

# ON-FINAL

AUGUST 2017

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 507TH AIR REFUELING WING



**OKIES MAXIMIZE REFUELING  
CAPACITY IN EUROPE**



## COVER

### OKIES MAXIMIZE REFUELING CAPACITY

Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 465th Air Refueling Squadron deliver fuel to an F-15C Eagle assigned to RAF Lakenheath, England, July 19, 2017. The Okies augmented the 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall, England, this summer. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech Sgt. Lauren Gleason)

Story by Maj. Jon Quinlan

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LAYOUT BY TECH. SGT. SAMANTHA MATHISON



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# 507th maintains aircraft, relationships via **OPERATION ATLANTIC RESOLVE**

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason



Tech. Sgt. Clarence White, 507th Maintenance Squadron, prepares a KC-135R Stratotanker for flight July 19, 2017, at RAF Mildenhall, England.

**T**otal Force Airmen of the 507th Maintenance Group at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, maintained KC-135R Stratotankers at RAF Mildenhall, England, in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve, strengthening the relationship between Air Force Reserve Command and U.S. Air Forces in Europe, July 1-29.

Atlantic Resolve is an ongoing operation to demonstrate U.S. commitment to the security and stability of NATO allies while improving interoperability between partner nations.

Seven maintenance personnel from the 507th MXG worked the second half of the month-long rotation, including three specialists in avionics, engines and sheet metal. The group readied and recovered aircraft for "Okie" flight crews with Tinker AFB's 465th Air Refueling Squadron, who in turn carried out seven flying sorties across 10 working days.

"The Reserve units taking the mission set for Atlantic Resolve have increased USAFE's tanker capabilities as whole," said 1st Lt. Lydia Hill, 100th Aircraft Maintenance Unit Officer in charge. "They allow the RAF Mildenhall aerial refueling mission to have more flexibility, so overall, USAFE has a stronger tanker presence in the area of responsibility."

One tanker unit from AFRC rotated to Mildenhall monthly until the end of the fiscal year, according to Maj. Walt Mettler, an AFRC tanker air liaison officer with the 349th Air Mobility Operations Squadron at Travis Air Force Base, California.

Mettler, a Reservist and KC-10 Extender pilot, augmented the 100th Operations Group as the AFRC tanker ALO and was responsible for planning all refueling missions for Air Force Reserve units rotating through Mildenhall.

"I plan all the AFRC-led refueling missions," Mettler said. "I help receive the

new crews, get them in and bedded down, fed and rested, and then show them where to go for their flight."

Senior Master Sgt. Justin Henry, 507th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron NCO in charge, said he was impressed with the support provided by the 100th Maintenance Group's composite tool kits, supply shop, maintenance operations center and aerospace ground equipment shop.

"We are excited to be an extension of the 100th MXG and to help them accomplish the mission," Henry said. "So far, they've been very supportive, helping us with anything we need. Everybody's been great."

Staff Sgt. Jason Collins, 507th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron engine mechanic, was selected for the TDY because of his specialty as an engine mechanic and

**"Reserve units  
take the mission  
set for Atlantic Resolve  
to increase  
USAFE's tanker  
capabilities."**

his qualification to perform engine runs.

"An engine run is necessary when following a leak check or operations check," Collins said. "For example, if there was a problem with an engine or with avionics, I would run the engines after repair to pressurize the systems and make sure it's working as advertised."

The key to the Oklahoma Airmen's success was coordination with their 100th Air Refueling Wing counterparts.

"We have visited with the 100th MXG and set up a line of communication with the production superintendents and crew chiefs," said Master Sgt. Roger Carr, 507th AMXS crew chief. "If we require a technician from a specialty shop, we can just request it over the radio and the 100th Maintenance Operations Center will provide us with what we need."

In fiscal year 2017, the 507th ARW operated a total of three monthly rotations to RAF Mildenhall. The following Reserve units deployed to support US-AFE air refueling requirements: The 459th ARW, Joint Base Andrews, Maryland; 452nd Air Mobility Wing, March ARB, California; 916th ARW, Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina; 931st ARW, McConnell AFB, Kansas; 940th ARW, Beale AFB, California; and the 434th ARW, Grissom Air Reserve Base, Indiana.



Master Sgt. Roger Carr, 507th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, moves a fire extinguisher across the flightline prior to a KC-135R Stratotanker refueling flight at RAF Mildenhall, England, as Senior Master Sgt. Justin Henry, 507th AMXS NCO in charge, looks on, July 25, 2017.



CONGRATS TO OUR MAY CCAF GRADUATES

**PITSENBARGER SCHOLARSHIP WINNER**  
Tech. Sgt. Stefanie Greer, 507th CES

**AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY**  
Staff Sgt. Lindsay Flanery, 507th MDS  
Master Sgt. Jason Lawson, 507th MXS  
Master Sgt. Colleen Skaggs, 507th ARW  
Tech. Sgt. Wiley Warner, 513th AMXS

**AVIATION OPERATIONS**  
Master Sgt. Adam Craft, 10th FTS

**AVIONIC SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY**  
Tech. Sgt. Hannah Mullings, 507th MXG

**DENTAL ASSISTING**  
Senior Airman Lita Watts, 507th MDS

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING MANAGEMENT**  
Master Sgt. Erin Sroufe, 507th CES

**ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY**  
Tech. Sgt. John Adams, 35th CBCS  
Staff Sgt. Nathan Bingham, 35th CBCS  
Staff Sgt. Christopher Roberts, 507th OSS

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**  
Tech. Sgt. Ryan Singer, 507th ARW

**FIRE SCIENCE**  
Senior Airman William Elliott, 507th CES

**HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT**  
Tech. Sgt. Laura Santiago, 507th MDS

**HOSPITALITY AND FITNESS**  
Tech. Sgt. Stephanie Foster, 507th FSS

**HOSPITALITY AND FITNESS MANAGEMENT**  
Tech. Sgt. Barney Ross, 10th FTS

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Master Sgt. Dawn Hardwick, 513th OSS

**HUMAN SERVICES**  
Tech. Sgt. Patrick Garrison, 507th ARW

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Senior Airman Michael Bentley, 507th FSS

**INTELLIGENCE STUDIES AND TECHNOLOGY**  
Senior Airman Richard Franz, 507th OSS

**MAINTENANCE PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT**  
Senior Airman Dominique Hall, 507th MXG

**MASS COMMUNICATIONS**  
Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason, 507th ARW

**MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL TECHNOLOGY**  
Tech. Sgt. Stefanie Greer, 507th CES

**MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGY**  
Senior Airman Christopher Rodriguez, 507th MDS

**METALS TECHNOLOGY**  
Staff Sgt. Christopher Ritter, 513th MXS

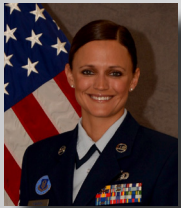
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Click the Get 1 Now logo to  
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EVERY RESERVIST IS A RECRUITER. RECOMMEND A QUALIFIED FRIEND TODAY.

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REWARDS:



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<b>AUGUST UTA AUG. 5-6</b> ATSO FAMILIARIZATION TRAINING @ 0730 AND 1200, SAT. & SUN.  2ND QUARTERLY AWARDS DUE NLT 1200 AUG. 6  COMMANDER'S CALL @ 1500 BASE THEATER AUG. 6	<b>OCTOBER UTA OCT. 14-15</b> ATSO EXERCISE, SAT. & SUN.  3RD QUARTERLY AWARDS DUE OCT. 9
<b>SEPTEMBER UTA SEPT. 9-10</b> A "ROYAL" FAMILY DAY @ 1200 HANGAR 1030 SEP. 9  MILITARY INCENTIVE FLIGHT SEP. 29	<b>NOVEMBER UTA NOV. 4-5</b> GLOBAL THUNDER  OPERATION HOLIDAY SPIRIT
	<b>DECEMBER UTA DEC. 2-3</b>
	<b>JANUARY UTA JAN. 6-7</b>
	<b>FEBRUARY UTA FEB. 3-4</b>
	<b>MARCH UTA MAR. 3-4</b>
	<b>Do you have an event to add?</b> <a href="mailto:507arw.pa2@us.af.mil">Contact us at 507arw.pa2@us.af.mil</a>



# A Royal FAMILY DAY

Saturday, Sept. 9, 2017, @ 12:00 p.m. in Hangar 1030

## Featuring:

Food trucks \$  
Refreshments \$  
Snow Cones \$  
Face Paint \$

Static Aircraft Displays  
Live DJ  
Car Show

Glitter Tattoos \$  
Jail \$  
Cake Walk \$  
Snag-a-Fish \$

SIGN UP REQUIRED,  
SEE YOUR 1ST SGT. TO REGISTER  
FOR THE FOLLOWING:

3 on 3 Basketball Tournament  
Pie in the Face \$  
Hot Dog Eating Contest  
Tug-o-War

Obstacle Course  
Pull Up Competition  
Speed Pitch  
Bounce Houses  
and more!



Please join us for a day of fun, and feel free to dress up as your favorite princess, prince, king, queen, or any other royalty of your choice!

Contact Chief Master Sgt. Mark Smith, Master Sgt. Angie Vereb or Ms. Denise Lawson in the 507th MXG with questions.



# OKIES MAXIMIZE REFUELING CAPACITY

Story by Maj. Jon Quinlan // Photo by Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason



Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 465th Air Refueling Squadron prepare to land a KC-135R Stratotanker at RAF Mildenhall, England, July 15, 2017. In a long-standing total force partnership between Air Force Reserve Command and U.S. Air Forces in Europe, members of the 507th Air Refueling Wing are supporting Operation Atlantic Resolve and augmenting the 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall, July 1-29, 2017.



# "AFRC is increasing refueling capacity for the entire European theater."

In a long-standing total force partnership between Air Force Reserve Command and U.S. Air Forces in Europe, members of the 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, augmented the 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall, England, to provide KC-135R Stratotanker air refueling support to the European theater of operations, July 1-29.

Total Force Airmen, along with their KC-135s, rotated monthly from various AFRC units to support the robust refueling requirements of the 100th ARW. The 507th ARW operated a total of three monthly rotations during 2017.

"It's important to support USAFE with air refueling of our NATO allies and regional partners, but it's also important to AFRC because our crews get experience in different areas of operation," said Maj. Walt Mettler, AFRC tanker air liaison officer.

The European theater of operations is busy, and keeping up with U.S. and regional partner training requirements can be challenging without the help of the Air Force Reserve, according to 100th Operations Support Squadron planners.

"AFRC augmentation is increasing our refueling capacity for the entire European theater," Mettler said. "Air refueling here is in high demand."

The Reserve units working here were tasked to support Operation Atlantic Resolve. According to U.S. European Command, OAR is an ongoing operation to demonstrate U.S. commitment to the security and stability of Europe while improving interoperability between allied and partner nations.

The 507th ARW flew sorties nearly every day while

on station. Most of the local missions were in support of training for F-15 Eagles from RAF Lakenheath, England, F-16 Fighting Falcons from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, MC-130J Command IIs from RAF Mildenhall, England, or training with allies and partners.

The Air Reserve Component can also be tasked by the Air Mobility Division in the 603rd Air and Space Operations Center to support any emerging refueling requirements for USAFE. The Air Reserve Component supports NATO and USAFE requirements regularly.

Sorting through all those requirements and coordinating with the ASOC, RAF Mildenhall and the Reserve crews is the job of the Tanker ALO, who is also a



Reserve Citizen Airman Tech. Sgt. Bobby Jackson, 465th Air Refueling Squadron boom operator, delivers fuel to an F-15 Eagle from RAF Lakenheath, England, July 19, 2017. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech Sgt. Lauren Gleason)



Citizen Airmen from the 507th Maintenance Group recover a KC-135R Stratotanker following a training flight July 25, 2017, at RAF Mildenhall, England. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech Sgt. Lauren Gleason)

## "We hope to continue this partnership for a long time."

Reservist and a KC-10 Extender pilot.

Mettler, who is also a civilian airline pilot, planned missions for Reserve crews to ensure delivery of tanker gas to U.S. and allied aircraft. He is formally assigned to the 349th Air Mobility Operations Squadron, Travis Air Force Base, California.

Mission planning was critical to getting Reserve crews out of the door to support daily missions. The AFRC tanker ALO was co-located with the mission planners and schedulers for the 100th Operations Group.

"We work side by side with our Air Reserve Component partners here which helps with integration," said Capt. Jonathan O'Neill, 351st Air Refueling Squadron mission planner. "AFRC helps us pick up additional air

refueling requirements which we may not have been able to support otherwise."

Reservists from maintenance worked seamlessly with the 100th Maintenance Group, according to 507th ARW maintenance leadership. If an aircraft breaks, Reserve maintenance personnel work the issue themselves or partner with the 100th MXG if parts or a specialty is needed, according to Senior Master Sgt. Justin Henry, deployed 507th AMXS superintendent.

"The partnership that exists between the 100th ARW and AFRC is vital to meeting the air refueling requirements for Europe," said Mettler. "We hope to continue this partnership for a long time."





# The U.S. Uniformed Services Blended Retirement System

Active Component

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1 2018

## Saving with the New Blended Retirement System

The Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act provides our military force with a modernized retirement plan built for retirement savings. Beginning in 2018, service members can get **automatic and matching Thrift Savings Plan contributions**, as well as a mid-career compensation incentive, in addition to **monthly retired pay for life**. All service members under the current system are grandfathered into today's retirement system, but may choose to opt-in to the new Blended Retirement System.

### Pre-2018 Retirement System:



$2.5\% \times \text{Years Served} \times \text{Retired Pay Base}$   
after completing 20 years of service

## Blended Retirement System Components

### 1 Automatic and Matching Contributions

Automatic contributions are seen immediately



You Contribute	DoD Auto Contribution	DoD Matches	Total
0%	1%	0%	1%
1%	1%	1%	3%
2%	1%	2%	5%
3%	1%	3%	7%
4%	1%	3.5%	8.5%
5%	1%	4%	10%

The DoD automatically contributes 1% of your basic pay to your **Thrift Savings Plan** after **60 days of service**.

You'll see matching contributions at the start of 3 years through the completion of 26 years of service, and...

You're fully vested—it's yours to keep—after completing 2 years of service and it goes with you when you leave.

### 2 Continuation Pay

Received at the mid-career point



You may receive a **cash payment** in exchange for additional service.

### 3 Full Retired Pay

Received after completing 20 years of service

$2\% \times \text{Years Served} \times \text{Retired Pay Base}$

Calculate your **retired pay base** by averaging **the highest 36** months of basic pay.

You'll gain this monthly annuity for life after completing 20 years of service.

## Your Retirement System

### Options for Collecting Your Retired Pay

Full retired pay as a monthly annuity

or



Lump sum

+



Reduced retired pay as a monthly annuity

50% or 25% of monthly retired pay annuity bumps back up to 100% at full retirement age (67 in most cases).

### If you joined the service or signed a contract to serve:

**BEFORE**  
January 1, 2006

You'll be grandfathered into the pre-2018 retirement system.

**AFTER**  
December 31, 2005  
**BUT BEFORE**  
January 1, 2018

You'll have the choice to enroll in the Blended Retirement System or remain in the pre-2018 retirement system.

**AFTER**  
December 31, 2017

You'll be automatically enrolled in the Blended Retirement System.

# FROM CITIZENS TO CITIZEN AIRMEN

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison

Five U.S. citizens took the oath to become Citizen Airmen in the Air Force Reserve July 21, 2017, at the AF Reserve Career Center in Moore, Oklahoma.

Four of the new recruits enlisted to become officers, making up approximately 30 percent of the annual goal that recruiter Master Sgt. Cody Newsom, AF Reserve Central Recruiting Squadron, is required to achieve.

According to Newsom, less than four percent of officers in the Air Force Reserve are pilots and three of the officers who took the oath are slated to fly the KC-135 Stratotanker. The fourth officer who commissioned will be an E-3 Sentry air battle manager and the fifth recruit enlisted as an aircrew flight equipment apprentice.

Newsom, who is one of the top 50 recruiters in the AF Reserve Recruiting Command, helped the new Airmen through the application process and witnessed them take the oath.

"Enlistment day culminates in the tremendous effort, time, hard work and commitment to one's self, the AF Reserve and the United States of America," Newsom said. "This day is just the beginning of an applicant's transformation from civilian to Airman."

The oath was issued by the AF Reserve Central Recruiting Squadron commander, Lt. Col. Casey Pombert, who recognized their commitment in a speech beforehand.

"I want to thank you all for making this commitment, not only for yourself, but for your country," Pombert said. "Less than 1 percent of Americans serve in the military, so the fact that you are willing to do it as Citizen Airmen is a huge sacrifice and contribution to the United States."

Pombert then asked the recruits to raise their right hands for the oath.

In front of friends, family and other Citizen Airmen, the recruits pledged to support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies as new Airmen in the AF Reserve.

For information on how to join the U.S. AF Reserve, please visit [www.afreserve.com](http://www.afreserve.com) or call (800) 257-1212.



Five new recruits enter the Air Force Reserve by giving the oath of enlistment at the AF Reserve Career Center in Moore, Okla., July 21, 2017. The oaths were administered by Lt. Col. Casey Pombert, AF Reserve Central Recruiting Squadron commander.



Lt. Col. Casey Pombert, Air Force Reserve Central Recruiting Squadron commander, shakes hands with Rashaan Johnson, a new recruit and future aircrew flight equipment apprentice, after issuing the oath of enlistment at the AF Reserve Career Center in Moore, Okla., July 21, 2017. Johnson, a Del City, Okla., native, enlisted with the 507th Operation Support Squadron.





A CLOSER

LOOK

## Senior Master Sgt. Julie Hudson

**DISTRIBUTION FLIGHT SUPERINTENDENT,  
507TH LOGISTICS READINESS SQUADRON**

Senior Master Sgt. Julie Hudson, 507th Logistics Readiness Squadron distribution flight superintendent, poses for a photo at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., July 11, 2017. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison)

### WHAT IS A LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOU?

Those who know me best know this, but I am a huge David Bowie fan.

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTER IN A MOVIE?

Hands down, the Phantom of the Opera, which I can say because they made a movie from it.

### AS A KID, WHAT WAS YOUR DREAM JOB?

I always did, and still do, want to be an author.

### WHEN DID YOU JOIN THE MILITARY?

I joined in January of 1992.

### WHAT IS YOUR CAREER GOAL?

To make a difference somehow. I'd like to have a positive impact on tomorrow's Non-commissioned officers and Senior Non-commissioned Officers.

### WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

Mentoring young troops. I love to train and pass on what I know and encourage them to embrace every opportunity offered to them. When I see that light when Airmen grasp a concept I am teaching, it's the best feeling ever.

### WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?

Spend time with my daughter.

### WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST PET PEEVE?

Lateness. I don't like to wait for people who are late but, even worse, I hate it when I have to be late for something and my anxiety skyrockets.

### WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEXT 'CLOSER LOOK'?

[EMAIL YOUR SUBMISSION HERE](#)



# August PROMOTIONS

BRETT NEELEY, 72 APS

**SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT**



MARK FIORITTO, 730 AMTS  
BRADLEY BLOCK, 507 MXS  
TODD LOVEJOY, 507 CES

**MASTER SERGEANT**



SAMANTHA MATHISON, 507 ARW  
JAMIE BROUSSARD, 72 APS  
RHIANNA BRYAN, 72 APS  
JAMES BRADSHAW, 507 AMXS  
NICHOLAS ENDSLEY, 513 MXS  
ROGER BLANKERSHIP, 513 AMXS  
AARON STELZER, 970 AACs  
JESSE EGERT, 970 AACs  
DONOVAN HAYES, 507 AMXS

**TECHNICAL SERGEANT**



JOSEPH LUCAS, 507 CES  
REBECCA COWAN, 507 OSS  
DOMINIQUE HALL, 507 MXG  
GARRETT GREER, 970 AACs  
CALEB JACK, 72 APS  
ZACHARY AMBROSE, 507 AMXS  
TYLER LAWRENCE, 513 AMXS  
KIRK GODFREY, 507 LRS

**STAFF SERGEANT**



AUSTIN HIATT, 507 SFS  
HUGO GARCACERON, 507 CES

**SENIOR AIRMAN**





# NEW



## AIR FORCE PRIORITIES



**RESTORE  
READINESS**

*...to win  
any fight, any time*



**COST-EFFECTIVELY  
MODERNIZE**

*...to increase the  
lethality  
of the force*



**DRIVE  
INNOVATION**

*...to secure  
our future*



**DEVELOP  
EXCEPTIONAL  
LEADERS**

*...to lead the  
world's most  
powerful teams*



**STRENGTHEN  
OUR ALLIANCES**

*...because we  
are stronger  
together*



THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC



FJUL 31 2017

To the Airmen of the United States Air Force:

For more than 70 years, our fellow Americans have asked you to be the sentinels of air and space for the nation, delivering unmatched capabilities every day. The demand for what you, as American Airmen, bring to the fight will only increase. We will continue to lead and support the Joint Force in defending our homeland, owning the high ground, and projecting power with our allies. As the most dominant air force in the world, we will continue to face serious and ever-changing threats. In order to ensure our Air Force remains lethal and ready when the nation calls, we have established the following Air Force priorities:

- **Restore readiness** ... to win any fight, any time.
- **Cost-effectively modernize** ... to increase the lethality of the force.
- **Drive innovation** ... to secure our future.
- **Develop exceptional leaders** ... to lead the world's most powerful teams.
- **Strengthen our alliances** ... because we are stronger together.

Everything we do as a team should advance or augment these priorities. Each and every one of our Total Force Airmen has a role to play in making us successful in this endeavor. We will prevail through the power of our Airmen.

You and your families represent our nation's absolute best. We are humbled to lead this great Air Force and honored to serve with you every day.

*Heather Wilson*

Heather Wilson  
Secretary of the Air Force

*David L. Goldfein*

David L. Goldfein  
General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

*Kaeth O. Wright*

Kaeth O. Wright  
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force



# Facebook PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS!



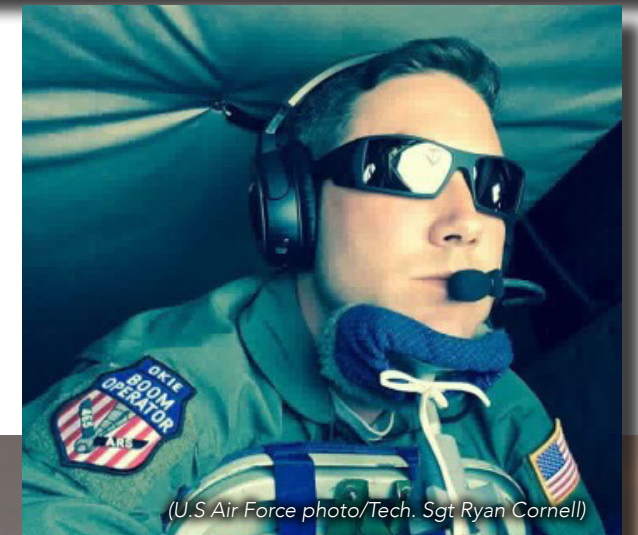
(Courtesy photo/Scot Meek)

Last month we asked for your favorite photos from around the wing and here are the top photos!

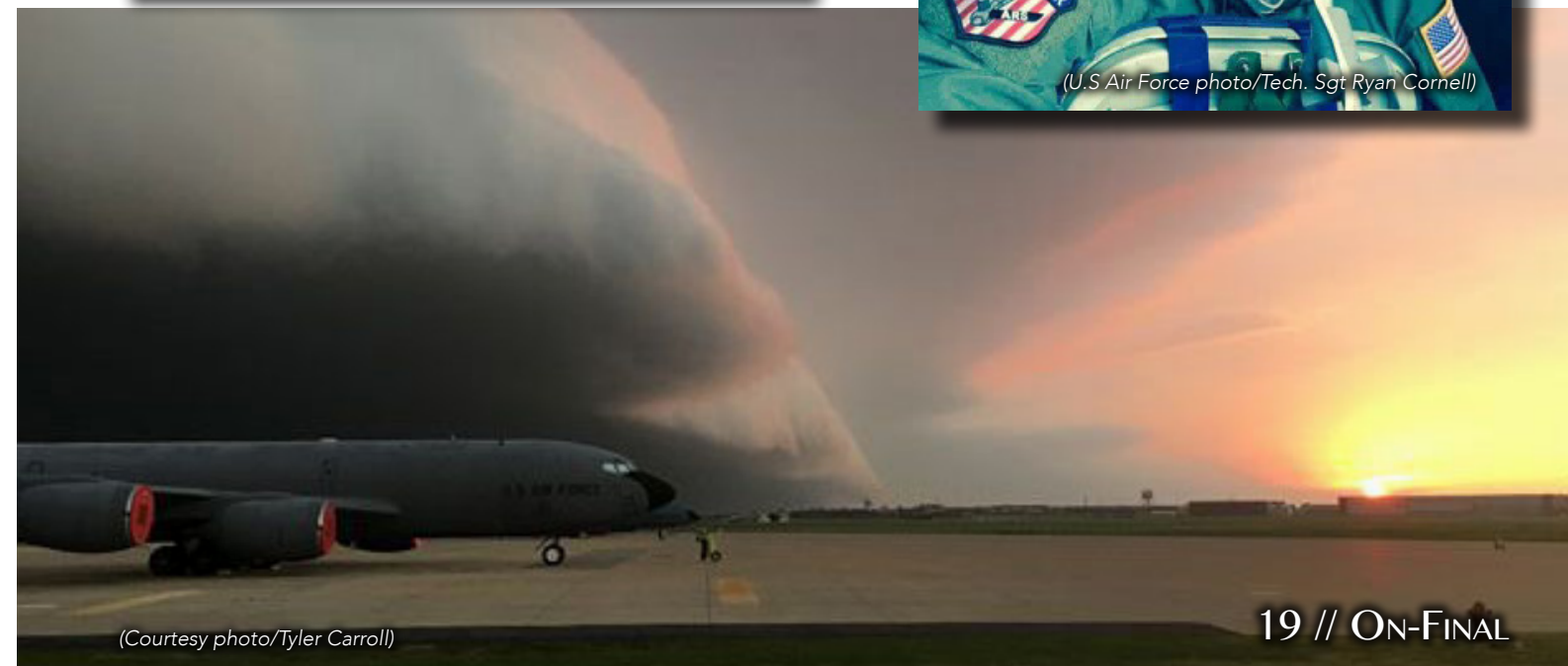
Go to page 26 to view the rest of the photo submissions.

Feel free to submit more photos to us at:

[www.facebook.com/507arw](http://www.facebook.com/507arw)



(U.S Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Ryan Cornell)



(Courtesy photo/Tyler Carroll)





Airmen have 12 months from notification to complete their enlisted professional military education distance learning course. Airmen notified in 2015 need to complete their EPME DL courses by the new policy implementation date or they will be ineligible to reenlist, extend or promote. (U.S. Air Force graphic/Staff Sgt. Alexx Pons)

Story By Senior Master Sgt. Katherine Grabham

**A**ir Force officials announced major changes to the enlisted professional military education program today via an initiative called Enlisted Professional Military Education for the 21st Century, or “EPME 21.”

A major initiative of EPME 21 is that time in service will no longer dictate an Airman’s EPME enrollment -- Airmen will only be required to complete distance learning courses as a prerequisite to their resident attendance. This initiative is now in effect.

Also, the Air Force will transition to 100 percent resident EPME, allowing all active duty, Guard and reserve Airmen an opportunity to attend Airman Leadership School, the NCO and senior NCO academies prior to promotion.

The changes are a result of the 2017 EPME triennial review, said Chief Master Sgt. JoAnne Bass, the Chief of Air Force Enlisted Developmental Education at the Pentagon.

“The committee determined changes were needed to the existing EPME structure in order to align EPME with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’s policy requiring rank-based educational opportunities,” Bass said. “This also enables all Air-

men an opportunity to attend resident PME in order to truly leverage the educational experiences gained from instructors and peers.”

One of Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright’s three priorities is leadership – developing Airmen who are ready to lead. One of his objectives in this is to cement EPME changes and infuse agility into Air University processes to improve the ability to provide timely, updated content delivery.

“If this sounds familiar, it should. It was the staple of our EPME for almost 43 years before a recent change to a time in service model,” Wright said. “While this model was effective for some, we quickly found it didn’t meet the needs of all our Airmen, causing many NCOs to lose the opportunity to attend in residence at all.”

Rather than requiring Airmen to complete EPME at set times based on how long they’ve been in the Air Force, the new model transitions to a rank-based continuum of learning.

Removing the TIS determination “just makes sense,” Wright said. “We must ensure timely, focused and operationally relevant training and educational solutions at all levels. Providing Airmen with the appropriate PME at the right times in their career is a must. If we deliver it too soon,

it’s not effective for where they are in their careers. If we deliver it too late, it’s not effective at all.”

Wright notes that the model provides Airmen greater flexibility and time, allowing them to focus their energies on the mission.

“Commanders, superintendents, first sergeants and supervisors remain central to inspiring a culture of innovation, agility and excellence, while promoting a continuum of learning that spans an Airman’s career,” he said.

Airmen will not be notified from the Air Force Personnel Center or Air University on when to enroll themselves into distance learning, but must manually enroll themselves.

“This new EPME structure allows Airmen to decide the best timeframe to complete their distance learning,” Bass said. “They will have to complete the distance learning prior to being scheduled for the resident portion, but each Airman now has more flexibility as to when the right time is for them.”

Bass explained that distance learning provides students with basic competency development and the resident courses allow students to apply what they learned.

“It is necessary to complete both the distance learning and the resident courses to achieve development of the required competencies at the appropriate proficiency levels,” she said. “We expect staff

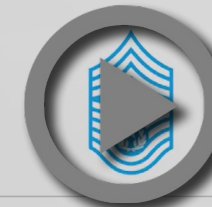
and master sergeants to complete their respective distance learning so when they become technical and senior master sergeants, they are immediately eligible for resident attendance.”

Resident EPME is a promotion requirement -- Airman Leadership School, NCO Academy, SNCO Academy and the Chief Leadership Course are required for promotion to E-5, E-7 and E-9, respectively.

Airmen who have previously completed NCO or SNCO distance learning courses under the previous policy and have not attended resident EPME, will still receive EPME credit and will not be required to attend the resident portion. Additionally, those currently enrolled in NCO or SNCO distance learning courses may still complete the course and receive credit upon completion. Or, they may withdraw with no adverse actions and reenroll at a later date, prior to attending resident EPME.

“This change clearly sends a signal that our senior leaders value deliberately developing our enlisted corps,” said Lt. Gen. Gina Grosso, the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services. “This is a positive move in the right direction, as we continue to develop the force and support our Airmen.”

## Video: CMSAF Wright discusses EPME 21



# EPME 21

ENLISTED PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION REVISIONS



# 507TH AIRMEN CALLED TO ACTION

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison



Staff Sgt. Rory Witt, 507th Civil Engineer Squadron firefighter, says goodbye to his parents July 13, 2017, at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City before his deployment to Southwest Asia.

More than 100 Citizen Airmen from the 507th Air Refueling Wing here said goodbye to friends and family as they deployed in July to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

The Airmen mobilized as part of U.S. Air Forces Central Command and other coalition partners to deliver decisive air, space and cyberspace capabilities in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

One of the deployers, Master Sgt. Timothy Lord, 507th Logistics Readiness Squadron 1st Sgt., discussed some of the emotions that go into preparing for deployment.

"We have some nervous jitters and excitement," Lord said. "But there is also a lot of pride. We are prepared, and now we get to use what the Air Force has trained us to do."

The deployers left on the first leg of their journey from Will Rogers World Airport, Oklahoma, with friends

and family in attendance, exchanging advice, hugs and farewells.

Co-workers, peers and mentors from the 507th ARW were also there in a show of support.

The 507th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander, Maj. Damien Miller, said goodbye to Airmen in his command at the airport. Miller recently returned from a deployment, so he understood the challenges the Airmen faced as they prepared to depart.

"I think they're doing an amazing thing," Miller said. "It's what we train to do. The tough part is leaving our families behind, but they're doing what they've been called to do: Protect our country and way of life. I'm very proud of them. We will support their families and take care of anything they need while they're away."

The deployed Airmen are from the 507th ARW Wing Staff and the following squadrons: logistics readiness, civil engineer, force support, security forces and medical.



Staff Sgt. Travis Meske, 507th Civil Engineer Squadron firefighter, hugs a family member as he says goodbye July 13, 2017, at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City before his deployment to Southwest Asia.



Senior Airman Kirk Godfrey, 507th Logistics Readiness Squadron, says goodbye to his family July 13, 2017, at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City before his deployment to Southwest Asia.



Tech. Sgt. William Kuykendall, 507th Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels management supervisor, hugs his son goodbye July 13, 2017, at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City before leaving on a deployment to Southwest Asia.



Tech. Sgt. Andrew Piscitello, 507th Civil Engineer Squadron health and safety officer, hugs his daughter goodbye July 13, 2017, at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City before his deployment to Southwest Asia.



## LEADERSHIP COMMENTARY

# The 'Okie' Way

Col. Christopher Amend  
Commander, 507th Operations Group

To the 507th Air Refueling Wing,

What a year you have experienced: Since last May, the ops-tempo has been non-stop for the wing. The schedule was full of exercises, training and deployments. You scurried from one event to the next, and one aircraft generation to the next. It's hard to believe, but the wing's pace and activity actually increased as we rolled into 2017. And yet the wing executed a mobilization, quickly followed by two inspections in amazing fashion. Yes, it has been quite a year.

Through all the stress and turmoil, there is one constant within this wing; a sense of family and cohesion. Each of you, the 507th Okies, proved that when faced with adversity, you will pull together to meet it head-on and conquer it--together. It is that sense of family that continues to impress leadership within the wing, 4th Air Force, AF Reserve Command and around the globe. All who are fortunate enough to witness Okies at work can sense the Okie pride and notice your professionalism while accomplishing the mission. Time and again, 507th leaders receive phone calls and messages commending the Okies for a job well done.

Contributing to the Okie Pride is knowing that wherever you are and whatever you do, you are taking care of each other and doing things the right way. Doing the right thing is a mindset and part of the Okie culture. Everyone realizes that doing the right thing is not always easy, nor is it popular, at times.

What is the right thing to do? It is the voice in our head that tells us what we should do. It is that "gut feeling," letting us know what we should be doing or questioning the actions you are about to take. The right thing is outlined in Air Force Instructions, technical orders and other documentation we use throughout the day, both at and away from work. By striving to do the right thing and doing the best you can in all you do, you will look at yourself in the mirror at the end of the day and know it was a good day.

Our Okie family also ensures we are doing the right thing. If you see someone performing a task that doesn't look correct, stop the action and ensure it's performed the right way. Your question may be what breaks the chain and prevents an accident or injury.

In addition to our work family, there is the family



Col. Christopher Amend, 507th Operations Group commander, sits for an official photo, May 15, 2016, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason)

at home. This last year was not only a strain on the work family; it was equally, if not more, stressful on the home family. We must always remember what spouses and children sacrifice when service calls. For many Okies, the end of inspections meant the beginning of a relaxing summer full of vacations and quality family time. However, the end of inspections for some in the wing meant the beginning of mobilization and deployment. Whichever group you fall into, spend time with your family. Thank them, hug them, go to the ball games or out to a nice evening. The family that you take care of now will be waiting for you at the end of your military career. Appreciate them now, because they are there to appreciate you for the rest of your life.

The 507th ARW is one large family with a culture that shines. Take pride in everything you accomplish every day. Let your Okie pride be a part of who you are on base, off base and in everything you do. Continue to strengthen your families and do things the right way.

## 507TH FLASHES THE TINKER TAIL IN SOUTH AMERICA



(U.S. Air Force photo/Maj. Michael Waters)

Citizen Airmen of the 507th Air Refueling Wing showcase a KC-135R Stratotanker during the Feria Aeronautica Internacional—Colombia 2017 in Rionegro, Colombia, July 13-16. Visitors had the opportunity to walk through the aircraft and interact with the crew, strengthening international relationships and promoting combat capability of the U.S. Air Force Reserve.



(U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Megan Floyd)



(U.S. Air Force photo/Capt. Daniel Shaheen)



FACEBOOK PHOTO SUBMISSIONS







U.S. Air Force Photo/Tech. Sgt. Ryan Cornell



Courtesy photo/Tyler Carroll



U.S. Air Force Photo/Tech. Sgt. Ryan Cornell



Courtesy photo/Jennie Whitlock



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Bobby Jackson



Courtesy photo/Scot Meek



Courtesy photo/Ben Desilets



Courtesy photo/Andrew Harkness



Courtesy photo/Andrew Harkness





Citizen Airmen from the 507th Maintenance Group recover a KC-135R Stratotanker following a training flight July 19, 2017, at RAF Mildenhall, England. (U.S. Air Force photo/Maj. Jon Quinlan)