

# Contrail

MAY 2012, VOL. 46, No. 5





## What every mother needs

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Dean E. Wentzien

MAY 2012, VOL. 46, NO. 5

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### COVER: SUITING UP

Staff Sgt. John Hurley, right, helps Tech. Sgt. David Niedzwiadek into a bomb suit on May 10 during an exercise at the 177th Fighter Wing. Hurley and Niedzwiadek are both explosive ordnance disposal technicians assigned to the 177th Fighter Wing. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs)

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#### Exodus 20:1-12

Every second Sunday in May, we celebrate Mother's Day. God tells us to honor our mother, and He does not set any limits to His command. By virtue of her position as our mom, we are to treat her with respect and love.

Mothers do not always live up to our expectations. Sometimes they experience hardships and challenges that affect their ability to offer what we need or want. Or they might have a personal weakness that negatively impacts us and, later on, our families. But we are to follow the example of our heavenly Father, who set His affection on us even though we did not have all the qualities that deserved His favor. While we were still His enemies, He chose us to belong to Him through His Son (Romans 5:10).

God loved us when we were unlova-

ble. One way we can express our gratitude to Him is by showing unconditional love to our mother. With God's help, we can choose to do so genuinely and consistently.

To love the significant women in our lives without strings attached is an important part of showing them honor. No mother or wife should have to wonder if she is living up to what loved ones hope and expect from her. After a while, she will feel trapped by the burden of unmet expectations rather than accepted by those closest to her.

Mothers have the same needs as all women: to be loved, listened to, and cared about. Take time to show the important women in your life how much you care for them. Be a willing, attentive listener, and demonstrate your love in ways meaningful to them.

### The Air Force chief of staff 2012 reading List

WASHINGTON (AFNS) --In a letter to all Air Force personnel, Gen. Norton Schwartz said today's Airmen are among the military's best educated and most inquisitive.

"Their experiences are one of the cornerstones of the 2012 Reading List," Schwartz said.

This year's list contains 13 books and, for the first time, supplementary films, treatises and Internet-based resources.

The following is book list:

"Airpower for Strategic Effect," by Colin Gray

"Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption," by Laura Hillenbrand

"Start with Why," by Simon Sinek

"The Forever War," by Dexter Filkins

"Paradise Beneath Her Feet," by Isabel Coleman

"The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution," by Linda Monk

"The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers," by Richard McGregor

"Adapt: Why Success Always Starts with Failure," by Tim Harford

"Catch-22," by Joseph Heller

"Freedom Flyers: The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II," by J. Todd Moyer

"Physics of the Future," by Michio Kaku

"A Country of Vast Designs: James K. Polk, the Mexican War, and the Conquest of the American Continent," by Robert Merry

"The Hunters," by James Salter

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE WING COMMANDER



## Jersey devils,

The 177th Fighter Wing will face many challenges in the next several years, as will the rest of the Air National Guard.

As many of you are aware, we are facing some significant fiscal challenges, as well as the seemingly never ending inspection and air expeditionary force cycle. Although these challenges can feel overwhelming, they also provide us with opportunities to secure our future relevance and continue to prove our value to the state and nation.

Many units outside of New Jersey are feeling the pain of the projected cuts associated with the Fiscal Year 13 President's Budget, but fortunately the 177th has fared relatively well...so far! I believe the reason we have remained largely untouched is based on our mission performance of the past several years and our validated value to the nation's security objectives. Every unit member should remain aware that our continued strong performance in the conduct of our daily missions, inspections and real world

contingency support will be our greatest asset through all of these current and future fiscal challenges.

Many of you have heard me say that although a unit's performance during an inspection is a testament to the *capacity* of an organization, the *true* health of an organization is reflected in how we execute our mission...*daily*. That said, never forget that a unit's *poor* performance during an inspection, or while deployed, has the potential to become a liability for that wing when looking at the potential gain of future mission sets, and the ultimate goal of organizational relevance.

Fortunately, the 177th Fighter Wing enjoys a strong reputation within the Combat Air Forces (CAF) and the ANG based on our past several years' performance. That reputation is a direct result of YOUR hard work and commitment. In the past several years, the 177th has consistently performed at a superior level when compared to our peers throughout the CAF...on a daily basis ("daily excellence"...remember☺). It shows in our inspections, it shows in our AEF performance and it shows in our daily execution. In short, our sustained performance has earned us a strong reputation within the CAF that provides a strong argument for continued mission presence at Atlantic City, as well as a strong position for gaining follow on mission sets. The value of this sustained performance cannot be understated, and it is the *daily* performance of every Airman that provides this strength.

So as we prepare for our next inspection, our next AEF, or for our next daily mission event, I challenge every Airman to recognize that by striving for excellence in your own profession, you are contributing directly to the long term health and sustainability of the 177th Fighter Wing...it is YOUR Wing!

Have a great UTA, and remember as we enter the summer always make Safety your first consideration in any activity you may decide to embark upon!

Sincerely,

KERRY M. GENTRY  
Colonel, NJANG  
Commander



Donna Clementoni, left, New Jersey Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve representative, and Col. Kerry Gentry, 177th Fighter Wing commander, right, present a Seven Seals Award to Capt. David Russo at a Law Enforcement Show of Strength Event in Mays Landing, N.J. May 4. Area mayors and police chiefs signed letters of support at this event, run by the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve office. Russo is a traditional Air National Guardsman, who works full time for the New Jersey State Parole Board, and was recognized for meritorious leadership while serving in the military. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs)





# Lead Where You Stand...

By New Jersey State Command Chief Master Sgt. Michael R. Francis

I want to thank everyone for their hard work and diligence during my time as the State Command Chief; it has brought me great rewards and many challenges. During my tenure, I have attended many post inspection out-briefs and have always been impressed with the inspector's comments on our positive attitudes and excellent results. It is this attitude, along with our shared military values and heritage, that will aid us through the challenging days ahead.

As you move forward through these inspections and deployments take the opportunity to "Lead where you stand." Pick up that rock or bolt, even when it's not a FOD walk, or the piece of paper in the hallway. Point out a job "well done" even if that Soldier or Airman doesn't work for you. Conversely, it is as equally important to discreetly mention when someone's uniform needs attention or their behavior needs adjusting. The act of both encouraging and holding each other accountable demonstrates a level of caring needed in today's complex operating environment.

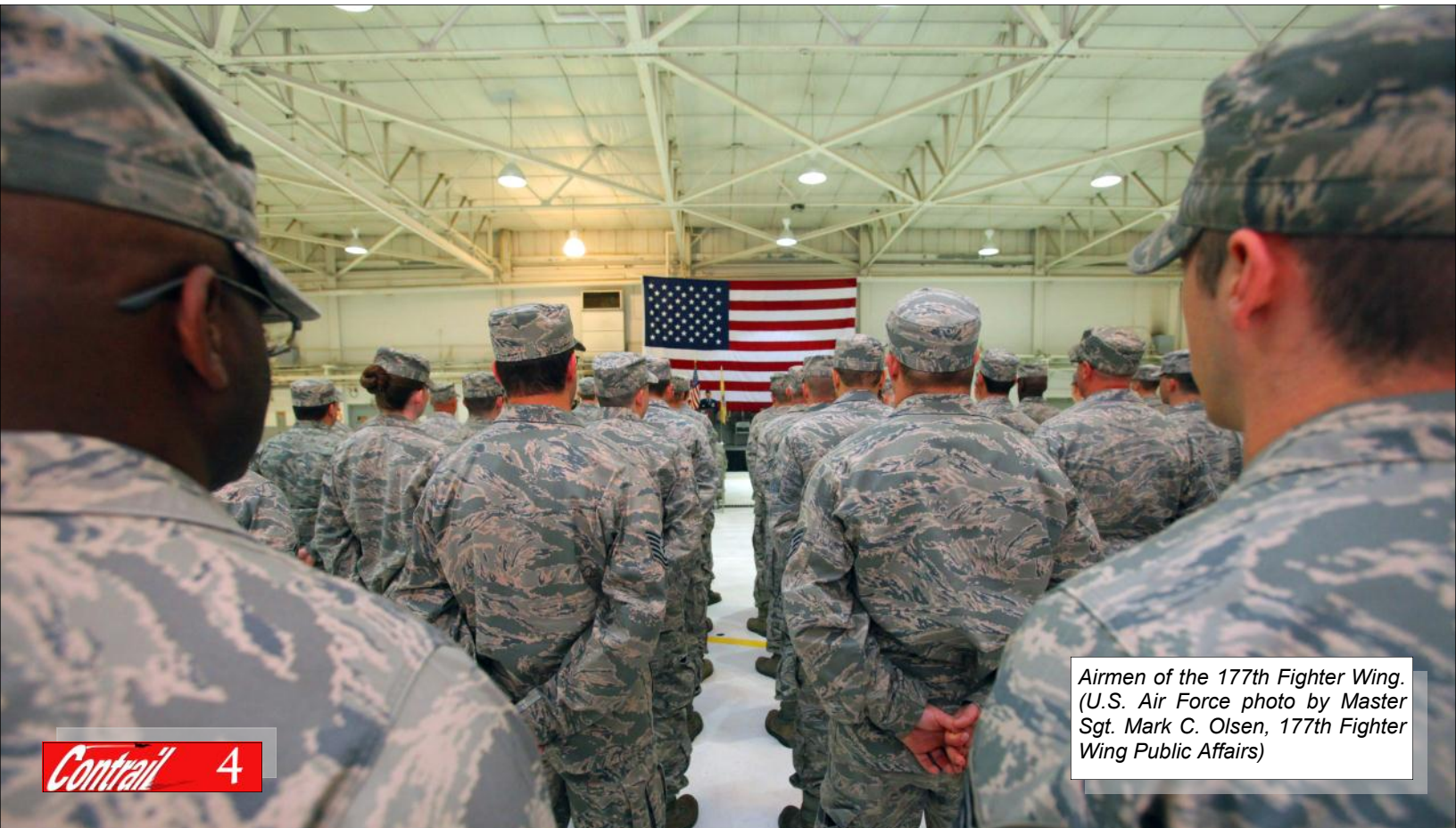
In continuing this level of leading, be active in your professional organizations; they are your direct voice to your elected officials and there is strength in numbers. Continue to work toward your degrees, particularly your Community College of the Air Force. This is crucial to maintaining our "Profession of Arms". I encourage you to always look for ways to improve professionalism and safety. Not only that, make sure to share your ideas with leadership at all levels. The officer - enlisted relationship is time honored and battle proven. This, along with our customs and courtesies has served us well since the days of General Washington and demonstrates the fact that we remain a nation free to exercise our military heritage ac-

ording to our traditions.

In leading where you stand, we cannot forget a few important final thoughts: Don't put off making tough decisions and work with your leadership to officially recognize those that deserve it. It is the little things that often make the biggest difference. Take the time to listen and ask that Soldier or Airman how their day is going. Pay attention, and be prepared to answer their questions. Take the time to listen to your leaders, peers, subordinates and especially to your family?

While leading where you stand isn't that complicated, it can have a tremendous impact. Ken Blanchard and Norman Vincent Peale state in their book, *The Power of Ethical Management*, "Nice guys may appear to finish last, but usually they are running a different race." No one knows what tomorrow may bring, be prepared and be that enlisted professional that leads by running a different race.

With Honor and Sincerity,  
Chief Francis



Airmen of the 177th Fighter Wing. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs)



# KENNEDY TO COMMAND MAINTENANCE

STORY AND PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. MARK C. OLSEN  
177TH FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Col. Kerry M. Gentry, left, commander of the 177th Fighter Wing and former 177th Maintenance Group commander presents the Maintenance Group guidon to Col. Patrick M. Kennedy, right, during the Maintenance Group Change of Command ceremony in the main hangar April 22.

## It's all about expectations and opportunities.

That's what Col. Patrick M. Kennedy, the 177th Fighter Wing's new Maintenance Group commander stressed in his speech during the Change of Command ceremony that took place in the main hangar April 22.

"Here's what you can expect for me; I will work to ensure every member of this organization is treated and feels like a valued member of the group, whether you are an Airman first class in the orderly room; a staff sergeant loading munitions on the flight line or a crew chief sitting alert," said Kennedy. "What you do matters."

"I will work tirelessly to get you the resources you need to perform your duties effectively and efficiently. I will work with complete transparency – or in other words, I will call it as I see it and be clear on my intentions on all issues regarding our personnel."

During the ceremony, former Maintenance Group commander and now Wing commander Col. Kerry M. Gentry handed over command to Kennedy.

Kennedy, the former 108th Wing Maintenance Group commander and a 21-year veteran of the New Jersey Air National Guard, has deployed in support of both Operation's Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in business from Richard Stockton College in 1990 and a year later, received his commission as a second lieutenant.

He also has expectations of his new command.

"I expect us to operate in full compliance all the time - in every facet relating to military duty and aircraft maintenance,"

said Kennedy. "Attention to detail is paramount in our occupation. Each of you are empowered to fix what you see wrong; leave no stone unturned in making our operation the finest it can be."

And with those expectations and opportunities come challenges.


Those challenges include the upcoming Unit Compliance Inspection combined with a Logistics Compliance Assessment Program (LCAP) inspection - a first for Maintenance. The LCAP will target 3,000 different inspection items. In addition, the inspectors are looking at attempting to accomplish 600 personnel evaluations - one for every Maintenance member.

The number of personnel evaluations also shows the difference in organization size. At the 108th, Kennedy commanded more than 330 Airmen; at the 177th that number is almost doubled.

"We have not received an inspection of this magnitude that is specifically concentrated on maintenance tasks," said Kennedy. "It will require a tremendous amount of preparation on our part."

Despite the enormity of the upcoming inspections, Kennedy remains confident. This is based on the Group's ability to succeed regardless of what has been thrown at them.

"The individuals that work in Maintenance never cease to amaze me in mission accomplishments, professionalism and level of performance of duty and dedication," said Kennedy.

"We will capitalize on our previous successes and take the opportunity to redefine how we operate in the future." 



# Wing trains with area first responders

By Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



Members of the South Jersey Transportation Authority Fire Department and Atlantic County Hazardous Materials unit are briefed during an exercise May 10 at the 177th Fighter Wing.

**Emergency response Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing joined forces with South Jersey Transit Authority Fire Department and the Atlantic County Hazardous Materials units in responding to a simulated threat at the wing May 10.**

The responders were faced with the delivery of a simulated letter carrying anthrax spores.

"Having the different agencies respond and operate together creates a force multiplier and ensures emergency responders can work in concert to resolve threatening situations," said Exercise Evaluation Team Chief, Lt. Col. Jesse Arnstein. "The exercise revealed some areas for us to improve upon, as well as demonstrated the excellent capabilities of our Airmen."

These operations familiarize and combine skill sets of military and civilian emergency personnel and also identify any potential problem areas. This combined approach will help reduce or eliminate any danger to people and property.

"At the same time, we want to ensure that the flying mission will continue during terrorist threats and attacks to our base," said Arnstein.

By coordinating before exercises and practicing during the actual scenario, the Wing can learn lessons that will enable it to improve and refine joint operations and be better prepared to effectively respond and operate during real-world emergency events.

"I'm pleased to see that the situation was resolved in a professional and cooperative manner, which gives me confidence that we can protect our citizens and military personnel if similar real-world events were to arise," said Arnstein. "The response was effective, thorough and timely." 🇺🇸



Master Sgt. Donald Meddings, right, 177th Security Forces Squadron, is checked out by Emergency Medical Technicians from the South Jersey Transportation Authority.



# HRF EVALUATED



Security Forces Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing and the 108th Wing along with New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers participated at the Homeland Response Force (HRF) External Evaluation at Oriskany, N.Y. May 17. HRF is a part of the larger Department of Defense Chemical, Biological, Radiological (CBRN) and Nuclear enterprise developed to improve the Nation's ability to respond to large-scale CBRN incidents (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs)



# NEW STATE COMMAND CHIEF ANNOUNCED

By Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The wait is over, Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) has announced that Command Chief Master Sgt. Vincent Morton will become the New Jersey State Command Chief Master Sergeant.

Morton is the current command chief master sergeant for the 108th Wing.

A Change of Authority ceremony will take place at 1 p.m. June 9 at JFHQ.

As state command chief, Morton will be responsible for advising the adjutant general and the commander of the New Jersey Air National Guard on mission effectiveness, professional development, military readiness, training, utilization, health, morale, and welfare of the command's enlisted Airmen and how to take action to address shortfalls or challenges.

A board which was comprised of Maj. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson, commander, New Jersey Air National Guard; Col. Wayne McCaughey, Chief of Staff - Air; State Command Chief Master Sgt. Michael Francis and State Command Sgt. Maj. Jerome Jenkins reviewed the candidates and made their recommendations to the Adjutant General Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff.

Morton began his military career in 1979 when he entered the United States Air Force. After basic training and the Security Police Academy at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, he was assigned to the 45th Missile Support Squadron at Ellsworth AFB, S.D., where he served on security escort team, camper alert team and as a fire team leader.

In December 1982, Morton was assigned to Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, and worked in support of F-111 Aardvark aircraft alert, weapons storage area supervisor and quality control evaluator. In 1986, he was involved in United States bombing of Libya, code-named Operation El Dorado Canyon, which was carried out in response to the 1986 Berlin discotheque bombing. He separated from active military service after returning to the United States in 1987.

In 1989, Morton enlisted in the New Jersey Air National Guard in the 170th Security Police in support of KC-135E aircraft and air base defense.

A year later, Morton deployed to Moron Air Base, Spain in support of Operation Desert Shield. He was subsequently mobilized in support of Operation Desert Storm and assigned to Minot AFB, N.D. in 1991.


Following the merger of the 108th Tactical Fighter Wing with the 170th Air Refueling Group to form the 108th Air Refueling Wing in 1991, Morton was assigned as the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Security Police training section, flight sergeant, security police operations superintendent and the security force manager. During that period he



deployed in support of Operations' Deliberate Guard and Southern Watch.

Immediately following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Morton was mobilized in support of Operations' Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom. During his mobilization for Operation Noble Eagle, Morton served as the Air Guard Security Force liaison for Air Mobility Command gained security force units at Scott AFB, Ill. Later on he was assigned as the detainee movement operation NCOIC at Fort Dix, N.J. where he coordinated and participated in detainee movement teams to numerous foreign destinations.

During Operation Katrina he deployed in support of local law enforcement in New Orleans.

From April to October 2010 Morton served as the 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group Superintendent at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom where he was awarded the Bronze Star. 



# CJCS sexual assault prevention response

Commentary by Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff



## WASHINGTON (AFPS) -- Commanders and Leaders of the Armed Forces:

Sexual assault crimes strike at the health, welfare and dignity of our service members and undermine the readiness of our Force. As military professionals we must fully understand the destructive nature

of these acts, lead our focused efforts to prevent them, and promote positive command climates and environments that reinforce mutual respect, trust and confidence.

Sexual assault among Servicemembers is a problem we face together, one that can only be solved together. In doing so, we will Keep Faith with Our Military Family -- they should expect nothing less, and Renew Our Commitment to the Profession of Arms -- we should demand nothing less.

Strategic Direction released today is written for commanders and leaders to improve awareness of sexual assaults, operationalize our commitment, and facilitate dialogue and open communications across our formations.

The Joint Chiefs and Commandant of the Coast Guard, together with our DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program (SAPR) professionals, penned this guidance

to synchronize those efforts. Together, we will operationalize the concerted efforts of the DoD SAPR Office and our Service programs with renewed commitment to eliminate sexual assault crimes within our ranks.

Commanders and leaders at every level must integrate the intent, lines of effort and tenets of this Strategic Direction as a part of our daily command routines and activities. We must take conscious steps to understand, identify and reduce environmental risks, predatory and high-risk behaviors and personal vulnerabilities associated with sexual assaults or other abuse crimes.

It is up to you, as commanders and leaders, to safeguard our core values and Service cultures by promoting a climate and environment that incorporates SAPR principles as habitual and inherent characteristics of our commands.

Commanders and leaders must personally read, understand and implement this strategy. We are fully committed to supporting your efforts to put this Strategic Direction into action and operationalize SAPR within your commands across the Joint Force. We will set the conditions for you to take positive actions that reinvigorate our military culture and create command climates and environments based on mutual respect, trust and confidence.

You have our respect, trust and confidence. 🇺🇸

**The  
ENEMY  
is listening**

**He wants to know  
what you know**

**KEEP IT TO YOURSELF**

Military Intelligence Division, War Department  
Office of Naval Intelligence, Navy Department  
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice

a careless word



...another cross



a careless word...

A NEEDLESS LOSS

**HOWEVER  
YOU SAY  
IT**

**OPSEC  
SAVES  
LIVES**

## How to bolster OPSEC integrity

- Ensure all people listening have a "need to know" of any information you could be talking about.
- Don't talk shop while off duty - you could be giving out information to people that don't have a "need to know".
- Use secure communication.
- Don't discuss critical information over unsecured phones, e-mail or in unsecured environments.
- Report the unusual.

· If someone you don't know is asking you questions concerning your job, the materials you work with or other information that makes you feel uncertain, do not answer! Seek guidance and report it!

The Air Force Office of Special Investigations has created the Eagle Eyes program to facilitate the gathering of key indicators at a central point. A series of unusual events can be connected to create a picture of a potential plan to collect intelligence, exploit personnel, or even strike against us.

The 24-hour number for Eagle Eyes is (609) 761-6222. 🇺🇸





# NEWS AIRMEN CAN USE



## Annual dental exam

The annual dental exam will be completed by your civilian dentist.

Get a DD Form 2813 and have your dentist complete the form and return it to the clinic. Questions call 761-6240.

## Contrail Photos

Contrail photos are at the Y Drive.

You can copy them by either typing or copying and pasting the following link:

Y:\177 FW HEADQUARTERS ELECTRONIC FILE PLANS\177FW PA ELECTRONIC FILE PLAN\00 - Items to be filed\PA\2012 Images.

Photos are categorized by month.

## Veterans Retraining Assistance Program

From the United States Department of Veterans Affairs

In an effort to reduce veteran unemployment, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 was passed and signed into law last November. Included in this new law is the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) for unemployed 35 to 60 year old veterans, which will begin on July 1, 2012 – VA will begin accepting applications on May 15, 2012.

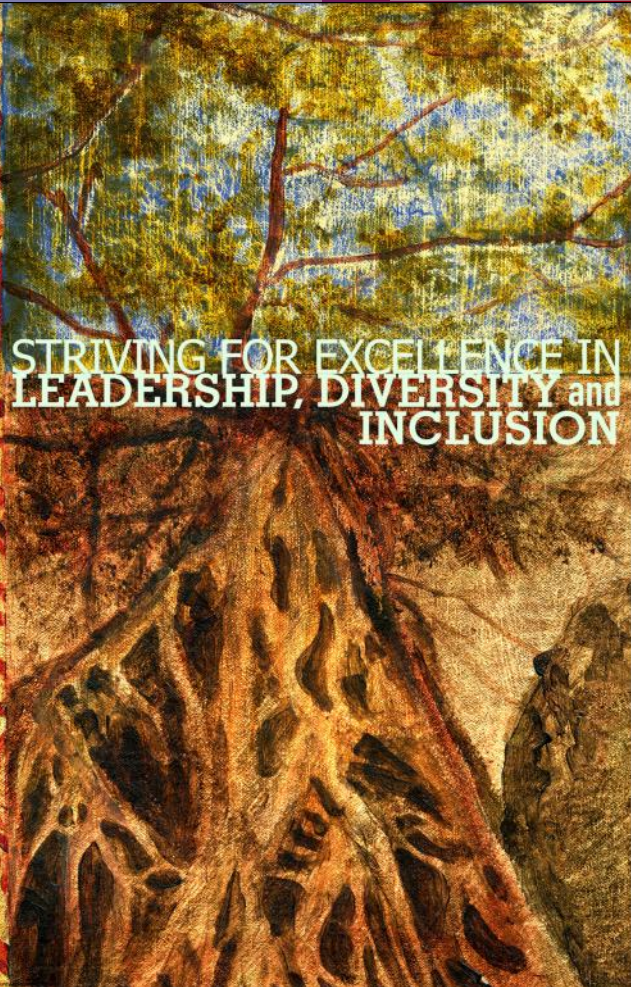
VRAP offers 12 months of training assistance to 99,000 unemployed Veterans who are at least 35 years old but no older than 60. Eligible participants will receive up to 12 months of training assistance at the full-time payment rate under the Montgomery GI Bill–Active Duty program (currently \$1,473 per month). DOL will offer employment assistance to every veteran who participates or applies to the VRAP program. You can learn more about VRAP at <http://benefits.va.gov/vow/education.htm>.

Please visit: [http://gibill.va.gov/benefits/other\\_programs/vrap\\_email\\_signup.html](http://gibill.va.gov/benefits/other_programs/vrap_email_signup.html).

You will be prompted to provide your first name, last name, and email address. Once submitted you can expect to receive six to seven emails about VRAP, including notification on when applications open.

If you have any technical problems with the link or the image please email the VA at [225D.VBACO@VA.GOV](mailto:225D.VBACO@VA.GOV) for support. Detailed information on VOW and VRAP is also available at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/VOW>.

NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN / PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH



STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP, DIVERSITY and INCLUSION

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

# MAY

# 2012

*Mentorship...plant the seeds for future success today.*

- ✓ Observe Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
- ✓ Volunteer/Recruit Members

*A hundred times everyday I remind myself that my inner and outer life depend on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving.*

*- Albert Einstein*



# Remembering roots

By 2nd Lt. Jason S. Ram, 479th Flying Training Group

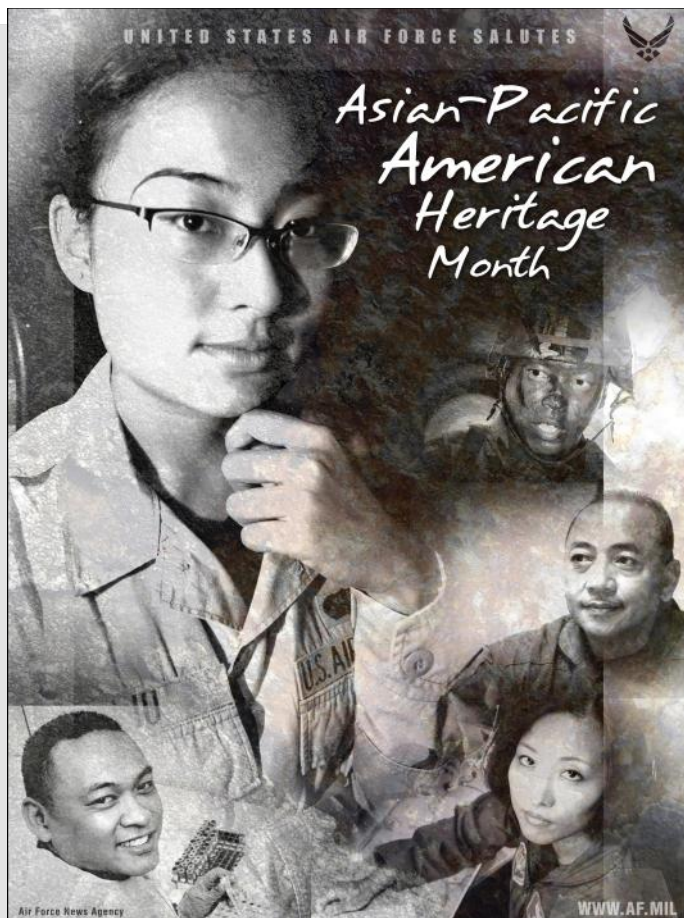
NAVAL AIR STATION PENSACOLA, Fla. -- I've always been taught to "never doubt your-self in the face of adversity." That to do so would, over time, kill all the potential you have been given in life. With this in mind, I would like to think I have not injured myself too much on my journey to become what I once thought was impossible, an officer in the Air Force - a small stepping stone for me, but the tip of an iceberg for the aspirations of three other Americans originally from a rural jungle village some 5,498 miles from home; my family.

I was born to traditional Indian parents native to the Fiji Islands, raised in Southern California by the wisdom of MTV and well versed in English with a decent tongue for Hindi and Spanish - the latter due to a lifetime of being tirelessly mistaken as such. I suppose I can understand how I'm considered to be Asian, South-Asian, American-Indian, East-Indian, Pacific Islander or just plain "other" in the box whenever

I got frustrated or confused with employee applications, since I always identified myself as "American" growing up but never found this option available in the paperwork for afterschool jobs. Ultimately it took witnessing an act of murder to find my identity years later.

My parents, Premilla and Siri, drew from a culture where gender inequality and division of social class were the norms. They met for the first time on their wedding day per the rules of arranged marriage (Mom didn't have a choice) and were expected to live a simple, rural life. Instead, they decided to take a chance and migrate to the states shortly after my sister was born and five years before yours truly came into the picture. While life was not easy for any of us in Los Angeles, my parents did everything they could to ensure my sister and I recognized all the opportunity around us. Siri worked a variety of jobs to make ends meet while Premilla served as a fulltime mother and factory worker for a small bridal company in downtown LA. Although regarded as naïve and timid by some, Mom never seemed to doubt herself and worked hard to eventually become the most successful female in the family; personifying perseverance in my eyes as a child.

Still, even with this in mind, I did not see my future beyond ordinary until walking into homeroom as a chubby 16-year-old Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2001 and watched the attacks unfold live on CNN. Before this day, I had no idea what I wanted to do in



life other than write a novel and maybe work in Hollywood if I was lucky. However, as I sat there glued to my desk, hands trembling and in utter silence amidst sporadic screams by teachers scattered about, everything I once thought I'd likely become suddenly changed to everything I would now fight to become from that day forward. By the end of the week, I outlined three goals I wanted to achieve at some point in my life:


1. Lead a career dedicated to the service of others.
2. Identify and embrace how my family's roots tie into my own as an American.
3. Develop my own take on "the American Dream" just as my parents did years before.

Although I did not have a clue about how any of this could be done at the time, I refused to believe that they were beyond my reach. Motivated by a newfound drive I discovered deep within, I was absolutely determined - now more than ever - to achieve these goals at any cost and do my part to honor those I saw die in New York.

Ten years later, dawned in full service dress uniform with my hands trembling just as they did on 9/11, I stood before a select crowd of friends, family, coworkers, cadets and Masonic brethren while an ROTC instructor read my commissioning biography as I prepared to "cross into the blue" as a 2nd Lieutenant. Less chubby, more focused and with eyes locked at attention, I reflected on the journey I took to get to that moment in time.

"...while a fulltime student, Jason consistently worked overnight security jobs in order to pay for tuition out of pocket and graduate college debt free..."

And then it hit me; the moment I noticed mom's face beam with gold, my sister sit-up straight and my once emotionless father cry for the first time in human history as the end of the script neared.

"While born and raised in the United States, Jason's cultural roots draw back to the South Pacific as his family comes from the Fiji Islands and belong to the Hindu faith." 

**Editor's Note:** May is Asian Pacific-American Heritage Month. Lieutenant Ram is currently stationed with the 479th Flying Training Group at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla. The 479th FTG is the 12th Flying Training Wing's geographically separated unit and conducts combat systems officer training for the Air Force.





Air Force News Agency

# MEMORIAL DAY

REMEMBER



[WWW.AF.MIL](http://WWW.AF.MIL)