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'Dice-giving' open house at 90th AMU



ABOVE LEFT: Airmen with their friends and family, grab food during a 90th Aircraft Maintenance Unit open house and "dice-giving," Nov. 21, at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. During the open house, family and friends of the 90th AMU Airmen had the opportunity to eat a Thanksgiving meal, play games with their spouses, visit different shops to become familiar with the unit's mission and have a chance to see what each section looks like. (U.S. Air Force photos/Airman 1st Class Crystal A. Jenkins) **ABOVE RIGHT:** Air Force Tech. Sgt. Matt Pinkard, 90th Aircraft Maintenance Unit noncommissioned officer in charge of support, speaks to open house attendees about the tools used to work on aircraft. **LEFT:** Attendees are given the opportunity to learn about the capabilities of the F-22 Raptor during the tour. **BELOW LEFT:** Tech. Sgt. Christopher Stafford, a 90th Aircraft Maintenance Unit weapons expeditor, holds his daughter Emily, age 3, during the tour. **BELOW RIGHT:** Children jump in a bouncy house during the open house.



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ARCTIC WARRIOR

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JBER Toastmasters lead the way

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

Some people can find the fear of public speaking or stepping into a broad leadership role daunting. The lack of this skill can possibly prevent a promotion or cause unfortunate setbacks in an individual's career development.

A few Airmen at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson have joined a program called "Arctic Guardians Community Toastmasters Club" which addresses the life altering uncertainties of public speaking and leadership and shines a light on future success in these areas and more.

This group is one of 20 official charters in the local Anchorage area and the only one at JBER. The club is not restricted and is open to all interested parties with base access.

"The sole purpose of this unique program is to enhance the professionalism of its members," said Air Force Master Sgt. Mike Barrett, Club President and 13th Space Warning Squadron Cobra Dane logistics support. "Most of the core things you

learn with the program correlates around time management, effectively evaluating others, and speaking with efficiency. An Airman who might get involved with a program like this early in their career will hopefully take their experiences back to the unit."

According to www.toastmasters.org, Toastmasters began as speaking clubs organized by Ralph C. Smedley during his time as director of education at the YMCA in Bloomington, Illinois. Smedley saw a need for community members to learn how to speak, conduct meetings, plan programs and work on committees, and he wanted to help them.

In 1905 Smedley decided to organize a club where individuals could learn these skills in a social environment. He named the group the Toastmasters Club.

"Although things change with time, participants still take turns leading and speaking at each meeting," Barrett said. "Older, more experienced participants evaluate short speeches, and those younger are also invited to join in the evaluations. This is one of the reasons I believe the program is so effective and why

I have continued to be a part of it since 2015."

For any organization communication is crucial and in today's Air Force it is necessary to continue personal and professional development at every stage.

"With the consistency of individual involvement and this organization's framework we are able to make a lasting impact on leadership development no matter what stage of your career," Barrett said. "Although this is a volunteer based organization Airman can sign up for Toastmasters International, which is an educational program that will give them credit towards professional development."

Although continued education and career development are important to many, joining a group might seem intimidating.

"Visiting a club is an exciting first step in reaching your goals," Barrett said. "There's no need to feel pressure to participate at your first club meeting – you can simply observe if you wish. Since every club is unique,




(Courtesy photo)

it's ok to visit several before you decide to join the right one for you."

Employers and the government are seeking well qualified communicators to get the mission accomplished.

"Throughout my long history with the program I feel like I have significantly helped other people who were apprehensive and reluctant to speak become successful in life," said Gregory McMullin, a JBER contracting office procurement analyst. "I have had people tell me that the program has changed their life."

For more information about the program visit: arcticguardians.toastmastersclubs.org. or [facebook.com/arcticguardians](https://www.facebook.com/arcticguardians). 

Preventing violence with Green Dot

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

One of many things Airmen and Department of Defense civilians share is annual training known as Green Dot that focuses on preventing and intervening in situations of interpersonal violence.

Green Dot is a national program adopted by the Air Force that teaches participants to recognize, analyze and respond to interpersonal violence – domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, sexual assault, rape, and gender and sexual orientation discrimination.

“The program is great because it focuses on violence as a whole,” said Air Force Capt. Julie Dewey, 673d Air Base Wing deputy sexual

assault prevention officer. “Instead of having various interpersonal violence programs, we’re able to incorporate prevention into one outlet.”

The term green dot is used to symbolize choices promoting safety and the communication of intolerance to violence. Red dots are used to represent an act of power-based personal violence.

During the training, the facilitators use a map of a hypothetical Air Force base and show the existence of red dot situations.

Each of the red dots represents a case of sexual assault, domestic violence or stalking.

The red dots are then covered with reactive green dots, representing the bystanders who stepped in and



(Courtesy photo)

prevented the situation from happening. Cases of violence will reduce only when the green dots overcome the red dots.

“The specialized training teaches us how to overcome barriers that may stand in the way of intervening when we witness potentially violent situations,” said Staff Sgt. Lindsey Lanoza, Green Dot


instructor and 673d Comptroller Squadron commander support staff.

There are three barriers to intervening – personal, relationship and organizational. A personal barrier might be having a shy personality or being afraid to act in the face of a situation. A relationship barrier might involve wanting to avoid damaging

a friendship or being related to someone who is being abused. An organizational barrier might be that the person is a supervisor or higher ranking.

While people may not be aware of the barriers until they experience a situation, there are ways around the obstacles. Delegation and distraction are two ways to intervene in negative situations.

“The class teaches you that these situations are real, these things are happening and there are ways to intervene,” Lanoza said. “The goal of the Green Dot program is to change the perception of interpersonal violence and to increase awareness.”

For more information about the Green Dot program, go to livethegreendot.com. 

Maintained and ready



LEFT: Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Palmer, a native of Washougal, Wash., left, and Senior Airman Mark Mader, a native of Davidson, N.C., both assigned to the 703d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, walk off the flight line after performing an inspection of a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Nov. 27. Tactical Aircraft Maintenance specialists ensure the aircraft in their care are ready to fly at a moment's notice so pilots can safely and effectively execute their missions worldwide. (U.S. Air Force photos/Justin Connaher)

BELOW: Airman 1st Class Anna Cox, a native of Wasilla, Alaska, assigned to the 176th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, right, and Airman 1st Class Jonathon Goeddey, a native of Tacoma, Wash., assigned to the 517th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, remove cargo from the aircraft.

BOTTOM: Air Force Master Sgt. Joe Dirksen, a native of Anchorage, and crew chief assigned to the 176th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, pauses in the door of a C-17 Globemaster III.



ABOVE: Airman 1st Class Jonathon Goeddey, crew chief assigned to the 517th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, watches fellow Airmen remove cargo.



Friday

Movie night

Join the Talkeetna Theater for a free showing of The Meg. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the movie starts at 6 p.m. Cash only concessions available; no outside food or drinks allowed. For more information, call 552-8529.

UAA theater night

Youth members get the opportunity to tour the UAA drama department and view the play "New Kid" from 4:30 to 9 p.m. Only \$17 to participate. For more information, call 384-1508.

Saturday

Breakfast with Santa

Kick off the holiday season at the Arctic Oasis from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets for Breakfast with Santa must be purchased in advance. For more information, call 552-8529.

Sunday

Cirque De Chanukah

Internationally known Zuma Zuma African Acrobats are coming to Anchorage. Part America's Got Talent, part Cirque du Soleil, part Harlem Globetrotters, join Cirque De Hanukkah in the Egan Center Dec. 2, starting at 5 p.m.

For more information, visit alaskajewishcampus.org or call 350-2744.

Tuesday

Cold weather safety

Learn how to protect yourself and others from the winter elements in this free class at Eagleleglen Fitness Park Lodge from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Learn to prevent cold weather injuries with proper clothing, food and hydration. Must register prior

to class date.

For more information, call 552-4599.

Avalanche awareness

Learn to access local avalanche bulletins and weather reports and recognize basic signs of avalanche danger in this free class from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

For more information and to sign up, contact OAP (Bldg. 7301) at 552-2023.

Wednesday

Indoor rock climbing

Scale the wall at the Outdoor Adventure Program from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and get a belay certificate for use at Buckner Physical Fitness Center. Must register prior to class date. For more information, call 552-2023.

Thursday

Holiday tree lighting

Join JBER family and friends for a night of music, tradition and celebration at the Frontier Theater starting at 6 p.m. and enjoy the cookies and hot chocolate. For more information, call 552-5900.

Ongoing

Zoo lights

Head to the Alaska Zoo to visit the lighted parade of animals that take over the zoo until 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.

Gingerbread village

See Alaska's largest gingerbread village at the Hotel Captain Cook until Jan. 1. Pastry chef Joe

Hickel meticulously constructs a sweet winter wonderland using more than 550 pounds of sugar and 200 pounds of chocolate. For more information visit captaincookchristmas.com.

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 552-5234 or email msmre@gmail.com.

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.

Honorary Commanders



Members of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Honorary Commanders Program tour the installation Nov. 20. The purpose of the program is to increase public awareness and understanding of the missions, policies, programs and the people of JBER. The program brings together community leaders from Anchorage, Eagle River and the Matanuska-Susitna valleys - who have close ties to the community and are aware of its concerns - and partners them with a military officer in command of a unit on JBER. (U.S. Air Force photo/Alejandro Peña)

Are you a faithful “shamash”?

By **ARMY CHAPLAIN (LT. COL.) GREG THOGMARTIN**
Deputy Installation Chaplain

The Jewish Festival of Hanukkah begins this year on Sunday, Dec. 2. It is an eight day celebration that commemorates the rededication of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem (circa 165 BC) following the revolt against the Seleucid ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

According to tradition as recorded in the Talmud, at the time of the rededication, there was very little oil left that had not been defiled by the Greeks.

Oil was needed for the menorah (candelabrum) in the Temple, which was supposed to burn throughout the night every night. There was only enough oil to burn for one day, yet miraculously, it burned for eight days, the time needed to prepare a fresh supply of oil for the menorah. An annual festival was declared to commemorate this miracle.

This annual festival is a beautiful celebration of light and hope in the

midst of the darkness of winter and the chaos of the world in which we live. It is a reminder of God’s blessing and providential care.

The observance involves the lighting of candles on a menorah that holds nine candles: one for each night, plus a Shamash (attendant or servant candle).

On the first night, one candle is placed at the far right. The shamash candle is lit and blessings are recited. After reciting the blessings, the first candle is then lit using the shamash candle, and the shamash candle is placed in its holder. An additional candle is added each evening of the festival.

During Hanukkah all the candles lit in a home are lighted by the servant candle. The Hanukkah candles are for pleasure only and may not be used for any productive purpose. That is the role of the shamash, and the reason it is kept at a different height so that it is easily identified.

The shamash candle may be a good image for many of us and the work we do in the military. Those of


us serving here on JBER whether Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, or Navy are essentially servants.

Our work is often a means to an end and not an end in itself. For many of us our military occupation skills may be more about enabling others to shine bright and

to succeed in missions beyond the joint base and even beyond our borders. This is true of both our uniformed personnel and our civilian work force here, too. And, in many ways it is also true of the family members and loved ones who support our service.

There are many situations where the success of others depends on our faithfulness in this role of servan-

thood. It takes a special person to be a servant – it is a lot of work and not much glory. It is kind of like the song “Wind Beneath My Wings” because sometimes as you may find as a servant it can be “cold there in my shadow.”

Are you a shamash? May God grant us each grace and strength to be faithful when our roles call for us to be servants. 



(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.

Tackle winter resilience through adventure

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

During the course of a typical Alaska winter, cold and dark days can seem eternal to some.

It is during these times of glistening moonlit snow and ice that the Outdoor Adventure Program and Outdoor Recreation Center shine a beacon of light, offering unique adventure trips and cold weather classes every week at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

“One of the most amazing experiences of being stationed in Alaska is the winter activities and rentals available through both the OAP and ORC,” said Karl Lavtar, OAP director. “Our goal is to offer quality classes and trips to as many service members and their families as we can, so they can experience the adventure Alaska offers all year long.”

OAP is open to all ac-

tive-duty, retirees, Department of Defense civilians, National Guard and Reserve employees and dependents. Registration is strongly recommended and most of the time required, depending on the activity or class.

“Both programs are extremely valuable resources not only for adventure, but resiliency,” Lavtar said. “The trips are group-oriented which provide for a safer, more controlled environment. Our experienced guides are Wilderness First Responder certified and are able to act as instructors on Alaska-specific matters one might encounter in the wilderness. While we are keeping the favorite activities of prior seasons on the schedule, there are several new classes and trips being added to this year’s calendar.”

In addition to the excursions already scheduled, outings can be further geared towards specific groups by looking at discounted trips

provided through Rec-On, Women in the Wilderness, Single Airman Program (which is open to all military branches) and Recharge for Resiliency programs.

Some of this year’s winter OAP trips include ice climbing on waterfalls, fat tire biking, snow machine and snow shoe trips.

Some of this year’s winter OAP classes include cold weather safety, avalanche awareness, winter camping/hiking, Captains class, kayak safety training and snow machine safety.

Although there are several outdoor adventures awaiting, there are plenty of scheduled indoor options available as well.

“While we offer indoor rock climbing and belay certification throughout the year, we were able to add ‘Intro to lead climbing basics’ which is considered the next step in your climbing experience,” Lavtar said. “If you want to put your skills to the test, we



(Courtesy photo)

are hosting two indoor rock climbing competitions in January and March.”

Climbing equipment is included for all listed classes. When it comes to obtaining other various types of winter activity gear, the ORC has a long list of rentable equipment available to the JBER community.


Reservations for a SAP or Rec-On trips can be made 30 days prior to the date of trip or class. Reservations for main OAP trips can be made any time.

Custom trips for friends, families, squadrons and spe-

cial occasions can also be arranged when available.

“Winter can be a beautiful time of year,” Lavtar said. “Unfortunately, it can also be dangerous in Alaska if you go unprepared. The classes and trips offer our community members a great way to partake in something they might be interested in but might be reluctant to do on their own.”

For more information about the trips, classes or programs offered, call 552-3812.

For more information regarding ORC rentals, call 552-2023. 

Combat cavities: Pediatric Clinic offers fluoride

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

The Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson 673d Medical Operations Squadron pediatric clinic is now offering a fluoride varnish program at the clinic in an effort to reduce cavities, increase knowledge and raise the amount of children visiting the dentist before cavities appear.

“While on a TDY to Anderson Air Force Base, Guam – where the oral health is poor amongst the vast population – I facilitated in creating a fluoride varnish program there,” said Air Force Capt. Charles Dunn, 673d MDOS pediatric clinic pediatrician. “After establishing the program, I came to the realization that it would be beneficial to have at JBER as well. So we [Pediatric Clinic] conducted a survey and discovered that of all of our patients ages 0 to 2 years old, less than a quarter of them were plugged in with a dentist.

“It was from this survey that we realized that we needed to improve our dental referral process, education for families and to make fluoride varnish available,” Dunn said. “Having the program provides the bridge needed between dentist and pediatri-

cian. The goal of the program is to get children plugged in with a dentist by the age of 12 months.”

The fluoride varnish is offered at all well-visits and oral health screening walk-ins are welcome. Well-visits occur for children at six months, nine months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, and yearly afterwards.

“Regardless of the child’s level of oral health risk factors, we offer them the fluoride varnish,” Dunn said. “The treatment is the equivalent to brushing the child’s teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, for up to six months. So we provide the treatment itself, follow-up care instructions and contact information for pediatric dentists in the area.”

Fluoride varnish is a dental treatment used to help prevent tooth decay, slow it down or stop it from getting worse. The varnish is made with fluoride, a mineral that strengthens tooth enamel. Fluoride varnish is safe and only a small amount is applied during treatment.

“The child’s teeth is painted with the fluoride resin, and once it hits their enamel, it solidifies and pushes into their teeth,” said Airman 1st Class Erika Rhode, 673d MDOS pediatric clinic medical technician. “The overall response has been really positive so far. I don’t think a lot of

parents knew when to start applying the fluoride varnish, so it’s been very educational. We’ve been able to tackle a lot of misconceptions about fluoride.”

Common misconceptions the clinic encountered were children should not be exposed to fluoride, fluoride does not prevent dental decay and fluoride is not needed until adult teeth are in.

“There’s a lot of misinformation out there about oral health, so a lot of the campaign has been about improving overall oral health education,” Dunn said. “Already we’ve seen an improvement in the amount of parents saying, ‘Yes, I brush my child’s teeth twice a day’. Or, ‘Yes, my child has received the fluoride varnish in the last six months’.”

When the fluoride varnish is applied to a child’s non-permanent teeth throughout the developmental stage any fluoride is incorporated into his or hers permanent teeth, making the enamel stronger overall.

“The purpose of the treatment is to prevent cavities, and the first step is strengthening the enamel,” Dunn said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cavities are the most common form of chronic dental disease in children. The CDC




(Courtesy photo)

also stated 20 percent of children between the ages of five and eleven have a cavity that goes untreated. For children, untreated cavities can cause pain, impaired ability to chew food, school absences, difficulty concentrating and poor appearance.

The prevention of cavities should start within six months of children obtaining their first tooth or at the age of 12 months, whichever occurs first.

While fluoride varnish cannot completely prevent cavities, when it is added to using fluoride toothpaste, brushing twice a day, flossing and regular dental care, it can aid in prevention.

For information or to schedule a visit, contact the 673d MDOS pediatric clinic at 580-2908. 

ASYMCA Food Pantry serves those who serve

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

Through a variety of programs and services, the Armed Services YMCA of Alaska has been enhancing the lives of military members for more than 70 years.

While available year-round, the ASYMCA's food pantries is one such service that experiences increased use during the holiday season.

"It's about making a difference in someone's life," said Brina Lynch, ASYMCA of Alaska program director. "Our food pantries play an important supplemental role for those in need each year. Unforeseen circumstances are consistently a top reason service members seek the program's assistance, whether it's an unexpected financial situation, adjustment to the cost of living in Alaska or a medical emergency, the ASYMCA ensures no military family goes hungry."

The ASYMCA of Alaska operates three food pantries – two located on JBER to serve Anchorage and South Central Alaska and one at Fort Wainwright to serve Interior Alaska. They are provided at no cost for military service members and families of all branches, regardless of rank.

The pantries are available to active duty, guard and reserve service members and their dependents.

A big selling point for the program is its anonymity. No referral or documentation of financial need is required, and no appointment is necessary. Any information collected during sign-in is solely to verify military affiliation and is held completely confidential.

Since the program does not receive any federal or state funding outside of contracts for service, it relies solely on support from the Alaska community, including food drives run by JBER and Anchorage affiliates, as well as donations from community grocery stores.

"Through donations from individuals, units, and office food drives, we're really able to connect not only with the individual who needs the assistance or use of the pantry, but we're also able to connect with our supporters and partners and bring everybody together for the common good," Lynch said. "We are able to immediately help those who are struggling with food insecurity or maybe something else in which the food pantry can help them free up



ABOVE: Lita McClain, marketing and public relations specialist for the Armed Services YMCA of Alaska, stocks shelves at the ASYMCA food pantry, at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Jan. 2016. Through a variety of programs and services, the ASYMCA of Alaska has been enhancing lives of military members for more than 70 years. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Javier Alvarez)

LEFT: Baby food lines the shelves at the Armed Services YMCA of Alaska at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Nov. 19. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Curt Beach).

funds in order to take care of another issue."

The pantries gladly accept donations. Some items in constant need are non-perishable foods, baby food, frozen meat (no wild game), toiletries, hygiene items and diapers.

Recently, a unit did a ruck march in which each participant carried 20 pounds of food and dropped it off at the ASYMCA. Food drives to support the pantries are always welcomed. Some units on the installation have permitted their members who supported the pantries to wear jeans on a given day, and JBER schools have also held drives to support the pantries.

"We recognize the direct impact this program has on community and being able to help directly with what-

ever situation you're going through," Lynch said. "It's incredibly rewarding. We're here to serve those who serve. The help we can provide might be just enough to help them open up on another issue."

Lynch said one of the best parts about working with the ASYMCA is the sense of community she witnesses with visitors and the smiles on their faces.


There's no limit on the amount of food taken, but the recommendation is take just enough to satisfy the actual need.

For those who don't cook often, ASYMCA staff has been offering education and advice on how to cook items like raw chicken and ground beef.

The food pantries' locations on

JBER are at the ASYMCA Welcome Center (JBER-E) at 10449 Luke Avenue, open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and at the Fort Richardson Office, located at Building 655 (Warrior Zone), open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Those interested in volunteering, donating or inquiring about the many services offered by the ASYMCA can call the JBER-E office at 552-9622 or the JBER-R office at 384-9622.

"I believe nobody should go hungry and it breaks my heart to know there are people out there in need, and I'm just glad we have this program that can make a difference and support those who support our country," said Pam Miller-Johnson, ASYMCA of Alaska program assistant. 

Working inside the heart of the Air Force

By **PETER HOLSTEIN**
Air Force Surgeon
General Public Affairs

Each squadron in the Air Force faces different stress and health challenges that require unique solutions.

General David Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, is leading an effort to revitalize Air Force squadrons.

“The squadron is the beating heart of the Air Force; our most essential team,” Goldfein wrote in a letter to Airmen. “Our vision demands that squadrons be highly capable, expeditionary teams who can successfully defend our nation’s interests in both today’s and tomorrow’s complex operating environments.”

The Air Force Medical Service is supporting that effort by rolling out a new health care model at the squadron level, called Operational Support Teams. OSTs rotate through squadrons at a base, seeking to improve individual health and squadron performance. By focusing on each squadron’s unique job, needs and environment, the OST can address the root causes of illness and injuries.

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson stood up its OST June 4, 2018. The OST has a physical therapist, a psychologist, two nutritionists, an exercise physiologist, and a human performance integrator technician, and embeds with units around the base on a rotating basis.

“OSTs lower barriers to care and head off potential injuries and illnesses by being embedded into the unit,” said Dr. Alyssa Wu, a physical therapist on the JBER OST. “We take what we learn and combine it with our expertise to make recommendations and implement policies that support the squadron.”

Most health providers on base work in the clinic and treat patients that come to them, while OST members are out in squadrons, engaging Airmen in their daily routines. Rather than focusing on individual health on a reactive basis, the OSTs work to systemically reduce risky health behaviors and improve human performance across the entire unit.

“Our number one priority as OST providers is unit readiness and performance,” said Dr. Natasha Swan,

a psychologist on the JBER OST. “We are not in the clinic doing individual treatment. Our focus is to evaluate the squadron or unit as a whole. We look at how it is working, what the conditions are that cause certain injuries, and what strategies can be implemented to address or prevent health issues.”

Embedding into the unit gives a better idea on the specific challenges a specific unit faces. JBER’s OST worked to understand the Airmen’s daily tasks while on duty.

“Being embedded in a unit gives us a ground-up perspective to tailor our efforts,” said Swan. “Each squadron experiences different stressors. Not only are we looking at the unique environment, but also the different dynamics within the squadron.”

As the Air Force refocuses on the



Airmen 1st Class Mathew Rozean (left) and Theodore Dykstra, 673rd Security Forces Squadron, participate in training at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in May 2015. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Sheila deVera)

value of squadrons as the engines that drive the force, the embedded OST model optimizes health and performance. Specialized care and policies helps squadrons reach their peak effectiveness.

“The goal is to improve the human weapon system’s capability,” said Wu. “Having that embedded medical team to improve the overall readiness and maintain squadrons at that constant level of superior physical, mental and nutritional health makes an OST a really special and unique asset.” 