

ARCTIC WARRIOR

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON'S SOURCE FOR NEWS

SOUP FOR THE SOUL

Community volunteer makes a difference

Page 11

LIGHT UP THE NIGHT

4/25 brings the flare

Page 5

NOMINATE A MILITARY CHILD

Honor the children in our community

Page 2

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Military Child of the Year Award nominations

By **MIKE LAHRMAN**
Operation Homefront

The deadline to nominate a military child for Operation Homefront's 2019 Military Child of the Year Awards is Dec. 5. Military Child of the Year is the nation's premier celebration of the achievements of military children. The MCOY awards will be presented at a recognition gala on April 18 in Washington, DC.

The annual awards event recognizes seven outstanding young people, ages 13 to 18, who are legal dependents of a service member or military retiree. Six Military Child of the Year recipients will represent a branch of the armed forces – the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and National Guard – demonstrating resiliency, leadership, and achievement during their parents' military service.

The seventh award is the Military Child of the Year Award for Innovation presented by global technology

and consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton. This award goes to a military child who has designed a bold and creative solution to address a local, regional, or global challenge. Children may be nominated for one of the service branch awards as well as the Award for Innovation.

"For the past decade, Operation Homefront's Military Child of the Year Awards has recognized the extraordinary young people in military families who serve alongside their parents and excel while facing the pressures and uncertainties associated with military life," said John Pray Jr., a retired brigadier general and now president and CEO of Operation Homefront. "We are very proud to



Riley Gustafson, 5, grandson of Air Force retired Master Sgt. James Barnett, salutes a passing Airman, Jul. 31, 2016. The Military Child of the Year Awards is a way to honor the important role military children play in the armed forces community. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Kyle Johnson)

celebrate these amazing military children who demonstrate resiliency, perform with excellence in the classroom, and volunteer their time to support others and their communities. I encourage those in the military community and beyond to nominate a military child for this national level recognition of exceptional service."

To nominate a child for the award, visit www.militarychildoftheyear.org and click the nominations tab. Nomination fields include when and how long a parent has deployed, number of family moves, Gold Star Family or Exceptional Family Member Program status, whether a parent is a wounded service member, nominee's volunteerism, and five short answers as to why the nominee is deserving.


All seven award recipients will be flown with a parent or guardian to Washington, D.C., and recognized at the April 18 gala, where they will receive \$10,000 each and a laptop computer. The recipient of the Military Child of the Year Award for

Innovation will also receive donated business expertise in bringing their creative solution to market.

Previous recipients remember their Military Child of the Year Award as both an honor and an amazing experience.

"Working hard to be extremely involved can be difficult, because oftentimes I would question whether or not it was all worth it," said 2018 National Guard Military Child of the Year Aaron Hall of Coarsegold, Calif. "When I found out I won, I was in awe. It gave me a realization that hard work does really pay off. It was an opportunity and moment I will never forget."

The 2018 Coast Guard Military Child of the Year was Roark Corson of Virginia Beach, Va. "I was both honored and humbled to receive such a prestigious award, and extremely proud to represent the resilient and resourceful military dependents across the world," he said.

For more information about the nomination process, visit www.militarychildoftheyear.org. 



Emilee King, 3, kisses her father, Army Staff Sgt. Demarcus King, assigned to the 98th Maintenance Company, 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, U.S. Army Alaska, after a redeployment ceremony to reunite Soldiers with their families at the Buckner Physical Fitness Center, November 2015, on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Through the Military Child of the Year Awards, children are honored for their service through the difficulties of military life which entails frequent moves, parents' deployments, and stepping up to take responsibility. (U.S. Air Force photo/Justin Connaher)

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Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/
673d Air Base Wing Vice Commander
Col. Adam W. Lange (USA)

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673d Air Base Wing Command Chief
Chief Master Sgt.
Charles C. Orf

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson/
673d Air Base Wing Sergeant Major
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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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More OCOLA? Take a 30-minute survey

By **SENIOR AIRMAN
CURT BEACH**
JBER Public Affairs

From a single cart of groceries that can cost more than \$500, to higher gas prices, living in the Last Frontier can quickly burn a hole in your wallet.

Uniformed service members and their families in Alaska have the opportunity to influence their Overseas Cost of Living Allowance and keep more of their hard-earned dollars.

A web-based Living Pattern Survey, conducted every three years, will become available for one month to service members and their families across Alaska beginning Dec. 1.

“Each service member should complete the survey to give us accurate data that reflects economic reality,” said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Ben Manalastas, Alaska COLA country coordinator. “The survey will be open for 30 days and everyone’s involvement is critical to ensuring service members across Alaska receive the appropriate allowance. We also encourage service members to gather input from their spouses,

especially if they do most of the household shopping.”

OCOLA is a supplement designed to match the purchasing power of service members stationed at stateside locations.

In other words, the supplement helps offset costs of goods and services which are typically higher in overseas locations compared to the Lower 48.

The purpose of the survey is to identify where service members and their families shop for necessities like groceries and clothing, along with where they spend their money dining out or on personal products and services, car repairs, entertainment, and so on.

The data collected from the LPS will establish the building blocks for the Retail Price Survey. The Retail Price Survey is conducted annually by select individuals who collect prices from the most frequent establishments (derived from the LPS) on and off the installation.

Once all price collections are completed, the data is sent to the Defense Travel Management Office.

This data is then analyzed and

used to compare prices from overseas to those in the Lower 48 to compute the Cost of Living Index, which is used to develop the country’s COLA rate.

For more information on this process, visit the DTMO website at www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/cola.cfm.


To prepare for the Living Pattern Survey, Manalastas recommends service members make a list of where they purchase groceries, clothing, household furnishings, entertainment, communications and transportation prior to the survey opening.

The web-based questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to



Uniformed service members in Alaska will soon have the opportunity to influence their Overseas Cost of Living Allowance and keep more of their hard-earned dollars. A web-based Living Pattern Survey, conducted every three years, will become available for one month to service members across Alaska beginning Dec. 1. (Courtesy photo)

complete and can be done from any computer at www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/colaSurvey.cfm?ID=alaska.

For more information, contact Manalastas at 552-2010 or Chief Master Sgt. Michelle Rootes at 580-3138. 

Changes to government purchase card

By **AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. JAMES RICHARDSON**
JBER Public Affairs

Under the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, government purchase card holders now have the ability to procure up to \$10,000 for mission-essential needs.

Class Deviation 2018-000018 increases the micro-purchase threshold for Department of Defense procurements from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This deviation falls in line with the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act that gave civilian agencies an increase in their micro-purchase threshold from \$3,000 to \$10,000.

“Under the new micro-purchase threshold, units will not have to submit a single purchase limit increase

for acquisitions unless it exceeds the \$10,000 threshold,” said Air Force Staff Sgt. Tom Hammonds, with the 673d Contracting Squadron. “This update should allow for a more streamlined process for units to make mission-essential purchases.”

In addition to the threshold increase, GPC cards will take on a new look.

“USBank is making a change from Visa cards to Mastercards due to the transaction fee that is processed every time someone swipes the card,” Hammonds said. “The bank will be re-issuing and sending all GPC cards to the contracting officer, we will then distribute them to all cardholders.”

The 673d Contracting Squadron will host several briefings in the upcoming weeks to issue the




(Courtesy photo)

new cards.

“We will send out a mass e-mail to all approving officials notifying them of the location and specific times for the new GPC pick-up,” Hammonds said. “Until then, there is nothing specific card holders need to accomplish and they can continue to use their old cards.”

For information regarding the GPC program, please refer to Air Force Instruc-

tion 64-117. This AFI provides guidance for the entire GPC program and states the responsibilities of the approving officials, cardholders, and the Approving Official Program Coordinator.

For more information on how to purchase items, please reference AFI 65-601. This AFI lays the framework for what cardholders are able to purchase. 

GPC RULES

Unauthorized Purchase

The purchase of items that are not for official government use, not mission essential, or are not in accordance with established governing rules, regulations, policies and or procedures.

Examples of Prohibited Items:

This list is not all-inclusive

- Purchases made by someone other than the cardholder
- Cash advances
- Personal comfort items (Bottled water, coffee pots)
- Rental or lease of land or buildings
- Travel costs associated with temporary duty/TDY travel

MORTARS, MORTARS, MORTARS



ABOVE LEFT: Army Cpl. Christian Rabun, assigned to Apache Company, 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, U.S. Army Alaska, monitors the shot intervals while operating a 120mm mortar system during live-fire training at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Nov. 19. The Spartans conducted the training at night to hone their skills in operating a crew-served weapon in low light conditions. (U.S. Air Force photos/Alejandro Peña)

LEFT AND ABOVE RIGHT: Army paratroopers assigned to Apache Company, 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, U.S. Army Alaska, conduct 81mm and 120mm mortar live-fire training.

ON THE COVER: Pvt. Dustin Childers, with Apache Company, 1st Battalion, 501st parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), cradles a 120mm mortar during training.

Friday

School's Out Bowling

Just because Thanksgiving is over, doesn't mean you can't bowl those turkeys at the Polar Bowl from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 753-7467.

Saturday

Cornhole Tournament

Join the Warrior Zone for this fun tournament starting at 2 p.m. Tournament must have at least 8 players to play for prizes. Prizes will be awarded to first, second, and third place. Must be 18 years or older to participate. For more information, call 384-9006.

Tuesday

Intro to Lead Climbing

Take your climbing to the next level. Learn the proper technique of clipping quick draws, belaying a leader, managing rope, and building anchors at the Outdoor Adventure Program from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Must register prior to class date; belay certification is required. Open to ages 16 and up.

For more information, call 552-2023.

Wednesday

Family Fitness Night

Burn off that Thanksgiving meal at Kennecott Youth Center with a Family Fitness Night from 5 to 7 p.m. Activities will include rock climbing, musical chairs, air hockey, pool, bumper pool, and Just Dance. Open to all youth members and families. For more information, call 552-2266.

Thursday

Bubble Ball Soccer

Join the Elmendorf Fitness Center for a competitive

game starting at 5:30 p.m. Sign up as an individual or as a team of five. Must sign up by November 28 at the front desk. For more information, call 552-5353.

Spouse Orientation

Find out how to make military life easier on you and your family, meet people who can help you, and make new friends. Orientation will be at Bldg. 4986 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

To register call 552-4943 or 384-1517.

Country Night

Join for a night of boot scootin' at the Frontier Theater from 7 p.m. for a free concert, starring country singer Granger Smith and special guest appearance from CMT Hot 20 Host, Cody Allen. Doors open at 6 p.m. For more information, call 552-3998.

Ongoing

Zoo Lights

Head to the Alaska Zoo to visit the lighted parade of animals that take over the zoo each winter from Nov. 23 to Dec. 23. Walk under the canopies of light and check out the animals weekly on Sundays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 5 to 8 p.m. For more information, visit alaskazoo.org.

Elmendorf pool closure

The Elmendorf Fitness Center Pool will be closed for annual maintenance throughout November. Buckner Fitness Pool and the Polar Paradise Pool will be under normal operations. For more information, call 552-5353.

Polar Nights First Friday

The Anchorage Museum's

Friday After Hours program has live music, art activities, food and more on Friday nights. The museum stays open Fridays with free admission from 6 to 9 p.m. on the first Friday of the month.

For more information, visit anchoragemuseum.org.

Civil Air Patrol

Adult members of the Civil Air Patrol meet at the Aero Club Hangar the first and third Tuesdays of each month; cadets meet Saturdays. For more information, call 350-7951.

Thursday science club

Youth are invited to the JBER Library to conduct experiments and think about science from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

For more information, call 384-1640.

Library story times

The JBER Library hosts preschool story times Tuesdays and Thursdays

from 10 to 11 a.m.; Toddler Tales is Wednesdays from 10 to 10:30 a.m. All-ages story time is Tuesdays from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

For more information, call 384-1640.

Model railroading

The Military Society of Model Railroad Engineers meets at 7 p.m. Tuesday and 1 p.m. Saturday in the basement of Matanuska Hall. They also host an open house every third Saturday through April; everyone is invited.

For more information, call 552-4353 or visit [facebook.com/msmrrre](https://www.facebook.com/msmrrre).

Evening Hike

These hikes hit a different route each time. Mondays are easier and are great for families; Thursdays are moderately difficult. Hikes begin at 6:35 p.m. sharp. For location and more information, call 440-9934.

Chapel services

Catholic Mass

Sunday
9 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
Monday and Wednesday
11:40 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
Tuesday
Noon – JBER Hospital Chapel
Friday
Noon – JBER Hospital Chapel

Confession

Confessions are available anytime by appointment or after any mass. Call 552-5762.

Protestant Sunday worship services

Gospel
9:30 a.m. – Midnight Sun Chapel
Contemporary
11 a.m. – Arctic Warrior Chapel
Traditional
11 a.m. – Heritage Chapel

Religious Education

For schedules, call the Religious Operations Center at 552-5762.

Veterans of CrossFit



U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Charles Landry, a Coast Guard Sector Anchorage gunners mate, releases a weight bar after completing a deadlift set during a Veterans Day CrossFit event hosted at the 907 CrossFit facility on Camp Carroll at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Nov. 10. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jonathan Valdes Montijo)

One more reason to give thanks

By **AIR FORCE CHAPLAIN
(CAPT.) BRENT MULDER**
673 Air Base Wing Chaplain

This is the time of year everyone gets together with family and friends. People cook and bake enough to feed families several times larger than their own. Amidst all the food preparation and eating someone will undoubtedly ask, “So, what are you thankful for this year?” You can hear it already if the question has not yet been posed. The response is typically along the lines of, “I’m thankful for family, jobs, food, housing, health, harmony with others, etc.”

I am not mocking this practice because I will be doing the same. These are also not bad things because all of them will be on my “Thanksgiving list” this year. However, I am also going to add one more – religious freedom.

My gratitude for religious freedom goes beyond job security, even though this is the primary reason the military pays me to be here. I have a historical stake in this issue which hits close to home for me.

Three generations ago my ancestors came to the new world, in part, seeking religious freedom. This was not something they had in Holland, and they decided that picking up and moving to an unknown land was worth the risk to achieve this goal. New Amsterdam (now New York City) was settled by the Dutch as a benchmark in religious freedom.

The second church I interned at in New Jersey was on the front lines of the Revolutionary War. It was both a haven and megaphone for a new way of life separate from Britain. One of their first pastors spent a great deal of time in hiding because he was outspoken on these ideals. He would rather risk his life for this cause than remain silent. I look up to his courage and conviction.

There’s a reason freedom of religion is the first of the 27 amendments to the constitution. It is of primary importance to democracy.

There are still parts of our world which do not have religious freedoms, and people continue to die because of their religious beliefs, but these are parts very distant from us.


Today, in the United States, the First Amendment is commonly taken for granted except for the few who have lived or traveled to a country where people do not have this freedom. As my parents used to tell me, “You don’t know how lucky you are.” Unless

we have been denied this right or this right has cost us something, we do not know how lucky we are.

The freedom of religion is good for everyone. It is good for the person who regularly practices his or her religious beliefs. A lot of people rely on their religious beliefs and community to help them during difficult times. But this freedom is also good for people who say they are not religious, atheists, or non-theists.

The First Amendment gives every one of these persons the freedom to make this statement and to live their

lives accordingly. Our government is not allowed to tell anyone what to believe or how to practice their religion thanks to the First Amendment.

So, this Thanksgiving, as you gather around the table with others and share your Thanksgiving list, remember those who do not have the rights we do, be thankful for those who came before us and risked it all to ensure future generations were more fortunate than they were, and cherish the life we have because of the sacrifices of others. 



(Courtesy photo)

Disposition of effects

Air Force 2d Lt. Joseph Machione, 673d Contracting Squadron, is authorized to make disposition of personal effects of Tech. Sgt Bryan C. McMullen, 673d Security Forces Squadron, as stated in Air Force Instruction 34-511. Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of the deceased should contact Marchione at 552-8683.

Firewood permits

There is a cost of \$35 per cord of firewood, and \$17.50 for a half-cord. To receive a permit, an iSportsman permit is required. For information, visit <https://jber.isportsman.net/Firewood.aspx>.

Law School applications

The Office of The Judge Advocate General is accepting applications for the Army's Funded Legal Education Program. The Army projects sending up to 25 active-duty officers to law school at government expense beginning the fall of

2018; officers will remain on active duty while attending.

Interested lieutenants and captains should contact the Staff Judge Advocate at 384-2434 for information.

Main Pharmacy hours

The main JBER pharmacy, on the first floor of the JBER hospital near the Bear entrance, is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The pharmacy at the Exchange is open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays for civilian prescriptions and refills, and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for refills only.

iSportsman enrollment

Anyone choosing to recreate in JBER training areas must obtain an iSportsman permit and sign in and out using the iSportsman system prior to recreating. A pass costs \$10; \$5 for those 60 and older and disabled persons. Passholders may also need an installation access pass. For information, visit [isportsman.jber.net](https://jber.isportsman.net) or call 552-8609 or 384-6224.

Reserve 'Scroll'

Officers wanting to transition to the Air Force Reserve must have their commission transferred to a list called "the Scroll" and approved by the Secretary of Defense.

The process averages 120 days, but can take longer, and must be approved before participating in the Reserve, which may mean a break in service. Even if you're unsure about transitioning to the Air Force Reserve, the process can be initiated. For information, call 552-3595.

Pothole repair

The 773d Civil Engineer Squadron encourages all Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson personnel to report potholes. For holes in housing areas, contact Aurora Housing at 753-1051. Other requests will be tracked by 773d CES. Note the location, including cross-streets or building numbers. Then email 773ces.ceoh.potholerepair@us.af.mil or call 552-2994 or 552-2995. Include contact information in case crews

need to follow up.

U-Fix-It Store

The U-Fix-It stores, open to all Aurora Military Housing tenants, issue home maintenance items. Availability is subject to change and limits; some items may have a cost.

U-Fix-It allows occupants to make minor improvements and repairs.

The JBER-E location, at 6350 Arctic Warrior Drive, is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, closed from 1 to 1:30 p.m. for lunch, and Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

The JBER-R office is at 338 Hoonah Ave., open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and closed from 1 to 1:30 p.m. for lunch.

A blind-cleaning machine is available at the JBER-E location; priority goes to those PCSing. For information, call 375-5540.

DLA Document Services

Defense Logistics Agency Document Services duplicates and prints documents,

including color, large-format photos, engineering drawings, sensitive materials, manuals and training materials. They design, print and distribute business cards, letterhead, invitations and programs, and provide devices to print, scan, copy and fax while providing maintenance and ink cartridges. They offer document automation and content services for building digital libraries.

To register, go to <https://www.dso.documentservices.dla.mil>. For information, visit documentservices.dla.mil or call (808) 473-1699 or (315) 473-1699.

OTC pharmacy counter

The pharmacy at the JBER hospital has over-the-counter medication for DoD beneficiaries from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m., Monday through Friday. The clinic offers pain relievers; cough, cold and allergy medications ointments; constipation and diarrhea medications, and others. For information, visit facebook.com/JBERPharmacy.

Tips for combating the wintertime blues

By **SENIOR AIRMAN
CURT BEACH**
JBER Public Affairs

With the two darkest months of the year approaching, low energy or depressed moods, also known as “wintertime blues,” becomes more likely for residents of Anchorage and the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson community.

Wintertime blues is a type of depression that’s related to changes in seasons. It typically begins and ends around the same time every year. For most people, symptoms start in the fall and continue into the winter months, sapping energy and making people feel moody.

“People living at higher latitudes are more likely to see a decrease in energy and mood during darker months,” said Air Force Maj. Laura Nichols, 673d Medical Operations Squadron director of psychological health. “Many other factors can

influence depressed moods as well, such as heredity, ways of thinking developed over the years, situational stressors and increased alcohol use. All of these things can contribute to a lower mood and make us more prone to an episode of depression.”

Symptoms can include but are not limited to irritability, fatigue, social withdrawal, oversleeping, weight gain with increased appetite, and feelings of hopelessness.

According to Clinical Professor of Psychiatry Dr. Norman Rosenthal at Georgetown University Medical School, someone may have mild winter blues while living in a warmer, southern climate and develop full-blown seasonal affective disorder by moving north.

According to Chapters Health System, seasonal depressed moods occur in an estimated 10 million Americans with about 10 to 20 percent being classified as mild.

It is more common in people between the ages of 18 and 30 and is about four times more common in women than in men. Severity

can influence quality of life up to the point of requiring hospitalization.

Lifestyle changes can help manage symptoms – getting adequate sleep, eating healthy foods, exercising often, participating in activities that make the person happy and talking with a trustworthy friend or mental health professional.

For others who battle depressed moods or low energy, light therapy, using a special light to mimic sun-



With the arrival of darker and colder months, many individuals can be susceptible to depressed moods and low energy. (U.S. Air Force photo/Justin Connaher)

light, is often a course of treatment.

Nichols said one of the most effective approaches to lowering vulnerability is to reduce the temptation of indoor isolation by acquiring clothes appropriate for the colder temperatures.


Additionally, taking an active look into your health and nutrition can contribute to an overall feeling of wellness. Working out three to five times per week, doing cardiovascular exercise and

weight training also tend to positively affect moods.

Face-to-face social connection is also very important for mood, Nichols said.

JBER has many community services and activities for people to try, enjoy, and use to connect with others. The JBER Life website at <https://jberlife.com/> details local recreation activities.

Nichols said another avenue that can help with your wellness is finding a faith community by reaching out to the JBER Religious Operations Center at 552-JROC.

Nichols recommends if someone finds themselves feeling down during the winter and unable to shake it, pursue the many different counseling services available, such as Military One Source, Military and Family Life Consultants, Behavioral Health Optimization in Primary Care, Task Force True North embedded in some Air Force units, or the Mental Health Clinic. 

Mountain star: JBER Airmen keeping it lit

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
CRYSTAL JENKINS**
JBER Public Affairs

Although the history, location and size of the brightly lit star placed on the side of Mount Gordon Lyon has changed over the last 60 years, the unwavering dedication Airmen and Soldiers have shown to it has not.

The brightly lit star, spanning more than 300 feet, is located in an area just below the old Army Air Defense Command Nike Hercules missile battery – one of three which defended the Anchorage bowl during the Cold War.

Since 2010, Airmen from the 773d Civil Engineer Squadron Electrical shop have assumed caretaking responsibility for it.

“Every year at the beginning of September, we have a team of about 10 Airmen inspect all of the wiring, make repairs, and change out more than 350 light bulbs for the September 11th memorial lighting,” said Air Force Staff Sgt. Steven Andersen, 773d CES Electrical shop exterior electric noncommissioned officer in charge. “Although changing out a light bulb sounds like a very simple job, the terrain and steep angle of the mountain can make it very difficult to navigate. Not only do we have to

make sure weather conditions are favorable, we also have to be cleared by range control to be there.”

Despite the unforeseeable weather conditions and possible challenges the Airman may face carrying out this Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson tradition, the lighting during the holiday season always happens on time.

“This year we will be following tradition by trekking up the mountain using four-wheel drive trucks or snow machines to light it the day after Thanksgiving,” Andersen said. “It will remain lit until the last musher from the Iditarod crosses the finish line, usually sometime in mid to late March.”

Although the star’s light comes by using the everyday 60 watt incandescent light bulb, the 773d CES electrical shop has been testing new light-emitting diode (LED) lights that burn brighter and are more energy efficient near the star’s tips.

“Each year we try out different brands and test the bulb’s ability to withstand the intense weather conditions the star faces throughout the entire season,” Andersen said. “Because the star stays lit for more than four months a year we don’t want to replace the entire star with LEDs until we know what works the best. The star’s symbol has become extremely

significant to both the Anchorage community and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson over the years. We take a lot of pride in making certain it stays lit for all to see.”

At the star’s humble beginnings as a 15-foot beacon of light atop the gatehouse of Site Summit, Soldiers from the B Battery, 4th Missile Battalion, 43rd Artillery, maintained the lighting during the long wintery nights in those early years.

According to *anchorage.net*, “The missile site was decommissioned in the late 1970s, but the star has been redesigned, relocated and enlarged through the years. Once just a single point of light in the mountains, the outline of the star near Arctic Valley is now clearly visible from downtown Anchorage, almost 14 miles away.”

Another way Airmen from the electrical shop stay prepared for star and other remote location electrical related emergencies is by conducting



Since 1958, the star has illuminated the skyline of Anchorage. The star sits atop Mount Gordon Lyon in the Chugach mountain range at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson and is lit every year in conjunction with Anchorage’s City of Lights celebration. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. James Richardson)

annual snow machine training during the winter season.

“Even though most of our preparation and repairs for the star happen in September, we train continuously to make sure we are ready to handle any situation no matter what kind of weather we face,” Andersen said. “We also go over the history and significance of the star with our Airmen to make sure the legacy continues.”

Without the continued efforts and commitment of the 773d CES Airmen, both the history and the light on the mountain would fade out. **AW**

Serving the community, one cup at a time

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
CAITLIN RUSSELL**
JBER Public Affairs

Volunteering plays a significant role in serving the community, and is done by the majority of service members at some point in their career.

Airman 1st Class Evan Keough, 732nd Aircraft Mobility Squadron, a tenant unit of the 515th Air Mobility Operations Wing, air transportation journeyman, takes that role seriously by volunteering his time every Wednesday at the Downtown Hope Center Soup Kitchen.

Keough said he started volunteering when he found himself having extra down time and wanted to use it to give back to those less fortunate. “Growing up my mother raised me and my sisters to never take anything for granted, and to give to others whenever possible. Volunteering at the center is my way of putting that into action,” Keough said.

Keough assists the soup kitchen with food preparation such as cooking, making and assembling sandwiches, plating desserts, serving food or cleaning up after service. He also has a prior culinary background that pays dividends at the center.

“In the past, I worked as a sous chef caterer and would do things like this daily,” said Keough. “Having the opportunity to volunteer here and put those skills into action is great.”

While Keough enjoys the culinary aspect of volunteering at the soup kitchen, he attributes his favorite aspect to the other volunteers there.

“The people I volunteer with are nothing short of amazing,” Keough said. “They treat me as if I were family, and always make sure that I am taken care of outside of the center.”

“Evan is amazing to work with and really embodies that volunteer spirit,” said Cynthia Skidmore, Downtown Hope Center Soup Kitchen volunteer coordinator and operations assistant. “He puts heart into everything he does, and always goes above and beyond.”

Skidmore also commended Keough on a coat drive he spearheaded for the soup kitchen, and he handled all aspects of getting it up and running, to include creating signs, coordination, gathering coats and other warm weather attire, and placing boxes around his unit.

Since September, Keough has spent over 60 hours giving his time to the soup kitchen and plans to keep



ABOVE: Airman 1st Class Evan Keough, an air transportation journeyman, 732nd Aircraft Mobility Squadron, a tenant unit of the 515th Air Mobility Operations Wing, prepares food at the Downtown Hope Center Soup Kitchen in Anchorage. (U.S. Air Force photos/Airman 1st Class Caitlin Russell)

LEFT: Keough operates a 10K all-terrain forklift on the flight line at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Nov. 19.

coming back. He mentioned there is a need for people to prepare and serve the food, and is happy to be one of those people.

Keough also said with the holidays coming up, he felt it was even more important to volunteer his time.


“Starving in general is a terrible thing,” Keough said. “But starving during the holidays, without a home or family, is even worse. Giving back during the holiday season reminds me of how lucky I am and to not take it for granted.”

Although the holidays can be a season of giving, for Keough volunteering year-round gives him the satisfaction of knowing his time is spent helping those in need.

When Keough isn’t volunteering at the local soup kitchen, he can be found at 732nd AMS passenger terminal manifesting passengers, building cargo pallets, and loading aircraft.

“Keough is a motivated and well-rounded Airmen – he carries out his work duties, gets involved with

the community and goes to school,” said Tech. Sgt. Adrian Romo, 732nd AMS noncommissioned officer in charge of passenger services. “He’s able to balance all these facets of life. It’s great that he gets out into the local community and volunteers not just for the whole Airmen concept, but to grow as a person.”

Whether he’s loading pallets onto aircraft or food onto a plate, Keough maintains the same level of motivation and dedication to the mission. 

525th FS appoints dedicated crew chiefs

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
CAITLIN RUSSELL**
JBER Public Affairs

Several Airmen with the 525th Aircraft Maintenance Unit were appointed as dedicated crew chiefs during a ceremony at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Nov. 16.

“The ceremony is important because it’s a rite of passage from maintainer to DCC,” said Tech. Sgt. Bradley Flinn, 525th Aircraft Maintenance Unit tactical aircraft maintenance section chief. “We have 16 Airmen who will be appointed as DCCs during the ceremony, and 20 who are already working on the aircraft.”

Crew chiefs are the core maintainers who ensure the jets fly each day. They maintain every component and system, and ensure the aircraft is capable of completing the mission with the support of specialists and weapons crews. The difference between a crew chief and DCC, is that a DCC only maintains the aircraft they are specifically assigned to.

The purpose of the program is to

provide continuity and accuracy by assigning ownership to each aircraft.

“Having assigned DCCs helps strengthen the bond between the pilot and DCC and ensures that the little things aren’t missed on an aircraft,” said Master Sgt. Arnee Pryor, 525th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron tactical aircraft maintenance section, flight chief. “Without the continuity between the DCC and the aircraft, things would get missed. The DCC’s main job is to leave not a shred of doubt when the aircraft takes off.”

DCCs are selected on the basis of initiative, technical knowledge, management and leadership abilities, regardless of their respective Air Force specialty code.

“Senior leadership and section chiefs get together and establish who they think would be best suited as a dedicated crew chief,” said Pryor. “We discuss who would be a solid role model, while also ensuring the discipline it takes to maintain an aircraft.”

As a DCC, maintainers will launch, recover, perform pre- and post-flight

inspections, schedule maintenance and coordinate with the pilot to ensure there are no issues with the aircraft. Their experience is second to none and is heavily relied upon to ensure mission success.

The title dedicated crew chief is part of a long-standing tradition and helps to instill further pride in the aircraft.

“There’s definitely pride in being a DCC,” said Staff Sgt. Aaron Rimer, 477th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron tactical aircraft maintainer and DCC. “It means more when you’re handling an aircraft that has your name on it.”

Stenciled on the side of each aircraft fuselage below the cockpit are two names one above the other. Both names are equally important to show pride and dedication to the aircraft’s combat effectiveness. The top name belongs to the pilot of the aircraft, the



Airmen with the 525th Aircraft Maintenance Unit were appointed dedicated crew chiefs at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Nov. 16. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Caitlin Russell)

second to the aircraft’s DCC.

“We work closely with the pilots and establish a relationship,” Rimer said. “Pilots and crew chiefs depend on each other to safely complete the mission. They trust us to take care of the aircraft on the ground and we trust them to take care of the aircraft in the air.”

The camaraderie between the DCC and pilot is built on mutual respect for each other’s skill set to ensure the aircraft is serviceable to accomplish the mission and to bring the pilot back safely. 