



May 18, 2016

BEHIND THE BADGE

OFFICIAL INFORMATION SOURCE FOR THE AIR FORCE RECRUITING PROFESSIONAL



STEM opportunities

Staff Sgt. Travis Tarr and Staff Sgt. Daniel Kim talk about Explosive Ordnance Disposal equipment at the FIRST Robotics Regional at Grand Canyon University Arena in Phoenix, April 6-9. Tarr and Kim are EOD specialists assigned to the 56th Civil Engineer Squadron at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. They assisted the 362nd Recruiting Squadron by speaking with prospective applicants about the opportunities in STEM career fields in the Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Improving a process

LEFT: Tech. Sgt. Alicia Wells speaks to Maj. Gen. Garrett Harencak, Air Force Recruiting Service commander, during the paperless processing Continuous Process Improvement at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, April 19-22. Wells and Tech. Sgt. Timothy Diggs, center, both assigned to the 361st Recruiting Squadron, briefed the general on what the new process will be for recruiting an applicant into the Air Force. Each applicant currently hand-carries 25-30 pieces of paper to Basic Military Training. The annual cost of paper alone is \$350,000, and processing takes 20 minutes a day per applicant for a total of 40 extra work hours per month. The team goal is to reduce the overall application cycle time per applicant by 50 percent and the overall cycle time by 85 percent. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Some of the team members of the paperless processing CPI gather for a photo in front of the current process for recruiting an applicant into the Air Force. In addition to Air Force Recruiting Service, team members represented Air Education and Training Command, Basic Military Training, 2nd Air Force, the Air Force Personnel Center, Air National Guard and Military Entrance Processing Command. Projected annual savings outcomes include a 97 percent paper reduction (3 million sheets of paper); 95 percent less processing time for recruiters, with six hours saved per applicant; 20 hours per week at the MEPS; 40 hours per week for BMT; 100 percent for 2nd AF, Detachment 1; and a 97 percent savings for AFPC. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Living history

Members of the 369th Recruiting Squadron were able to experience some Air Force heritage firsthand when they viewed a World War II-era P-51D Mustang at the Millionaire Terminal in Burbank, California, April 22. The aircraft, named Bunny, was recently restored by the Palm Springs Air Museum. The graphics on the plane were identical to the ones that were on the plane when 96-year-old Tuskegee Airman, retired Air Force Lt. Col. Bob Friend, flew the aircraft. From left are Master Sgt. Michael Horne, first sergeant, and his wife; Lt. Col. John Patrick, commander, and his two daughters; Master Sgt. Aaron Stern and son; Burbank Mayor Bob Frutos; Friend; Tech. Sgt. Brandon Wigginton, recruiter in Eagle Rock, and his family; and an unidentified Soldier. (U.S. Air Force photo)



AFA award

Retired Air Force Lt. Col. Jay Thompson (left) and retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Stephen Wood award the Top Air Force Recruiter Award for Air Force Association Chapter 285 to Staff Sgt. Joshua Abinal at the Vinton War Memorial in Vinton, Virginia, April 12. Abinal, assigned to the 317th Recruiting Squadron, was recognized for his performance in fiscal year 2015. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Remotely piloted aircraft crewmembers explain the characteristics of the MQ-9 Reaper to visiting priests during Air Force Recruiting Service's recent "Come Be With Us Familiarization Tour" at Creech Air Force Base, Nevada. (U.S. Air Force photo/Dale Eckroth)

Priests get first-hand look at Air Force way of life

By Dale Eckroth
Air Force Recruiting Service

As a Roman Catholic priest, Father John Tran has followed his spiritual calling by serving parishioners in Portland, Oregon, and by providing community service in New Orleans as a member of the religious order Domus Dei Clerical Society of Apostolic Life. In his heart though, he has another calling – a desire to serve a nation that went to war to help protect his home country nearly 50 years ago.

Tran was born in South Vietnam. At the height of the Vietnam War in the late '60s, his father joined the South Vietnamese Air Force and became a fighter pilot. As an ally, the U.S. government allowed VNAF pilots to receive advanced pilot training at select Air Force bases in the United States. When Tran's father completed his training he returned to Vietnam and was later killed during a bombing raid on Communist forces.

Tran, who immigrated to the United States in 1992, was just an infant at the time of his father's death. He's had to rely on stories passed down by family members to piece together his father's military legacy. A longing to follow in his father's footsteps and to give back to American service members led Tran on a quest to pursue a career as a Catholic chaplain in the U.S. Air Force.

He recently took that first step by participating in Air Force Recruiting Service's "Come Be with Us" familiarization tour at Creech and Nellis Air Force Bases in Nevada. Tran, along

with five other Catholic priests, got a first-hand look at how Air Force chaplains serve the spiritual needs of Airmen.

"Creech is the closest approximation to a remote or deployed setting to offer that perspective, while Nellis is a large base with several important missions," said Chaplain (Capt.) Thomas Foley, a chaplain recruiter with AFRS.

Now in its 11th year, the three-day tour allowed participants to become familiar with the roles and functions of active-duty Air Force chaplains while interacting with Airmen in various career fields.

Fielding questions from the group of priests, remotely piloted aircraft crewmembers at Creech explained the missions of the MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper. Tour participants also tested their skills in the RPA simulators.

The Creech Airmen Ministry Center, a place where base members often go to unwind and shoot pool or play table tennis, was transformed into a makeshift chapel to celebrate Mass. The priests also received a mission briefing at the 433rd Wing headquarters and ate lunch at the base dining facility.

At Nellis, the group celebrated Mass in the base chapel and visited the 58th Rescue Squadron where they received briefings on the Air Force pararescue mission. The priests also toured the Threat Training Facility, which houses formerly classified foreign weapons vehicles.

"The tour was just a confirmation of my call to serve as an Air Force chaplain. As human beings we have dreams and goals in life. My dream is to be a military chaplain," said tour

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With Russian Cold War era military systems on display, Father Gustav Montanez captures a few photos of Father Carlos Parada at the Threat Training Facility on Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. (U.S. Air Force photo/Dale Eckroth)

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participant Father Gustavo Montanez from the San Antonio Archdiocese. “I’ve learned that Air Force chaplains are supportive and rely on one another.”

Montanez, who has served two-and-a-half years as a civilian contract chaplain for Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, is also taking the steps to become an active-duty Catholic chaplain.

“I serve others from my heart. It’s what I feel,” he added. “Now I want to serve military families.”

According to Foley, the Air Force has a critical need for Catholic chaplains. Some bases do not have priests serving as active-duty chaplains while others have had to contract out services.

“That’s why our ‘Come Be With Us’ familiarization tour is so important,” he said.

Foley explained there are several factors that make recruiting candidates into the Air Force Catholic chaplaincy difficult.

“First, there’s a general shortage of Catholic priests in the United States,” he said. “Plus, Catholic bishops may be reluctant to grant permission for a priest to join the military since they are needed in home dioceses and parishes. Also, a significant number of Catholic priests are born outside of the United States and lack required citizenship.”

To be an Air Force Catholic chaplain, a candidate must be an ordained priest with a master of divinity degree or its equivalent with at least three years of ministry experience. He must also be in good standing in his diocese or religious order and the bishop or superior must be willing to grant permission for him to serve on active duty for at least three years.



Staff Sgt. Maximillian Quiroz, left, of the 58th Rescue Squadron at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, answers questions from visiting Catholic priests who participated in Air Force Recruiting Service’s recent “Come Be With Us Familiarization Tour.” Guests toured the squadron’s parachute drying tower, which is used for drying the equipment following pararescue training at nearby Lake Mead. Quiroz is an aircrew flight equipment technician. (U.S. Air Force photo/Dale Eckroth)

“Being an Air Force chaplain is a ‘call within the call.’ It’s a special way to serve God and country by serving the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States Air Force,” Foley said.

Each of the participants agreed that the Come Be With Us tour gave them a better understanding of the Air Force chaplain way of life. For Father Tran it was also a reaffirmation of his “call within the call.”

“I feel my father is still living because I’m living. I’m part of him. I want to do him service,” he said. “He died not only for me to have freedom but he died helping a country [United States] that was looking for justice and freedom as well.”



Smoky Mountain Air Show

The Air Force Performance Lab was at the Smoky Mountain Air Show at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville, Tennessee, April 16. ABOVE: Master Sgt. Christopher Robson, 332nd RCS C-Flight chief, is interviewed by Amanda Hara, Channel 8 news anchor. The Air Force Performance Lab was a huge success during the air show which drew more than 100,000 people. LEFT: Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Longo talks to two potential candidates about special operations careers in front of the Air Force Performance Lab. (U.S. Air Force photos)



Burbank on Parade

ABOVE: Tech. Sgt. Brandon Wigginton, 369th Recruiting Squadron, prepares to lead 10 Delayed Entry Program members during Burbank on Parade in Burbank, California, April 23. The DEP members included Natalie Jones, Tyrone Merritt, Joshua Jourdan, Maximillion Estrada, Sean McDonald, Christopher Cagurangan, Aries Perez, Jaime Gallegos, Jermaine Villareal and Juan Solorzano. LEFT: Wigginton stands with Vietnam Veteran Gregory Alaimo, City of Burbank military liaison. Wigginton, assigned to the Eagle Rock office, arranged for the Air Force Vapor Car to be on display at the end of the parade route. (U.S. Air Force photos)



The basics about Basic

LEFT: Master Sgt. Raymundo Contreras receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Staff Sgt. Tony Grabarczyk, 364th Recruiting Squadron, in Yuba City, California, April 18. Contreras, assigned to the 9th Maintenance Squadron at nearby Beale Air Force Base, is a former Military Training Instructor who volunteered to speak with Delayed Entry Program members about Basic Military Training fundamentals. BELOW: Contreras tells DEP members about BMT fundamentals in Yuba City, April 5. Grabarczyk invited Contreras to speak about what it takes to be successful in BMT. (U.S. Air Force photos)





Off to the Academy

Tech. Sgt. D'Kissy Bristow and Tech. Sgt. Matthew Moxley of the 317th Recruiting Squadron were on hand to congratulate Ameka Akaya and his family at St. Maria Goretti High School in Hagerstown, Maryland, April 13. Akaya, in the Falcons baseball cap, signed his letter of intent to continue his basketball career at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, this year. Pictured from left in the front row are his aunt, Delphine; his mother, Sheila; Akaya; and his sister, Sirri. In the back row from left are his father, Walter; Bristow and Moxley. (U.S. Air Force photo)



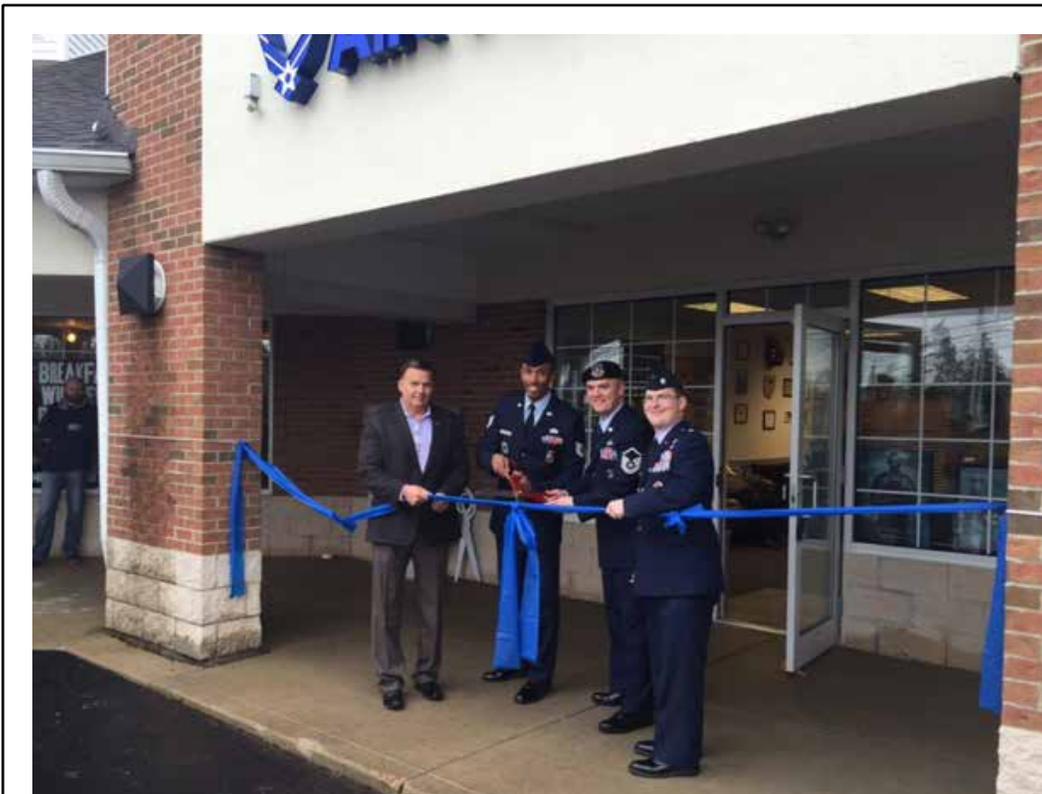
At Fenway Park

Lt. Col. Amy Goff, 319th Recruiting Squadron commander, swears in Delayed Entry Program members before the Boston Red Sox season opener at Fenway Park, April 11. Also present were Col. David Dunklee, 66th Air Base Group commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Patricia Hickey, 66th ABG command chief, from Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Spouse recognition

Three Key Spouses from the 361st Recruiting Squadron were recognized for their dedication to the program at the Team McChord Key Spouse luncheon at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, April 14. From left are: Col. Leonard Kosinski, 62nd Airlift Wing commander, Julie Scott, Lorenza Rabenold and Angel Medeiros, Key Spouses; Lt. Col. Jason Scott, 361st RCS commander; Master Sgt. Adriana Rodriguez-Griffin, 361st RCS first sergeant; and Chief Master Sgt. Tico Mazid, 62nd AW command chief. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Grand opening

The 311th Recruiting Squadron opened a new office in Avon, Ohio, April 8. From left are Bryan Jensen, Mayor of Avon; Tech. Sgt. Sergio Melendez and Master Sgt. Lucas Bistor, G-Flight recruiters; and Lt. Col. Alexander Ackerman, 311th RCS commander. The ribbon-cutting was followed by a Delayed Entry Program swear-in ceremony. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Thinking of careers
 Staff Sgt. Rebecca Sims, standing center behind the table, is joined by Recruiter Assistance Program participants Airmen 1st Class Christopher Kears and Robert Boyer, left, and Air Force Junior ROTC cadets from Huntsville High School at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, April 14. Sims, from the 332nd Recruiting Squadron E-Flight, set up the display for the Junior ROTC Career Fair, attended by 16 Junior ROTC units. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Certificate of appreciation
 Tech. Sgt. Scott Thomson, 317th Recruiting Squadron recruiter, presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Master Sgt. William Monge, Junior ROTC Aerospace Science Instructor, at Atlee High School in Mechanicsville, Virginia, April 14. Monge was presented the certificate for his support of Air Force recruiting. (U.S. Air Force photo)



TDSP leads
 Tech. Sgt. Matthew Moxley, 317th Recruiting Squadron, talks to sophomores majoring in engineering at Morgan State University in Baltimore, April 7. Moxley spoke to students about the Technical Degree Scholarship Program and garnered four leads. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Commissioning

Lt. Col. Philip Goff and Master Sgt. Ashli Betts, 318th Recruiting Squadron D-Flight chief, present Derick Chandler his commissioning certificate at the 318th RCS flight office, Arlington, Virginia, April 11. Chandler will be a bioenvironmental engineer. Goff, chief of the Bioenvironmental Engineering Development Branch for Headquarters Air Force Surgeon General, conducted the ceremony. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Sworn in by a Thunderbird

Lt. Col. Christopher Hammond swears in more than 60 Delayed Entry Program members from the 362nd Recruiting Squadron D- and F-Flights at the 75 Years of Airpower Air Show at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, April 2. The U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron commander administered the Oath of Enlistment at show center before the Thunderbirds took flight. More than 200,000 people attended the two-day event. (U.S. Air Force photo)



HPSP presentation

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Castroman, 318th Recruiting Squadron Health Professions recruiter, and Master Sgt. Robert Parent, 318th RCS E-Flight chief, speak with attendees at a tri-service military recruitment event at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, April 6. The recruiters did a presentation on the Health Professions Scholarship Program. (U.S. Air Force photo)



At Tufts University

Members of the 318th Recruiting Squadron gave a presentation on the Health Professions Scholarship Program at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, April 7. They also participated in mock triage duty along with 40 Tufts premed students at a simulated base in Afghanistan. In the back of the photo are, from left: Master Sgt. Robert Parent, 318th RCS E-Flight chief; Chief Master Sgt. James Core, 318th RCS superintendent; Lt. Col. Teri Noffsinger, 318th RCS commander, and Staff Sgts. Jonathan Castroman and Michael Labrie, 318th RCS Health Profession recruiters. (U.S. Air Force photo)



North Florida Air Show
Members of the 336th Recruiting Squadron organized a swear-in ceremony for their Delayed Entry Program members with the Thunderbirds at the North Florida Air Show in Lake City, April 9. From left are Capt. Ryan Bodenheimer, Thunderbird No. 2; Airman 1st Class Cody Nazworth, Recruiter Assistance Program; Staff Sgt. Dwain Douglas, 336th RCS; members of the DEP; Tech. Sgt. Cristina Garcia, 336th RCS; and Maj. Alexander Goldfein, Thunderbird No. 3. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Vapor on display

The Air Force Vapor Car was on display at Laguna Hills High School in Laguna, California, April 22. Tech. Sgt. Ricky Scoggins, 369th Recruiting Squadron, and Airman First Class Noel Lara Mora, Recruiter Assistance Program, are shown with Curtis Farrell, Katie McGuire, David Heard and Kathy Nguyen. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Media interview

Staff Sgt. Elaine Tejada is interviewed by Randy Jones, DJ at WVRS 89.9 FM, in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, April 19. Tejada, from the 317th Recruiting Squadron B-Flight, spoke about Air Force careers, education and her own personal testimony. (U.S. Air Force photo)



At the Honey Bee Festival

McGruff the Crime Dog and Kim Kester, 2016 American Honey Queen, stand with Staff Sgt. Eric Overbee and Staff Sgt. Matthew Cole during the Amherst County Honey Bee Festival in Amherst, Virginia, April 9. Overbee and Cole, from the 317th Recruiting Squadron, set up a display and met with community influencers to increase awareness of the Air Force in their local area. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Working with influencers

Tech. Sgt. Scott Thomson of the 317th Recruiting Squadron shows one reason to have partnerships with school influencers. One of the counselors from Hanover High School in Mechanicsville, Virginia, reached out to him with an interested student. Without this partnership this applicant may not have reached out to her local recruiter. The counselor helped set up this interview in their office during a school visit. (U.S. Air Force photo)



STEM event

The 317th Recruiting Squadron supported the 2016 USA Science and Engineering Fest at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C., April 15-17. It is considered one of the nation's largest STEM events, and this year the Air Force had Rapid Strike on display. From left are Staff Sgt. Ronald Suchit, Tech. Sgt. Jonathon Beirback and Staff Sgt. Shelby Hewitt of the 317th RCS, and Airman 1st Class Benjamin Pollard, Recruiter Assistance Program. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Community outreach
 Cadet Major Christine Keefe competes in the plank competition as teammates and her instructor cheer her on at the 1st Annual Tinker Air Force Base Junior ROTC community outreach event at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma, April 22. Keefe, a student from Carl Albert High School, won by planking more than 16 minutes. (U.S. Air Force photo)



ABOVE: Col. Stephanie Wilson, 72nd Air Base Wing commander and Chief Master Sgt. Larae Chapman, 72nd ABW command chief, stand with six local high schools at the 1st Annual Tinker Air Force Junior ROTC community outreach event, a joint venture between the base and the 349th Recruiting Squadron, April 22. The event was hosted by Tinker AFB First Sergeants Group and Air Force Sergeants Association. Participants competed in field events such as plank competitions, tug of war, push-ups and sit-ups. LEFT: Lt. Col. Seth Tribett, 349th RCS commander, takes a photo with students from Carl Albert High School, the winning team of the event. (U.S. Air Force photos)



Honoring veterans

Master Sgt. Christopher Robson, third from right facing camera, salutes as veterans participating in Honor Air Knoxville walk by to board a plane at the Knoxville, Tennessee, airport April 13. Roberson, 332nd Recruiting Squadron C-Flight chief, stood with other service members from all branches to honor more than 100 veterans who served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Honor Air flies veterans to Washington, D.C., to see the monuments built in their honor. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Wrench of Fury

LEFT: Staff Sgt. Luryan Camacho receives the “Wrench of Fury” award from Master Sgt. Michael Horne, 369th Recruiting Squadron first sergeant, and Lt. Col. John Patrick, 369th RCS commander, in Encino, California, April 28. The “Wrench of Fury” is given to the top three recruiters with the highest Mechanical/Electronic Aptitude Index reservations at the end of each quarter. RIGHT: Staff Sgt. Alexandria Trempe receives the “Wrench of Fury” award from Master Sgt. Ernesto Portunato, 369th RCS B-Flight chief, and Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Daigle, 369th RCS production superintendent, in Encino, April 22. (U.S. Air Force photos)



In appreciation

The 336th Recruiting Squadron had the opportunity to present two individuals with certificates for the Richard Petty Driver Experience Ride-Along Program. Both individuals are involved with various youth mentorship and athletic programs, and are strong supporters of the squadron's efforts. LEFT: Lt. Col. Lederer, 336th RCS commander, presents a certificate to Greg Bennett, owner of Farm House Restaurant, in Lake Park, Georgia, April 28. BELOW: Lederer presents a certificate to Stacey Maples, Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, Assistant Fire Chief, April 28. (U.S. Air Force photos)





IRR muster

The Air Force Reserve unit at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, hosted an Individual Ready Reserve muster for the surrounding area with approximately 200 in attendance April 23. Members of the 317th Recruiting Squadron A-Flight set up a booth to gather prior service leads; their efforts resulted in 16 leads. From left are Tech. Sgt. Elliott Mason, Staff Sgt. Chris Long, Staff Sgt. Shelby Hewitt, Staff Sgt. Ronald Suchit, Master Sgt. Yakima Armstrong and Staff Sgt. Andrew Emert. (U.S. Air Force photo)



CCAF recognition

With a graduating class of 14, Intermountain Christian School in Holladay, Utah, held a ceremony April 21 to congratulate each senior by recognizing their individual plans after high school. Tech. Sgt. Ronnie Iglesias took the opportunity to present Katie Berkenpas with a letter of acceptance into the Community College of the Air Force by meeting the strict standards for entrance into the Air Force. Berkenpas joined the Delayed Entry Program in 2015 under the soft book program and ships to Basic Military Training in August as a signals intelligence analyst. Iglesias is assigned to the 368th Recruiting Squadron E-Flight in Salt Lake City. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Welcome home

Members of the 364th Recruiting Squadron were recently welcomed home after their deployments to Afghanistan. LEFT: Master Sgt. Michael Richardson is welcomed home by his wife, Staff Sgt. Kristine Richardson, and daughter, Jayden, at the Sacramento, California, airport April 16. He was deployed 179 days. BELOW: Master Sgt. Kristy Norwood is welcomed at the Sacramento airport April 7 by her daughters, Miah and Janiah, and husband, Master Sgt. Jeremiah Norwood. She was deployed 236 days. (U.S. Air Force photos)





Out in the community

Members of the 361st Recruiting Squadron B-Flight volunteered at the Tri-City Union Gospel Mission in Kennewick, Washington, April 7. Pictured front to back are Tech. Sgt. Anthony Grisafe, Staff Sgt. Roman Watson, Airman 1st Class Jacob Doyle with the Recruiter Assistance Program, and Staff Sgt. Oscar Gastelum. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Last certification

Senior Master Sgt. Dwight Beck, 331st Recruiting Squadron production superintendent, congratulates Staff Sgt. William Magill, 331st RCS D-flight, on his recruiter certification in Pensacola, Florida, April 7. This was Beck's final certification as he retires May 20. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Certification

Staff Sgt. Ronald Suchit, 317th Recruiting Squadron A-flight, receives his certification from Senior Master Sgt. Jerome Peele, 317th RCS production superintendent, at the Largo, Maryland, recruiting office April 13. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Volunteer recognition

Col. Eric Trychon, left, and Col. Thomas Kunkel present Leila Brown with a Certificate of Volunteer Excellence at a volunteer recognition ceremony at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, April 13. Kunkel, 23rd Air Wing commander, and Trychon, 93rd Air Ground Operations Wing vice commander, recognized Brown for her many contributions as a volunteer on base and in the local area. Brown is a member of the 336th Recruiting Squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Air superiority

Members of the 313th Recruiting Squadron E-flight played a friendly “Battle for Air Superiority” basketball game against the faculty of John C. Birdleough High School in Phoenix, New York, April 15. Approximately 100 people attended, helping raise awareness of the Air Force in the local community. E-Flight won, 57-54. The players for E-flight are in the orange T-shirts. From left in the front row are Tech. Sgt. Bryan Newton, Staff Sgt. Jimmy Sayarath, Alex Van Pelt, 1st Lt. Thomas Boharsik and Staff Sgt. Catlyn Rohwer. In the back row are Staff Sgt. Kevin Dunham, left, and Tech. Sgt. Tim McClelland. (U.S. Air Force photo)