 109th Airlift Wing has been up to the last six months regarding Airman development and readiness. (Graphic by Master Sgt. William Gizara.)

Command Chief Notes

Councils' initiatives benefit base, local community

By Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto
109th AW Command Chief

I am so proud of the numerous councils across the wing! I can't thank you enough for all that you do! There are so many initiatives that benefit the wing and our community, and it is all because of 109th members wanting to make a difference.

The First Six Council has been busy with many initiatives benefiting both the wing and community. They recently held the 4th annual Airman of the Year Dinner which was a resounding success as usual. They raised money for a local child in need, collected clothing for donation to several charity organizations, and continue to participate in the Adopt-A-Highway Program along Erie Blvd/Freeman's Bridge Rd. – taking ownership of cleaning up the community. On tap next – refurbishing Baby Here.

The recently formed Top 3 Council had their elections in January and hit the ground running! They are already hard at work managing the Airman Development Course and the wing Incentive Flight Program.

The Chief's Council plans and sponsors the annual Senior Noncommissioned Officer Induction Dinner, and manages the Leadership Development Course and Combined Federal Campaign. They also recently tackled reinvigorating the Student Flight.

The Company Grade Officer's Council co-manages the LDC and also do an annual charity golf tournament. This year the proceeds of the tournament will go to the Veteran's Miracle Center in Albany.

Members from all the councils also take part in instructing portions of the ADC and LDC.

Besides the initiatives listed, each council's objectives are to focus on renewing our commitment to the Profession of Arms, the Health and Welfare of our members and to recognize and embrace our accomplishments. It takes everyone to make a difference! Want to learn more about your council and how to get involved? See the POCs listed.

First Six Council

Staff Sgt. James Comstock
Staff Sgt. Jason Stark

Top 3 Council

Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Trotter
Senior Master Sgt. John Bartow

Chief's Council

Chief Master Sgt. Tammy King
Chief Master Sgt. Kurt Garrison

Company Grade Officer Council

Capt. James Vendetti
1st Lt. Shawn Rulison



File Photo

AIR NATIONAL GUARD COMMAND CHIEF AIM POINT

Renew Our COMMITMENT to the Profession of Arms

- Core Values (Integrity/Service/Excellence)
- AFI 36-2618 "Little Brown Book"
- Focus on Performance and Training
- Leadership/ Mentorship/ Supervision
- Deliberate Development of Airmen
- Education Requirements

HEALTH of the Force

- Resilience- Mental, Physical, Social, Spiritual,*Fiscal
- Wingman Concept- SAPR, Safety, Distress
- Employ Technology

RECOGNIZE/ EMBRACE our Accomplishments

- Recognition Informal/ Formal
- Each of you fit into the mission
- Tell Your Story

A collage of several photographs. The top photo shows a group of military personnel in uniform standing in front of an aircraft. Below that are smaller photos: one of a person working at a computer, one of a person in flight gear, one of a person in a field, one of a person in a classroom setting, and one of a person in a desert environment. The bottom photo shows a man in a military uniform smiling in front of an aircraft.

Afghanistan through the eyes of an E-1

By Airman 1st Class Gerald Mesick
109th Logistics Readiness Squadron

As a traditional guardsman, it is very rare to walk out of Basic Military Training with anything less than two stripes. Unfortunately, this was the predicament I had fallen into.

Coming home from my tech school in Fort Lee, Va., I would often have to stop higher ranking personnel mid-salute and explain I was merely a slick sleeve. Shortly after, I was often questioned whether or not I messed up in tech school, and when I explained it was in my contract to enlist as an airman basic, I was often met with disbelief. From the start of my career as a guardsman, I felt I had to prove to others I was not a mess up.

Shortly after returning home, the opportunity to deploy to Bagram, Afghanistan, fell into my lap. I didn't hesitate to volunteer, and within a matter of days I was already put on the primary list to deploy. A short three months after my return home from Fort Lee I was on my way overseas.

It was my first experience outside the country, and I was both nervous and excited. I was far from experienced in foreign cultures, active duty military and my own AFSC (Air Force specialty code). My experience was rare for any branch of the military -- according to the Army, I was a "boots on the ground fuzzy". The phrase referred to the OCPs, Multi-Cam, uniforms being similar to ACUs, and the Velcro where I would put my rank was left patchless, leaving a fuzzy space on my chest.

Within the first 30 minutes in the Bagram Pax Terminal, we were hit with an IDF (indirect fire) attack. I remember hitting the deck with my hands over my head, shaking with nerves, and asking myself what the hell I got myself into. My naive excitement to deploy blinded me from the gripping reality of the real-world dangers of Afghanistan. Not only did I have to worry about my lack of experience as an Airman, I now realized I had to worry about this real-world scenario I had only heard about on the news since I was 9 years old.

Now on active duty orders, I was naturally looked at by some of my co-workers as nothing more than a liability. Many saw my rank and underestimated my abilities to work



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Gary J. Rihn

Airman 1st Class Gerald Mesick (second row, third from left) was among this group of 109th Airlift Wing Airmen who deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. This photo was taken Feb. 28, 2014.

hard and learn fast, resulting in my team chiefs assigning me to the most brain-dead and meaningless tasks of every mission. In my first few weeks I was assigned solely to the task of chocking vehicles as they pulled up to the aircraft ramps. To be honest, I initially didn't mind at first, I often second guessed myself from the beginning, and I couldn't blame my supervisors for doing the same. On top of that, we were getting IDFs frequently and in my mind, I didn't want the stress of possibly messing up during work while stressing over the surprise of our next attack.

I settled in and grew bored of my meaningless tasks, and gradually asked for more responsibility. At first, this was hard to achieve, I was an E-1 and a guardsman nonetheless; active duty personnel didn't want to train me and only saw me as dead weight. Not only did I have to prove to myself that I could handle the high-paced, deployed environment, but I had to prove that to many of my co-workers.

Luckily, I deployed with a great group of people, and many were quick to help me with training, CDCs (career development course) and morale. When some NCOs seemed

annoyed by the idea of training me, there were plenty more NCOs and Airmen to help me out and build my confidence. I quickly learned a lot about my AFSC, what to do, what not to do, and the difference between home station and deployed location. It was a great confidence boost, and much of the stress I initially experienced within my first few weeks overseas quickly faded away.

I no longer questioned myself during the work hours, and I could focus on the rest of the craziness around me, my state of mind and my family. After two months in Bagram, I was promoted, and when we got a new rotation, I was now looked at more as someone to watch and learn from as opposed to someone to watch and worry about. I met a lot of great people and made many friends within my six and a half months in Afghanistan.

In a short six months, I learned a great deal about my AFSC, the Air Force and myself. I had a lot of crazy and incredible experiences in my short time overseas that I wouldn't change for the world. I feel deploying so early in my career has only helped me, and I suggest that any new Airman who gets the opportunity I did should seize it.

Wing completes 27th year of Antarctic science support

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

New York Air National Guard Airmen flew 241 missions, delivering more than 3,000 passengers and 4.5 million pounds of cargo and fuel to research stations across Antarctica during a deployment to the southern continent that began in October 2014 and ends this week.

This is the 27th year that the 109th Airlift Wing supported the National Science Foundation's Antarctic Program as part of Operation Deep Freeze, military logistics support for the research effort.

This mission season also saw the successful deployment of IcePod on the wing's LC-130 "Skibird" aircraft, an imaging system that can measure the depth of an ice sheet.

"This was a great season for the 109th," said Lt. Col. Clifford Souza, 139th Airlift Squadron, who returned home with about 30 Airmen on Feb. 24. "We flew over 155 on-continent missions in Antarctica as well as intercontinental missions from New Zealand to Antarctica. We're glad to be back and have one more year under our belt."

The wing deployed 575 Airmen and seven LC-130 ski-equipped aircraft to McMurdo Station, the hub of the American presence in Antarctica during the five month support season. About 120 Airmen were at McMurdo Station at any given time, as Airmen rotated between Antarctica and the 109th Airlift Wings home in Scotia, N.Y.

The first LC-130 returned home with passengers Feb. 23 with more Airmen following throughout the week via C-17 Globemaster III. The final six LC-130s that were deployed and remaining Airmen returned home the following week. The unit's 27th season supporting the National Science Foundation began in October.

The unique capabilities of the ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft make it the



USAP photo by Laura Gerwin

Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James meets Lt. Col. Clifford Souza (right) and Col. Michael Steindl during a trip to Antarctica in January. James was there to visit Airmen at work supporting Operation Deep Freeze. Souza is the 109th Operations Support Squadron director of operations, and Steindl is the 109th Operations Group commander.

only one of its kind in the U.S. military, able to land on snow and ice. The primary mission of the 109th AW is to provide airlift within Antarctica, flying to various remote locations from McMurdo Station.

One of the biggest successes this year, though, was flying the IcePod missions for the first time in Antarctica.

"IcePod focuses on the development of an integrated ice imaging system that can measure in detail both the ice surface and the ice bed, helping in the understanding of why ice sheets are changing at such a rapid rate," said Lt. Col. Blair Herdrick in an earlier article, chief of Antarctic Operations at the 109th. "The system will be enclosed in a Common Science Support Pod (CSSP) mounted on the rear troop door of the LC-130. This will be the first operational use of the CSSP."

Crews flew nine flights total with the

IcePod over a three-week period.

"These were the final tests before the IcePod is fully commissioned," said Maj. Joshua Hicks, a 139th Airlift Squadron pilot who flew the missions. "Overall it went very well. We completed what we needed to do."

The continued work supporting Operation Deep Freeze garnered attention from military leadership. Both Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James and Lt. Gen. Stanley Clarke III, Air National Guard director, visited Antarctica and the Airmen stationed there in January.

Maj. Marc McKeon, assistant chief of Antarctic Operations, said the people are what contribute to a successful season.

"People enjoy the mission," he said. "You have to enjoy what you do in order to be good at it. And we have some of the best maintainers and aircrew that the Air National Guard has to offer."

SFS supports Foal Eagle in Korea

By Master Sgt. Erik Peters
109th Security Forces Squadron

On March 16, 20 Airmen including myself, from the 109th Security Forces Squadron traveled to the Republic of Korea air force's Daegu Air Base, South Korea, in support of Foal Eagle.

Foal Eagle is a combined field training exercise conducted annually by the Republic of Korea armed forces and the U.S. armed forces under the support of the Combined Forces Command. It is one of the largest military exercises conducted annually in the world, spanning ground, air, naval and special operations.

While there, we were attached to the 353rd Special Operations Support Squadron based out of Kadena Air Base, Japan. Our purpose was to test the operations plan for special operation in the Republic of Korea and provide real world security to the personnel and aircraft TDY to Daegu AB and Gimhae AB.

At Daegu, our group's duties consisted of flightline patrol, base patrol, base defense operations center, joint operations command center entry controller and shift flight sergeant. Every shift consisted of 12 hours, split into two to provide 24 hours of constant vigilance. Our everyday routine was to arm the BDOC controller and the JOC entry controller.

On March 20, Tech. Sgt. Andre Noel, Staff Sgt. Berardino Mancino, Senior Airman Adam Podbielski, Airman 1st Class Francis DiCaprio, Airman 1st Class William Brady and myself, departed for Gimhae Air Base, about 1.5 hours southeast of Daegu.

The following day, the remainder of U.S. exercise participants arrived at Gimhae, as well as the two MC-130H Combat Talon II aircraft that we would be assigned to secure. Those of us at Gimhae began providing 24-hour security for the aircraft. On March 22, the 1st SOS and 353rd SOSS commenced their active participation in the exercise. We made contact with the 109th Security Forces members still at Daegu once per shift. Additionally, we instituted physical



Courtesy photo

(Top) Airmen with the 109th Security Forces Squadron recently supported Foal Eagle in South Korea. Foal Eagle is one of the largest military exercises conducted annually in the world, spanning ground, air, naval and special operations.



Courtesy photo

A group of six 109th Security Forces Squadron Airmen were at Gimhae Air Base for a portion Foal Eagle, providing security for aircraft and the U.S. compounds.

perimeter checks of the U.S. compounds twice per shift.

Since there were only a total of 68 U.S. Air Force personnel present at Gimhae, we developed an excellent and friendly working relationship with these Airmen. We had regular contact with flight crews, communications, and maintenance personnel. Personally, I have never worked this closely with other U.S. Air Force career

fields, and it was a very positive, rewarding and educating experience.

On March 29, the Gimhae portion of the exercise was complete, and we were brought back to Daegu AB to be with the rest of the squadron. Following our return to Daegu, I was advised by leadership that they had received a lot of praise for our detachment's bearing and appearance during the visit.



Airmen don their masks during the hands-on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York, on April 18, 2015. The training was part of the 109th Airlift Wing's first ancillary training rodeo where more than 200 Airmen were trained on CBRN as well as self-aid and buddy care.

Airmen get hands-on training during wing's first ancillary rodeo

Story and Photos
By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

More than 200 Airmen received hands-on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training along with self-aid buddy care training during the 109th Airlift Wing's first ancillary training rodeo here April 18.

The mass training began in the Dining

Facility as trainees were given CBRN and then SABC training before heading out for the hands-on portion. During the SABC briefing, the instructors played out a scene of a combat situation demonstrating how effective SABC can save a life. The Airmen were then broken up in two groups as half headed over to don their chemical gear and the other half went to put their SABC skills to the test.

Staff Sgt. Adam Winters of the Small Air Terminal said the SABC briefing really set

the pace for the hands-on portion.

"Being able to be hands on can help young Airmen to remember these kinds of things if they ever deploy and a real-world combat situation happens," Winters said. "This type of training will be very beneficial to them as well as just being able to know what (you need to do) in a time of need."

The SABC hands-on portion included stations on applying a tourniquet, mass casualty, quick clots, nerve agents, traumatic brain injury and more.

"(Senior Master Sgt. Joseph) O'Connor and myself have met a good 30 times to go over this," said Master Sgt. Candace Stefanik, 109th AW SABC adviser, on the planning that went into the rodeo. "We're getting a lot of training done in one day, and making sure everyone is really comfortable with the hands-on portion of the SABC is very important."

During the hands-on portion of the CBRN training, Airmen started off with donning

their mission-oriented protective posture gear as instructors went around to ensure gear was on correctly and done in a timely manner.

"We're teaching all these Airmen how to survive in a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive environment," said Airman 1st Class Rafael Lopez, CBRN instructor with the 109th Civil Engineer Squadron's emergency management office. "People haven't been in these suits in a long time, but after running them through drills and getting them going, people were catching on, helping out and having fun."

After donning their gear a few times, Airmen went to different stations to get instruction on things like M295, M9, zone transition points, post-attack reconnaissance, equipment checks and more.

Tech. Sgt. Kathleen Gregory, of the 139th Airlift Squadron's loadmaster section, said she's done hands-on CBRN training before and it was very hectic. "This was very organized, and I really like how everything's been going."

"It's good training," said Airman Bradford Jollie, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron. "It's good that everyone's getting out here and getting it done. After a couple times, it becomes very easy."

O'Connor, Emergency Management superintendent, said all the training during the rodeo went very smoothly.

"Units throughout New York are just starting to do (the rodeo-style training) for the first time, and this is the first time we've done this. This event started being planned back in the fall so it's been a long time coming and a lot of planning has gone into it."

O'Connor said they received support from around the wing to make the rodeo happen, and things went even better than expected.

"We built time into our schedule in case there were glitches, but we didn't need it and we're finishing up earlier than expected," he said. "My overall impression is that today went very well, and I'm just hoping the trainees feel the same way."

More ancillary training rodeos will be held in the future, as all Airmen on base are required to be trained within three years.



(Top) Lt. Col. Alan Ross, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander (left), and Col. Shawn Clouthier, 109th AW commander, talk with Master Sgt. Candace Stefanik, 109th AW self-aid buddy care adviser, during the hands-on SABC portion of the 109th Airlift Wing's first ancillary training rodeo April 18, 2015.

(Center) Airmen go through the decontamination procedures during hands-on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training.

(Bottom) Master Sgt. Scott Bailey, 109th Medical Group, instructs a portion of the hands-on self-aid buddy care training.



Student flight changes ensure more structure for trainees



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

Tech. Sgt. Michael Crouse addresses the 109th Student Flight during an inspection May 17, 2015, at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York. Inspections are just one of many changes the Student Flight recently underwent to help ensure 100-percent graduation at Basic Military Training. Crouse, 139th Aeromedical Squadron, is one of three cadre assigned to the flight.

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Trainees recently underwent a big change within Student Flight – more structure, more physical training and more guidance all to better prepare them for their first step in becoming an Airman at Basic Military Training.

In January, Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, 109th Airlift Wing command chief, approached the Chief’s Council to ask for their help in reinvigorating the Student Flight. The chiefs, along with Force Support Squadron leadership, assessed the program and found that many trainees were leaving for Basic Military Training not as prepared as they should have been. Physical training was rarely accomplished, if at all, and with no cadre to hold the trainees accountable, there really wasn’t much structure or

guidance for the flight.

In March, all of that changed. The chiefs worked closely with Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Archibald, Base Training Manager who oversees the program, in creating a more structured program with the primary goal to “ensure 100-percent graduation rate at BMT,” said Chief Master Sgt. Vincent Princiotta of the 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron. He was one of the chiefs to help rebuild the program, along with Chief Master Sgt. Mark Schaible, 109th LRS, and Chief Master Sgt. Joshua Walters, 109th Security Forces Squadron.

The program is now structured to follow basic training as much as possible with physical training, terminology, structure, scheduling and memory work. It also includes four phases; the first for the newest trainees, and the fourth for those who are in a “break-in-training,” meaning they have

graduated Basic Military Training but are waiting to go to technical school.

“It’s better that they’re doing it this way now,” said Airman 1st Class Gregory Discipio who is currently in Phase 4 of the program. He graduated basic training in September, and once he completes technical school, will be part of the Services Flight. “If you’re in break-in-training, it helps to stay in that mentality.”

Along with Discipio, Airman Andrea Rivera is also part of the Phase 4 program and will be with the Force Support Squadron once she graduates technical school. She graduated basic training in April. Both Airmen are experiencing a much different flight than when they both started the program.

“Before we’d just sit in a classroom and have someone come in and talk to us about things like the core values,” Rivera

said. Discipio and Rivera agreed that the trainees who haven’t left for basic training yet will be much more prepared than they were with the new structure.

“The training they receive is really dependent on the trainee to learn,” said Master Sgt. Garrett Cowser, flight cadre. “We go over some basic information like reporting statements and the basics of facing movements, but push hard for them to learn a lot of memory work. We educate them about their PT responsibilities, and do PT but encourage them to be proactive on their own the other 28 days out the month until we see them again.”

The Student Flight now has cadre working with them every Unit Training Assembly. Along with the team of three cadre, is a chief who acts as a “liaison for the Student Flight and the cadre and the rest of the wing to remove any

roadblocks,” said Chief Master Sgt. Mark Schaible who is the current chief assigned to the flight. The goal will be for each team to work in six-month rotations. They needed a strong group for the first team of cadre, and reached out to Cowser, who had been a cadre with Student Flight years before; Master Sgt. Marlene Frankovic, who had served as a first sergeant; and Tech. Sgt. Michael Crouse, a former full-time Stratton Base Honor Guard member.

“The cadre are a good balance,” said Trainee James McPartlin about the cadre’s approach to instructing. He is set to leave for basic training in July and started with the flight in September. “They’re tough on us when they need to be, but they’re also not overbearing. I think I’ll be genuinely ready for basic training.”

“Even though we are hard on them, they

See STUF, Pg. 13



Photo by Master Sgt. Christine Wood

(Left and background photo) Trainees with the 109th Student Flight perform a mock physical training test May 17, 2015, at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York. Regular PT is just one of many changes the Student Flight recently underwent to help ensure 100-percent graduation at Basic Military Training.



Background photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

Tech. Sgt. Michael Crouse inspects the 109th Student Flight on May 17, 2015, at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York. Inspections are just one of many changes the Student Flight recently underwent to help ensure 100-percent graduation at Basic Military Training. Crouse, 139th Aeromedical Squadron, is one of three cadre assigned to the flight.

109th members named state Airmen of Year

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Two Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing here were among six recently selected 2014 New York Air National Guard Outstanding Airmen of the Year.

Senior Airman James Comstock, who is the NYANG Airman of the Year, and Master Sgt. Michael Lazzari, the NYANG First Sergeant of the Year, were selected for the state-level award based on superior leadership, job performance, community involvement and personal achievements.

"Congratulations to our two state-level winners," said Col. Shawn Clouthier, 109th AW commander. "They were among 14 extremely strong candidates from our wing. All of whom embody superior performance and the strong leadership qualities to excel in the future. Also, congratulations to all of the selections from across the state."

Lazzari, a Schenectady native who has nearly 19 years of total military service including a five-year active duty tour, joined the 109th AW Fire Department in 2007. In 2012, he became the first sergeant for the 109th Mission Support Group. In the last year, Lazzari has supported both Operation Raven Dew in Greenland and Operation Deep Freeze in Antarctica as the unit's deployed first sergeant.

Lazzari said the continued teamwork at the 109th AW has been one of the contributing factors to his success as first sergeant. He also said the sacrifices and support his family has made during his time way have been true motivators for him.

"Without them I wouldn't be able to do this at all," he said. "I can't thank them enough for all the support they offer. I love being at home with my wife, daughter and family and don't take my time away from them for granted. If I am not giving my best, their sacrifices and support are for nothing. I solely accept this award as

a reflection of all the help and support I receive from my wife, family and friends."

Comstock, a Guilderland native, joined the wing in 2008. He is currently a customer support representative with the 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron. Comstock received the John L. Levitow award while attending Airman Leadership School this past year and is also the current president of the 109th First Six Council. The council represents the junior enlisted of the wing. With the council, he has participated in many community events throughout the year, and also coordinated the wing's first Adopt-A-Highway project.

"I attribute this award to the great opportunities the unit offers," Comstock said. "An award like this couldn't be accomplished without a unit that supports their people to strive past their potential."

Along with the unit, Comstock said his he couldn't have accomplished what he's achieved without the support of his wife and children.

"I was very excited to hear the news at each step of the process ... going from squadron, to wing to state," he said. "We have a lot of excellent Airmen in the New York Air National Guard, and to be thought of as one of them is a great thing."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German

Wing Airmen of the Year honored

The 109th Airlift Wing 2014 Airmen of the Year were honored during the fourth annual Airman of the Year dinner at the Water's Edge Lighthouse on April 18, 2015, hosted by the 109th AW First Six Council. Pictured are (from left): Master Sgt. Michael Lazzari, of the 109th Mission Support Group, 109th AW and New York Air National Guard First Sergeant of the Year; Senior Master Sgt. Michael Pingitore, of the 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron, 109th AW Senior NCO of the Year; Staff Sgt. James Comstock, of the 109th LRS, 109th AW and NYANG Airman of the Year; Master Sgt. Sarah Helligrass, of the 109th Communications Flight, 109th AW NCO of the Year; Tech. Sgt. Michael Ignecia, of the 109th MSG, 109th AW Honor Guard Member of the Year; Capt. James Roth, of the 109th Comptroller Flight, 109th AW Company Grade Officer of the Year; and Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Peno, Joint Forces Headquarters-Air National Guard Senior NCO of the Year.

"These two individuals embody the Air Force core values of integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do," said Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, 109th AW command chief. "They are team players and always

motivated to do what they can to lead and make a difference at this wing and within their community. Their can-do attitudes are infectious! I am so proud of them, and I am glad that the state recognized who they are and what they represent."

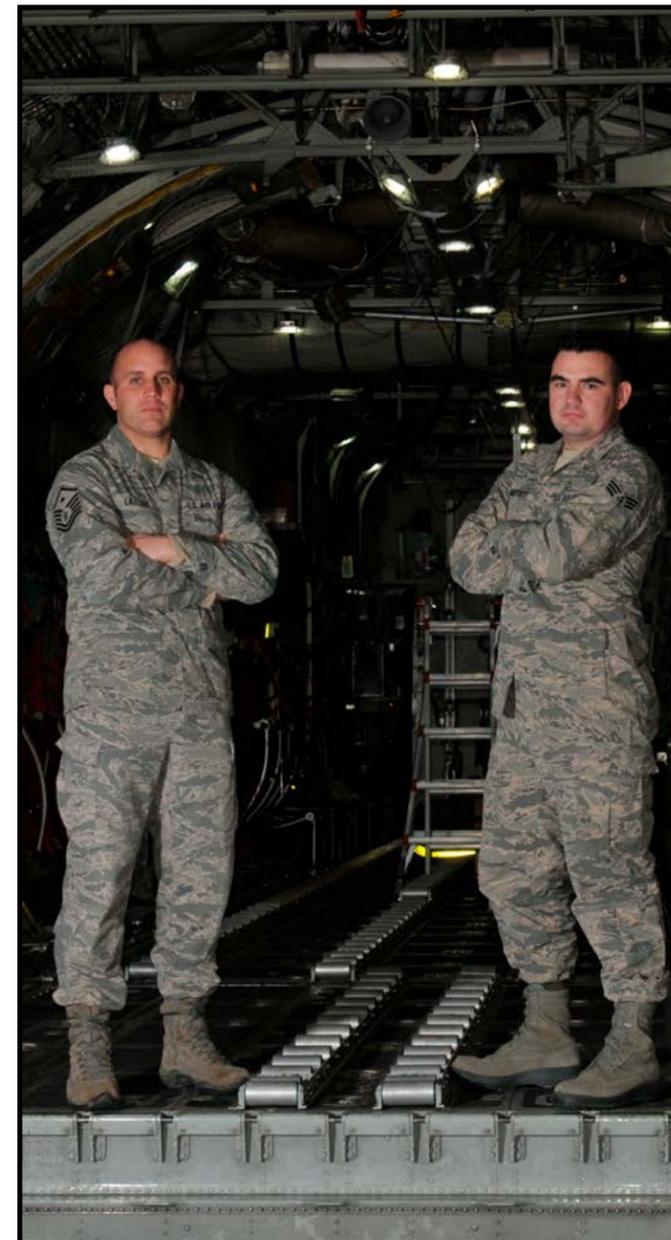


Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German

Master Sgt. Michael Lazzari (left) and Senior Airman James Comstock were among six selected as the 2014 New York Air National Guard Outstanding Airmen of the Year. Lazzari is the 109th Mission Support Group first sergeant, and Comstock (recently promoted to staff sergeant) is with the 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

STUF

get it," said Crouse of the trainees. "We're setting them up for success. It's not personal. We're not yelling at them because we don't like them, we're just trying to set a foundation so they can maximize their success."

"I really believe this is going to help prepare me for basic training," said Trainee Bradley Collyer who just began the program over the May UTA. "I think they're giving us exactly what we need to get ready, and I feel lucky to be getting this now - months before even going to basic."

It may be a little too early to tell how successful the program will be for basic training since it's so new, but the cadre said they are already receiving positive feedback from the trainees. Crouse also said the flight's camaraderie among each other is great. "They really help each other out; we're teaching them to be good wingmen, and most of them already have been," he said.

"We need to help our new members get off to a positive start and give them the training and support to be the best new additions to the wing we can," said Cowsert. "Keep in mind that these trainees will be replacing all of us at some point. It's key to instill the foundations of integrity, service before self and excellence and teamwork along with the wingman concept. The trainees have a unique opportunity to network with each other early on as they all are filling slots across the base."

Cowsert said the success of the program is dependent on the support of all of those within the wing.

"This program will only continue to grow with the support and dedication of those of us here at the 109th who want to help develop professional Airmen and get involved," he said. "We need our First Six to help come and teach some of the education pieces that are being built into the program; we need our senior noncommissioned officers to become cadre and use their time and unique experiences to help mentor the trainees."

"It is the perfect time to breathe new life into the Student Flight program with the release of the Air National Guard Ancillary Training Program," said Giaquinto. "Student Flight members are a part of this wing and they deserve to be set up for success as they start their military career. With this new program, they are going to get just that!"



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

Tech. Sgt. Michael Crouse tells Trainee Bradley Collyer what the grooming standards are within the Air Force during an inspection of the 109th Student Flight on May 17, 2015, at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York. This was Collyer's first Unit Training Assembly. Inspections are just one of many changes the Student Flight recently underwent to help ensure 100-percent graduation at Basic Military Training. assigned to the flight.

109th supports Canadian exercise

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

On April 4, seven Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing were dropped off at a remote location in the vicinity of Victoria Strait in the High Arctic with a couple snowmobiles and only the bare essentials to set up a field camp.

Their mission: Prepare a ski-way for the two ski-equipped LC-130s that were supporting Canada's research of a recently discovered ship lost with the infamous Franklin Expedition more than 150 years ago.

This was only one facet of the 109th's support for the Canadian Forces annual Operation Nunavut, an exercise the wing supported for a second time. Along with the campsite, operations were also taking place in Yellowknife and Cambridge Bay.

By the time the mission ended on April 19th, the 109th had flown 26 flights, and transported 91,000 pounds of cargo and 49 passengers.

After setting up camp, the American Airmen hit the ground running the next day. They began building a landing area by dragging 4-foot by 8-foot wide slides behind the snowmobiles to act as groomers to build the ski-way.

"After our first real day of grooming, we only made it maybe 500 feet (because of the snow conditions)," said Maj. Matthew Sala, one of the seven Airmen who groomed the ski-way. "It was about 500 feet a day."

"Every day it was about 8-10 hours, sometimes more, of grooming," said Maj. Eric Wood, another member of the team. Temperatures got as low as -35 degrees Celsius with wind chill.

Ten days after their arrival, on April 14, the ski-way was ready, and the first LC-130 flight to their location arrived.

"The ski-way we made was 6,000 feet long by 200 feet wide," Sala said. "We put about 1,700 miles on those sleds on that small mile-long ski-way."

The campsite also housed Joint Ice Diving operations conducted by Parks Canada's underwater archeologists and Royal Canadian Navy divers. Their mission included a joint archeological effort over

the site of the HMS Erebus, the flagship for British Admiral Sir John Franklin's Arctic voyage in 1846.

In September of 2014 Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the discovery of the Erebus – one of the two ships belonging to the Franklin Expedition whose members were caught in the ice and eventually died of starvation exposure.

As part of Operation Nunavut, Parks Canada and Royal Canadian Navy divers conducted intense ice diving and underwater archeology as part of historic research of the ship.

"One big difference from last year (2014) is that last year's exercise was simply just to see what our capability was," said Wood. "Even though it was an exercise, there was a goal the Canadians had which was to go to the site of the HMS Erebus -- the same ship that Mount Erebus in Antarctica is named after. This same ship that sunk at the site (we were located) was the same ship that was down to McMurdo."

Five hundred miles away from the camp at Yellowknife, 30 other 109th Airmen were maintaining the aircraft operations of the two LC-130s that made the trips to the remote location as well as to Cambridge Bay, transporting people and supplies in support of the exercise.

The LC-130s were able to provide up to 9,000 pounds of cargo per flight as opposed to the Canadians' Twin Otters which could only provide about 1,200 pounds.

A few weeks before the team of seven arrived, Sala along with Lt. Col. Clifford Souza, Maj. Matt Johnson, Tech. Sgt. David Rodriguez, and Senior Master Sgt. Ronald Jemmott went to the site as a reconnaissance team.

"We go out there and test the snow depth, the ice depth, the snow density and then water depth," said Sala.

The ski-landing area control officer looks at the conditions of where a ski-way will be prepared to see if it's even plausible to make a ski-way for a cargo aircraft to land and take off from, he explained.

"The point of the ski-landing area control officer (SLACO) is to be the last one who

walks out there and says yes, I'll land here," he said.

"We use the SLACO process when we go to Antarctica and Greenland, too, when we go to camps that we've never been to before," said Wood. "The first person to go out in a twin otter is the SLACO to give us a thumbs-up or a thumbs-down on whether or not we think it's safe to bring a Herc in."

On April 15, the original seven Airmen who set up camp and prepared the ski-way were replaced by five other 109th Airmen who continued to maintain the ski-way and camp through April 19.

Jemmott, an instructor for the 109th Airlift Wing's Kool School held each year in Greenland, said the techniques taught there helped make the mission a success.

"For us it's the people that make it," he said. "You're in small quarters, working long hours. There's no running water, there's no shower -- it's true field conditions. We try to do the work rest cycle, you wear the cold weather gear, you hydrate, but if it wasn't for the people you're with, it'd be easy to say, 'I'm done here,'" Jemmott said.

"We all worked together very well. A good attitude is key. When putting together teams, I sometimes overthink things, but to me I think it pays off in making a successful team," he said.

Operation Nunavut is a sovereignty operation conducted annually since 2007 in Canada's North. According to the Joint Task Force-North website, it provides an opportunity for the Canadian Armed Forces to assert Canada's sovereignty over to northernmost regions; demonstrate the ability to operate in the harsh winter environment in remote areas of the High Arctic; and enhance its capability to respond to any situation in Canada's North.

This year's operation took place in and around the Cambridge Bay from April 1-22.

The 109th had demonstrated their polar capabilities the previous year when they were asked by Canada to participate. The Wing's support of the National Science Foundation in both Antarctica and Greenland made them an ideal choice to aid the Canadians in their annual Arctic exercise.



The 109th Airlift Wing crew that groomed the ski-way stand with the Inuit in front of an LC-130 aircraft at a remote location in the High Arctic.

(Left) Airman 1st Class William Lee, 109th Maintenance Squadron, works on the propeller of an LC-130 at Yellowknife, Canada, on April 10, 2015. About 40 Airmen and two aircraft from the 109th Airlift Wing were in Canada to support Operation Nunavut.

(Right) A 109th Airlift Wing LC-130 lands at the remote location in the vicinity of Victoria Strait, Canada, for the first time April 14, 2015, after a group of seven Airmen spent 10 days grooming the ski-way. The aircraft and Airmen were supporting Canada's annual Operation Nunavut.

(Background photo) Seven Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing were dropped off at a remote location in the High Arctic to set up a field camp (pictured) and to prepare a ski-way for an LC-130 in support of Canada's annual Operation Nunavut.



All photos courtesy of 109th Airlift Wing members

Courses continue to help develop Airmen

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Junior Airmen from different offices on base got together this week to gain insight, receive tools and learn skills to help them as they progress in their careers with the 109th Airlift Wing.

Fourteen Airmen, E-3s through E-5s, were part of the first Airman Development Course held here Jan. 28-30, a little more than a year after the 109th AW's successful launch of the Leadership Development Course for mid-level Airmen.

"We have to come up with unique ways to develop our Airmen," said Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, 109th AW command chief. "This is held at the wing and being instructed by volunteers at the wing."

The Chief's Council sponsors the Leadership Development Course, while both the First Six Council (representing the wing's junior enlisted members) and the Top 3 Association (representing the wing's senior enlisted members) had a part in putting together the Airman Development Course. The First Six Council was given the opportunity to name the course and many also provided feedback in what they would like to see from it. The Top 3 Association sponsors the Airman Development Course.

"Our job as senior (noncommissioned officers) is to provide training and information on what the Airmen are asking for," said Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Trottier, who taught the public speaking portion of the class.

Staff Sgt. Vanessa Clark, 109th Security Forces Squadron, said she took the course to better herself and make herself more valuable to the base.

"I wasn't expecting it to be like this at all; I thought it was going to be more of a death by PowerPoint thing," she said. "It's very interactive, the subjects change constantly, there are different instructors, and everything we're learning in the class, I really don't think I would've known otherwise."

Airmen received briefings on benefits they were entitled to, information on the evaluation process, conflict resolution,



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

The first Airman Development Course was held Jan. 28-30, 2015. The course offers insight and tools to help Airmen, E-3s through E-5s, progress in their careers.

teambuilding, Air Force heritage, 109th AW history and instruction on public speaking, which culminated on the students giving speeches in front of their peers. Much like the Leadership Development Course, they also had the opportunity to network with Airmen from other sections on the base, which some may have not otherwise had the chance to do.

"I didn't know what to expect, so I came in with an open mind and am really glad I took the course," said Airman 1st Class Darren Durfee of the 109th Small Air Terminal. "The overall experience has been great."

Each Airman was given a binder with all the information they were briefed on. Durfee said he plans on using the binder as a reference guide after the class.

"There are a lot of things that we don't always get to talk to our supervisors about," he said. "So the binders and the notes we have from the class we can reference later on. I know I'm going to benefit from that, and I assume other people will too."

"I wanted to advance my position at the base, and I knew this would be a good step to get that done, and also I'm planning on taking the (Airman Leadership School) satellite course in May so I thought this would be a good precursor to doing that," said Senior

Airman Ronald Butler, of the 109th Medical Group. "I took a lot away from the finance part of it and the public speaking -- being able to talk to large groups of people. Also just knowing all about the base and where it came from and the history."

To close out the course, Brig. Gen. Anthony German, New York Air National Guard chief of staff, stopped by to speak to the Airmen about the importance of the Air National Guard as well as their careers.

"Each one of you is going to have a career, and there is going to be a start date and an end date," he told the class. "And between the two there's a big dash -- however long it's going to be -- what are you going to do with that dash?"

The Airmen had the chance to ask the general questions about his career and the military as a whole before the course came to an end.

"They're our future," Giaquinto said of the junior Airmen. "They're going to be where we're at some day, so we're just using this course to set them up."

"What better way to train the future than to hold these classes," Trottier said.

More ADC classes will be offered for Airmen throughout the year. Airmen can contact their first sergeants for more information and to register.

Students test their industry skills at Stratton

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Hundreds of students were here March 18 to test their skills in carpentry, vehicle maintenance, heavy equipment operation, welding, nursing and more as part of the regional SkillsUSA competition.

Nearly 300 students from Capital Region BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services), Questar III, Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES and beyond competed at the base, Schenectady County Community College and the Albany Career and Technical Education Center. The base has served as a venue for this event for more than 10 years.

“Not only are we helping out the local educators in the area, but this is also great for us as it brings community awareness to the 109th Airlift Wing and the Air National Guard,” said Master Sgt. John Blackburn, 109th AW recruiter.

“We are proud to once again be part of SkillsUSA,” said Col. Shawn Clouthier, 109th AW commander. “SkillsUSA is a proven program that gives the youth of our community a foundation to build upon for a successful future. This is also a great way for our community and local students to see first-hand what our Airmen do each and every day.”

“(Stratton) has bent over backwards over the years to help our students in the Albany area,” said Bruce Botter, Skills USA state director, in an interview with the media.

Business and industry leaders throughout the area served as judges for the event. Students first took a written test on their general knowledge of their specialized subject, and then went on to the hands-on portion of the competition. Students said that this experience was more than just about a competition.

“It’s not about coming here and winning a prize,” said Caleb Hendricks, Cobleskill-Richmondville senior, in an interview with the media. “It’s about coming here and seeing new people who have the same interest as you and learning different things and making contacts that you can use in the future.”

The winners of the competition went on to compete at the state level held in Syracuse in April.

SkillsUSA is a national organization for career and technical education students, and competitions are held annually at the regional, state and national levels. At Capital Region BOCES Career and Technical Center (CTE), SkillsUSA members are school leaders and good citizens. They organize campus-wide events such as holiday food and fund drives, community service projects and blood drives.



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

Students from Capital Region BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services), Questar III, Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES and beyond were at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York, on March 18, 2015 to compete in the regional SkillsUSA competition.

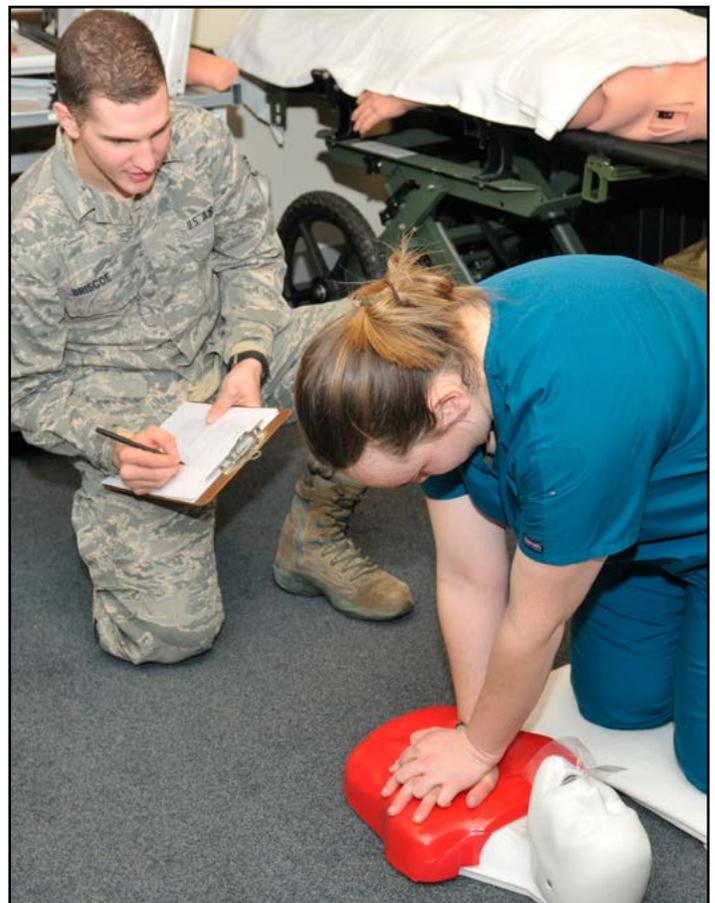


Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

Staff Sgt. Tyler Briscoe, 109th Medical Group, evaluates a student's CPR skills during the regional SkillsUSA competition March 18, 2015.

DPH offers support for Airmen

Wellness Center Staff

Many questions have been asked about what a Director of Psychological Health is, why they are assigned to every Air National Guard Wing and why there has been so much focus on military mental health.

Historically, Directors of Psychological Health were contract positions that were introduced to Air National Guard wings to aid in mitigating the increasing rates of suicide, violence and to address the stressors of the high tempo deployment cycle and the increased pressures placed on families. In November 2014, the Department of Defense recognized the importance of

having a consistent, experienced and licensed mental health subject matter expert at each Air National Guard wing which launched the hiring of 89 GS-level Directors of Psychological Health nationwide. Although the role and the scope of the position has not changed in the transition, the program is growing and building upon best practice initiatives.

Who is the 109th Director of Psychological Health?

Kelly J. Young is a licensed Clinical Social Worker with 29 years of experience in the mental health field who has worked in several behavioral health care settings working with adults, children, veterans and families. Prior to joining the 109th AW, Young was a Military and Family

Life Consultant working with all branches of the military across New York state.

What services does a Director of Psychological Health provide?

Brief solution focused assessment, support and referral for all issues from stresses at home, at work, relationships, conflict resolution and concerns related to mental health symptomatology, consultation to leadership and dispelling the stigma of mental health and help seeking behaviors.

“No issues are too big or too small that we can’t work out together.” Young says. The goal of the program and Young’s commitment is to aid members and their families in obtaining their goals, maintaining operational



File Photo

readiness and joining with the efforts of the wellness team in keeping members resilient and focused.

“Our 109th members are

See DPH, page 19

Family Programs manager joins wing

Wellness Center Staff

The Wellness Center enthusiastically welcomes Colleen Casey as the new Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager. She comes to us with a wide breadth of experience and knowledge. She understands first-hand what it takes to be part of a military family. She is married to Army Sgt. Maj. Timothy Casey for 25 years. He has been in the Army National Guard for 33 years. They have three children; Army Specialist Chanleigh Casey with the 42nd Combat Action Brigade, recently returned from Kuwait and currently working for Rutland Mental Health as a Therapeutic Case Manager; Kayla Casey, a Johnson & Wales graduate working for The Winfield Group

in Clifton Park as an account executive assistant; and Lucas Casey, who is finishing up eighth grade. Casey has experienced multiple deployments as a wife and mother. The Casey family was recently recognized as the Capital Region Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) Volunteer Family of the Year.

Casey is a graduate of State University of New York-Adirondack with an associate’s degree in marketing and holds a Bachelors of Arts and a Masters of Education from the College of St. Joseph. She has earned more than 100 continuing education credits from Military Child Education Coalition, American Camp Association, Zero to Three, Franklin Covey, and St. Peter’s Addiction Recovery Center. Casey has completed training in Applied Suicide

Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, Resilience Trainer Assistant, Building Coalitions & Partnerships with Federal, State & Community Partners, Effective Leadership, Volunteer Management, and Educator Outreach.

For the past five years Casey worked at the Division of Military and Naval Affairs for Family Programs as the Lead Child and Youth Program Coordinator. She assisted the New York and National Guard Bureau Family Program Offices with coordinating, implementing, and promoting awareness of family benefits and entitlements through Yellow Ribbon Deployment and Strong Bonds events, Teen Council, state and national symposiums, and state trainings, camps, and workshops.



File Photo

She provided support, resources, and assistance to families, which both encouraged and enhanced resiliency among the military community. She increased outreach programs by gathering, analyzing, and offering information and referral and accessed needs for school

See Family, page 19



Courtesy photo

Service before self... It's all in the family

Amanda Sander, daughter of Lt. Col. Chris Sander of the 109th Maintenance Squadron, has been accepted to graduate school at the esteemed School of Social Welfare at the University at Albany-State University of New York.

During the summer of 2014, Amanda volunteered to do an internship in the 109th Wellness Center working alongside the Director of Psychological Health.

"I wanted to learn more about what my dad did at the 109th and to decide if I wanted to pursue my graduate degree in social work," she said. "After my summer at the 109th, I definitely knew what I wanted to do; pursue my advanced degree and to help people."

Following in her father's footsteps and the members of the 109th AW, Amanda truly is an example of service before self! Congratulations Amanda and Colonel Sander.

DPH

talented and uniquely skilled for unique missions," she said. "We can't afford to lose any of our valuable members due to mounting stress or pressures from work, home and the rigorous deployment cycle."

How do you make an appointment with the Director of Psychological Health?

Appointments can be made by calling or emailing Young or stopping by the Wellness Center. "If my door is open, you're

welcome and encouraged to stop in and chat about what's on your mind," Young says. "Members stop in and talk about problems, but many stop by and talk about good things that are going on in their lives as well. We always love to hear about success stories and the outstanding wingman efforts that are going on every day."

109th AW DPH

Kelly J Young, LCSW-R

Kelly.j.young29.civ@mail.mil

(518) 344-2364 or (518) 275-3618

Family

issues and child care resources. Casey worked effectively to maintain partners with local, state, and federal agencies, which ultimately improved the military youth and their families.

Casey is looking forward to the unique challenges that the 109th Airmen and their families face. She is highly committed to offering Airmen and their families all the resources and information that are available. Her No. 1 priority is to open the lines of communication. She has set up a SharePoint with useful information and continues

to add and update it. She is working with the Director of Psychological Health Kelly Young and Chaplain Jake Marvel to reinvent the Wellness Center's website page. Also, she has gone viral with the 109th Wellness Center's Facebook page. Casey is very excited to work with the Family Matters Group and the 4-H group. Her main goal is to make sure that Airmen, spouses, partners and families have all the tools and resources to be a resilient and successful unit. Please visit the 109th Wellness Center website and like us on Facebook at 109th AW Wellness Center.

Purple Up for military children



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

Colleen Casey (left), 109th Airlift Wing Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager, and Kelly Young, 109th AW Director of Psychological Health, went around base April 15, 2015, handing out purple candy as part of the national "Purple Up!" day to honor military kids. The color purple is chosen as the signature color because it symbolizes all branches of the military. April is the Month of the Military Child.

Dear Sis...

By Chaplain (Maj.) Jacob Marvel
109th AW Chaplain

One of my favorite episodes of the television series M*A*S*H revolves around a day in life of the chaplain at the Army hospital. The episode (*Dear Sis* from Season 7) begins with Father Mulcahy ready to start chapel services – but no one comes. Frustrated, he goes to tend bar at the club and members who are there start talking to him and asking for advice. He discovers he is more important to members when he offers to be in a relationship with them, than when he waits for them to come to his religious event. I've always liked that image of a chaplain.

This came to my mind recently when a member here asked about a Pew Research Center report released in May: America's Changing Religious Landscape. You may have seen it in the news. Pew found that the number of Americans "who do not identify with any organized religion is growing." To me, this isn't surprising. This trend is also reflected in religious preferences members report here at Stratton; for example, in the last six years there's a 10-percent increase in those who report "No Religious Preference" in their personnel files.

The member had a simple question: If fewer people are religious, why do we need chaplains?

One reason is to help members navigate their rights to either practice religion, or not have religion forced on them. We're trained to help you balance this tension if it arises.

We are also here to offer to walk with you on your journey, not to ask you to walk with us on ours.

Whether or not you find meaning in an organized religion, we are trained to nurture and encourage you as you face the twists and turns of life's challenges and joys. In the last few days, our diverse and highly qualified chaplains and chaplain assistants have walked with many of you on your journeys; we have welcomed new life with new parents, consoled members who

grieve recent deaths, celebrated triumphs, taught relaxation techniques, and sat with members who face difficult decisions.

We still offer great programs. Sunday morning worship for Protestants now includes an excellent band; families and unmarried Airmen can now attend Strong Bonds retreats - not just couples; and we're integrated into the Wellness Center to model a well-rounded life.

I want our programs to meet your needs and encourage you on your journey. But these programs are secondary to what our role is as your chaplain corps: To build relationships and trust so that when you have need of counsel or a compassionate listener, whether or not you are religious, you know we are among the resources to help strengthen your journey.



Courtesy photo

The Chaplain's Office hosted a Strong Bonds event for couples over Valentine's Day weekend. Strong Bonds retreats are also offered for single Airmen as well as families.

NY National Guard Teen Council represent military youth

The New York National Guard Teen Council is a group of military and non-military affiliated teens brought together to speak on behalf of the youth and the entire National Guard Youth Program. The council offers unique opportunities for volunteering, where hours can be used to benefit the teen for future jobs or college applications.

Teens are rewarded every year with a three- to four-day all-expenses paid trip. In the past, the council has traveled to Lake

Placid and New York City.

The 109th Airlift Wing currently has six teens involved. The intent is to increase the numbers to eventually have a 109th AW Teen Council.

Responsibilities:

- Teens must check and respond to email bi-weekly
- Must have 15 volunteer hours within NYS Family Programs or related functions
- Seek out partnerships to create with Teen Council
- Express opinions on issues being discussed

• Assist Child and Youth Program Coordinators with planning of State Workshops, Symposiums, and Trainings

• Complete at least one community service project each year

Guidelines:

- Minimum age of 13 years old
- Term ends with graduation of High School
- Must attend 50 percent of Teen Council meetings
- Zero tolerance of drugs and alcohol
- Minimum of 2.5 GPA (80

percent)

Participation In:

- Planning of trainings and state events
- Public relations and promoting
- Administration
- Meetings – calls and face to face

For more information on the Teen Council, contact Colleen Casey, 109th AW Airman and Family Programs Manager at 344-2357 or via email. More information can also be found at <http://dmna.state.ny.us/family/yprogs.php>.

TRAINING

CCAF Professional Manager Certification Program:

Have you accomplished your Community College of the Air Force degree and Professional Military Education? Taken civilian courses in leadership/management? The Professional Manager Certification (PMC) is a professional credential awarded by CCAF that formally recognizes an individual's advanced level of education and experience in leadership and management, as well as professional accomplishments. The PMC is a culmination of a military members Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME), military experience and continued dedication to education. Please see the Base Training Share point or contact Master Sgt. Anna Franklin via email at anna.n.franklin.mil@mail.mil for more information on the requirements and how to submit an application.

INSTALLATION PERSONNEL READINESS

The IPR office can assist you on many things. Just go to the SharePoint at 109AW/MSG/FSS/IPR and there you will find information on Passport Applications, AFPAAS instructions, Deployment information, ID tags and many other items. The IPR office is always here to answer any questions you may have on any of these topics. With deployments just around the corner, unit deployment managers should look over the site and let Master Sgt. Timothy Jones know if they require anything to help their processes go smoother. Over the next few weeks, Jones will be going back through all his documents and ensuring all the latest guidance and regulation are there and available to assist you. Like always if there is anything the IPR office can assist you with just gives them a call at 344-2390.

SERVICES

ANG Home Community Child Care is here at the 109th for UTA weekends! This past May was our first time using the program and it was a success based on the feedback from the parents who utilized the program! We have one confirmed provider, and they are working on getting two more providers certified. If you have children between the ages of 2 weeks and 12 years old, you may qualify. This program is a first-come first-served basis. There is some paperwork that needs to be completed prior to joining the program. The Air Force pays the provider for the child care service and there is no charge to the sponsor. Please call Services for more information on how you can enroll at 344-2407 or 344-2014.

There has been a change in the 109th Lodging policy for those members who live outside the commuting distance. The commuting distance has been changed to 50 miles one way from Stratton ANGB by the most direct route. Map Quest is used to validate the distance. In order to be eligible for lodging the member must complete two periods of inactive duty training. Services will maintain a list of all members who meet the requirement. For more information please call Services at 344-2407 or 344-2014.

RELOCATIONS

Relocations is an area where not only members can learn about retirement, but also receive information on transitioning from the military to the civilian life as well as directing members on how

to apply for retirement, the survivor benefits plan and what to expect in an exit physical. The relocations section will also help and guide members on separations and transfers from in and out of our unit and maintaining that smooth flow into your next chapter. If you have any questions or concerns in regards to retirements, separations or transfers, please contact Tech. Sgt. Brittany Rinaldi at 344-2095 or visit the separations SharePoint page at <https://eis.ang.af.mil/org/109AW/MSG/FSS/separations/Pages/default.aspx>.

CUSTOMER SERVICE/ DRESS AND APPEARANCE

Morale T-shirts/patches representing individual squadrons that were worn in the past to increase unit pride are now authorized to wear on Fridays. Squadron color T-shirts may be worn with the ABU or flight suit when in-garrison or on-station during unit temporary duty assignments and contingency deployments. Shirts must be one color throughout the squadron, and may have only a small squadron patch over the left chest. Wing commanders can authorize personnel from different units to wear the same color T-shirts to facilitate esprit de corps and team building. For example, maintainers, life support personnel and flight doctors are allowed to wear the color T-shirt of the flying squadron they support. Also, authorized is the in-garrison Friday wear of morale patches and nametags that have tasteful nicknames or call signs on flight suits. Unit commanders have approval authority for morale patches and nametag naming conventions.

Earned Air Force and other services' badges are authorized to wear, but only the command insignia pin is mandatory. This reverses a previous decision to prohibit wear of qualification badges and various patches on ABUs, to eliminate the need to remove and replace badges for deployment or permanent change of duty station moves.

A list and examples of all newly approved badges authorized for wear on the ABU is located in attachment five of AFI 36-2903.

The Air Force physical training uniform no longer has color restrictions for athletic shoes. Airmen are now also authorized to wear black socks with their athletic shoes.

Cell phones no longer have to be black, as long as they're not worn on the uniform or attached to a purse.

7.1.12. PTU/IPTU items are authorized for wear with conservative civilian/personal attire during individual/personal PT or while off-duty (e.g. PT shirt with personal shorts/pants, PT jacket with personal shirt/pants/shorts, etc.). No civilian/personal items with offensive wording, graphics or photos are to be worn with the PTU/IPTU items at any time.

7.1.13. Headphones and earphones (iPods, etc.) are authorized while in the fitness center or on designated running areas unless prohibited by the installation commander. **7.1.15.** Proper military customs and courtesies honoring the flag during reveille/retreat will apply (this means coming to full attention and rendering a proper salute when outdoors).

Saluting due to rank recognition is not required when wearing the PTU/IPTU.

For more information, please view Air Force Instruction 36-2903, which can be found on ePUBS on the Air Force Portal.

Also guidance is in the works for morale shirts to be worn during UTA. There is currently no ANG supplement for the AFI and as such has been put up to wing and unit leadership to approve or disapprove morale shirts for UTA weekends.

Ergonomic alternative keyboards

By Lt. Col. Benson “Rucksack” Louie
109th Medical Group

The purpose of this article is to disseminate some basic information on common alternative keyboard designs and their potential effects on work posture. For now, there is no conclusive scientific evidence that shows alternative keyboards prevent musculoskeletal disorders.

History/Background

Computer keyboard users often hold their arms, hands and/or wrists in awkward or non-neutral postures when keyboarding on traditional keyboards.

In figure A, the forearms are rotated so the palms are facing down towards the keyboard.

In figure B, the hands are deflected laterally outward.

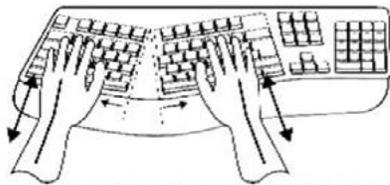
In figure C and D you can visualize the upward bent wrist

Workers also can angle their elbows slightly away from the bodies when keying if the keyboard surface is positioned high relative to their torso.

Alternative Keyboard Designs/Options

SPLIT KEYBOARDS

They are designed to straighten the wrist. By increasing the distance between the left and right sides of the keyboard or by rotating each half of the keyboard so that the halves are aligned with each forearm, the wrists are re-aligned in a more natural posture.



Split and Rotated Keyboard with Wrist Rest

TENTED KEYBOARDS

Tented keyboards have halves that tilt up like a tent. This results in reduced forearm rotation.



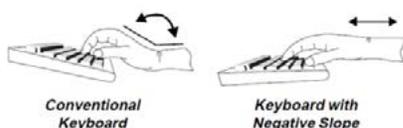
Split and Tented Keyboard

WRIST/PALM RESTS

Physically, wrist/palm rests help prevent the wrist bend by elevating the wrist to at or above the keyboard level.

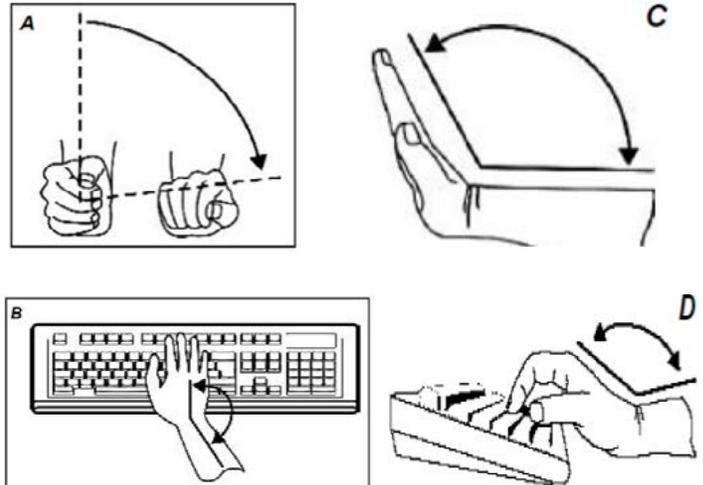
SLOPED KEYBOARDS

Keyboards with negative slope straighten the wrist by preventing the hand bend through either raising the front edge of the keyboard or sloping the keyboard in a downward lean.



Conventional Keyboard

Keyboard with Negative Slope



Considerations

Determine whether keyboard is compatible with existing hardware, software.

Will the alternative keyboard fit in the workstation space (some are extra wide, high, or long)

Some alternative designs have keys that are more difficult to see compared to the standard keyboard

Check if the side numeric keypad or upper edge specialized “F” keys are task necessary

A new keyboard will probably initially reduce the performance of the keyboarder.

Let users to “test drive” alternative keyboards for about one to two weeks so they can adapt and judge the discomfort relief effectiveness.

As with differences in individuals, one type of keyboard will not fit everyone or every type of task.

An ergonomics specialist and medical provider can help

It is unlikely that a keyboard change alone will eliminate all discomfort.

Some keyboard designs may require training/integration so they be correctly configured. Encourage workers to make adjustments on adjustable keyboards.

NIOSH link: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/pdfs/97-148.pdf>

Final thoughts

A keyboard is only one part of a work area that could contribute to potential worker discomfort. Chair positioning, workstation location, placement of equipment, accessories, lighting, extraneous/nuisance noise, temperature all could contribute to employee discomfort. Because computer work is highly repetitive and promotes a static body posture, it’s recommended to break up long periods of keyboarding with breaks or with hand/arm/wrist motions other than keyboarding or using a computer mouse. At the minimum, keyboarders should halt their keyboarding to rotate/flex their wrists/arms/shoulders to allow muscles to stretch/relax.

Around the Wing

Alumni News

By Retired Chief Master Sgt.
Bill McBride
Alumni Secretary

The **Wednesday Summer Lunch Program** began on Wednesday, April 29, for all people working on base. We put on a great barbecue at the All Ranks Club, and it really breaks up your week nicely. We are always looking for volunteers from our retired members to help with this program. Volunteers are needed between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on scheduled Wednesday lunch days. The meal program runs through the last Wednesday in August.

A bit about whom we are. The 109th Alumni was formed back in the early 1980s as a support organization for the 109th Airlift Wing. The Alumni since its existence, has been involved with and has supported wing family days, full-timers' picnics, All

Ranks Club events and wing anniversary celebrations. The Alumni has supported the base sports program and has provided bicycles to local schools for merit programs. Our Alumni also provides tuition funds to send Junior Class Boys to the American Legion Boys State Program every June.

Alumni membership is open to any former 109th member. You do not have to be retired to belong to the Alumni. At this time we have about 85 members, and we would like to see that number get bigger. Applications are available in the All Ranks Club. All meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the All Ranks Club in Bldg. 24 at Stratton Air National Guard Base. We always look forward to seeing new faces at our meetings.

Alumni Election of Officers was held at the January 2015 monthly Alumni meeting. (You just may recognize some of these people).

The Alumni Officers for 2015 are as follows:

President-Annette Briggs
Vice President-Bill Liberis,
Secretary-Bill McBride
Treasurer-Ken Bliss,

Board of Director Members- Bill Pickney,
Howard Ray, Charlie Shatley and Bill Siudy.

The **109th Airlift Wing Alumni Association Summer Picnic** will be held on Saturday afternoon on Aug. 29 on base at the picnic area. Plan on attending for some plain old camaraderie. All Alumni members whose dues are paid up for 2015 will receive a picnic RSVP form in the mail. We also have a swell Christmas party every year. The party is always held on our December meeting night. The last three of these were held in the dining hall and were catered by the Turf Tavern from Scotia. They were all wonderful events. We hope to see you there also.

Until the next issue of this Skibird Magazine Alumni News, stay happy, healthy, safe and enjoy Spring and think Summer.

Base Honor Guard Notes



Courtesy photo

The 109th Base Honor Guard would like to welcome its newest full-time member, Tech. Sgt. Kristopher Tank of the 109th Munitions Flight. Tank came to the 109th Airlift Wing in late 2013 after serving on active duty at Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho. He was a member of the Mountain Home Base Honor Guard, performing more than 100 Military Funeral Honors. He has the hard task of filling the void left by Staff Sgt. Carl Williams, who acquired a position with the New York State Counter Drug Task Force. Please welcome Sergeant Tank to the team; we look forward to working with him!



Courtesy photo

The 109th Base Honor Guard presents a farewell Certificate of Appreciation to 1st Lt. Matthew Begin for his work with the team. He participated in more than 30 Military Funeral Honors and ceremonies in his short time with the team. Begin is leaving the 109th for a position with the Tennessee Air National Guard. Thank you, Sir; you will be missed!

109th member helps develop next generation of Airmen at basic training

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Tech. Sgt. Terra Dunnells recently made a longtime goal a reality – to become a Military Training Instructor at Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. The longtime member of the 109th Services Flight said she made up her mind about 10 years ago.

“Being in possession of the campaign hat and ribbon was something that I was always pretty much in awe of,” Dunnells said. “I knew it would be a huge transition in my life and a huge challenge, mentally and physically, for me. I needed to know if this was something I could do. I needed to know if I could be a Military Training Instructor.”

She first attended the MTI Corps Shadow Program in July of 2013 – a one-week permissive TDY for those interested in becoming an MTI to get a first-hand look at the position.

“During my week shadowing I was able to see everything from an 8th week flight to zero week’s first phone call home,” she said. “It was an eye-opening experience and is truly what solidified my wanting to do this. I decided to turn in my application package my last day there as I was signing out of the MTI Recruiting Office.”

Shortly after, Dunnells was accepted into the MTI Corps. According to Chief Master Sgt. Mark Schaible of the 109th Airlift Wing, she is the first 109th member to ever become an MTI.

Her training began with Military Training Instructor School, a six-week course covering the basics of what students need to know on becoming an MTI. Upon completion of school, she received her campaign hat and Air Education and Training Command instructor badge on Feb. 28, 2014.

She began the certification process the following May. The first three weeks are known as the “cadre” portion.

“Cadre is where you really begin



Courtesy photo

Tech. Sgt. Terra Dunnells, who has been with the 109th Services Flight for about 15 years, is now a Military Training Instructor for Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

associating more with flights and interacting with trainees,” she said. “This is where lessons and different areas slowly begin to make more sense. You’re finally seeing things play out in real life instead of reading it from your book or hearing it from your trainers. The following 10 weeks is the actual certification process where you start ‘pushing’ a flight, known as your ‘student flight’.”

Since August, she has been a certified MTI with the 321st Training Squadron and said it has been a rewarding experience.

“It truly is an astonishing feat watching civilian boys and girls who come to you off the streets from everywhere around the country and from all walks of life, turn into mature men and women literally right in front of your eyes in 8.5 short weeks,” she said of the trainees going through Basic Military Training. Like anything else, Dunnells has met some challenges in her new position but

has learned to overcome them.

“A hard part for me has been stepping out of my introverted shell I have been stuck in my whole life,” she said. “You never truly lose it, but you learn how to fit into the MTI mold that you are ‘supposed’ to conform to. It was a hugely awkward experience coming here and having to get in someone’s face and yell at them for the first time. Eventually, you get used to it. You learn the job, the memory work, the lessons, the database, what they can and cannot do, and it just becomes a natural part of your everyday life.”

During her time as an MTI, Dunnells has seen a few trainees come through from the 109th AW. She even had a trainee from the 109th in her flight recently.

“From the time my daughter left and arrived at Lackland, Sergeant Dunnells remained in constant contact with my family via text and Facebook,” said Senior Master Sgt. Earl Rayner. His daughter, Airman 1st

Class Meya Rayner, 109th Airlift Wing staff, graduated basic training in July, although not in Dunnells’ flight. “She was a great resource of information to us prior to arriving at Lackland and addressed any questions or concerns that my wife had to set her at ease.

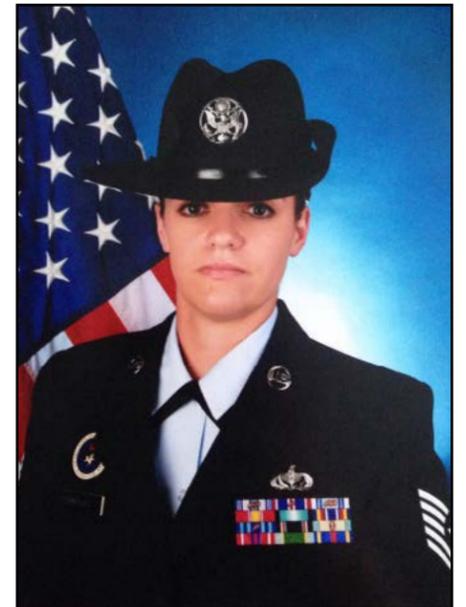
“It’s a tough job that takes a great deal of commitment,” he said. “I applaud Sergeant Dunnells for stepping up to this one.”

“I worked with Sergeant Dunnells for over six years before she became a Military Training Instructor,” said Capt. Lynsey Cross, 109th Medical Group. “Even before she had her sights on becoming and MTI, she strictly followed standards while mentoring those she supervised. She always had her head in an AFI, getting spun up on whatever she was working on. She could recite instructions verbatim. This job suits her well. She worked hard

in preparation and is now a successful and influential instructor.”

Dunnells said her experience at the 109th AW, specifically with the Stratton Base Honor Guard, has helped her tremendously in being an MTI.

“The lessons I learned from being the NCOIC of the Base Honor Guard and the military bearing and discipline I perfected while on the team has extraordinarily assisted me in being here,” she said. “My peers and mentors from the 109th have helped me make decisions here every day and guide my every move. Great NCOs and friends still take the time out of their day to see how I am doing and if I need anything. I may not physically be at the 109th anymore, but my heart will always be. I can’t wait to come back and once again be a part of the greatest unit (with the greatest planes) in the United States Air Force.”



File photo



Courtesy photo

Tech. Sgt. Terra Dunnells graduated her flight, 321st Training Squadron’s Flight 275, May 22, 2015. Dunnells, 109th Services Flight, has been a certified Military Training Instructor at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, since August 2014. Also pictured (far left) is Airman 1st Class Daniel Guthrie, another 109th Airlift Wing member. This was the first time she had a fellow 109th member in her flight.



Courtesy photo

Tech. Sgt. Terra Dunnells graduated her flight, 321st Training Squadron’s Flight 275, May 22, 2015. Dunnells, 109th Services Flight, has been a Military Training Instructor at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, since August 2014.



Courtesy photo

Chaplain Oath of Office

Chaplain (Maj.) Jacob Marvel gives the Oath of Office to Chaplain (1st Lt.) Xiomara Diaz. Diaz joined the 109th Airlift Wing's Chaplain Corps.



Courtesy photo

Memorial Day run

Tech. Sgt. Ryan Milton, 109th Maintenance Squadron, runs the Buffalo half marathon over Memorial Day weekend with the U.S. Flag. "I hope I was able to honor those that made the ultimate sacrifice for the country I love," he said.

A note from Lt. Col. Ty Randall

I want to say a big "Thank you" to the military and civilian members of the Civil Engineering Squadron. It has been a true honor to be your commander and base civil engineer over the past seven-plus years. I arrived at the 109th in August of 2007, and you all welcomed and supported me as I settled into the Air National Guard. Coming from active duty, it was a big change for me, but you all made it a wonderful experience. You work behind the scenes on every aspect that impacts EVERY wing member. From electrical, heating and cooling, plumbing, roofs/windows/doors, real property/space allocation, funding, project design/execution, grounds maintenance, environmental, fire safety, and emergency management, your impact across the wing is amazing! As I make the transition to the deputy Mission Support Group role, I carry with me everything that you have taught me, and I am so thankful to have worked with each and every one of you. I wish you all continued success under Lt. Col. Rob Donaldson as he transitions to the role in July.

To the Mission Support Group, I look forward to working with you in my new capacity. My goal is to learn as much as I can from each of the units and assist you in any way that I can. The group is amazing and has so much happening each and every day; I am excited to learn more about what you do. I am also looking forward to working with Operations, Maintenance, and the Medical Groups and the wing in a very different capacity. The mission here is amazing and so successful, and I am eager to learn much more across the spectrum of what you all do here at the 109th.

Thank you for the past and the future and for this wonderful opportunity to serve with you all!

In closing, I would like to say a special thank you to Kim Kotkoskie. Kim has decided to take more time to be with her family and will be leaving the environmental position in late June. Many know Kim and her profound impact that she has had on this wing; please wish her well as she makes the transition.



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

Newly promoted Col. Alan Ross, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander, speaks during his promotion ceremony at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York, on April 19, 2015. Ross took over as vice commander in October of 2014.

Officer Promotions

Colonel

Alan N. Ross - AW

Major

Melissa A. Cucchi - AES

Captain

Joshua R. Choquette - AW

Lynsey A. Cross - MDG

Tierra C. Oliver - AES

Angela M. Vasilakos - AW

First Lieutenant

Anthony J. Amico - AS

Stephanie M. Burwell - MDG

Jessica R. Pfau - AS

Katie M. Swanick - AES

Nov. 2, 2014 - May 1, 2015

Awards

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Lawrence H. Schaefer - AW

Lt. Col. Tammy D. Street - LRS

Maj. Michelle M. Buonome - FSS

Air Force Commendation Medal

Capt. Christopher L. Husher - AS

Capt. James R. VanWormer - CES

Senior Master Sgt. Michael A. Pingitore - LRS

Master Sgt. Sarah M. Helligrass - CF

Master Sgt. Michael A. Lazzari - MSG

Tech. Sgt. Nicholas B. Bastiani - MSG

Tech. Sgt. Misty A. Guthinger - AW

Tech. Sgt. Jeremiah P. Henderson - AW

Tech. Sgt. Michael S. Ignecia - FSS

Tech. Sgt. Morris P. King - MXS

Staff Sgt. James A. Comstock - LRS

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey M. Hayes - CF

Air Force Achievement Medal

Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt - AW

Senior Airman Steven A. Yuhasz - LRS

Enlisted Promotions

Senior Master Sergeant

Thomas J. Flynn - AMXS

Douglas A. Fredenburg - LRS

Lloyd B. Hale - AES

Ronald P. Jemmott III - MXS

Deborah L. Nordyke - MXM

Shawn P. Peno - JFHQ

Master Sergeant

Seth D. Bathrick - AW

Anna N. Franklin - FSS

Isaiah M. Gibbs - CF

Sarah M. Helligrass - CF

Juan G. Martinez-Ruiz - MDG

Joshua C. Muscato - LRS

Michael W. Patterson - LRS

Matthew L. Plank - LRS

Jessica L. Ramirez - AW

Raphael J. Smith - AMXS

Kara B. Tatlock - SFS

Technical Sergeant

Clayton D. Allen - JFHQ

Matthew R. Baisley - AMXS

Jason T. Derose - AS

Brian K. Devlin - CES

Kevin M. Facteau - CES

David M. Falcon - MXG

Ryan T. Fortune - AES

Stephen J. Girolami - CF

Theodore F. Golden - CF

Kathleen M. Gregory - AS

Alexander M. Gordon - MXS

Michael S. Ignecia - FSS

Morris P. King - MXS

John Leggett - MXS

Andrew C. Menard - SFS

Joshua T. Myers - CES

Richard C. Nicklas Jr. - AMXS

Stephanie M. Perkins - FSS

Kristopher C. Tank - MXS

Justin M. Wawrzonek - MXS

Blake W. Wells - AMXS

Staff Sergeant

Matthew A. Almy - CF

Connie J. Anderson - AES

Logan M. Brennan - AS

Jennifer A. Bristol - CES

Vanessa M. Castell - MXS

Amanda M. Cimorelli - OSS

Keith D. Cunningham - MXS

Brandon D. Deming - AMXS

Eric M. Deppe - AMXS

Gabriel J. Enders - AMXS

Ryan M. Griffin - LRS

Christian M. Guere - MXS

Nick T. Hochmuth - FSS

Robert J. Johnson - FSS

Matthew B. Jones - AS

Mitchell E. Lake - MXS

Matthew R. Livingston - CF

Joseph R. Paludi - AMXS

Michael A. Perez - OSS

Matthew R. Piombino - AS

Casey C. Preyer-Blakney - AS

Brittany L. Rankin - MXS

Scott D. Salisbury - AS

Ethan T. Schager - MXS

Andrew R. Smith - LRS

Joshua R. Spagnola - JFHQ

Benjamin Watsky - STUF

Latisha C. Webb - AMXS

Carl E. Williams - AES

Senior Airman

Benjamin Andrews - MDG

Robert S. Baldascini - MXS

Nicholas S. Chakurmanian - AS

Patrick A. Cotnoir - FSS

Lyida J. Gerardi - MDG

Stephen W. Marra - LRS

Troy P. McCullen - AS

Alex J. Sakadolsky - CF

Airman 1st Class

Kahdeem M. Defreitas - FSS

109th Airlift Wing
1 Air National Guard Road
Scotia, NY 12302-9752



File Photo illustration

Mission statement

The 109th Airlift Wing employs the Department of Defense's only ski-equipped aircraft to conduct operations in remote Polar Regions. We train, equip and deploy premier, combat-ready Airmen to support state and national objectives.

Vision statement

Unparalleled tactical airlift to remote polar environments, propelled by highly trained, combat-ready Airmen.