

BUCKEYE FLYER



Wright-Patterson AFB, OH | Volume 66, No. 6 | June 2026

Operation Spring Spartan



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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson

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1st Sergeant Mentorship



AFRC Command Chief Visit



Historian's Corner

By Dr. Tara Simpson
445th Airlift Wing Historian

In June 1991, the 445th Military Airlift Wing, then stationed at Norton Air Force Base, California, was at the center of many celebrations.

The wing received requests for unit members for welcome home and victory parades, TV appearances, and a Hollywood salute.

Nearly 2,000 members of the 445th served in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm missions. In total, the wing flew over 19,000 hours to support the Allied operations in the Middle East and the post-conflict peace keeping efforts that culminated on June 15, the official termination of Desert Storm.

On the heels of Operation Desert Storm's end, a different kind of storm was brewing in the Pacific. Days after the 445 MAW ended missions to the ME, the wing was tapped for Operation Fiery Vigil.

On June 15, two remarkable and tragic weather events occurred simultaneously. Mount Pinatubo on the island of Luzon, Philippines, violently erupted as the island was also hit by Typhoon Yunya. The double disaster forced the shutdown of U.S. military bases on Luzon. U.S. military and their dependents desperately sought safety.

The typhoon worsened the effects of the second largest terrestrial eruption of the 20th century. The event prompted the largest evacuation operation to the U.S. since the fall of South Vietnam in 1975.

21,000 refugees flew to Andersen AFB, Guam, with Military Airlift Control responsible for 15,000 passengers on 246 missions.

On June 16, the 445th MAW started flying missions for Operation Fiery Vigil. The unit's 1991 history noted members' eagerness to support the historic evacuation mission, "The 445 MAW members continue to demonstrate above and beyond what is normally expected of the Air Force Reservist."

June 2026: Message from the Top

By Col. Douglas A. Perry Jr., 445th Airlift Wing Commander

Team 445th – Budget Updates and Innovation Initiatives

Wing Priorities: Generating Ready Forces, Developing Leaders, and Mastering the Fundamentals – Innovating to Excel.

The wing is driving forward at a strong and fast pace. As we roll into the final quarter of the fiscal year, our budget remains challenged while we navigate updated Omnibus (Omnibus Appropriations Act) policy and guidance. The Financial Management Team has worked hard to ensure the wing is positioned to finish the fiscal year on target.

I want to take a moment to highlight our newly formed innovation cell, Aero-Think, which is growing and moving forward. Signed into charter in August 2025, the initiative has already taken some good strides.

The charter's core functions:

Educate – Teach and facilitate structured problem solving and systems thinking. Build a culture of innovation.

Cultivate – Go to the Gemba (work centers) and see. Project management. Facilitate strategy and improvement events.

Recognize – Reward favorable and innovative performance that meaningfully moves the Airlift Wing in a strategically aligned direction.

Two recent examples from our maintenance teams:

The 445th Maintenance Squad-



ron created a 3D printer STL file and 3D printed a Hose Assembly Knob Wrench for the 445th Operations Support Squadron Aircrew Flight Equipment section, then shared with Steel City Spark at the 911th Airlift Wing, and distributed it to the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center for sharing with the total force.

MXS also worked with the Rapid Sustainment Office (RSO) to use an innovative robotic Incremental Sheet Metal Forming (ISF) machine to create a new nose skin for a damaged C-17 aircraft. This effort saved approximately \$1.1 million in storage fees and accelerated the aircraft's return to service. Additionally, the RSO used modernized

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Buckeye Flyer 445th Airlift Wing

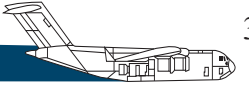
Editorial Staff

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U.S. Government Printing Office 5-00001-445AW

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5439 McCormick Ave.
WPAFB, OH 45433-5132
Building 4010, Room 171
937-257-5784
445AW.PA2@us.af.mil



445 AW conducts Operation Spring Spartan

By Senior Airman Bernard Puller
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

There's chaos in every direction; adrenaline flows as hearts begin to race; however, the Airmen of the 445th Airlift Wing can be confident knowing the training they received prepared them for these situations.

These Airmen maintain their skills through various training exercises such as Operation Spring Spartan that took place April 13-14, and included the 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, 445th Civil Engineer Squadron, 445th Force Support Squadron, 445th Logistics Readiness Squadron and 445th Security Forces Squadron.

Spring Spartan was created to enhance the warfighter capabilities needed for deployed environments. It focused on evacuation alarm signals, attack response procedures, tactical combat casualty care and other critical skills needed during and after attacks.

"The perishable skills that a lot of us practice only during exercises, you lose focus on because we don't utilize them that much," said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Johnathan Johnson, 445th CES emergency manager. "That repetition builds confidence because it builds your preparedness. When our people go downrange, that muscle memory takes effect."

Exercises like these reinforce the importance of staying ready for the unexpected by making Spring Spartan realistic, aiding in Airmen readiness.

"When the alarms are going off, you can put yourself in the mindset of a real-world situation," said Senior Airman Dawn Adams, 445th CES engineering assistant apprentice. "Thinking about all the things that can happen, you have to



Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Whitlow, 445th Security Forces Squadron, provides protection and cover as his team searches and clears a building during the Operation Spring Spartan exercise at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base April 14, 2026. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson)



Tech. Sgt. Luke Barnes, center crouched, 445th Logistics Readiness Squadron ground transportation specialist, performs tactical combat casualty care under inspector supervision during the Operation Spring Spartan exercise at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, April 14, 2026. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson)

be ready for anything."

Although the goal was to make the exercise as realistic as possible, it was still important to balance realism and safety.

"You want to make it realistic, but at the same time you don't want people getting hurt," Johnson stated. "You can calculate risk during an exercise. When you want to inject realism, you look at how much of a calculated risk you want to put into that realism. Sometimes it's writing a situation where the person can put themselves in a scenario through sound, instruction or forward thinking."

One of the most memorable moments happened when a member of the 445th SFS, acting as the opposing force, aggressively attempted to enter a facility during a scenario.

"When I first saw it happening, I thought it was a real-world situation, I had to remind myself he was playing a part," said Johnson. "That was my favorite part of the exercise because it was strictly the actions of this Airman that made this situation realistic."

When designing this exercise, the goal was to set the Airmen up for success by using it to build confidence in their skills and be prepared to perform the task required for the mission.

"We want to make sure when people leave the training environment they feel better about themselves, what they learned and the mission," Johnson said. "Everyone cares about the mission you're doing. They care about you as an individual and everything that you're sacrificing. Everything is to set you up for success downrange. Our people are our number one priority; we want to make sure they're taken care of."



SPOTLIGHT

Rank/Name: Tech. Sgt.
Amy Stanfield

Unit: 445th Operations
Support Squadron

Duty Title: Aircrew Flight
Equipment NCO in Charge

Hometown: Born and
raised in Hilliard, Ohio.
Finished growing up in
Woodstock, Ohio.

Civilian Job: AFE Active
Guard Reserve

Education: Some college

Hobbies: Sewing, yard work, fid-
dling around with home renovation
projects.

Career Goal: To do my job to the



best of my abilities, pass on knowl-
edge and skills, and help out who-
ever I can when I can.

**What do you like about working
at the 445th?** Working with great

folks! I'm lucky to be in a
really good squadron and
a fantastic AFE shop!

**Why did you join the Air
Force?** To deploy! Need-
less to say, that has not
happened as much as
what I would have liked.
But, getting our crews
out the door, taking care
of "rainbow" crews and
checking out tails from
other units has been
interesting. It's still reward-
ing when whoever leaves
out the door is leaving with
the best we can give them

to do what needs to be done and
make it back safely! The combined
efforts from every section and
squadron are what makes these
home station deployments possible
and successful!

445th AW hosts mentorship event for Airmen at all levels

By Senior Airman Bernard Puller
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Airmen gathered not just to listen, but to connect during a mentorship event held May 2 aimed at building stronger leaders and expanding awareness of resources available across the wing.

The event, organized by Master Sgt. Julio Medina, 445th Operations Support Squadron first sergeant, and Master Sgt. Brandi Tschuor, 445th Maintenance Squadron first sergeant, focused on creating open conversations about leadership, professional growth and personal development.

Designed for Airmen of all ranks and experience levels, the event brought representatives from several helping agencies and subject matter experts, including financial advisors, military and family readiness, chaplains, and psychological health representatives.

"We are trying to include as many on base resources that people might not be aware of," Tschuor said. "Smaller groups make people more comfortable to ask questions and get connected."

In addition to sessions on topics like Veterans Affairs loans and budgeting, attendees participated in leadership-based scenarios meant to encourage discussion and ex-

pose Airmen to different leadership styles, as learning the different styles and receiving mentorship is important for the Air Force continuing to evolve.

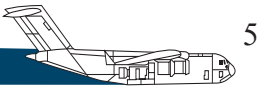
"You cannot develop your Airmen as your supervisors developed you, because your supervisors developed you for an Air Force that no longer exists," Medina said. "It's important to stay relevant to the changes that are coming."

Mentorship helps Airmen overcome uncertainty and build confidence, especially early in their careers. For junior Airmen, making connections can also break down perceived barriers.

"I think communicating is a big challenge," Tschuor said. "There's a stigma that senior noncommissioned officers can be intimidating. However, people communicate better when they're comfortable."

Ultimately, the goal of the event was to strengthen readiness and morale, encourage individuals to ask questions, seek guidance, and accept that not having all the answers is part of the process.

"You don't have to know the answer," Medina said. "You just have to know where to find it. Just show up. You might think events like these are awkward, but you'll have the best time and realize you want more of it."



News Briefs

Promotions

Chief Master Sergeant
Emily Temple, LRS

Senior Master Sergeant
Zachary Thorsky, AMXS

Master Sergeant
Jeremie Jamito, AMXS
Patrick Jennings, AES
Christopher Kirby, AES
Haley Morris, OG
Zachary Webb, 89 AS

Technical Staff Sergeant
Jessica Audia,
Jacob Bowers,
Lucas Corder,
Vanessa Dongmo,
Kasey Meadows, MXS
Thomas Ott, MXS
Anne Smith, LRS

Staff Sergeant
Jacob Clark, AMXS
David Fuller, AMXS
Jason Nixon, LRS
Christian Reeves, AMXS
Victor Sandoval Gutierrez,
AMXS
Mia Tinajero, WG
Lucas Wonderly, 89 AS

Senior Airman
Demerius Boyd Cattle, SFS
Jayden Dewitt, AMXS
Cody Dwire, AMXS
Jeremy Jones, MXS
Cameron JacksonHarris, SFS
Ceedrick Kedze, AMXS
Katherine Ross, LRS

Airman 1st Class
Hilda Appiah, LRS
Emily Cogossi, 87 APS
Chaza Ikua-Joseph, FSS

2026 Employer Appreciation Day

Reservists, it's time to nomi-
nate your employer for the 2026
Employer Appreciation Day that
will take place Saturday, Aug. 1.

If you would like to nominate
your employer, please fill out
the online form at <https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/NtH2zNDPy2> or
scan the QR code below by the
Sunday of the July UTA, July 7.



BAH Recertification

BAH recertification is a trian-
nual requirement for all mem-
bers receiving with dependent
rate BAH. Members have from
now until the Sept. 30 to recer-
tify or face a BAH reduction.

Emails with documentation
to recertify must be sent from
af.mil email address to 445aw.
fm.bahrecert@us.af.mil. Don't
wait until the last minute.

Stork's Nest

The First Sergeant Council
has introduced Stork's Nest
Family Link – an initiative fo-
cused on supporting 445th Airlift
Wing Airmen with diaper-aged
children across the wing.

The program connects Air-

men in need with voluntary,
wing-based support through a
structured quarterly cycle. To
register to receive items, please
scan the QR code below.

First Sergeants will validate
the requests to remain anony-
mous and discreet. Reach out
to your unit First Sergeant for
more information.



Support an Airman & their Family

As part of Stork's Nest, mem-
bers can sponsor an Airman
and their family by donating the
items. Pick up a Nest Egg for
a family in need, purchase the
items and return them back to
the Stork's Nest.

This will be a quarterly pro-
gram to continue to support
445th families. For Calendar
Year 26, please have items
back by June 6, the Saturday
of the June training assembly
weekend.

Please contact your unit First
Sergeant for more information.





Wing announces 1st Quarter award winners for CY 2026

445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The 445th Airlift Wing announced its 1st Quarter award winners for Calendar Year 2026.

Airman of the Quarter

Senior Airman Marcus Simones, 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron aircraft maintenance squadron, is the Airman of the Quarter. Simones diagnosed a malfunction and coordinated repair with Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina. This enabled three 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron crews to complete eight hours of essential training, prevented a mission cancellation and bolstered readiness.

Additionally, he led a six-person team to tow a C-17 off a compromised ramp, navigating the hazardous situation and preventing catastrophic aircraft damage. His use of people and equipment safeguarded a critical asset and spared over \$15 million in repairs.

He overcame a critical manning shortfall by integrating with multiple maintenance teams. The Airman earned five vital certifications that cut aircraft repair times by 12% and increased the unit's aircraft availability and mission readiness.

During an operation, Simones led a five-member team through a mission computer failure where he orchestrated a nine-step troubleshooting plan and saved a U.S. Central Command sortie that culminated in the security of a \$340 million strategic asset.

NCO of the Quarter

Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Strunk, 445th Logistics Readiness Squadron deployment noncommissioned officer, is the NCO of the Quarter. Strunk led his team in activating 166 Reservists in support of Operation Spartan Shield during the wing's largest Air Force Force Generation cycle the delivered mission-ready Airmen to four combatant commands with zero discrepancies.

Additionally, he secured military airlift for over 100 Airmen in four squadrons via C-17 for expeditionary skills training that closed a vital home-station training capability gap and helped mitigate emergent risks arising from an operation.

The NCOIC was hand-selected by Air Force Reserve Command's Force Generation Center to assist in the overhaul of Agile Mobilization Process Business Rules and new redeployment guidance, codifying complex procedures and enhanced readiness for all three Reserve Numbered Air Forces.

Strunk conducted targeted training on 37 critical deploy-

ment tasks that enhanced all Air Force Specialty Code essential skills for their expeditionary deployed location and drove a 28% increase in their operational proficiency and competency.

SNCO of the Quarter

Master Sgt. Taylor Shaw, 87th Aerial Port Squadron aerial port superintendent, is the Senior NCO of the Quarter. Shaw deployed as a port superintendent where he led 63 Airmen in the movement of munitions that sustained allied and joint combat operations for the operation.

Additionally, he identified and aligned 34 Airmen with five helping agencies after multiple dorms were destroyed, and he led and participated in resiliency efforts to restore combat effectiveness within a high-stress environment.

The superintendent oversaw the integration of 28 forward deployed Airmen and led the establishment of a Contingency Response Team that consisted of 12 Airmen which

expanded the wing's regional logistics airlift capabilities by over 43%.

Shaw coordinated the movement of 10,000 war fighters and 20 million pounds of cargo and equipment during a logistics surge that bolstered regional combat air power and air defense critical to gaining air superiority in the battle space.

CGO of the Quarter

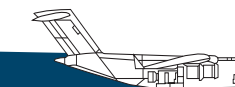
Capt. Amy Ray, 445th AMXS director of operations, is the Company Grade Officer of the Quarter. Ray rapidly prepared over 100 maintenance group maintainers for a second short-notice activation in under a year in support of an opera-

tion. This resulted in zero personnel shortfalls and ensured rapid deployment of assets to various areas of responsibility.

Additionally, she oversaw aircraft repair typically deferred to the depot. She navigated severe manning shortages, facility limitations, and supply barriers that delivered \$1.1 million in cost savings and prevented a 12-month aircraft delay.

The officer overhauled the unit's health and safety posture by resolving five critical IGEMS deficiencies and over 1,000 days of noncompliance. She instituted a process that secured regulatory adherence and 100% oversight for future operations.

Ray led a wing-wide "LEAD" seminar and executed a 100-person Air Reserve Component maintenance workshop where she coordinated across Air National Guard and AFRC units. Both events were delivered to 130 members, fostered leadership and enhanced readiness.



445 AW recognizes children during Month of Military Child

By Senior Airman Bernard Puller
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The sound of boots at the door, a packed suitcase in the hallway and another goodbye before sunrise are familiar moments for many military children.

They learn early how to adapt to change, make new friends in unfamiliar places and stay strong during long separations from a parent in uniform. While their sacrifices often happen quietly at home, their resilience is on display in every move, deployment and missed milestone.

During April's Month of the Military Child, the 445th Airlift Wing recognized the sacrifices military children make every day.

"The Month of the Military Child is a month set aside to honor military children and all their sacrifices," said Shanna King, 445th AW Military and Family Readiness Office director. "Military children sacrifice a lot of time with their parents and go through a lot of things the average non-military child doesn't go through."

This month of recognition was established to focus on the unique challenges military children face. Focusing on these children highlights the resilience required of children whose parents serve in uniform.

While November recognizes the military family as a whole, King said April's focus on children is important because they are often expected to understand adult situations.

As the parent of a military child herself, King, wife of former U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Scriven King, has seen firsthand the challenges that military children face.

By the time her son was 3 years old, he had already lived in two different countries and three different states. Frequent moves are among the biggest challenges military kids endure. These children must constantly move and adapt to new environments.

"Military kids are some of the most resilient kids that you will ever find," King said. "I know some military kids who went to six different high schools before they graduated. They get used to packing up and going; they make friends quickly. Put a military child anywhere and even the most introverted kid is good at making friends."

Beyond relocation, the uncertainty can weigh heavily on them, especially during deployments which place a strain on the entire household and create challenges children must navigate.

"We sign up; we wear the uniform, but they make the sacrifices," said Master Sgt. Jason Cordle, 445th AW first sergeant resiliency integrator. "When we go out in public in uniform, we get the thank you and the handshakes. Nobody ever thinks to when we go away it puts a strain on the whole family. They make some of the same sacrifices we make and, in some cases, even more so. They didn't sign up for this, but they're still forced to make sacrifices and go through the adversities of service."

It is important to highlight the sacrifices military children make. To help recognize those sacrifices, the 445th sent personalized certificates to military children of the wing.

This year the certificates were redesigned to make them different from previous years by adding gold labels and a seal featuring the official flower of the military child, a dandelion, to give the certificates a fancier, more grown-up look.

"A lot of people think the dandelion is a weed, but it's a really important flower," King said. "The reason the dandelion is the flower of the military child is because no matter where the dandelion goes, it's going to grow and thrive. The seeds scatter everywhere, but they're always going to grow wherever they land."

When the 445th began to send these certificates four years ago, around 100 certificates were sent. Last year, around 350 certificates were mailed. The feedback from parents has been positive. Emails have been sent detailing how excited the kids are to receive them, often wanting to hang them up on the wall or the refrigerator.

The M&FR office is constantly looking for more ways to support military children, whether or not the kids are ever able to physically come to Wright-Patterson AFB. The 445th wants to acknowledge all military children and the sacrifices they make.

"We see you," Cordle said. "We thank you, and we appreciate your service. It does not go unnoticed."



An Airman with the 445th Airlift Wing and his family enjoy the wing family day picnic during the September unit training assembly at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Sept. 9, 2023. Held annually, the picnic is a morale event for Reserve Citizen Airmen and their families to spend time together while learning about the wing. (Photo by Staff Airman Angela Jackson)



AFRC senior enlisted advisor visits 445th AW enlisted Airmen



Left: Chief Master Sgt. Israel Nuñez, senior enlisted advisor to the Chief of Air Force Reserve, Pentagon, Washington D.C., and Command Chief Master Sgt. of Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, speaks to enlisted members assigned to the 445th Airlift Wing at a wing enlisted all call during a visit at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, May 2, 2026. (Photo by Tech Sgt. Johnathan Quiñones)

Right: Chief Master Sgt. Israel Nuñez, senior enlisted advisor to the Chief of Air Force Reserve, Pentagon, Washington D.C., and Command Chief Master Sgt. of Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, takes questions from a 445th Airlift Wing Airman at a wing enlisted all call during a visit at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, May 2, 2026. Nuñez discussed a wide range of topics from deployments, Active Guard Reserve billets, health benefits and mental health resources. (Photo by Tech Sgt. Johnathan Quiñones)

VALUES from page 2

3D scanning technology to scan the nose, which improved accurate measurements for the repair.

These are just a few examples of many across the wing where our Airmen have introduced initiatives in innovation that have directly impacted and improved operations.

To quote The “Blue” Book, A Profession of Arms: Our Core Values, “Excellence In All We Do does not mean that we demand perfection in everything from everyone. Instead, this value directs us to continuously advance our craft and increase our knowledge as Airmen. We must have a passion for continuous improvement and innovation that propels America’s Air Force in quantum leaps toward accomplishment and performance.”

I continue to challenge ALL of us at every echelon in the

wing to seek new ideas and drive to a culture of continuous improvement.

We MUST continue to look for ways to become better, more efficient, stronger, more resilient, and enhance our competitive edge. If we do not, we are putting ourselves, our unit, and our country at risk.

Our Continuous Improvement and Innovation (CI2) Team just attended an Air Force Reserve Command CI2 Leadership WERXShop on innovation. We need your ideas! Reach out to Monte Synder, our CI2 Performance Analyst.

To close out, thank you for all you do day-in and day-out and your contributions, leadership, sacrifice, and steadfast commitment.



445TH AIRLIFT WING/PA
BUILDING 4014, ROOM 113
5439 MCCORMICK AVE
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB OHIO 45433-5132

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