

THE *STINGER*

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ABOUT THE STINGER

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Commander's Comments



Editorial by Col. William Giezie

Over the years we have used a process to promote our mid to senior enlisted members which has consisted of a job advertisement, an interview board and a position selection, which was, in most cases, followed by a promotion. This same process has been essentially used for both traditional military positions as well as many of our fulltime opportunities. Our selections for these positions were based on identifying the best qualified candidate for the position through the interview process and by an evaluation of the total Airman concept. The general idea was by selecting the best qualified candidate we were doing our best for the unit and the mission, and for many years this process has served us well. When this process was first implemented, the 180th Fighter Wing had around 1,100 military members which included a fulltime staff of about 250 technicians and 55 Active Guard Reserves. In addition, we were primarily focused on our Air Expeditionary Forces deployment cycle and routine training.

The Air National Guard has seen many mission requirement and force structure changes in the recent past and the 180FW has been a big part of this. We received the

Aerospace Control Alert mission, which started here in 2008. This added an additional 70 AGR positions in the Operations, Maintenance and Mission Support Groups, plus additional military and civilian fire fighters. This also increased our mission requirements from a standard 40-hour work week plus one drill weekend each month to a 24-hour a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year operation. This was followed by force structure changes in Civil Engineering which reduced our military manning to increase RED HORSE personnel in Ohio, while maintaining the fulltime force structure. At about the same time, the Air Force made the decision to deactivate and stand-down the 555th Air Force Band, which was also part of the 180FW, causing the loss of additional military force structure.

Several initiatives were launched by both our state headquarters as well as the National Guard Bureau which transitioned our state security guards into fulltime military technicians. This was combined with a program NGB implemented which transitioned Security Forces AGR authorizations from wings that lost their aircraft

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A New Perspective

180FW Conducts Four Lenses Training

Editorial & photos by Airman 1st Class Hope Geiger

All Airmen should participate in the Four Lenses Training course as it creates a better working environment for all. Four Lenses is a two-hour team building exercise to teach Airmen concepts of knowing themselves and the different ways people learn, establish personal values and conceptualize.

“Four Lenses is temperament training,” said Senior Master Sgt. Nathan Howard, 180 Fighter Wing human resources advisor and four lenses course instructor. “It’s looking at different types of personality temperaments and how to understand them better.”

This system was adapted from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, 160-item test that categorizes an individual into one of 16 types. Most individuals who have taken this test often do not remember the results, a four-letter

code, and seldom remember what the code means, explained Howard.

To address this, Four Lenses took these 16 different types and condensed them into four color preferences: Gold, Green, Blue and Orange. Gold is for structure, security and order temperaments; Green for logical and analytical thought; Blue for feelings and emotional support; and Orange for competitive and action-oriented personalities.

It teaches individuals how to remember and incorporate type theory into their personal and professional lives. During the training individuals learn how to apply it to real-life situations and how to fully use this information.

“There are two things you are supposed to get out of it,” said Howard. “First, you learn more about yourself, like the things you are good at and what you need to work

on, and the other part is learning about the other people you work with. It helps Airmen understand who they are working with and why they do the things they do.”

Each shop or section of the 180FW consists of a wide range of diverse people. This training provides a base of understanding for the different ways people learn, think, establish personal values and conceptualize. By working in groups and talking to your peers, it exposes attitudes, wants, needs, preferences, desires and the motivation behind behaviors. It opens channels of communication across ethnic, gender and other human barriers.

“The training helped Airmen understand each other better by seeing all the different perspectives and discussing our views,” said Lt. Col. Elizabeth Vossler, communications flight commander, who attended training.

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180FW Safety Superintendent

Receives Top Award

Story & photo by Staff Sgt. John Wilkes

The National Guard Bureau selected Senior Master Sgt. Joseph Carter, occupational health and safety superintendent with the 180th Fighter Wing in Swanton, Ohio, for the 2017 Air National Guard Outstanding Individual Occupational Safety Award for exceptional performance in his career field.

Of the 105,000 Airmen in the Air National Guard, the award is given to a select few Airmen each year who make unparalleled contributions to their unit and the Air Force as a whole.

“It is a true honor to receive this award,” said Carter. “This is the top award in our career field and it is reassuring to know that the work we put in does not go unnoticed.”

Carter genuinely cares about the safety of all personnel on the base and across the Air

Force. He is regularly engaged in training programs and actively seeks out courses to further his knowledge.

“We work very hard in the safety office to prevent mishaps before they occur,” said Carter. “We train personnel across the base on safety to prevent incidents from occurring and to keep people safe.”

In 2017, Carter served as the single investigative officer for an incident resulting in more than \$800,000 in damages. Due to his hard work and dedication, he was able to identify an Air Force-wide hazard and submit a corrective action plan, preventing countless potential mishaps across the nation.

Carter also worked with Air Education Training Command to develop a new online safety training course required for all safety professionals across the Air Force prior

to attending the in-residence journeyman safety training course.

Carter sets the example for junior airmen both on and off duty. He is an Authorized Occupational Safety and Health Administration Instructor, an Air Force Mishap Investigator and is working on earning the Certified Safety Professional designation.

“Senior Master Sgt. Carter demonstrates what it is to be a true safety professional,” said Maj. Gen. Mark Bartman, Adjutant General of the Ohio National Guard.

Airmen are the 180FW’s number one resource and asset and their safety is a top priority. In 2017, there were zero major mishaps for 180FW members. Both at home and while deployed, the 180FW remains mission-focused to provide for America while developing Airmen, supporting their families and serving in our community. 🇺🇸

ONE OF A KIND

**Passion drives only female firefighter
supporting Northern Strike**

Story & photos by Airman 1st Class Tiffany Clark





“In tech school, I actually had people pull me aside and say, ‘You might want to consider a different career path,’ because they didn’t think I could do it.”

Across the U.S. military there are extraordinary women fighting for the freedom of their friends and family. In various roles, women carry out the same job as their male counterparts. In 1948, when President Truman signed the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act, it allowed women to serve directly in the military. This paved the way for women like Staff Sgt. Andrea Villegas, fire protection, 180th Fighter Wing, Toledo, Ohio, also known as the Stingers, to be the only female fire fighter executing training missions at Northern Strike 18 today.

Humble and hard-working, Villegas knew from a young age that she would serve her country in whatever capacity she could. After considering active duty Air Force, she decided it wasn’t the right time to leave her family, so with high hopes, she pursued her education and discovered the Ohio Air National Guard.

“I really didn’t know what I wanted to do; I just knew I wanted it to be in the military,”

said Villegas through a shy smile, her fingers folded politely in her lap as she collected her thoughts. “When you think of the military, it’s so honorable and such a cool thing. I knew I had to be part of it and it could help me further my education too.”

Villegas knew she wanted to help people, so when she was provided with the options for a career path, it became clear that fire protection was the only way for her to go.

“You know when you’re a kid and you see fire trucks speeding past you? There is this excited feeling, like, ‘they are saving someone,’ so when they called with all of the options of what I could do, I had to go with fire because I wanted to be the one saving people,” said Villegas; her shy smile turning into a wide grin as a passionate fire sparked in her eyes. Her hands became expressive

as she described making her decision and not looking back.

“My favorite part about being a fire fighter is the excitement of not knowing what we are running into when those tones drop - along with the medical aspect,” said Villegas. “I can’t imagine doing anything else, besides being a mom.”

Villegas set her sights high: even throughout her 68-day technical training with the 180th Fighter Wing, she pushed herself passed her limits to prove she had what it took to ‘hang with the boys.’

“It is definitely difficult being a woman in this career field; in tech school, I actually had people pull me aside and say, ‘You might



“The guys can be rough..., but it is still a brotherhood and she holds her own as sister in that brotherhood.”

want to consider a different career path,’ because they didn’t think I could do it,” said Villegas. “I thought to myself, ‘the hell I can’t.’ I felt like I had something to prove, so I gave it my all and ended up beating the Marines’ fastest times.”

With her current goals, high motivation, and follow-through, Villegas is not done yet. She is setting herself up to move through the ranks and come out on top.

“I am studying fire administration at school. my main goal when I got into fire-

fighting was to become our bases’ fire chief, but then I got to know our chief and how many responsibilities he has; he makes it all look effortless,” said Villegas. “It’s inspiring, but it is also going to take a lot of hard work to get there.”

Villegas is a stay-at-home mom on the civilian side and loves being able to raise her children. Setting an example for them is her top priority.

“My current job is just being a mom to my babies, but once they are old enough I

would love to work at the fire department, whether it’s on-base or on the city department,” said Villegas, her eyes shining at the possibilities of her future. “Right now, I think of my Guard duty as a side gig to my being a mom, so when people usually ask me what I do I say, ‘I’m a mom, AND I am a fire fighter.’”

Villegas arrived in Alpena for NS18. Only to find out she would be the only female for the entire training mission. Senior Master Sgt. Jeremy Wohlford, Fire Chief, Alpena

Combat Readiness Training Center, Alpena, MI, has been working close with Villegas during NS18 to assist her in getting prepared for real life scenarios.

“During the vehicle extrication exercise, she was the Rapid Intervention Vehicle (RIV) driver, and helped put out the live fire for the exercise at the Calcite quarry during the coalition training,” said Wohlford. “She was in charge of the three coalition Latvian partners during one of the exercise, which was difficult because they don’t speak English

that well, and tonight she is driving the big Stryker truck during our live fire exercise.” The fire chief raved about Villegas and how she handled the guys around her. He commended her on her abilities as a firefighter with a giant smile. Wohlford acknowledged the change in culture when allowing women to join the career field.

“It has to be challenging at times, especially with the way this career field is. The guys can be rough, and they aren’t very politically correct, but it is still a brotherhood and she

holds her own as sister in that brotherhood,” said Wohlford. “They keep a protective stance around her, in situations when they could just leave her behind, they don’t because at the end of the day we are still a team with one mission so we do everything we can to make sure everyone comes home.”

The Department of Defense’s Women’s Equality Day is Aug. 26, 2018. Women like Staff Sgt. Andrea Villegas are an inspiration to others who serve, and those that will serve after her. 🇺🇸

A woman in a white Taekwondo uniform is captured in profile, performing a technique. Her right arm is extended forward with a clenched fist, and her left arm is also extended. She has a focused expression. The background is a blurred gymnasium with other people in white uniforms.

“It’s more than just punching and kicking. It’s about becoming a better person.”

180FW Airman to Compete in Taekwondo World Championships

Story & photos by Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes

An Airman assigned to the 180th Fighter Wing, Ohio Air National Guard, will be competing in the International Taekwondo Federation World Championships from July 31 through Aug. 5 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Airman 1st Class Lydia Delmonico, an information technology specialist, qualified to compete as an individual in the ITF World Championships in four categories: Pattern routines, power breaking, specialty breaking, and sparring. She also qualified for the U.S. team in the specialty breaking category. She and her teammates will represent the U.S. against hundreds of competitors from 28 other nations.

Pattern routines are detailed, choreographed patterns of movements practiced either solo, or in pairs, and characterized by the strength and precision of the movements. Power breaking involves using straightforward techniques to break as many boards as possible. Specialty breaking involves breaking fewer boards but using jumping techniques to attain greater height or to clear obstacles.



One of the specialty striking events requires competitors to kick a board suspended 8 feet, 6 inches off the floor for males and 7 foot, 2 inches for females. Sparring is a scored and judged fight.

“This is a big competition, and, in Argentina, it’s their national sport,” said Carol Van Zile, a seventh-degree black belt and the owner of Great Lakes Global Taekwondo, where Delmonico trains. “I’m very proud of her. I think she has a real good chance to medal.”

“This is my first world championship,” Delmonico said. “I’m just excited to have the opportunity to go compete.”

Taekwondo has its origins in Korean military history and is characterized by its emphasis on head-height kicks. According to Delmonico, there are many similarities between her military training and Taekwondo.

“When you learn taekwondo, it comes with a history, philosophy and a mental discipline that you don’t find in other sports,”

Delmonico said. “When you learn a pattern, there’s a history behind that pattern that you also learn with it. It’s more than just punching and kicking. It’s about becoming a better person. Courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control, and an indomitable spirit

“She takes that discipline from her martial arts training and brings it over to the military.”

are just some of the tenets of Taekwondo. Taekwondo means the same thing to me as the Air Force does; it’s about making a physically and mentally outstanding person.”

Delmonico’s hard work and determination have impacted everyone around her,

both her teammates and her fellow Airmen.

“She has always been very dedicated and she’s a leader,” Van Zile said.

“She has a great work ethic, and I learn something every time I train with her,” said Brandon Nickens, one of Delmonico’s teammates who will also be competing for the U.S.

“She’s independent and self-driven,” said Senior Master Sgt. Charles Hollingsworth III, information technology superintendent assigned to the 180FW. “She takes that discipline from her martial arts training and brings it over to the military.”

Taking place every two years, the competition draws the best athletes and teams from around the world and has been compared to the Olympics.

“I like winning, but whether I win or not, this is an amazing experience for me,” Delmonico said. “It’s like the Olympics. You come together to do this amazing thing, to compete against each other, to represent your country. It’s a tremendous honor.”



Infection Control

Story & photo by Staff Sgt. John Wilkes

Each year, countless lives are lost due to the spread of infections in medical facilities. Approximately one in 25 patients are affected by hospital-acquired infection, according to the U. S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

To prevent this, the 180th Fighter Wing Medical Group appointed Staff Sgt. Delaney Preston, an aerospace medical technician, as the infection control noncommissioned officer in charge.

“I was given that role the day I was promoted to Senior Airman,” said Preston. “Our chief nurse at the time created this program to help ensure we’re following protocols and are prepared for any type of infection.”

“Sgt. Preston was chosen as the NCOIC because she always does a great job with whatever task she is given and she showed a lot of interest in the position,” explained Capt. Stephanie Smiddy, a clinical nurse

assigned to the 180FW and infection control officer in charge.

Her role is intended to prevent the spread of infectious diseases among Airmen and patients.

“Infection control keeps people safe from different risks from blood-borne pathogens, like HIV hepatitis C and tuberculosis, that we either test for or vaccinate for,” said Smiddy. “This role is to keep us safe, as well as the people we are treating.”

Preston is responsible for ensuring all the

rooms get cleaned and disinfected properly, stocking rooms with the necessary cleaning supplies and checking expiration dates, and placing infectious spill kits in each room.

A spill kit, a container filled with everything needed to clean up an infectious spill, includes a mask with an eye shield, pair of gloves, absorbent powder, antiseptic towelettes, wipes, waste bags and a towel.

“An infectious spill can be anything from someone bleeding to somebody vomiting,”

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“We’re a medical facility so we have to be ready for anything.”

Combat Archer

Evaluating the Whole Weapon System



Story & photos by Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes

“It gives everyone an idea of how well they’re doing, what they’re doing and why that’s important.”



The sound of fighter jets roared above the pristine, sandy beaches of the Florida coastline. High above the sun-kissed tourists, F-16 Fighting Falcons chased after bright orange drones, following them out over the Gulf of Mexico where a pilot targeted them and fired a missile, ending any chance of the drone ever returning.

More than 150 Airmen from the 180th

Fighter Wing, Ohio Air National Guard, participated in Combat Archer, a two-week air-to-air Weapons System Evaluation Program to prepare and evaluate operational fighter squadrons’ readiness for combat operations, at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida from Sept. 10 – 21.

The exercise evaluated the performance of the whole weapon system from the Airmen who load missiles to the pilots who fire them, determining the reliability and capability of

the 180FW to engage targets in combat by firing live missiles at subscale drones which take on the role of enemy aircraft.

“Combat Archer’s objective is to evaluate the missile and weapons system throughout the whole deployment of the weapon,” said Maj. Seth Carmody, a maintenance officer assigned to the 180FW. “That includes breaking out the missiles, loading them onto the aircraft and deploying the missiles to shoot down drones.”

The opportunity to load and fire live missiles is something Airmen don’t get to experience during routine training. Participating in Combat Archer is one of the few times most Airmen will get to work with live missiles outside of combat related deployments.

“Few people have actually had the opportunity to shoot a live missile,” said Maj. Randall Kreps, an F-16 Fighting Falcon pilot assigned to the 180FW and the project officer for the exercise. “It’s a great opportunity for

us to come out here and employ a live missile, and something we’d want to see before we go to combat.”

“This training helps pilots who’ve never been in combat so they know what to expect, like how long the missile takes to come off the aircraft,” said Capt. William Ross, an F-16 pilot assigned to the 180th Fighter Wing who fired his first live missile during Combat Archer. “It helps us know the parameters for what type of shot we’ll take and what missile

we’ll use in different situations.”

The 180FW fired more than 20 missiles during the exercise, but gaining firsthand experience firing live missiles is not the only benefit of the training at Combat Archer. The pilots also gain experience training with dissimilar aircraft and different branches of the military, enhancing the pilots’ abilities to integrate with other airframes and services, in joint operations, and providing increased capability to combatant commanders. The

pilots trained alongside F-15 Eagles, F-22 Raptors and Navy F-18 Super Hornets.

“Fighting against F-16s all the time, we get to know everybody’s tricks,” Kreps said. “When we go overseas we’re going to see a wide variety of enemy aircraft and different techniques when we deploy. Being able to fight somebody other than an F-16 and seeing something we’re not used to and figuring out how to cope with that puts us in a better position to protect our country.”

“Training with dissimilar aircraft helps us know what to expect when we fly against something other than an F-16,” Ross said. “We’re pretty good at a lot of things, but there are other planes that do things differently than we do, and training against different jets gives us the experience to know what to expect.”

Combat Archer also evaluated the effectiveness of the 180FW maintenance teams, ensuring Airmen are qualified to and ready to deploy at any time.

“It gives the teams a chance to be evaluated on all the training we’ve done throughout the year,” Carmody said. “It gives everyone an idea of how well they’re doing, what they’re doing and why that’s important. It also gives

WSEP data that allows them to evaluate where we’re at and how well we’re doing.”

Kreps said the biggest challenge the 180FW faced during the exercise was learning how to work with other units to share the airspace. It took a significant amount of work to coordinate between services to ensure they could all operate effectively and maximize the benefit of the training.

Carmody said the maintenance teams worked long days and often had shifts that were undermanned due to shifting flight times for the exercise, but good teamwork and communication helped the Airmen perform well and overcome the challenges they faced.

“It really gives the opportunity for the Airmen to step up and show what they’re made of,” Carmody said. “It gives them an opportunity to lead, show their technical abilities and show they understand their training.”

“These guys have been doing long shifts, and I haven’t heard one complaint from anybody,” said Chief Master Sgt. Jason Caswell, munitions flight chief assigned to the 180FW. “It’s the 180th way. We just get it done.”

While evaluating the performance of the

whole weapons system is the purpose of this type of training, there are other benefits that aren’t as easy to measure, things like building comradery.

“Exercises like this build teamwork and comradery by getting everyone together in the same place for an extended time,” Ross said. “We get a chance to bond a lot more than we would at home, because we’re at work for ten or twelve hours a day and then we’ll go back to the hotel and go to the beach or the pool. It helps us get to know everyone that’s in the unit a little better.”

After all this missiles were fired, and the after action reports submitted, the Airmen of the 180FW packed up to head back to Ohio. Having completed the evaluation, they can rest easy knowing they are trained and qualified to meet any mission required of them.

“The 180th has performed very well out here, and we can definitely count on them to go out and make the mission happen,” said Tech. Sgt. Ricardo Ochoa, an aircraft maintenance evaluator assigned to the 83rd Fighter Weapons Squadron, the unit responsible for conducting the training at Combat Archer. 🇺🇸

180FW Recognizes Outstanding First Sergeant



Story by Staff Sgt. John Wilkes

The position of first sergeant is unique. In the Air Force, the first sergeant is a special duty, reporting directly to the squadron commander on matters of morale, welfare and conduct. They are also the principal advisor to the commander about their Airmen.

Master Sgt. Kristy Copic, the 180th Fighter Wing Medical Group’s first sergeant, knows how important her job is and the impact she can have on Airmen, especially during deployments.

“I knew the job was going to be difficult, but I wanted the opportunity to serve and help people,” said Copic, the 180FW First Sergeant of the Year for 2017.

According to Copic, that is what the first sergeants, also known as “first shirts,” are here for - to make sure their Airmen are taken care of, so they are able to take care

of the mission.

“Airmen have come up to me at home and during deployments and pulled me aside to talk about problems they are having, whether personal or simple administrative issues,” Copic said. “As their first shirt, I have to make sure I stop and take care of whatever problem comes up.”

For example, emergency leave is a key function first sergeants manage in order to help their Airmen. If an Airman’s immediate

“She is always available and ready. She is professional, committed and models what a great leader should be.”

family member has an emergency situation while they are away, the Airman is able to reach out to the first shirt to help coordinate that Airman’s return home.

Copic has gone on many deployments throughout her career from Iraq to Hawaii.

In the past year, she has deployed, in various roles, to North Carolina, Hawaii, Texas and California.

In North Carolina, Copic served as the first sergeant during the Smoky Mountain Medical Innovative Readiness Training, which provided medical, dental, ophthalmologic and veterinary services to more than 5,800 people in underserved areas.

During the deployment, Copic coordinated morale, welfare and readiness events for hundreds of service members in various branches of service.

In Hawaii, Copic served as first shirt during a deployment to Tripler Army Medical Center. Under her guidance, 180FW Airmen were able to complete more than 1,650 training hours.

“Sgt. Copic does a great job taking care of Airmen,” said Chief Master Sgt. Constance McGuire, medical group superintendent at the 180FW. “She is always available and ready. She is professional, committed and models what a great leader should be.”

Copic considers herself lucky to be the first sergeant of the medical group.

“They make it easy,” she said. “It helps when you work with a truly great group of Airmen.”

In addition to serving as first shirt while on military duty, Copic is employed fulltime with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, in the national exercise division and works to develop exercises at the state, local, tribal and territorial level.

She has been on multiple deployments in her role with FEMA, deploying to California to support wildfire relief efforts and to Texas, in support of Hurricane Harvey relief efforts.

Copic has been able to apply the knowledge and experience gained in her role with FEMA to her role as a first sergeant at the 180th Fighter Wing.

“I feel that being in a service-oriented career field, whether it is military duty or working with FEMA, it’s very rewarding and motivating because you can see how much of an impact you can have,” Copic said.

Copic embodies what it means to be a Citizen-Airmen, serving her fellow Airmen and community. 180FW members are active in their communities both personally and professionally, supporting hundreds of events each year and volunteering for organizations that add value to Toledo and its surrounding areas. 🇺🇸



Airman 1st Class Ashley Mitchell, Airman 1st Class Sam Echstenkamper, and Staff Sgt. Sam Kimple load live missiles onto an F-16 Sept. 20, 2018 during Combat Archer at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida.

PERSPECTIVE

Although not a mandatory training, Four Lenses has been implemented to help retain Airmen in the Air Force.

"Many people don't quit a job, they quit a work area or environment, because they don't feel like they belong or are liked," Howard said. "For the most part people leave because they just are not happy with the people they work with, its relationships. The Air Force loses hundreds of thousands of dollars every year because people get out and we have to retrain new people for their job."

The National Guard sponsors this training because it helps keep people. Airmen work with people of very diverse backgrounds and this training helps them understand, not only themselves better, but it helps them communicate with others, motivate other people, lead others and how to understand their needs.

"Ultimately, we need to respect and trust each other in a unit and being able acknowledge everyone's personality helps us operate better as a more cohesive team and improves our readiness," said Vossler.

The training provides several learning styles, or ways people process and organize information as they interact with their environment, explained Howard. Airmen with different temperaments learn in different ways.

This can be applied to working in different shops and how individuals interact with each other. For example, in a shop when a supervisor is conducting training for their Airmen, the Airmen whose styles match the supervisors would have no difficulty in communicating about the content. Although, when the supervisor's style is different from the Airmen's, miscommunication can happen.

By completing Four Lenses, the shop would better understand how everyone else

thinks and the supervisor can adapt their training style to meet the variety of learning approaches. It may not be possible to match every learning technique for every different training purposes, but it is possible to address a variety of styles so each Airmen can understand it completely.

Everyone is unique, so this process is not limiting. People can be dominant in one color but also possess traits of another color. The limitless variety of human nature makes it impossible to define a person by any specific type. This workshop helps individuals identify strengths and the primary basis from which they see life and expands their perspective.

The goal for the 180FW is for each unit to participate in the Four Lenses training so each shop can learn to work as a better team. Effective teamwork is essential in meeting the demands of the U.S. Air Forces dynamic and complex environment. Four Lenses allows Airmen to increase individual and group awareness to help foster more constructive, trust-based relationships.

"The four lenses training program is a critical aspect of effective team building. It allows each team member to better understand themselves as well as their counterparts," said Col William Giezie, 180FW vice wing commander. "By learning and understanding the strengths and capabilities of all members, the team can use these attributes and temperaments to increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the group as a whole."

The success of the U.S. Air Force relies on the strengths of each of the personalities in order to be more successful. By taking only a few hours out of your day, you can better understand yourself and the people you work around, creating a more cohesive team and greater work environment. 🦅



INFECTION

Preston explained. "Anything that is a bodily fluid is what we see the most in medical and that's what we have to be prepared for."

The medical group sees the most infectious spills in the lab where they draw blood.

"If someone breaks something, something spills, or when drawing blood an accident happens where somebody's blood comes out of their arm, and it gets on the chair or the floor we have to be ready to clean it up," said Preston. "It's not safe to have blood laying around the lab."

Preston certifies that every room contains the proper cleaning supplies so medical personnel can immediately react to any type of spill.

"In a worst case scenario, if someone

were to have an infection, we don't want that spreading to us or our Airmen," Preston said. "We need to be able to clean that up immediately. We're a medical facility so we have to be ready for anything. That's why we have the kits and the rooms ready."

At the end each regularly scheduled training weekend she ensures the rooms are properly cleaned.

"We wipe down the tables, blood pressure cuffs and anything that comes in contact with the patients," Preston explained.

Her responsibilities enhance readiness at the 180FW because the medical group is always ready.

"In a deployed environment you're going to have a higher chance of coming across someone who has an infection or is going

to bring an infection into the medical facility," said Preston. "Some of the treatment facilities aren't going to be as nice as what we have at the 180FW, so this really is preparing us to be able to go into the real world and be able to clean up and take care of those infections before they become a bigger problem."

"We need to be ready and aware of what the hazards could be so that way we can prevent them and if someone was exposed we know what steps to take to minimize the exposure," said Smiddy.

Preston's role as the infection control NCOIC establishes that the 180FW medical group maintains the highest levels of proficiency and readiness, and maintains the safest possible environment for Airmen. 🦅

CONGRATULATIONS to the following Airmen on their recent promotions & retirements

To Airman:

- Badenhop, Katie L., Force Support Squadron
- Sauerwein, Ariana M., Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Shephard, Cari R., Logistics Readiness Squadron

To Airman First Class:

- York, Gregg A., Fighter Wing

To Senior Airman:

- Bacon, Autumn M., Operation Support Squadron
- Buckmaster, Jeremiah L., Maintenance Squadron
- Burdue, Abigail H., Maintenance Squadron
- Byers, Clay E., Maintenance Squadron
- Driftmeyer, Raven, Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Echstenkamper, Samuel D., Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Giddnes, Melodie S., Force Support Squadron
- Greenwalt, James C., Maintenance Squadron
- Grenwalt, Tyler D., Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Haviland, Daniel R., Maintenance Squadron
- Iannucci, Alex A., Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- LeStrange, Noah T., Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Maddox, Nathaniel S., Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- McCluer, Ian A., Maintenance Squadron
- Pedroza, Taylor N., Fighter Squadron
- Rayot, Tristen A., Maintenance Squadron
- Reisinger, Jesse D., Maintenance Squadron
- Richardson, Ismail A., Maintenance Squadron
- Robarge, Brittany N., Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Smith, Nolan S., Maintenance Squadron
- Stead, Andrew J., Maintenance Squadron
- Struffolino, Ryan S., Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Tusko, Olivia S., Maintenance Squadron
- Wakefield, Joshua A., Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Whitehead, Annaleada A., Fighter Wing
- Wood, Sarah N., Maintenance Squadron
- Young, Amber K., Security Forces Squadron

To Staff Sergeant:

- Ballesteros, Valentin F., Maintenance Squadron
- Bennett, Megan N., Maintenance Squadron
- Bess, Patrick L., Maintenance Squadron
- Carr, Jenna A., Logistics Readiness Squadron

To Staff Sergeant (Cont'd):

- Degier, Clayton J., Communication Flight
- Douglas, Alyssa N., Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Duly, Nolan M., Communication Flight
- Durham, Ashley N., Maintenance Squadron
- Evanoff, Aaron T., Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Gantt, Robert J., Civil Engineering Squadron
- Gardener, Noah C., Civil Engineering Squadron
- Kervick, Christopher, Communication Flight
- Mason, Charles J., Communication Flight
- Mattoni, Jacob A., Maintenance Squadron
- Szymanski, Evan R., Security Forces Squadron
- Thigpen, Valerie L., Force Support Squadron
- Velker, Kaleb J., Medical Group
- Verbosky, Claire M., Civil Engineering Squadron

To Technical Sergeant:

- Kahrs, Bradley W., Maintenance Squadron
- Lippi, Nicholas J., Maintenance Squadron
- Parton, Alexander J., Operation Support Squadron
- Reeder, Jerrie L., Maintenance Squadron
- Showalter, Dakota S., Maintenance Squadron
- Vorst, Tyler D., Medical Group
- Waldron, Tyler S., Maintenance Squadron

To Master Sergeant:

- Angeloviz, Adrian D., Civil Engineering Squadron
- Askins, Justin W., Civil Engineering Squadron
- Barrett, Kevin D., Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Cowdry, Paul V., Fighter Wing
- Lloyd, Thomas J., Civil Engineering Squadron

To Chief Master Sergeant:

- Hollingsworth, Charles, Communication Flight
- Howard, Nathan R., Maintenance Goup

Retired:

- Bugg, Benjamin
- Ohm, Rebecca
- Potridge, Shelly
- Sykes, Tiffany
- Wolfe, George

COMMENTS

wings that still had a flying mission. On top of this our wing gained a fulltime Anti-Terrorism Officer which was combined with the Security Forces Commander position. What once was a fulltime security forces team of 23 AGRs and state employees is now a fulltime force of 47 AGRs and technicians.

The Air Force and the Air National Guard launched a combined program as part of the Total Force Initiative which assigns newly trained aircraft pilots to ANG wings to complete their initial two years of seasoning and training. After this two year seasoning period these pilots transition back into active duty Air Force units. This program requires the ANG flying wings to provide these new active duty pilots a certain number of sorties and flying hours each month on top of those we have to provide our own pilots, with no increase in the number of assigned aircraft to complete this additional workload. The 180FW is one of the few ANG units to assigned to this program. Due to the age of our current aircraft fleet and the additional training missions needed to meet the increased training requirements, this created the need to increase our Maintenance and Mission Support Group's full time manning to accommodate a night shift. This resulted in the 180FW converting almost 60 of our traditional military positions into AGR authorizations, all of which took place in fiscal year 2018. This also increased our logistics and maintenance work schedules from 10 hours per day to 20 hours per day.

Congress is continuously evaluating the federal government's civilian employee program and due to the Na-

tional Guard's close ties to our community our technician program gets looked at regularly. In an attempt to meet mission needs while providing for the individual employee, congress mandated in the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, that 12.6 percent of all dual-status military technicians in all reserve components be converted into standard federal civilian employees with no associated military membership requirement. Their intent was to provide the employees additional rights and benefits with no degradation to the mission. This law impacted the 180FW this past year by converting 32 of our technicians to federal civilian employees with no military membership requirement. In addition, our Director of Psychological Health transitioned from NGB's manning document to the wing's manning document. The end result of these actions increased the number of federal civilian employees at the 180th from two to 36.

After several years of evaluation, the ANG has made the decision to transition a number of technician authorizations to AGRs. Typically the ANG's fulltime manning model consisted of a force mix of about 70 percent technicians to 30 percent AGRs. The ANG globally has a goal of changing this model to a fulltime force mix of potentially 40 percent technician to 60 percent AGRs. This conversion process will take several years to complete and will be starting in mid-year FY 2019. It appears to be impacting the 180FW by converting approximately 30 of our current technician authorizations to AGR authorizations in the current FY.

The combined impact of all of these actions had a major effect on the dynamics of the 180FW. What was once

an organization of 1,100 members that was composed of about 30 percent fulltime manning, is now a unit of just over 1,000 military authorizations which is composed of just under 50 percent fulltime manning. All of these actions combined has made the 180FW one of the most highly fulltime manned units with the greatest percentage of AGRs in the ANG. This has been positive in that it has increased the military readiness of the wing, but it also changed the face of the unit in a very short time.

For the AGR program, congress controls the number of AGR members who can hold the senior ranks of E-8 and E-9 in the enlisted force and O-4 and above in the officer corps. This concept is referred to as Control Graders, which is governed by law and adjusted percentage-wise each year by Congress.

I realize I have spent a lot of time identifying many details which appear to have an impact on our fulltime force without mentioning our traditional workforce. The strength of our National Guard comes from our traditional guardsmen combined with experience gained by our fulltime workforce. One cannot discuss one aspect of the force without impacting the entire program. So what does any of this have to do with selections and promotions? Well, for one it complicates the entire program and process and requires a different level of leadership to execute effectively.

Although we always strive to treat everyone equally and always select the best Airmen for the job, all of the time, sometimes additional considerations must be made to do what is best for the unit, the mission or the Air Force. The status of our membership, whether that be traditional

guardsmen, technician, AGR or federal civilian employee has a major impact on how we manage the force. The reasoning behind this is the overall goal of each status of membership differs. In addition, anything that becomes detrimental to one group of membership stands to impact that entire group. Typically, traditional guardsmen are looking for a 20-to-25 year military career to earn a reserve retirement. Our AGRs are looking to complete 20 or more years of active military service, in addition to any reserve time they may have, to earn a regular military retirement. Technicians are working to earn a federal employee retirement in addition to a reserve military retirement, which requires the member to serve at least 20 years as a technician combined with being over 50 years in age or reaching their minimum retirement age of 57 with at least 20 years of technician service.

These status and the generic goals I have identified impacts when a member should be considered for promotion. If we promote an AGR or technician too soon in their career we can possibly block an entire generation of membership from many opportunities of upward mobility. At the same time if leadership consistently denies technicians and AGRs opportunities, this presents a similar problem. All of this can have a major negative impact on membership retention and unit readiness.

To help resolve some of these concerns and problems, the wing is implementing a new promotion process for our E-8s and E-9s and our officers. In this process the selection for positions will be done in the same manner as it has in the past. However, for promotions to these grades, the wing will be establishing a new practice of conducting centralized wing-level boards to evaluate the management of these ranks and controlled grades to make certain that all members are promoted at the proper time in their individual careers to make certain their potential is maximized while at the same time the strength of the entire force and unit readiness is maintained and enhanced. This process may require individuals to delay promotion for a period of time to make best use of resources while at the same time provide upward mobility opportunities. It may also require that members be limited in the amount of time they can serve at a particular rank so that the program does not stagnate and that unit readiness, opportunities and retention rates are maximized.

We've seen the impact these changes have made to the unit, most of which have been positive. At the same time we have been unable to promote and retain quality Airmen due to some of the practices we have used over the years which have been more of a detriment than an advantage. I have heard many groups across the wing voice their concerns about these issues and the problems it has created. Fortunately the wing has been successful in working with state leadership to develop models to more effectively manage the entire process not only at the 180FW but also across the Ohio National Guard. Over the next several months you may see or hear of a different process being used for promotion and selection to the wing's more senior grades. Hopefully the information I have provided presents a fair description of the issue and the need for changes to some of our past practices. 🇺🇸



ALWAYS ON MISSION



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