



Recruiter

The Magazine of the Air Force Recruiting Professional



The world of Air Force HPs

Outreach programs aid
AFRS recruiting efforts

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cover



To aid in health professional recruiting efforts, Air Force Recruiting Service held a health professionals tour in April and a series of focus groups centering on civilian concerns and military experiences. See pages 10-14 for related stories. (Illustration by Senior Airman Madelyn Waychoff)



Air Force Recruiting Service

COMMANDER'S ACTION LINE

Q: I'm concerned with the procedures of how new health professions applicants receive their orders for attending Commissioned Officer Training. One applicant had to purchase an airline ticket out of pocket because she didn't receive orders until five days prior to attending COT.

I know there was an error on the original forms that were submitted after the commissioning ceremony, but the error was not brought to my attention until almost a month later — one week prior to the applicant's departure.

I have also seen instances where orders are not received until only a few days prior to an applicant departing for COT or a direct-duty assignment, which may reflect negatively on how the operational Air Force works. It makes my job as a recruiter more difficult by having to explain these issues, where my word can either help me perpetuate business or discredit my name.

Ultimately, I want to provide my applicants with great customer service. How can we improve this process and ensure applicants have their orders in advance?

A: We're always looking for ways to improve our processes to provide the best customer service possible, and this is a potential problem area requiring attention.

It's important that prerequisite documents are provided in a timely manner to my staff in order to meet the suspenses in AFRISS. This also includes a quick-turn on requests for corrected forms. The Air Force Personnel Center will not produce orders until it has the necessary documents, but it can cut orders within about eight duty days after receipt. Required documents such as credit checks and COT briefs that arrive at Air Force Recruiting Service after suspense dates ultimately lead to delays in orders being produced.

If applicants are approaching their earliest arrival date and do not have orders, it's time to elevate the issue up the chain of command. Doing so not only resolves these issues more quickly, but also serves to educate your leadership and other members in the squadron.

The existing Procedural Guidance Message 713, issued by the operations division here, provides detailed direction. Following the steps outlined in the guidance ensures applicants receive the best service possible.

The Commander's Action Line is a direct line for comments, questions, complaints and suggestions on how to make Air Force Recruiting Service a better place to work.

All action lines will be answered personally by me or my staff while protecting the identity of the individual as best as possible. Although the action line is always available, the best way to resolve problems is through your chain of command.

If concerns still cannot be resolved, please call the action line at (210) 565-4678, or e-mail at afsractionline@rs.af.mil. Items of general interest may be printed in the *Recruiter* magazine.



Brig. Gen. Dutch Remkes
Commander

View from the top: Every day is Wingman Day



By Gen. Don Cook
*Air Education and Training
Command commander*

**RANDOLPH AIR FORCE
BASE, Texas** – In December, we took a down-day to combat accidental deaths and suicides in the Air Force. However, Wingman Day was never intended to be a one-time “event.” Rather, it is a reminder to be good wingmen every day. The wingman concept extends to another issue we’re confronting – reintegrating Airmen into “home station life.”

Very shortly, the Air Staff will release policy to assist commanders in effectively reintegrating Airmen after they return from deployments. As you may know from speaking with redeploying troops, their stress is real. Consider the Airmen performing the highly dangerous mission of convoy security or serving on critical care air transport teams for the seriously wounded. These courageous people have personally experienced the horrors of war, and they deserve the fullest support when they return home.

So with the release of the Air Force policy, it will be up to all of us to turn this guidance into

action. We need to take care of Airmen returning from the taxing challenges of a deployed environment. This is especially important in Air Education and Training Command, where our Airmen often lack the familiarity and security of deploying with their organizations.

How can you help?

“Wingman Day was never intended to be a one-time ‘event.’ Rather, it is a reminder to be good wingmen every day.”

First - Commanders, emphasize face-to-face contact with your redeploying troops – and set the example.

Second - Have your Airmen take advantage of base agencies ready to support them and assist those struggling with reintegration.

Third - I ask those Airmen who

have felt the hardships of reintegration to use your experience to coach and counsel those who have recently redeployed.

Fourth - First sergeants and supervisors should follow up. Research shows troops typically begin to manifest problems three to six months after they redeploy. Monitor this period closely to prevent challenges from becoming emergencies.

Finally - Everyone, don’t forget about taking care of our Air Force families.

Reintegrating into family life after a deployment can be tough; I’ve been there. Often the only one who will know how an Airman and family members are coping with reintegration is the Airman’s co-worker or friend. Thus, every Airman must be a wingman ... that’s the culture of expeditionary-minded wingmen.

And every day must be Wingman Day. We will lean heavily on this principle of airmanship as we answer our nation’s call to duty. We will be tested in the fire of expeditionary warfare abroad and the pressure of resource constraints at home – all the more reason to integrate a wingman mindset into everything we do.

A goal of **zero**

Recruiting turns tables for 101 critical days

By Brig. Gen. Dutch Remkes
Air Force Recruiting Service commander

Recruiting is a numbers gig. As commander of the best recruiting force in the world, I look at numbers almost every day. There are days when the numbers are where we need them to be and days when the numbers aren't so favorable. But in the end it still boils down to numbers to determine if you've been successful in meeting your recruiting mission.

Another number that will have my close attention over the next three months is the number of mishaps we experience.

The period between Memorial Day and Labor Day is one in which increased activities and unnecessary risks lead to a higher number of off-duty injuries. All of you should be familiar with the annual "101 Critical Days of Summer" campaign intended to heighten safety awareness and practice risk management during this time of increased activity. You may not know that each year this message still seems to somehow get lost for the almost two dozen Airmen our Air Force loses annually.

I'm the first to agree that if you work hard, you deserve to play hard. Warmer temperatures provide a great opportunity to plan that summer vacation, join a sports league or participate in local recreational activities.

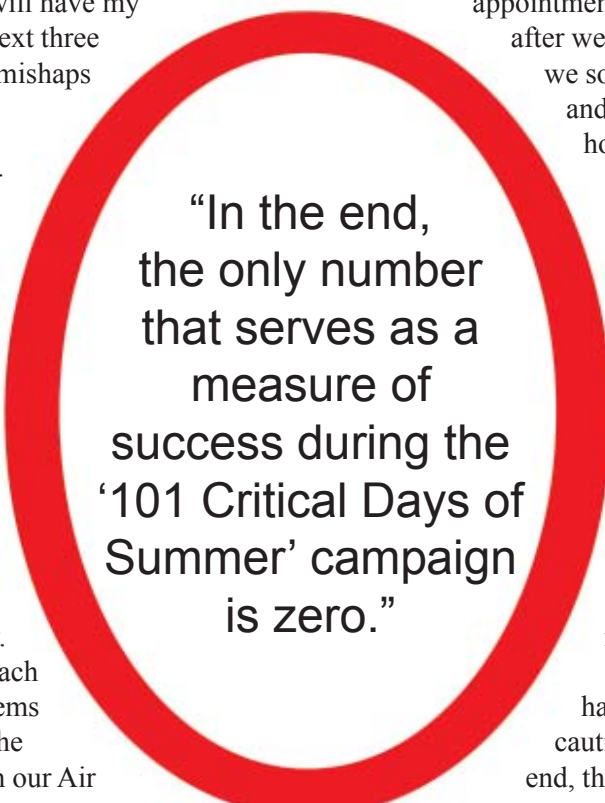
The key to safely enjoying your summer activities is planning. I enjoy boating, but I don't do it without first preparing and following my checklists for every aspect – from inspection and launch to engine checks and storage. You, too, should incorporate a little extra attention to detail in your plans for the summer, particularly if it involves taking to the roadways.

The most common cause of Air Force fatalities involves mishaps in private motor vehicles. In our business, a lot of time is spent on the road between appointments. So much time that perhaps after we lock up the government vehicle, we sometimes relax a little too much and let our guard down for that drive home or across the state.

The only thing worse than the tragic loss of life in a mishap is knowing that many of these mishaps are preventable. Recognizing when you or a buddy is too impaired to drive or planning your trip to ensure you take frequent rest breaks makes a difference in arriving at your destination safely. Something as simple as wearing seatbelts or easing up a little with that lead foot can also make a difference.

Summer is meant to be fun, but having fun doesn't mean you throw caution and safety to the winds. In the end, the only number that serves as a measure of success during the "101 Critical

Days of Summer" campaign is zero. Zero mishaps. Zero fatalities. With your increased attention to safety and careful planning, this is a goal I know we're very capable of achieving. Think; the number is "Zero."



**"In the end,
the only number
that serves as a
measure of
success during the
'101 Critical Days of
Summer' campaign
is zero."**



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Connor

Home away from home

As part of a GQ magazine effort to recognize U.S. military members deployed to Iraq, the magazine requested environmental photos taken by those deployed. One Air Force Recruiting Service public affairs NCO, Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Connor from the 319th Recruiting Squadron, submitted this photo. The photo, along with others sent in by servicemembers, was featured at the GQ "Life During Wartime: A Soldier Portfolio" reception and exhibition in New York City in March. The gallery featured "photographs of the American experience in Iraq, all taken by the servicemembers who lived it." All servicemembers whose photos were chosen were invited to the reception.

Recruiter Spotlight

Staff Sgt. Tamickco Jackson

Job title: Enlisted accessions recruiter, 348th Recruiting Squadron

Office location: Monroe, La.

Hometown: San Antonio, Texas

Time in AFRS: Four months

Time in Air Force: Thirteen years

Prior career field: Paralegal

Hobbies: Reading, bowling and traveling

What inspires you to do what you do: I have had many experiences in my life. If I can share some of my experiences, both good and bad, and can help a young person make better decisions, then I want to do that. Knowing I can make a difference is very important to me.

What is the best advice you have ever received: You'll never know until you try, so always at least try in whatever you want to accomplish.

What hints can you give others about recruiting: Learn from your mistakes.

Career goals: Do what it takes to get promoted and go as far as I can in recruiting

Personal motto: Never be afraid to fail.





Photo by Senior Airman Madelyn Waychoff

Chop shop

Visitors view the new Air Force chopper during its recent visit to Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. The chopper is a motorcycle built by Orange County Choppers Inc., a custom motorcycle fabrication company in Rock Tavern, N.Y. The motorcycle was officially unveiled March 20 at Atlanta Motor Speedway's Golden Corral 500. The 10-foot-long bike was modeled after the F/A-22 Raptor, complete with Air Force symbol rims, riveted gas tank, Raptor exhausts and rear view mirrors in the shape of jets.

Public affairs award

The Air Force Recruiting Service director of public affairs was recently named Air Force-level public affairs field grade officer of the year for 2004, and "Best of the Best" by the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, Public Affairs.

Lt. Col. Steve Murray, AFRS Headquarters, distinguished himself through his work at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, and while he was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom last year.

"The recipient of this award is selected on the basis of professional excellence and significant contributions

to the Air Force mission," said Brig. Gen. Frederick Roggero, Secretary of the Air Force director of public affairs.

Program award

Air Education and Training Command officials at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, recently announced its history and museum program award winners for 2004.

Master Sgt. Lane Bourgeois, from Headquarters Air Force Recruiting Service, was a winner of the AETC Excellence in Wing History Program Award for a single-person office.

Sergeant Bourgeois received the award for his work as the AFRS historian and for his book, "One Enlisted Voice," which featured an interview with retired Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Eric Benken.

TSP open season

Civilian and military employees can sign up for, or change, their Thrift Savings Plan contribution amounts during the "open season" April 15 - June 30.

Contribution elections and/or changes made between April 15 and June 11 will take effect June 12 for both military and civilian personnel. Changes made on or after June 12 will become effective at the beginning of the pay period following the one in which the election was made for civilians, and the following month for military. Open seasons will be eliminated effective July 1.

More information about the Thrift Savings Plan can be found at www.tsp.gov.

Former CMSAF visit

Retired Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Robert Gaylor visited the Air Force Recruiting School March 18.

Chief Gaylor spoke to the audience of recruiting students, logistics students and Air Force Recruiting Service personnel about getting back to the business of people – to remove technology from the workplace and incorporate more face-to-face contact and interaction into the everyday workplace.

This visit was the first of what is projected to become an annual program.

Electronic kiosks

New electronic kiosks are going up at several Air Force museums around the country, including Robins Air Force Base, Ga., Hill AFB, Utah, Travis AFB,



Photo by Master Sgt. Susan Riggsby

Teaching control

Staff Sgt. Aaron Switzer, 720th Special Tactics Group combat controller at Hurlburt Field, Fla., shows weapons maneuvers, tactics and combat techniques to a group of high school students in Marion Center, Pa. Sergeant Switzer visited the 311th Recruiting Squadron in March to help local recruiters spread Air Force awareness. He visited 10 schools and talked with more than 1,000 students. He has also been credited with 60 leads and two new combat controller delayed enlistments.

Calif., and Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio.

The new kiosks will incorporate the new television ads and the airforce.com website, and will also aid local recruiters in gathering leads.

Museums are high traffic areas, and these new kiosks will help draw people in and keep people informed on Air Force opportunities and way of life, said Tim Talbert, Air Force Recruiting Service marketing deputy chief.

International affairs cadre

Air Force officials will begin training more than 100 officers this spring to become international affairs spe-

cialists in a managed, secondary career path.

As many as 3,000 officers will form a pool of experts in regional, political and military affairs who will advise combatant commanders worldwide, officials said.

The first group of field grade officers, selected between now and summer, will enter formal training in the summer of 2006.

The following year, Air Force officials will select and train more than 150 officers, then 210 each year until a pool of 2,500 to 3,000 specialists is filled, officials said.

“We are an expeditionary Air Force. To continue our success far from home, we must deliberately develop a cadre of Air Force professionals with international insight, foreign language proficiency, and cultural understanding – Airmen who have the right skill sets to understand the specific regional context in which air and space power may be applied,” said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper in his recent Sight Picture.

New campaign medals

Defense Department officials announced two new campaign medals April 7 to recognize servicemembers for contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The medals were established by presidential order for those who have been assigned, attached or mobilized to units operating in these areas.

The Afghanistan Campaign Medal and Iraq Campaign Medal are awarded to servicemembers who directly supported Operation Enduring Freedom beginning Oct. 24, 2001, or Operation Iraqi Freedom beginning March 19, 2003.

For more information on the new campaign medals or to learn about eligibility requirements visit www.af.mil.

Basketball tournament

Air Force Recruiting Service is sponsoring the Gus Macker 3-on-3 National Basketball Tournament, a series of 50 events featuring adult and junior divisions for ages 10 through 40.

Games began April 23 and will run through Oct. 16, with events mainly being held in the North and Midwestern states.

This event will aid recruiters in attracting the target audience to the Air Force in one of the most difficult recruiting regions in the U.S., said Master Sgt. Marvin Daugherty, AFRS special events NCOIC.

These tournaments will help create awareness of the Air Force as well as help generate leads, he added.



Master Sgt. Jose Cavazos



Master Sgt. Wade Trahan



Tech. Sgt. Matthew Zuniga



Master Sgt. James Dailey



Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey James

STEPping up in rank 5 receive promotions

Five non-commissioned officers from throughout Air Force Recruiting Service received Stripes for Exceptional Performers promotions recently. STEP promotions are instant promotions given only to enlisted Airmen who exemplify the highest military standards.

Tech. Sgts. Jose Cavazos, James Dailey and Wade Trahan tacked on master sergeant stripes while Staff Sgts. Jeffrey James and Matthew Zuniga sewed on technical sergeant stripes.

Sergeant Cavazos, AFRS Headquarters marketing NCO, was awarded the 2004 AFRS NCO of the Year. He created and fielded a new web-based ordering system for sales promotional items and literature that saved more than 300 personnel hours in one year and provided on-demand shipping. He has completed his bachelor's degree and volunteered his time with the Special Olympics, a Portuguese orphanage, Big Brothers, and the YMCA.

Sergeant Dailey, 362nd Recruiting Squadron flight chief, was the 362nd Recruiting Squadron 2004 top flight chief. He completed fiscal year 2004 with all eight recruiters earning a silver badge, and one with a gold badge. He led the Houston Military Entrance Processing Station from the No. 46 rank to No. 7 in one year and also ran the third best large MEPS in the nation. Sergeant Dailey has also volunteered at a local high school, a homeless shelter and is involved in his local Veterans of Foreign Wars organization.

Sergeant Trahan fills a master sergeant billet as the 344th RCS enlisted accessions flight chief. He has the top MEPS success rate in the squadron and led his flight to the highest accessions in the 344th RCS in 2003. Sergeant Trahan also spearheaded several air shows in his zone and volunteers as a Little League coach.

Sergeant Zuniga, 368th Recruiting Squadron logistics NCOIC, earned the 2002 AFRS Senior

Supply Technician award, 2004 372nd Recruiting Group Top Logistics Readiness award and squadron NCO of the Year for 2001, 2002 and 2003. He also created a logistics database that saved more than 1,000 personnel hours. Sergeant Zuniga volunteered for the Boy Scouts and is involved in the Hispanic Heritage Programs, Habitat for Humanity and Air Force Aid Society. He is currently on a remote tour to Korea.

Sergeant James, 332nd RCS officer accessions recruiter, helped lead the officer accessions flight to finish in the top five of 28 squadrons for 2003 and 2004. He also produced 400 percent of the 2004 Dental Corps Health Professions Scholarship goal and was awarded the Flight Key Person of the Year and Commander's Eagle Club Award. Sergeant James completed a bachelor of philosophy degree and has volunteered for Habitat for Humanity, the Nashville Rescue Mission and Vanderbilt Children's Cancer Center.

March Promotions

Chief Master Sergeant		Henry Roberson	317th RCS
David Gottshall	369th RCS	Michael Snodgrass	345th RCS
		Sean Snodgrass	344th RCS
		Steven Stephens	341st RCS
Senior Master Sergeant			
Gregory Elmore	HQ AFRS		
Gary Posavad	339th RCS		
Master Sergeant			
Todd Edgar	362nd RCS		
Earl Edwards	369th RCS		
Gordon Fay	367th RCS		
Brenton Gale	311th RCS		
Gerardo Gonzales	361st RCS		
David Hahn	345th RCS		
Brian Huff	HQ AFRS		
Michael Johnson	333rd RCS		
Patrick Lander	311th RCS		
Joseph Latino	341st RCS		
Daniel Lovdahl	342nd RCS		
Steven Marciniak	343rd RCS		
Ruben Perez	341st RCS		
David Perkins	360th RCS		
Steven Porter	362nd RCS		
		Technical Sergeant	
		Dustin Beard	367th RCS
		John Bedell	343rd RCS
		Mark Caldwell	361st RCS
		David Cantrell	HQ AFRS
		Steven Dracup	318th RCS
		Michael Galea	369th RCS
		Anthony Holland	313th RCS
		Danny Matthews	338rd RCS
		Stephen Sutton	336th RCS
		Staff Sergeant	
		Jennifer Boonstra	319th RCS
		Jose Calderon	314th RCS
		Jerry Cruz	369th RCS
		Jacob Edwards	338th RCS
		James Potter	347th RCS

April Promotions

Chief Master Sergeant			
Edward Vargas	HQ AFRS		
Senior Master Sergeant			
Darick Carter	HQ AFRS		
Wayne Klasen	367th RCS		
Kenneth Oliver	343rd RCS		
Jeffery Springer	361st RCS		
Master Sergeant			
Alridge Allsman	367th RCS		
Angela Batson	364th RCS		
Dominique Brown	364th RCS		
Roberto Goyco	318th RCS		
Albert Head	336th RCS		
David Isham	HQ AFRS		
James Lapenta	362nd RCS		
Ruben Perez Jr.	341st RCS		
Arman Razavipour	337th RCS		
Craig Rickaway	349th RCS		
Jose Rivera Jr.	311th RCS		
Anthony Schuck	318th RCS		
Leonard Wilson Jr.	330th RCS		
		Technical Sergeant	
		Vernon Cohrs	336th RCS
		Jerry Dail	338th RCS
		Melinda Fletcher	336th RCS
		Brian Halley	349th RCS
		Michael Hammond	349th RCS
		Tracy Handler	362nd RCS
		Jesse Hemsworth	342nd RCS
		John Hickey	311th RCS
		Scott Lowell	319th RCS
		Gregory Lyles	337th RCS
		Darek Malone	344th RCS
		Jeffrey May	339th RCS
		Kristofer Miller	330th RCS
		Leslie Owens	317th RCS
		Staff Sergeant	
		Michael Blackburn	339th RCS
		Jill Carr	368th RCS
		Charles Caskey	332nd RCS
		Fredrick Hayes	369th RCS



AFRS holds first HP tour in years

Revamped recruiting initiative tackles health professionals

By Staff Sgt. Marti Ribeiro
Air Force Recruiting Service

Twenty-nine health professionals from across the nation visited San Antonio April 5-8 as part of a revamped recruiting initiative.

This initiative, the Headquarters Air Force Recruiting Service Health Professional Tour, exposed prominent members of the medical and academic communities to opportunities the Air Force has to offer. This health professional tour was the first in more than 10 years held by AFRS, and in light of the current trend of HP recruiting, AFRS officials

thought it was time to hold another.

“It’s been awhile since we brought members of the medical community to San Antonio to show them all the wonderful things the Air Force has to offer,” said Lt. Col. Cyndie Gibson, chief of medical officer accessions. “We were able to take these influential people, who otherwise might not ever be exposed to the Air Force, and show them what a great career choice this could be for their students or residents.”

Tour attendees were chosen from hospital residency programs, dental colleges, nursing schools and resident placement programs from across the nation.



Photo by Senior Airman Madelyn Waychoff

Senior Airman Francisco Arboleda, 12th Aeromedical-Dental Squadron aerospace physiology journeyman at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, spins a visiting health professional in a special disorientation chair to help demonstrate the training pilots receive before flying.

While in San Antonio they had the chance to learn about Air Force benefits, to include paid vacation, health care benefits and the opportunity for further education. The attendees were also given extensive tours highlighting some of the new medical technology available at Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and research facilities the Air Force utilizes at Brooks City-Base, also in San Antonio.

“Overall, this tour was a huge success,” said Lt. Col. Tom Haines, chief of officer accessions branch. “These medical professionals had no idea how much the Air Force takes care of its people in terms of

health care, family welfare and education.”

Surveys at the end of the tour showed that after only a few days, 97 percent of the participants thought very positively of the Air Force as a viable career choice. This was a great step considering only 24 percent felt very positively of the Air Force at the beginning of the tour, Colonel Gibson said.

According to Colonel Haines, showing these influential people what the Air Force has to offer should help HP recruiting – these people will now be able to talk with their students about the Air Force as a potential career choice and serve as advocates for our recruiters.

Focus groups

Shedding light on Air Force health professions

By Senior Airman Madelyn Waychoff
Air Force Recruiting Service

To increase health professionals' awareness of the Air Force and its opportunities, GSD&M, Air Force Recruiting Service's contract ad agency, held a series of focus groups to help shape future marketing strategies.

The first focus groups, held May through July of last year, focused on civilian health professionals and their view of the Air Force. Many topics were addressed, including job concerns for both the military and civilian sides, benefits and drawbacks.

A second focus group series with military health professionals was held from December to January. Questions focused on reasons for

joining, decisions for staying in, and what health professionals say to others about Air Force medicine.

"We interviewed 20 to 25 Airmen, mainly nurses, dentists and physicians, from different units throughout the Air Force," said Randy King, GSD&M senior marketplace manager. "Those we interviewed had an average time in service of between 12 and 15 years, and ranged from captains to colonels."

The focus groups were not designed to center on any specific ranks or groups, he added. All interviews were conducted by phone, allowing coordinators to talk to more people in more areas.

"The groups were very informative," Mr. King said. "They were very eager to share their experiences and were forthright about the positives and negatives of military health service."

Those interviewed said they had many reasons for joining and staying in, but at the top of the list were the patients and the



Air Force recruiting photo by S
Illustration by

opportunities offered.

The Air Force has better patients, according to those interviewed. Health professionals on the civilian side become worn down by their patients because they don't follow directions and often fault doctors for problems. In contrast, patients and medical professionals have the same mission – to stay healthy.

“From what they told me, the patient care and quality of treatment are not equal in the civilian sector,” said Mr. King. “Health professionals are restrained by profit and (health maintenance organizations). This isn't an issue in the Air Force; patients can be treated as needed.”

And along with this treatment comes skill. Air Force health professionals said their colleagues are highly skilled, and that they work with the best people in the field, which isn't always true in civilian medical treatment facilities.

“The Air Force provides continuing education for all its health professionals while civilians have to find opportunities to attain higher education,” said Chad Wilson, GSD&M Air Force account manager. “This results in more highly trained Air Force health professionals and superior care for patients because those treating them are up to speed.”

The Air Force's advanced opportunities along with the continuing education is especially important to nurses.

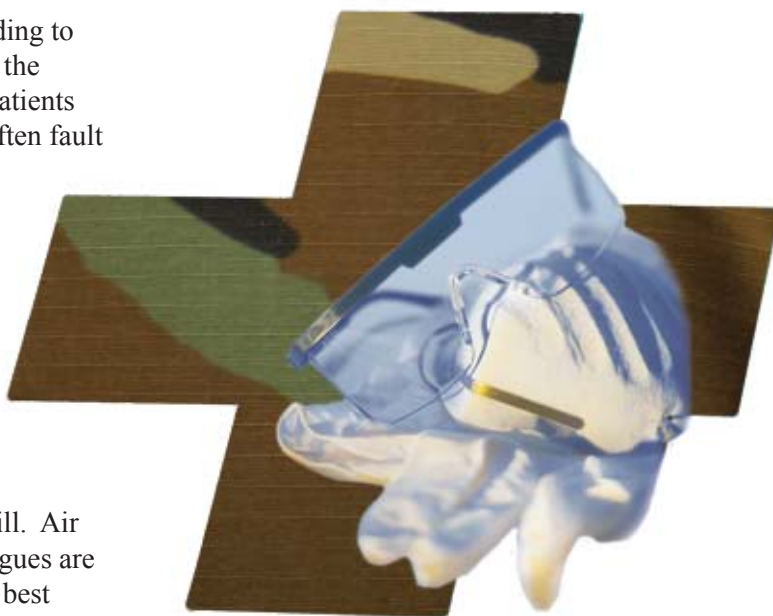
“Nurses told me the sky's the limit in the Air Force, while on the civilian side, most nurses feel stuck in their jobs,” said Mr. King.

Additional opportunities the Air Force has includes advanced and recent technology available to healthcare providers and patients. Most civilian hospitals do not have the same technology and learn some of their techniques, such as handling bioterrorism threats, from the Air Force.

“These are all positive aspects to joining and staying in the Air Force,” said Mr. King.

“Those we interviewed couldn't narrow down their decision to join or stay in the Air Force to just one reason; they said it was a combination of everything. They were also energized by work rather than beaten down by it. Their enthusiasm was higher when they spoke of their jobs.”

“And because of their positive outlook, many of these health professionals help recruit others,” said Mr. Wilson. “They sometimes speak to groups, or just one on



one, to explain their experiences in the Air Force. Much of what they hear from their civilian counterparts is consistent with what we learned in the first focus group sessions. For the civilians who are unsure if they want to join, sometimes just talking to a military health professional can help change their minds.”

As with any job, however, Air Force health professionals also identified challenges. Adjusting to military life can be difficult, and though many people worry about deployments, those who have practiced medicine on the battlefield say it is a humbling experience and one they will never regret doing.

“Those who deployed say it was one of the best experiences they've had, and they would willingly go again,” said Mr. Wilson. “They said deployments are something you deal with when you join, because you know they are part of the job, so you prepare.”

The information gained through the focus groups will be used for future health professional advertising campaigns and to modify existing campaigns to better address questions from the target audience, said Tech. Sgt. Corey Hulse, AFRS officer accessions account executive.

“We can show civilians the great benefits and experiences the Air Force has to offer, and how they can be a part of this elite force,” Sergeant Hulse said.

Editor's note: This article is the second in a series of three on the findings from health professional focus groups held between May 2004 and January 2005 by the Air Force Recruiting Service's contract ad agency, GSD&M.

Female takes helm as production superintendent

By Senior Airman Madelyn Waychoff
Air Force Recruiting Service

Since Air Force Recruiting Service was activated more than 50 years ago, the role as superintendent has been filled predominantly by males. Since the end of 2004 and in the months to come, females in the senior enlisted ranks are taking a greater role in squadron leadership positions.

The most recent to be assigned to such a leadership position is Senior Master Sgt. Colette Bousson, a 16-year veteran of recruiting service, at the 364th Recruiting Squadron.

Sergeant Bousson is the first female to be assigned as a production superintendent since the reorganization of duties that includes the assignment of both a

production superintendent and a superintendent to a squadron. The production superintendent oversees production recruiters assigned to a unit.

Her assignment follows that of Chief Master Sgt. Kathy Barker, who is serving as superintendent of the 368th RCS. In the weeks ahead, Senior Master Sgts. Patty Barry and Crystal Taylor will be filling production superintendent positions at the 314th RCS and 332nd RCS, respectively.

The first female to serve as superintendent for a recruiting squadron was Chief Master Sgt. Deb Wilkerson.

“This is something I’ve worked my way up through recruiting service to attain,” said Sergeant Bousson, who has served more than 20 years in the Air Force. “It’s a big achievement and an

honor because it means that recruiting service looked at me and said I have the right leadership style for the job.”

Production superintendents are chosen by rank. They are placed on a list when they make senior master sergeant. When a name reaches the top of the list, the person is assigned to the next squadron that opens up, according to Sergeant Bousson.

She said the reason for fewer females in leadership positions is primarily due to their decision to retire when they reach 20 years of service.

“Balancing work, kids and a spouse can sometimes take its toll, and it also hurts retention. I really wanted to be a superintendent so I decided to go past 20 and take this job.

“Female recruiters have been around for a long time. I know I was not the first and certainly not the most successful; I just managed to hang in there and enjoy doing a job that I know impacts many folks.”

With this job, Sergeant Bousson said she hopes to have a positive impact on the lives of those working for and around her and to help others be successful. She also said she has been well accepted.

“The folks who work for me have figured out I am demanding but will help them get the job done in a successful manner,” she said. “I love my job and look forward to the next couple of years watching recruiters grow and progress in their careers.

By the numbers

Female recruiters	Total recruiters
299	2,557
Chief master sergeant	Total
1	19
Senior master sergeant	Total
7	68
Master sergeant	Total
43	479
Technical sergeant	Total
122	1,074
Staff sergeant	Total
114	835
Senior airmen	Total
15	80

Two chiefs, one marriage, and a love for the Air Force

By Tech. Sgt. Eric M. Grill
66th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

HANSCOM AIR FORCE BASE, Mass. — In a small farming town near what was then Loring Air Force Base, Maine, 18-year-old Roger Sirois, now the incoming superintendent for the 319th Recruiting Squadron, made a decision. It would lead him and his high school sweetheart on a 25-year personal and professional journey.

In 1980, Roger asked his girlfriend, Lisa Warrington, to marry him after their high school graduation ceremony.

“One day before graduation, (Lisa) came home from the recruiter’s office and said, ‘I’m going into the Air Force,’” Roger said.

Roger said he felt if he wanted to be with her he needed to join, too. He asked her to marry him on graduation day, and she accepted.

They married in 1980, and Roger left for basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, three weeks later. Lisa left for Lackland two weeks later.

Both graduated basic training within weeks of each other and headed to Keesler AFB, Miss., where Lisa attended administrative technician technical school, and Roger reported to ground radio maintenance technical school.

They were first assigned to Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. After joining Lisa at Wright-Patterson, Roger said she ‘shot out of the blocks.’

Roger’s experience at Wright-Patterson was a little bit different.

“I still wasn’t prepared to make the Air Force a career,” he said. “But, I was in, so I was embracing it and seeing what other opportunities were out there.”

He said he eventually saw his calling.

“I enjoyed being a radio maintenance technician,”

Roger said. “But I also saw what I thought was a pretty influential position in the squadron, the first sergeant.”

At the time, not knowing that he was going to make the Air Force a career, Roger said he decided that being a first sergeant was an interesting job.

“I thought, ‘There’s my calling if I decide to stay in,’” he said.

In 1982, Lisa gave birth to Brad, the first of two children. She was still committed to staying in the Air Force for 20 years, but it was not as cut and dry for Roger. Ultimately, he said, Brad and a remote assignment to King Salmon Air Force Station, Alaska, helped him make the decision to stay in.

He had to either extend his enlistment or re-enlist altogether to accept the one-year remote assignment, or decline it and leave the military very quickly. He re-enlisted for six years.

They had their second child, Kyle, in 1986. But Roger still faced another decision: To go past the 10-year mark or not.

“I saw how much the military had given us,” Roger said. “So, here I had two children, a wife who is just kicking butt in

the military, and is super motivated and super charged about it. She is going to make chief. My kids are in a good school.

“We have nice things — the vacation plan is fantastic; the medical is fantastic — all the benefits are there.” he said. “I couldn’t turn away. I became what the Air Force wanted to keep in — a motivated, dedicated person.”

After special-duty assignments to Hawaii, Roger was given a chance to become a first sergeant when the couple was stationed at Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

Roger then attended the First Sergeant Academy and graduated as both the top graduate and commandant award winner in November 2000. He will become the 319th RCS superintendent May 9.



Photo by Linda LaBonte Britt

Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Sirois tacks chief master sergeant stripes on her husband, Roger Sirois, during his promotion ceremony at Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass.

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