

# Heartland WARRIOR

Volume 17, Issue 4

April 2012

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This Air Force Reserve online magazine is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services, family, and friends of Grissom Air Reserve Base.

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## On the cover...

Master Sgt. Eric Saddlemire, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron KC-135R Stratotanker crew chief, is embraced by his daughter Riley after returning to Grissom from a deployment March 2. Several 434th Air Refueling Wing Airmen returned to their families and friends after being deployed for several months. For more photos see Page 4. (U.S. Air Force photo/ Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays)

# Jackson to lead AFRC

Maj. Gen. James Jackson has been nominated for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general and for assignment as chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command.

Jackson's nomination by President Barack Obama was announced by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta March 20.

The general is currently serving as deputy to the chief of Air Force Reserve in the Pentagon, a role he has held since May 2010.

Jackson is a 1978 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He completed more than 14 years in the regular Air Force, including flying tours in Europe and the Pacific, before joining the Air Force Reserve in 1992.

General Jackson has held numerous wing leadership and command positions, as well as staff assignments at Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, Headquarters U.S. Pacific Command and Headquarters U.S. Air Force.

A career instructor pilot and evaluator, Jackson also flew combat support missions during operations Deny Flight and Allied Force.

General Jackson served as mobilization assistant and also Commander, Air Force Doctrine Center, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.



Maj. Gen. James Jackson

Prior to his current assignment, he was the mobilization assistant to the Commander, 8th Air Force, Barksdale AFB, La., and Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb.

The general is a command pilot with more than 3,600 hours in the F-4 Phantom, F-16 Fighting Falcon and KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft.

Jackson's nomination is subject to Senate confirmation. (Courtesy AFRC Public Affairs)

## AF Deputy JAG visits Grissom

The Grissom legal office made a motion of a good impression as the number two Air Force lawyer visited the base March 20-22.

Maj. Gen. Steven Lepper, Air Force Deputy Judge Advocate General, visited Grissom examining the combined 434th Air Refueling Wing and 951st Reserve Support Squadron legal office.

Per Article 6 of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice, The JAG of the Air Force, or delegated members of his staff, is supposed to routinely inspect field units. This visit accomplished that requirement and also gave Lepper a chance to see first-hand the many successful

practices in place here.

"We highlighted JAG-paralegal teaming and how both offices work together as a team," said Senior Master Sgt. Wes Marion, 434th ARW law office superintendent. "I think we did really well."

The legal office was not only happy the visit went well, but that they had the chance to sit down with one of the Air Force's top leaders.

"It's always an honor to have one of our leaders come see what we do and meet with us individually," said Capt. Maria Delimata, 434th ARW Deputy Staff Judge Advocate. (Courtesy 434th ARW Public Affairs)

# Grissom to lose reserve, full-time positions in FY13

Air Force force structure changes will cause Grissom to lose a total of four part-time drilling reservist positions and nine full-time positions in Fiscal Year 2013.

The full-time positions will come from a mix of air reserve technicians and straight civilian employees, and the exact positions are still being identified.

The Air Force Reserve announced about 3,000 job changes on March 6 that will realign affected reservists into growing new career fields and help the total force reduce manning by 9,900 Airmen in FY 13, which starts Oct. 2012.

"We expect to lower the majority of our manning numbers through normal attrition and reduced recruiting accessions," said Lt. Gen. Charles Stenner Jr., chief of Air Force Reserve at the Pentagon. "As we do this, we're realigning our people into the missions that we expect to endure or be new areas of growth in the future."

Besides the reduction of 900 Air Force Reservists, the Air Force plans to decrease by 3,900 active duty Airmen and 5,100 Air National Guard Airmen. These manning cuts are part of the Air Force's force structure changes to align with the president's FY13 budget plan presented to Congress on Feb. 13.

Faced with austere budget times, the Air Force is refocusing and reducing the size of its forces to comply with DOD's new



**Grissom will lose four part-time drilling reservist positions and nine full-time positions in Fiscal Year 2013 according to an announcement made by the Air Force Reserve Command March 6. (U.S. Air Force graphic/Sylvia Saab)**

defense strategy and the Budget Control Act's requirements to cut \$487 billion from the defense budget over the next 10 years.

The Air Force's share is about \$54 billion and Air Force leaders plan to save \$8.7 billion in FY13.

"We need reservists in every Air Force career specialty in order to fulfill the nation's need for cost-effective and efficient daily operations as well as a ready global surge capability," said Stenner. "As people face career and life changing plans, we want them to know that the Air Force Reserve offers them an opportunity to continue to serve."

As the manning changes take effect, they will cause reservists to move or commute as their old jobs get realigned to new growth areas such as: nuclear, space, cyberspace, special operations, training, intelligence, surveillance, and

reconnaissance career fields.

"We're going to do everything we can to take care of our people," said Stenner. "We want to offer our civilians, reservists, and Airmen getting off of active duty, an opportunity to stay on the Air Force team - to become or stay a reservist, an 'Airman for life.'"

One of the biggest changes for the Air Force Reserve Command is the planned closure of the 911th Airlift Wing, Pittsburgh Air Reserve Station, Pa. If the 911th AW is deactivated as planned, the Pittsburgh ARS is expected to close. However, the Pittsburgh Air National Guard Base is planned to remain operational.

Officials at Air Force Reserve Command have assistance programs to help civilians and Reservists affected by these changes to find new jobs.

Traditional Reservists, Enlisted Air Reserve

Technicians and Civil Servants are encouraged to register in the AFRC Clearing House for job placement elsewhere in the command.

Officer Air Reserve Technicians are managed through the ART Officer Career Management Program office and can call for job assistance.

Civil Servants faced with a move due to organizational restructuring will receive hiring preferences for DOD job vacancies through the Priority Placement Program.

All displaced Civil Servants are eligible for the DOD's Interagency Career Assistance Transition Program that gives them special selection priority in other government agencies.

Officials plan to announce details on further assistance programs as information becomes available. Force shaping programs may be offered if officials deem them necessary to facilitate the planned force structure changes.

Air Force plans call for the Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve to be deactivated in FY13. The 45 active duty Airmen currently assigned to the Air Force Reserve Command headquarters at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., will be reassigned to other active duty bands.

In order for the planned manning reductions to take effect, the FY13 budget must be approved by Congress and signed into law by the president.

*(Story courtesy Air Force Reserve Command Public Affairs)*



# WELCOME HOME: 434th ARW Airmen redeploy



Grissom Airmen return home to the base March 2 after being deployed for several months.



Riley Saddlemire, waves and American flag as she watches a KC-135 return to Grissom, with her dad, Master Sgt. Eric Saddlemire, on board. Saddlemire is a KC-135 crew chief with the 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.



Abby Hobson, niece of Tech. Sgt. Scott Bardonner, holds up a sign welcoming back Grissom Airmen who returned from a deployment March 2. (U.S. Air Force photos/Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays)



Friends and family members of returning Airmen celebrate as their loved ones come home from a deployment March 2.

# Grissom rotates 'shirts' for fresh perspective

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner  
Public Affairs staff

Any fashionista can preach the value of switching up a wardrobe, but far more important than having a fresh new look, Grissom made some changes recently to provide fresh new perspectives.

The 434th Air Refueling Wing recently rotated positions in the first sergeant community here, affecting eight of the 11 first sergeant positions.

A U.S. Air Force first sergeant, often referred to as 'first shirt' or 'shirt,' works directly for a unit commander and serves as a critical link with a unit's enlisted members, ensuring they understand commander policies, goals and objectives as well being the commander's advisor on personnel programs, career progression, family needs, financial matters, education, recognition programs and any additional needs required by the commander.

Shortly after becoming the 434th ARW command chief last year, Chief Master Sgt. Karen Perkins said she saw that many of Grissom's first sergeants had been in the same positions for many years and wanted to move things around for the benefit of both the shirts and their units.

"This gives everyone a fresh perspective as we all can get used to doing things a certain way and



The 434th Air Refueling Wing recently rotated positions in the first sergeant community here, affecting eight of the 11 first sergeant positions. (U.S. Air Force graphic/Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner)

get stale in our positions," she explained. "We looked at the needs of the first sergeants, the needs of the units, the needs of this wing and how those all fit with the needs of the Air Force as a whole."

The chief said the main goal of the move was to put the right first sergeant in the right unit where they were needed most.

"Every first sergeant has their unique strengths and experiences, and this helps move those strengths around to where they are needed,"

she added.

A former first sergeant herself, Chief Perkins is the functional manager for Grissom's shirts and said one of her biggest goals was to help the first sergeants reach their career goals.

"The whole goal was to set these folks up for their future," she said. "One of the things the command looks at is who has stepped outside their career field and tried to broaden their experiences."

To gain a better understanding of each shirt's career goals and to make the best decision for all involved, the command chief made sure the first sergeants had input in her decision and conferred with all the commanders affected for their input on the moves as well.

"I sat down with every first sergeant and asked them their goals and where they wanted to go," Perkins explained. "Well this person said they wanted to be a chief, and this person wanted to make senior (master sergeant) and be a superintendent, so I took that information and tried to help set them up to attain their career goals."

With the dust settled, the first sergeants are all in their new units.

## 434th ARW first sergeants by unit

Below is a listing of the 11 first sergeant positions and the 'shirts' that fill them after a recent shift designed to bring fresh perspective to the first sergeant ranks. Eight of the positions were affected by the move.

- 49th Aerial Port Flight - Master Sgt. Matthew Eastburn
- 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron - Master Sgt. James Malloy
- 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron - Chief Master Sgt. Sandra Dye
- 434th Civil Engineer Squadron - Master Sgt. Dean Regazzi
- 434th Communications Squadron - Master Sgt. William Hurley
- 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron - Master Sgt. Brian Rude
- 434th Maintenance Operations Flight - Master Sgt. Geoffrey Spaulding
- 434th Maintenance Squadron - Senior Master Sgt. Matthew Zahradka
- 434th Mission Support Group/Wing Staff - Master Sgt. Vincent Culbreath
- 434th Operations Support Squadron - Master Sgt. Leslie Nance
- 434th Security Forces Squadron - Master Sgt. Tonya Gonzales



# McIntosh earns Airman of the Year award

From the start of their military careers, Air Force recruits are taught the title "Airman" is earned and not given, making the honor of being named "Airman of the Year" all the more special to one of Grissom's own.

And, just as he earned the title of Airman in BMT, Senior Airman Justin McIntosh earned the title of 434th Air Refueling Wing Airman of the Year 2011 through hard work and dedication to his country, his service and himself.

Part of what set McIntosh, an aerial port journeyman with the 49th Aerial Port Flight here, at the top of the list for the annual award was his recent deployment to the Transit Center at Manas, Kyrgyzstan.

During this deployment, which was his first, McIntosh was heavily involved a troop surge, where he helped move a record setting 55,000 personnel and over 4,200 short tons from around the world into Afghanistan.

"I'm not big into history, but as far as the surge went, that's the biggest one we've done, so it was great to be a part of that," explained McIntosh. "I got an insane amount of experience and it was really cool for my first deployment to be historic."

During the same deployment, the aerial porter was also involved with three Angel Missions, which are special transport missions that return fallen U.S. troops home.

"It was an honor to be part of them and bring them home," recalled McIntosh. "It was hum-



Senior Airman Justin McIntosh, was named the 434th Air Refueling Wing Airman of the Year 2011. (U.S. Air Force photo illustration/Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner)

bling to my core, knowing that life is so precious, and seeing somebody lay their life down for a bigger cause makes you think about what you really signed up for."

And, it is all of his deployment experiences that he credits for being able to do his job so well.

"I had just came out of (technical training) school, and it was all brand new, so it was the first time I really got hands-on with the job," he elaborated. "Getting my first deployment under my belt was rewarding and challenging at the same time."

That experience is what Master Sgt. Laurie Latchaw, 49th APF deputy superintendent, said has helped make McIntosh so invaluable to her unit.

"He works hard, and anything I have asked him to complete, he's completed ahead of schedule, or at the latest, on time," said Latchaw. "He definitely stands out amongst his peers.

"There's no hesitation with him," she added. "He's very effective -- he's a smooth operator."

That effectiveness is

what also earned McIntosh the responsibility of managing the 49th APF flightline driving program, which he completely revamped according to his nomination package.

"As soon as I got back, they put me in charge of flightline driving training, which is critical to our job," explained McIntosh. "Because of my deployment, I was able to give those I trained a little more about what would be expected of them."

However, McIntosh wasn't awarded the honor just for his deployment and superior work ethic. Both his community involvement and his commitment to self improvement helped garner him the award.

McIntosh completed his military coursework two months ahead of schedule and is currently working on complete his Bachelor of Science degree along with a Community College of the Air Force degree and maintains a 3.7 grade point average.

"Life's all about learning," he explained about his commitment to education. "Life-long learning is

the greatest thing anybody can do for themselves"

On top of all his military accomplishments, the Indianapolis native is also involved with both his Grissom and local communities. He frequently volunteered for Yellow Ribbon events on base and helped coach a local youth basketball team.

"I grew up playing basketball, and it was great for me," said McIntosh as he explained his desire to coach a team of his own. "It helped me grow up and kept me out of the streets, so I wanted to give back and help those guys."

Despite his numerous accomplishments, accolades and positions of responsibility, those who work closely with McIntosh said he has been able to stay grounded.

"He's a very humble and modest person... but he's a go-getter," remarked Latchaw.

Maj. Michael Schaefer, 49th APF commander, agreed.

"McIntosh possesses a boundless initiative and drive that is seen through his professionalism and humble desire to learn from all situations," said Schaefer.

In keeping with his humble track record, when asked about what it meant to be awarded such a prestigious honor McIntosh turned the focus on to those with whom he served.

"It means a lot to me because it shows off the training others gave me," he said. "It shows off the guys above me and how good they are at training me." (Courtesy 434th ARW Public Affairs)

# Afghanistan vet named NCO of the Year

**Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner**

*Public Affairs staff*

Embodying the Airman's Creed, one of Grissom's Operation Enduring Freedom veterans was named the 434th Air Refueling Wing Noncommissioned Officer of the Year for 2011.

Tech. Sgt. Travis Stephens, a 434th Security Forces fire team leader, was awarded this honor based on his leadership and performance both at home and during war, along with his commitment to self-improvement and his community.

*"I am an American Airman. I am a warrior. I have answered my nation's call..."*

Answering his nation's call, Stephens voluntarily deployed to Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan, where he first served as a patrolman for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force and was later handpicked to be the NCO in charge of security forces logistics.

"I volunteered because I wanted to do the job I was trained to do," explained Stephens. "I'm not Rambo, but I like doing my job, and I felt like I was playing my part."

In his logistics role alone, Stephens managed over \$15.5 million of mission-critical equipment and improved vehicle readiness from 30 percent to over 80 percent.

"Where I'm from you get the job done," said the former Army Soldier who joined the Air Force Reserve in 2007 after a 10-year break in service. "I was able to use my Army experience to work with the guys from the 10th Mountain Division to get our stuff fixed.

"I'd help them out and they'd help me out; it's a symbiotic relationship," he elaborated. "I felt at home dealing with the Army and getting stuff done; I loved it, man, I loved it."

And, getting those vehicles back in running order was extremely important to the unit's mission effectiveness, a point proven by his award of a Joint Service Commendation Medal.

*"I am an American Airman. My mission is to fly, fight, and win. I am faithful to a proud heritage, a tradition of honor, and a legacy of valor..."*

While his role as the logistics NCOIC was what Stephens referred to as one of his greatest successes while deployed, he initially distinguished himself by facing danger head-on as a security forces patrolman, a job he said he loved doing.

"I love getting down and dirty, and this wasn't a typical Air Force security forces deployment where you sit in a tower or guard a gate," he explained. "This was actual law enforcement where we got to be police officers."

On top of his normal law enforcement patrol duties, the Phoenix Raven qualified Airman also responded to seven rocket attacks, two unexploded ordnance events



**Tech. Sgt. Travis Stephens, who recently served in Afghanistan, was named the 434th Air Refueling Wing Noncommissioned Officer of the Year 2011. (U.S. Air Force photo illustration/Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner)**

and two perimeter probes by enemy forces.

*"I am an American Airman. Guardian of freedom and justice, my nation's sword and shield, its sentry and avenger. I defend my Country with my life..."*

According to his nomination package, Stephens's actions helped safeguard over 30,000 NATO troops, 5,000 of which he was directly responsible for evacuating during an indirect fire attack that left one dead and 18 wounded.

"I'm not afraid to put my neck on the line when it comes to protecting someone, just like every other security forces member on our deployment" he said.

The Grissom NCO was also responsible for securing and investigating a base perimeter breach in which it was determined U.S. supplies were being stolen by terrorist forces.

Stephens also discovered three unsecured 240B machine guns and 8,000 rounds of ammunition, and was able to secure them before they could fall into enemy hands.

*"I am an American Airman. Wingman, leader, warrior. I will never leave an Airman behind..."*

Wanting to always be prepared and capable of helping a fellow warrior, Stephens successfully completed the U.S. Army combat lifesavers course and also was certified as a self-aid and buddy care instructor for the Air Force. He is now responsible for training over 150 security forces Airmen at Grissom with these invaluable lifesaving skills

*"I will never falter, and I will not fail."*

With his many war-time accomplishments, it should come as no shock that the Grissom NCO is committed to improving himself and his community.

Described in his package as a "selfless volunteer," Stephens served both his U.S. and deployed

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**See 'NCO' page 9**



# AMDS 'shirt' awarded wing top honor

By Lt. Col. Gary Lockard

Public Affairs staff

Master Sgt. James Malloy was recently selected as the 434th Air Refueling Wing First Sergeant of the Year 2011.

Malloy was the 434th Communications Squadron first sergeant prior to assuming his current role in the 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron. During this time he also volunteered his time as the superintendent of the 434th ARW Seasoning Training Flight.

"This award is really about the supervisors I've been blessed to have who brought me up and put me in a position of success," stated the 23-year veteran of the Air Force in discussing his award.

It was Malloy's accomplishments while assigned to the 434th STF that paved the way for his selection as first sergeant of the year.

The STF consists of Airmen who have graduated from technical training school and voluntarily remain on temporary active duty to receive on-the-job training that accelerates their advancement to the next skill level.

"Through the evolution of the Air Force, we're always going to do bigger and better things," explained Malloy. "It's exciting to see someone come from technical training school and see what they may be capable of in the future."

The majority of those assigned to the STF are new to the Air Force and

Malloy mentored more than 75 Airmen during their initial tour of duty at Grissom. The first sergeant ensured they completed stringent physical fitness and training requirements.

"My greatest rewards come from helping people out on things like their fitness test," he explained. "There have been several people I ran with during their test to encourage them along the way, and it's extremely rewarding when you know what you've done to help them out is appreciated and you've brought the best out of them."

While the Airmen in the 434th STF benefited from Malloy's leadership, he also learned valuable lessons from them.

"It goes hand in hand; anytime you work with

people, they build up your skills enabling you to do more," he explained. "My time as the STF director helped me as a first sergeant, and my experience as a first sergeant definitely helped me as the STF director."

In addition to his work with the 434th STF, Malloy was lauded for his first sergeant duties with the 434th CS, which included preparation for a compliance inspection, management of the unit's family care plan, organizing unit morale events and serving as a liaison between the 434th CS commander and the squadron's enlisted force.

An avid runner who logged more than 1,100 miles last year, Malloy is currently working towards a degree in criminal justice through both the Community College

of the Air Force and Lansing Community College. He has completed leadership and management courses in association with his civilian occupation with the Michigan Department of Corrections and has volunteered his time to assist with Grissom's First Sergeant Council, Enlisted Development Plan Board, Kokomo Disabled Veterans and the International Circus Hall of Fame in Peru, Ind.

Malloy summarized his personal philosophy by stating, "Being in the Air Force is a constant improvement process, and we should always strive to improve ourselves. Take ownership of what you do because it makes your time in the Air Force more enjoyable and sets you up for getter success."



Master Sgt. James Malloy, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron first sergeant and former 434th Seasoning Training Flight director, was named the 434th Air Refueling Wing First Sergeant of the Year 2011. (U.S. Air Force photo illustration/Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner)

Heartland Warrior



# Grissom holds Wingman Day to improve wellbeing



Master Sgt. Cindy Webb places a blindfold on Chief Master Sgt. William Somers, both members of the 434th Force Support Squadron, as she gets ready to guide him through an obstacle course as part of a Wingman Day exercise held March 4.



Tech. Sgt. Danielle Taylor, left, guides Senior Airman Amanda White through an obstacle course set up at the fitness center. Both are members of the 434th Force Support Squadron. (U.S. Air Force photos/Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays)

**By Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Grissom Airmen were able to sharpen their resolve and improve their resiliency during a Wingman Day held here March 4.

Alison Duncan, 434th Air Refueling Wing social worker, said the training provided Airmen with not just the tools to take care of themselves, but also those useful in

helping others.

To highlight the importance of this training, wing leadership had Airmen across the base stand down and participate in three-hour training sessions led by Airmen from each squadron.

During these sessions Airmen learned how to deal with stress and how to recognize someone who's reaching their stress limit with training focused on the four quad-

rants of wellness, which include physical, social, mental and spiritual wellbeing.

Facilitators across base also stressed the importance of preventing mishaps and having good situational awareness.

The training culminated with a team building scenarios and discussions aimed to help members focus on communication and connecting with others.

## **NCO**, from page 7

communities.

At home, he was an assistant coach for a Hoke County High School, N.C., girls golf team, assisted in a church donation drive and was an active member for his local Veterans of Foreign Wars post where he volunteered in the community and assisted disabled veterans. Stephens took his community involvement with him when he deployed and volunteered at the Kandahar Airfield USO as well.

On top of all the above Stephens remained focused on bettering himself as he simultaneously pursued a bachelor's degree and Community College of the Air Force associate's degree.

Despite his many accomplishments and accolades, the security forces NCO said he shies away from the spotlight, although he will speak his mind when it comes to the military and leadership.

"I think there are many people deserving of that

award, but it's nice to get noticed," said Stephens. "I don't think I'm anything exceptional; I just do my job the best way I know how."

And doing the job as an NCO is something he said he takes seriously.

"It's your job as an NCO to conduct yourself as such, so your troops can look up to you and learn from you," he elaborated. "You learn from your troops, and they learn from you."

In the end, Stephens said he would not have been able to accomplish anything without the love and support of his family.

"They mean the world to me -- I don't party, I don't drink, I don't run around, and when I'm not working, I'm with my wife and children," he said. "It makes it easy, but it makes it the hardest thing in the world; being away from my children destroys me, but I do what I do because it's for them."

# Honorary commanders test thier ATC, pilot skills

**Lt. Col. Gary Lockard**

*Public Affairs staff*

Grissom's honorary commanders received a behind-the-scenes look at what it's like to be an air traffic controller and KC-135R Stratotanker pilot during a recent visit to the 434th Operations Group.

Five of the base's honorary commanders participated in the event that included a tour of Grissom's radar approach control facility, as well as interactive time in air traffic control and KC-135 simulators.

"It's been an eye opening experience to see how much goes into daily operations at Grissom," stated Chris Theisen, who is the honorary 434th Air Refueling Wing command chief.

Other participants included Jessica Green, honorary 434th Operations Group commander; Leilan McNally, honorary Maintenance Group commander; Andrea Zwiebel, honorary Mission Support Group commander; and Cassie Dull, honorary Marine Corps

Reserve commander.

The air traffic control simulator, which provides realistic training for Grissom personnel, allowed the honorary commanders to experience the challenges, and pressures, that air traffic controllers face on a daily basis. Grissom controllers provide support not only to the 434th ARW's fleet of KC-135 Stratotankers, but all military, civilian and commercial aircraft transiting through North Central Indiana.

After testing their skills in the ATC simulator and a brief lunch with key 434th ARW staff members, the honorary commanders traveled to the KC-135 simulator where they learned how difficult it is to fly a tanker aircraft.

"The amount of stress in flying the KC-135 simulator and participating in the ATC simulator were more than I would've imagined,"

explained Theisen. "I can't think of what it's like to do those tasks for real and have peoples' lives in your hands."

The honorary commanders program is a special civic outreach concept in which select individuals from the civilian community are matched with Grissom's key commanders.

The goal is to provide the honorary commanders, who serve a one-year term of office, with a rare, inside look at the base, its mission and its people.

"For a government organization to give this kind of access and insight to civilians is a surprising, and refreshing," added Theisen.

The honorary commanders will visit the base again in April and participate in a special Arbor Day tree planting ceremony and interactive tour of the 434th Mission Support Group.



## In the limelight

### Promotions

**To senior master sergeant:** Christopher Feltis, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; and Matthew Zahradka, 434th Maintenance Squadron.

**To master sergeant:** Billy Dotson, 49th Aerial Port Flight; Jeffrey Figaro, 434th AMXS; Jason Jastrzembki, 434th MXS; Heidi Jenkins, 434th Maintenance Group; Michael Morris, 434th Communications Squadron; and David Rooke, 434th Security Forces Squadron.

**To technical sergeant:** Shannon Cloutier, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron; John Drent, 49th APF; Kevin Gregory, 434th MXS; Matthew Hall, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron; Lisa Hendricks, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron; Justine Kenefick, 434th MXS; Zuriel Lund, 72nd ARS; Annette Quattrocchi, 434th AMXS; Justine Ramler, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron; and Jessie Rood, 434th Operations Support Squadron.

**To staff sergeant:** James Bushman, 434th LRS; and Katie Gibson, 434th SFS.

**To senior airman:** Dylan Bubeck, 434th AMXS; David Decker, 434th MXS; Joshua Escobedo, 434th CES; Keegan Holland, 434th MXS; Anthony Krock, 434th AMXS; Cavia Mead, 434th AMXS; Brandon Prince, 434th Force Support Squadron; Danielle Singleton, 434th LRS; Daniel Taylor, 434th MXS; Abigail Wakefield, 434th MXS; Jordan Wisler, 434th AMXS.

**To airman 1st class:** Shauna Allen, 434th ARW; Emerson Bowling, 434th MXS; Brent Cannon, 434th AMDS; Kody Harmon, 434th Maintenance Operations Flight; Kody Herbst, 434th MXS; Scott Hunter, 434th AMXS; Nicholas Hushower, 434th AMXS; Charles Nunnally, 434th MXS; and Bradley Rodriguez, 434th CES.

**To airman:** Kayla Endres, 434th MXS; Jacob Hosier, 434th MXS; Chad James, 434th MXS; Christian Jones-Christopher, 434th SFS; Daniel McKenzie, 434th AMXS; and Michael Miller, 434th MXS.

