

THE STINGER

The Official Magazine of the 180th Fighter Wing
Vol. 57, Issue No. 3, June 2018



STINGER

Vol. 57, Issue No. 03, June 2018

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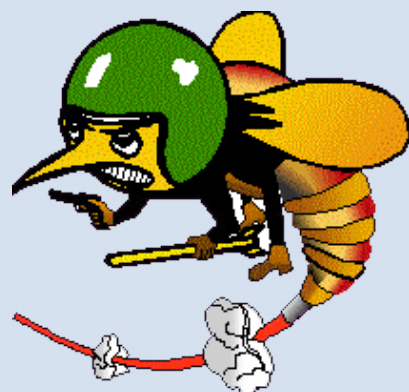
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The Stinger, a funded Air Force newspaper, is an authorized publication for the personnel of the 180th Fighter Wing, Ohio Air National Guard, 2660 S. Eber Road, Swanton, Ohio 43558. Contents of The Stinger are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, the National Guard Bureau or the Adjutant General of Ohio. The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the 180th Public Affairs Office.



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Commander's Comments



“The value of knowledge is knowing what we don't know”

Editorial by Col Joshua L. Wright

There are many times in life when I feel ignorant about many things. This is a common feeling, or at least should be, among many people as the amount of knowledge out there is vast and ever expansive. However, you can rest assured that nobody can know everything about everything. That being said, ignorance is more than just lack of knowledge, but also can be the refusal to try to understand viewpoints other than one's own. The first half of this definition will be the focus of this article. We will address the second half in a future article.

Everyone starts out being ignorant. We first start learning from our parents; how to talk, walk and ride a bicycle. This knowledge is not inherent in any of us, we each must be taught by someone how to do these basic things. Then, we go to school to learn more advanced concepts of reading, writing and arithmetic. As we get older, these concepts become more complex yet we still apply the basic fundamentals of learning that were ingrained in each of us at a young age. Then, we go to technical school to learn our trades and develop even more specialized knowledge. Eventually, we become experts in our fields and become the teachers. However, it is important to know, that the learning does not stop once we get to this point. The value

of knowledge is knowing what we don't know and then asking the right questions to get the answers we seek. Questions asked don't always give the answers sought and the answers received should breed more questions to be asked. Questions and answers should proliferate together in a continuous learning model.

Now you hopefully are asking the question, “Why is he talking to us about ignorance?” Following the concept: questions lead to answers, lead to more questions philosophy, there is a lot of information out there for guardsman, specifically about the medical requirements of reporting injuries and illnesses to the unit. Come on, you knew it had to go there since this whole article is being written by the medical group commander. And dare I say, not everyone is familiar with the reporting requirements, nor the consequences of not reporting them. So, being the subject matter expert in this particular field, I am here to help educate you on the requirements so that you can no longer claim ignorance referencing back to the title of this whole thing. Instead, I would hope that “I think therefore I am,” would be more fitting.

Rather than delving deep into AFIs and quoting regulations, I am

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One Big Family

180th Fighter Wing Siblings
Serve Side-by-Side

*Story & Photos by
Senior Master Sgt. Beth Holliker*

The Guard Family is a well-known phrase throughout the Air National Guard, highlighting the close-knit relationships built while serving as members of the Air National Guard, often times serving entire 30-year careers with the same unit.

Bringing true meaning to the phrase, Senior Airman Arika Hoffman and her brother, Senior Airman Alex Hoffman, decided to embark on a journey of military service together, enlisting with the Ohio Air National Guard's 180th Fighter Wing in 2015.

"I always kind of knew I would end up serving in the military," said Senior Airman Alex Hoffman, a tactical aircraft maintainer assigned to the 180FW. "But my decision to join the Air Force came after considering a few different options. I talked to both the Army and the Navy, but my dream of flying led me to choose the Air Force, and the ANG, so I could pursue a college degree as well."

Knowing that serving in the military had always been something they both wanted to be a part of, after choosing the ANG, it was

Arika, a client systems technician assigned to the 180FW, who suggested they do it together.

Side-by-side, the Hoffman siblings headed to Basic Military Training, conducted at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, conquering all of the challenges that came their way before heading off to their respective career technical training.

"We joined about a month apart," Arika said. "But, we were fortunate enough to experience basic training together, watching each other get yelled at or get made fun of, and having our family fly down to watch us graduate together."

The Hoffman's are no strangers to military service and are following in the footsteps of several family members who have served before them, in four of the five military branches that make up the U.S. Armed Forces. Arika and Alex's older brother is currently serving in the U.S. Air Force and their cousin is serving alongside of them at the 180FW as an F-16 pilot assigned to the wing.

Now, nearing their four-year anniversary of military service, both Arika and Alex couldn't be happier with their decision to enlist.

As a client systems technician, Arika's

primary role is to assist unit members with various IT, or information technology, related questions or problems. She assists with setting up user accounts, installing drivers, fixing printers and helping members navigate through basic troubleshooting processes.

"The things I enjoy the most are the people and the challenge the job brings each day," Arika said. "I joined the communications flight with very little IT knowledge. I was nervous and very excited to learn something new. I have been so lucky to work beside some pretty amazing people and being able to learn from everyone in the communications flight as well as getting to know so many other influential people here at the 180FW."

As an aircraft maintainer, or crew chief, Alex's primary role is to oversee the status of his assigned F-16 fighter jet and ensure it remains in the most mission capable condition possible. He is responsible for the daily maintenance and service of the aircraft, scheduled inspections and maintenance of the main systems of the jet. He is also responsible for having knowledge of various specialized aircraft systems and coordinating service requirements with the sections on base that

maintain those systems, including avionics, hydraulics, fuels, propulsion and structural.

"My favorite part of the job is the constant challenge," said Alex. "Every day brings something different than the last and keeps me on my toes. Also, launching the jet out after a few days of in-depth maintenance and seeing it take flight, knowing that all of the hard work you put in made it happen. It gives me an overwhelming sense of accomplishment."

Both of the Hoffman siblings have learned and accomplished so much in their short time in the military, most significantly, being hired as fulltime employees at the 180FW.

For Alex, being assigned to and named as the dedicated crew chief for aircraft tail number 0527, becoming the person primarily responsible for all aspects of a particular aircraft, has been his most important accomplishment yet.

"When I got back from technical school, I barely understood the basics of what it took to be a crew chief," Alex said. "I looked up to everyone above me and tried my best to learn from each of them. It's because of them that I am even able to hold such a title and I can only try my best to uphold everything it

means to be a dedicated crew chief."

Earning a military coin during her first deployment, from a senior noncommissioned officer, outside of her primary career field, has been deemed one of Arika's biggest accomplishments to date as coins are often presented to Airmen recognized for outstanding performance and achievement.

When one of the unit's primary computer systems, used for processing military pay for unit members, went down, Arika pulled her knowledge, reached out to colleagues from the field and came up with a plan to rectify the issue. She was able to help each member on the trip to process pay documents before the unit returned back to home-station.

"I was back from technical school for just about a year when I found out that I would be supporting a two-week deployment with the aviation package," Arika said. I was so nervous, I didn't feel prepared and I knew very few people outside of the communications flight. It may seem like a little task to some, but to me, it proved that I was capable of tackling the issue at hand and getting it done."

Now, both serving fulltime with the 180FW, Arika and Alex plan to make a career

out of their military service and are excited to what opportunities will come in the future and to making lifelong memories together and with their new Guard Family.

It was on a recent deployment to Patrick Air Force Base, Florida that highlighted the Guard Family concept.

"There was just something special about the trip," said Alex. "We were working hard and flying a lot, but I was having just as much fun at work as I was playing volleyball with everyone after work. It really highlighted to me what it is that I love so much about being in the 180FW. We're just one big family and there is nothing we cannot accomplish together."

For Arika, the Guard Family concept is also important to her, but it's serving alongside of her brother that means the most.

"I'd honestly have to say that the most important memory I've made so far is graduating BMT alongside my brother," said Arika. "It's not something that I think many others can say and I will forever cherish the fact that we were fortunate enough to experience such an important and life-changing event together." 🦅



Providing Hope

180th Fighter Wing Airman Provides
Patient-Centered Care





**Story & Photos by
Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes**

A cancer diagnosis can leave patients reeling, frightened and uncertain of the future, especially when it is an aggressive form of cancer or one that doesn't respond to traditional treatments. This is the state many patients are in when they first meet Capt. Stephanie Smiddy, the infection control and immunization officer-in-charge assigned to the 180th Fighter Wing, Ohio Air National Guard.

As the head research nurse for the precision oncology program at the Eleanor N. Dana Cancer Center at the University of Toledo Medical Center, Smiddy is often the first person a patient will meet before beginning experimental immunotherapy treatments for rare and difficult cancers.

She is responsible for patient care, administrative and regulatory duties, but her first responsibility is ensuring the patients understand the treatments they'll receive during the clinical research program. It's a difficult task, Smiddy explained, because most of the patients are experiencing high levels of stress and are often overwhelmed by the complexity of the diagnoses and treatments, which is only made worse by the constant barrage of medical jargon. Her coworkers described her as a nurse with a natural talent for putting her patients

at ease and breaking down complicated medical concepts into simple analogies without talking down to or confusing her patients.

"Whenever she comes into a patient's room for the first time, she gives them hope," said Jill Sholl, a clinical research nurse at UTM.

"The room lights up whenever she walks in, and I needed that," said Linda Milks-Pond, a patient receiving treatments at UTM. "When I got here, things weren't looking very good, but her attitude and her professionalism lifted a huge burden from me. She's been a huge part of my recovery."

She began her nursing career in a regular oncology program, but moved to clinical research because she wanted to have a bigger impact on her patients and their care.

"When you're in the hospital, you get just a snapshot of the patient," Smiddy said. "They're in the hospital for an acute problem, so they come in, you take care of them, and then you discharge them, but you don't know what happened to them before they were admitted and you don't know what happens to them after they're discharged. As a clinical research coordinator, I'm more personally involved with that patient."

Smiddy is also responsible for monitoring how patients respond to

treatments and determining whether or not a patient should continue with their treatment program. One of the many ways she goes above and beyond the call of duty is by making herself available to all of her patients 24-hours-a-day.

Milks-Pond said she had been hospitalized for an unrelated medical emergency while participating in the clinical research program at UTM. Around midnight, she had a nurse telling her she needed a blood transfusion, but the doctor treating her disagreed, saying it would conflict with the cancer treatment she was receiving at the time. Milks-Pond sent Smiddy a text asking for help, and Smiddy replied immediately letting Milks-Pond know the treatment wouldn't conflict with her other treatments.

"It was horribly scary," Milks-Pond said. "But I was able to get right through to her. I didn't have to worry about what might happen, because she was always there for me."

While she tries to make herself as available as possible to all of her patients, Smiddy said the hardest part of her job is time management.

"I want to be able to spend an hour with each patient, but that's not always possible," Smiddy said. "I want to enroll as many people as possible without compromising the quality of care the patient

is getting and without compromising the quality of the data we're getting."

In addition to her role as a head research nurse, she's also responsible for safeguarding the health and preparedness of the men and women of the 180FW. As the Immunization OIC at the 180FW, she needs to be able to explain the way vaccines work with the human immune system for Airmen who frequently deploy to remote locations where they need vaccinations for diseases most Americans will never encounter.

"What she does here for the patients, for the program, and the university is invaluable," said Dr. John Nemunaitis, director of the oncology research program at UTM.

Whether helping Airmen stay fit to fight or helping a patient cope with the physical and emotional hardship of battling cancer, Smiddy is committed to helping people live their best lives.

"Between all of her experiences with her military background and what she does for the patients here every day, I'm just very proud of her," Scholl said. "She's very compassionate her work and her patients, and she does an amazing job." 🐦



A Teacher at Heart

180th Fighter Wing Airman Educates
and Advocates for Youth and Airmen

*Story & Photos by
Senior Master Sgt. Beth Holliker*

Growing up in a home where education was valued, 1st Lt. Ashley Chapa, assigned to the Ohio National Guard's 180th Fighter Wing, intended to make teaching a career, but it was her dream to serve her country that came first.

Chapa was so eager to serve that she enlisted, in 2004, at the age of 17 while still in her senior year at Chisago Lakes High School, in her hometown of Lindstrom Minnesota.

"I wanted to give back for all the freedoms and liberties I have been afforded as an American," said Chapa. "Freedom is not free and is only possible as a result of the brave men and women who stand up to defend those freedoms."

Joining the Minnesota National Guard's 148th Fighter Wing as a jet engine mechanic, Chapa transferred to the 180FW in 2006 so she could attend The Ohio State University, in Columbus, where she pursued a double major in Italian and History of Art, earning her Bachelor of Art in Italian and Bachelor of Art in History of Art in 2009.

In 2013, deciding to bring her dreams of teaching to reality, Chapa enrolled in the Master of Education in Special Education program at the University of Toledo, graduating in 2014.

"Even though I wasn't using my undergraduate degrees," said Chapa. "With this degree, I was still able to apply my passion for teaching and helping others through a different avenue."

For the past five years Chapa has worked as an intervention specialist at Liberty Center Elementary School in Northwest Ohio, where she works with kindergarten and first grade students with varying degrees of disabilities in small group and one-on-one settings, or co-teaching in a general education classroom setting, assisting typical students as well as students with disabilities.

"I firmly believe that all students can and will learn when provided with individualized educational opportunities that capitalize on their strengths, instead of what they cannot yet do," said Chapa. "Kids with disabilities are just like their peers, in that they deserve an appropriate education that provides them with what they need in order to be successful."

Chapa has always been passionate about helping others and her role as an intervention specialist allows her the opportunities to make a lasting impact in many ways.

"In my role as an intervention specialist, I am able to advocate for the educational rights of my students and provide early intervention in order to minimize the learning and educa-

tional gaps as much as possible," Chapa said. "Also, I often work with students who have challenging needs and students who come from a variety of backgrounds. Some days I may be their only source of smiles, praise and encouragement, so it is imperative that I also advocate for their social-emotional needs as well."

"She is really nice," said first grader, Olivia Boylan. "I like her because she always helps me sound out words."

"She's a special teacher," said Kelly Hartbarger, principal at Liberty Center Elementary. "It's not just a classroom to her or her students. She's attached to them and they are attached to her. She is so dedicated to the kids and their families."

In addition to her fulltime teaching career at Liberty Center, Chapa still continues to serve as a traditional guardsman with the 180th Fighter Wing.

Currently serving as Director of Equal Opportunity at the 180FW, Chapa is responsible for the development of education materials and overseeing training requirements related to human relations, discrimination and harassment for more 900 Airmen assigned to the wing. She is also charged with facilitating the Equal Opportunity process for any Airmen who feel they may have been victims of, inadvertent or intentional, unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment.

"It is my sincere hope that I can spend 95% of my time on preventing discrimination and harassment through education and training," said Chapa. "Best practice states that prevention is more effective than reaction. Therefore, our office takes the time to educate Airmen by increasing awareness of laws, regulations and observances in an effort to prevent discrimination and harassment."

In an effort to better to educate Airmen, promote awareness and prevent discrimination or harassment situations within the wing, Chapa decided to expand her knowledge in the field and is currently attending course at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, located at Patrick Air Force base, Florida. Throughout the six week course, made up of more than 113 Army and Air Force officers and enlisted members, Chapa was ranked in the top 5% of students for academic excellence, earning her the title of Distinguished Graduate.

"I will miss her when she's gone," said kindergartner, Charlie Rains. "I like it when she lets me be the teacher. And, she gives me treats!"

"When she's gone for training, it's impactful," said Hartbarger. "It's hard. No one could



"It's not just a classroom to her or her students. She's attached to them and they are attached to her."

ever fill her shoes. We are so very proud of her and her service to our country."

Hartbarger also attributes Chapa's military service and training to the dedication and discipline Chapa brings to the classroom.

"She is dedicated and disciplined," said Hartbarger. "That, combined with her compassion and understanding allow her to handle the most difficult cases with poise and grace. She is so valuable to us."

While the educational needs and environments of adults serving in the ANG are vastly different from those of her students, Chapa has easily been able to apply and blend skillsets and techniques from one to the other, further enhancing her ability to

teach and advise commanders and military members on rights, regardless of any differences, perceived or otherwise.

"During the week, as a teacher, I teach and advocate for the rights of my students, regardless of any disabilities," Chapa continued. "During military training, I teach and advocate for the rights of my fellow military members, regardless of any differences, perceived or otherwise."

Chapa credits her role as an intervention specialist to setting her up for success in her military role by providing her the ability to prepare effective and efficient lesson plans, allowing her to be better prepared when training fellow Airmen.

"It has also helped me in advising all of our Airmen," said Chapa. "Regardless of background, age, gender or race."

A true teacher at heart, Chapa strives to bring it all together, using best practices from both her civilian and military roles to aid her in providing the best possible education, opportunities and outcome for her students, no matter their age, background or differences.

Her heart belongs to her smallest students and she hopes to continue her career at Liberty Center Elementary for years to come.

"I do intend to go back to school to earn my Educator Specialist degree," said Chapa. "This would provide me the credentials needed to one day be the Director of Special

Education in a school district. This would involve leading a team of intervention specialist and providing support for staff and students within the district."

Chapa plans to continue her military career and teaching her fellow Airmen, as director of equal opportunity or in any other position that would allow her to both teach and follow her passion of helping others.

"I am open to whatever opportunities present themselves and will consider myself blessed for whatever comes my way," said Chapa. "I enjoy working with people and I am passionate about helping others, so I am hopeful for a position that allows me to continue to do those things." 🐦



CDDAR Training

Photos by Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes

Airmen assigned to the Ohio Air National Guard's 180th Fighter Wing and 200th RED HORSE Squadron conducted CDDAR training on May 20, 2019 at the 180FW. CDDAR (See-Dar) is an acronym for Crash Damaged/Disabled Aircraft Recovery. The CDDAR team is made up of members of the Maintenance Group. It consists of Airmen from most of the sections in Maintenance, including electricians, egress, pneudraulics, weapons, avionics, structural, engine shop, fuels, quality assurance and other sections. The team is a mix of specialized and diverse skillsets, ready and able to respond to any aircraft recovery scenario.

The CDDAR team responds to aircraft emergencies during normal flying on a regular basis. If a pilot declares an in-flight-emergency, the CDDAR team assembles and prepares to handle the emergency once the aircraft is on the ground. This could include something as simple as towing the aircraft back to the flightline once he lands safely, or in the worst case scenario, responding to a crashed aircraft. In the event of an in-flight-emergency, the long, loud siren on base is activated. That is the emergency klaxon that lets everyone know there is an emergency, and lets the CDDAR team know to assemble.

The CDDAR team is prepared to respond to an emergency at any location, and at any time of day or night. As an example, in June of 2017, a U.S. Air Force F-16 Thunderbird was involved in a crash at Dayton International Airport in Dayton, Ohio. The Thunderbirds were in Dayton for an airshow, and while practicing for the show, the two seat F-16 departed the runway while landing and flipped over onto its back, trapping the pilot and another rider in the aircraft. Officials from Dayton called the 180FW Maintenance Group commander and requested assistance from the 180FW CDDAR team to clear the aircraft from the airfield prior to the start of the airshow the next morning. Members of the 180FW team took personnel and equipment to recover the aircraft in Dayton, and were able to get it clear of the airfield prior to the start of the airshow.

CDDAR training consists of classroom and hands-on training. Classroom training covers topics such as environmental hazards, heat/cold stress, fall protection, and lifting techniques. The hands on training is where team members learn the different techniques for aircraft recovery. Lifting an aircraft with inflatable lift bags, hoisting with a sling and crane, pulling an aircraft out of the mud, and performing composite material recovery and mitigation are all tasks performed by the CDDAR team members. 🛩️



Under Pressure

Providing Critical Care When It Matters Most





**Story & Photos by
Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes**

While other children watched Sesame Street or Lamb Chop's Play-Along, Kaitlyn Newkirk watched shows about emergency room trauma surgeons. Even as young as three years old, her dad would find her standing in their living room, entranced by the events unfolding before her. "He would kind of question himself like, 'Should I really be letting her watch this?' But he said I would watch it for hours and tell him 'That's the gall bladder,' and I was just a little kid," Newkirk said.

Her early exposure to trauma care led her to a career in the medical field, and ultimately to saving lives.

The first person in her family to attend college, Newkirk faced a common hurdle: she knew she needed an education, but she didn't know how to pay for it.

"At the time, it didn't really seem possible, because no one else in my family had done it," Newkirk said.

She needed someone who had already accomplished what she hoped to accomplish.

She needed a mentor to help show her the way. She found that mentor through one of her friends, whose mom worked at the 180th Fighter Wing. Her friend's mom explained the college tuition benefits Newkirk would receive if she joined the Air National Guard, and she enlisted a few months later as a lab technician with the wing's medical group.

After returning home from basic training, Newkirk enrolled in the nursing program at the University of Toledo. She graduated in 2012 and began working as a nurse in the surgical intensive care unit at ProMedica Toledo Hospital. After a few years, she received her critical care certification and moved to New York City with her husband, where she worked at Columbia University Irving Medical Center.

Despite living and working more than 500 miles away from the 180FW, she refused to transfer units. She said she felt such a strong sense of comradery and connection to her fellow Airmen at the 180FW that she decided she would fly back to Ohio every month for training rather than switch to the New York or New Jersey Air National Guard. Most of the time, the money she earned from a weekend of training went directly to paying for her

plane tickets. For three years, she served in the Ohio National Guard, not for the money, but for the love of it.

In 2017, she enrolled in the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist program at Otterbein University. It was during this time that she would find herself in high-stress situations of life-or-death importance.

While providing anesthesia, her patient experienced a serious and extremely rare medical event. An event that results in the patient's death in more than 80% of cases. She recognized the problem immediately and took action to save the patient. Newkirk refrained from explaining the details of the case to protect patient confidentiality.

"She was working at a facility where the CRNAs are the only people in charge and there are no doctors, so she was literally the person making all the decisions," said Jessica DeSalvo, a nurse anesthetist who studied with Newkirk at Otterbein. "She had a day where she had a patient coding on the table and she took charge of the situation, and they were able to stabilize the patient."

"She's calm and focused," said Dr. Norman Smike, medical director of the Grant-Otterbein CRNA program. "She doesn't let emotions

get in the way, she just does what needs to be done. She's great at communicating under pressure, and during a critical situation, Kaitlyn did a fantastic job."

"Anesthesia is 99% boredom and 1% sheer terror," Newkirk said. "The most fatal thing that can happen in anesthesia is not recognizing that something is happening. Prompt recognition of an adverse event is the best way to save a patient's life. The quick recognition and communication between the anesthesia providers and the surgeon, and the quick action taken thereafter is what saved the patient's life."

Newkirk said her experience in Air Force basic training is what allowed her to remain calm and focused during that situation. It gave her the tools she needed to handle the stress.

"I still, to this day, think a lot about basic training in terms of how I manage stress," Newkirk said. "They're creating a high-stress environment on purpose to test your ability to complete your mission. That high-stress environment, that truly is anesthesia. A pa-

tient is dying; fix it, fix it, fix it! That's the thought in your head the entire time. It's like a training instructor is yelling inside my ear the entire time; fix it, fix it, fix it! Even though it's been more than 12 years, I still think about how I first learned to maintain my composure in those situations."

"Her military experiences have helped mold her and prepare her to tolerate stressful situations, to think clearly, to stay calm

***"A patient is dying;
fix it, fix it, fix it!"***

under pressure, and given her opportunities to experience things most people don't get a chance to experience," DeSalvo said.

She brings that experience with her to the 180FW. As a clinical nurse, she draws blood, gives shots, and teaches self-aid and buddy care to all 180FW Airmen to ensure they have the skills to provide life-saving first aid during the often chaotic and high-

stress situations they might face in deployed environments.

In addition to training Airmen, she actively mentors them, helping them to overcome obstacles in their personal and professional lives. She recently helped guide an Airman through the process of becoming a CRNA.

"I never had anyone to show me the way," Newkirk said. "Anytime I can offer that to anyone else, I will."

She's left a lasting impact on those she's mentored and her colleagues.

"I've never met anybody like her," DeSalvo said. "She's one of the most genuine and hard-working people I've

ever met. She's true to herself and others."

"Since joining the 180th Medical Group, she has consistently sought out the path that educates and challenges her the most," said Lt. Col. Ronald Nabors, medical administrative officer at the 180FW. "Each step of her career she has consistently been identified as one of our gifted and strongest leaders. We are extremely fortunate to have her." 🐦



Women in Aviation

Senior Airman Haelie Egbert
Aerospace Propulsion



**Story & Photos by
Senior Master Sgt. Beth Holliker**

Amelia Earhart once said, “Some of us have great runways already built for us. If you have one, take off. But if you don’t have one, realize it is your responsibility to grab a shovel and build one for yourself and for those who will follow after you.”

That is exactly what Senior Airman Haelie Egbert is doing, paving a runway that would allow her to take off to a bright future for herself and those women and young girls with dreams of taking flight into the aviation industry.

Egbert, an aerospace propulsion technician assigned to the Ohio Air National Guard’s 180th Fighter Wing, Swanton, Ohio, and a mechanical engineering student at The Ohio State University, enlisted in 2015 to provide herself with an education and a skillset that would set her apart from others.

“Not only did I want to have an experience that would set me apart from many of my colleagues,” said Egbert. “As a mechanical engineering major, the idea of being able to completely take apart such a complex system and put it back together really appealed to me.”

Though her family has a long tradition of military service and she was armed with love and support from her family as she set

her course to the future, not everyone was as supportive.

“The true deciding factor to enlist is my unwillingness to take no for an answer,” Egbert said. “When you’re trying to find your way through the process, people will give you their beliefs and opinions, and not all will be supportive.”

Turning the negative into a positive, she refused to let those opinions sway her decision to join the ranks of the less than one percent of U.S. population serving in America’s Armed Forces.

“I used it as fuel,” said Egbert. “Fuel to figure out what was best for me, fuel to have the courage to act and fuel to exceed the expectations and prove those opinions

wrong.”

Now, nearly four years into her military service, Egbert says she wouldn’t change her decision to enlist.

“Like many jobs, there are good days and bad days,” Egbert said. “It’s after the work is done and you’ve washed as much grease off of your hands as you can that you realize there really is no other job like it in the world.”

Aerospace propulsion technicians are integral to the flying mission and are responsible for maintaining, troubleshooting and repairing the nine primary components and more than 5,000 pieces that make up the more than 3,000 pound turbofan engine, either when installed or removed from a jet.

“It’s after the work is done and you’ve washed as much grease off of your hands as you can that you realize there really is no other job like it in the world.”

Basic understanding of how the aircraft, starter and engine work together as a system is also a necessity to successfully maintaining the engines.

Her role as an F-16 jet engine mechanic is to maintain the wing’s Pratt & Whitney 229 engines through time-sensitive inspections, repairs and test runs, providing the highest quality engines for the mission, while ensuring the safety of pilots.

“We do our job with the highest level of discipline and attention to detail to ensure everything is done right,” Egbert said. “With a single-engine fighter jet, we are held to high standards to ensure the pilot’s safety.”

“If there were no jet engine mechanics, the jets would not fly,” Egbert said. “Plain and simple.”

“It takes a rare and unique person to be able to disassemble and assemble and test a piece of machinery that forces the travel of an Aircraft to 1,500 miles per hour,” said Senior Master Sgt. John VanHorn, 180th Fighter Wing Propulsion Element Supervisor. “It has to be built with the precision of a Swiss watch and contain no maintenance flaws, because there is only one engine in the F16---It has to be perfect every time.”

While the job comes with a high level of responsibility and requires significant discipline, it also comes with reward of seeing how the hard work directly contributes to success of the mission.

“My favorite part of the job is performing engine runs,” said Egbert. “Whether installed in the jet or removed and mounted on the test stand, it provides you with a high level of satisfaction knowing that your hard work played a part in breathing life back into that engine. Especially when you are on the floor next to that engine as its running, knowing that very few people get to stand next to something so powerful makes it very rewarding.”

Outside of her military duties, Egbert continues to expand her aviation knowledge through her studies in mechanical engineering, while also earning a minor in security and

intelligence, at The Ohio State University through aviation related internships.

Her first internship allowed her to participate in a study, observing how air flow passes over a Chinook helicopter’s rotor blades during flight.

Currently, in her civilian job, the university is working with Pratt & Whitney to study bending stress and fatigue on various gears used in the company’s engines.

Now, in her junior year, Egbert plans to continue her education to earn a master’s in mechanical engineering before pursuing a career in the national security and defense field, while also working toward a commissioning opportunity in the Air National Guard.

“I get asked a lot if I plan to make a career out of the military,” said Egbert. “It’s when you get home and finally take your boots off that you realize you are a part of something much bigger than you. I’m not ready to come home and take my boots off for good. I’d like to stay in as long as I am able to.”

“With her Engineering book savvy and understanding of physics, calculus, thermo, material science, etc., she can see and apply thought processes toward a perfect engine, either through exact assembly or aggressive troubleshooting, with her problem solving mind,” said VanHorn. “With her solid Engineering mind and very good mechanical abilities, she is simply the very best of those we like to see working in the Propulsion field. I expect upon graduation from Ohio States Engineering program that she will have a very promising future.”

As Egbert continues to pave the runway to her future, leaving a trail for other women and young girls interested in the aviation field, she reminds herself and others to dream big.

“There is no dream too big, no idea too outrageous and no goal too far out of reach,” Egbert said. “Set your limits high and have the courage to pursue them. Follow your passion, set your goals and execute your plan to get there.” 🐦





(From left to right) Capt. Michael Dandurand, Chaplain assigned to the 180th Fighter Wing, Col. William Gieze, Vice Wing Commander of the 180th Fighter Wing, Bishop Daniel Thomas, and Randy Gasser, Employer Support of the Guard and reserve Ombudsman Director, pose for a photo outside of Holy Trinity Parish in Swanton, Ohio after presenting Bishop Thomas with the Patriot Award May 19, 2019. Photo by Airman 1st Class Kregg York

COMMENTS from pg. 3

going to break it down to you in layman’s terms so hopefully there will be no confusion. Just know there is a regulation for everything and usually is located in multiple different regulations depending on the situation.

The best example I can give you of this is depending on which status you are in, on orders or not on orders, there are two different AFIs that deal with these situations. If you are in AGR status or a traditional guardsman out here on a regularly scheduled drill (RSD), then you are on orders. AGR status guardsman are never not on orders, but traditional guardsman not here on an RSD or other status, i.e. AT, ST, RMP, deployment, etc., are not on orders. In other words, a traditional guardsman at home doing their civilian occupation or schooling are not on orders. Make sense? That was more of a rhetorical question and I did not really expect an answer but if you did answer, then more questions to follow.

If you are in status, and you suffer an injury or illness, you need to report said injury or illness to your unit and the medical group within 24 hours. This allows your unit the opportunity to account for your whereabouts as well as determining what else you might need to help your situation. Whether this is placing you on CONLEAVE, MEDCON orders, or INCAP to get you the resources and assistance you need in a timely manner. Trying to do this retroactively is near impossible and really

if you had adhered to the policy, should not have to be done in the first place. Now, if those acronyms mean nothing to you, don’t be complacent and ignorant. You can look them up for clarification in the different categories should you desire. I can’t spoon feed you everything, sometimes the best learning is gaining that knowledge

through active learning, looking it up yourself. Now, if you fail to report your injury or illness within 24 hours, you are then required to provide a written explanation to your commander and the medical unit. And yes, you are reading this correctly. A written explanation. And no, I am not making this up. AFI 36-2910 2.2.1.1. Look at that, you made me go and quote AFI because you did not believe me. Oh, and by the way, if you did not know those acronyms I listed above, they are in that AFI also. Just an FYI. FYI is not in that AFI.

Ok, so now, if you are not in status, refer back to two paragraphs ago if you forgot what that means, you have 72 hours to report that illness, injury, disease, operative procedure, hospitalization, or other medical situation to your unit and the medical group. By informing your unit and medical of the situation, we will be better able to serve you by limiting your mobility, duty and fitness requirements once the information is known. If you fail to report this information, then you are expected to deploy at a moment’s notice without restrictions if the “you know what” gets thrown by the monkey and hits the fan. You are doing your unit and yourself an injustice by not reporting a change in your medical status.

Now, you can no longer claim ignorance of the medical reporting requirements of an injury or illness. And most importantly, when I come around to your section whatever that may be and ask “Where are the keys to the jet?” or “Which way does the wrench turn to tighten the bolt?” Oh wait, I did learn that one when I was a kid... righty tighty, lefty loosey. See, those basic concepts still are applicable even when we are so highly specialized. I ask these questions to expand my knowledge so that I am not so ignorant of what it is that you do. We all learn from each other. 🐼

CONGRATULATIONS

to the following Airmen on their recent promotions

To Airman:

- Durden, Sabrina - Security Forces Squadron
- Haviland, Hannah - Medical Group
- Hudspeth, Cheyenne - Force Support Squadron
- Pinnardo, Drew - Security Forces Squadron
- Walters, Seth - Security Forces Squadron

To Airman First Class:

- Niese, Emma - Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Sauerwein, Ariana - Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Shepard, Cari - Logistics Readiness Squadron

To Senior Airman:

- Dobos, Brandon - Maintenance Squadron
- Gore, Brandon - Civil Engineering Squadron
- Hoffman, Debra - Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Kernyakevych, Vladyslav - Maintenance Squadron
- Mikesell, Brett - Maintenance Squadron
- Mitchell, Ashley - Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Petit, Jonathan - Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Pokornik, Kayla - Security Forces Squadron
- Whitman, Nicholas - Maintenance Squadron

To Staff Sergeant:

- Eldred, Branden - Security Forces Squadron
- Gamble, Brandon - Maintenance Squadron
- Hall, Daniel - Maintenance Squadron
- Iannantuono, Bradley - Force Support Squadron
- Jones, Austin - Maintenance Squadron
- Krise, Sienna - Operations Squadron
- Kroon, Douglas - Maintenance Squadron
- Logan, Brooke - Maintenance Squadron
- Penwell, Selena - Force Support Squadron
- Polker, Kevin - Maintenance Squadron
- Proffitt, Kayla - Force Support Squadron
- Reddick, Jame - Maintenance Squadron
- Rucker, Jordan - Fighter Wing
- Schreck, Lily - Maintenance Squadron
- Trendel, Paul - Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Westrick, Zachary - Fighter Wing

To Technical Sergeant:

- Hughes, Shane - Fighter Wing
- Lamping, Anthony - Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Pilcher, Steven - Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- Rayot, Jordyn - Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

To Master Sergeant:

- Boyer, William - Maintenance Group
- Burton, Andrew - Maintenance Group
- Cousino, Bradley - Medical Group
- Kimple, Samuel - Maintenance Group
- Marquette, Lee - Civil Engineering Squadron
- Mock, Caleb - Civil Engineering Squadron
- Schaffer, Justin - Maintenance Group

To Senior Master Sergeant:

- Burke, Joshua - Security Forces Squadron
- Chapa, Steven - Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Pacewicz, Anthony - Civil Engineering Squadron

To Chief Master Sergeant:

- Newsome, Roger - Maintenance Group

Retirements:

- Corson, Gregory
- Ohm, John
- Stevenson, James

ALWAYS ON MISSION



180th Fighter Wing

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Swanton, Ohio


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