

BUCKEYE



FLYER

Wright-Patterson AFB, OH

Volume 66, No. 8

August 2026



LRS Wrecker Recovery Training

Page 6

Photo by Staff Sgt. Angela Jackson

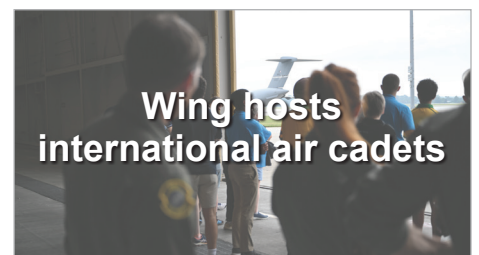
IN THIS ISSUE



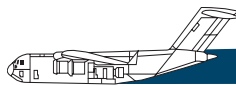
445th SFS
SMCC training



Health promotions jobs:
enlisted to officer



Wing hosts
international air cadets



21-day challenge: Form positive habits

By Lt. Col. Dietra Watson
445th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

My name is Lt. Col. Dietra Watson, and I am a mental health nurse with the 445th Aeromedical Staging Squadron.

It is an honor to be provided with the opportunity to share positive communication that aims to add to your resiliency toolbox.

In times of chaos and uncertainty, positive communication is vital for building relationships and uplifting morale.

We all encounter new norms and beliefs at various points in our lives. I hope this message finds you when you are ready to read, reflect and embrace it.

Did you know we possess the power to shape the lives we desire? You might wonder, "How can I create the experiences I want?"

While it may sound cliché, our challenges often stem from doubtful or negative thinking patterns. These thought processes and emotional responses are linked to our experiences.

For instance, many feel anxiety before or during an annual PT test. Regardless of the outcome, concerns about passing or failing can heighten this anxiety.

It's natural to express emotions both good and not so good depending on the circumstances. The choice to express feelings healthily and pro-



ductively is ours to make. Therefore, the most productive way to face challenges effectively is to adopt healthy behaviors.

These may include exercising, meditating, praying, taking walks in nature, listening to music or whatever helps you minimize focusing on external demands. Research shows that it takes 21 days to form a habit.

I challenge each of you reading this: for 21 days, each morning before reaching for your cell phone, go to the nearest window, look up at the sky and declare, "I am thankful for another day. I have everything I need to communicate effectively and listen intently."

A small challenge but a positive start to creating the experiences you want to have.

Buckeye Flyer

Editorial Staff

Col. Douglas A. Perry Jr.-Commander
Capt. Mary Begy-Chief of Public Affairs
Maj. Rachel Ingram-Assistant Chief of PA
Amanda Dick-PA Specialist
Patrick O'Reilly-PA Assistant
Tech. Sgt. Joel McCullough-PA Specialist
Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson-PA Specialist
Staff Sgt. Angela Jackson-PA Specialist
Senior Airman Bernard Puller-PA Specialist
Senior Airman Ethan Lamb-PA Specialist

445th Airlift Wing

This funded Air Force Reserve newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the Buckeye Flyer are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, Department of the Air Force or Department of Defense. Editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the 445th Airlift Wing Office of Public Affairs. Photographs are U.S. Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

5439 McCormick Ave.
WPAFB, OH 45433-5132
Building 4010, Room 171
937-257-5784
445AW.PA2@us.af.mil

U.S. Government Printing Office 5-00001-445AW

More content can
be found at www.dvidshub.net/unit/445-AW.

Follow us on Facebook
at www.facebook.com/445aw and Instagram
at www.instagram.com/445awpa/



Wing announces 2nd Quarter award winners for CY 2026

445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The 445th Airlift Wing announced its 2nd Quarter award winners for Calendar Year 2026.

Airman of the Quarter

Senior Airman Seth Staiger, 445th Force Support Squadron Customer Support, is the Airman of the Quarter. Staiger drove mission execution by completing over 100 Point Credit Accounting Record updates that reduced the backlog by 50%. He also processed over 100 Department of War Common Access Cards with zero access disruption to reinforce unit readiness.

Additionally, he managed resource strains across two low-manned offices by out-processing nearly 300 deployers while maintaining mission flow. Staiger accounted for \$50,000 in CAC inventory and safeguarded access to critical electronic Air Force systems.

The senior airman redesigned ID card scheduling to cut wait times by 30 minutes to boost throughput by 85% which reduced backlog, improved service flow, and created a repeatable, sustainable and efficient process for future operations.

Staiger led a five-member team to support a period of increased operations tempo and the out-processing of more than 100 new Airmen for basic training under tight timelines to meet the previous Commander Air Force Reserve task order of "Transforming the Future."

NCO of the Quarter

Tech. Sgt. Richard Edwards, 445th Security Forces Squadron unit deployment manager, is the NCO of the Quarter. Edwards excelled at the 140-hour Mission-Focused Rehearsal Training in Fort Bliss, Texas, where he earned "Top Performer" out of 170 peers. His execution enhanced kinetic environment readiness that drove war fighting success for 41 subordinates.

Additionally, he directed the squadron's deployment preparation as UDM where he executed readiness processing for 41 members that yielded zero discrepancies and guaranteed a 100% on-time combat projection.

The technical sergeant directed his section's compliance programs during the 445th AW's Inspector General vertical inspection while managing 75 graded items across two checklists. His oversight secured zero write-ups and validated the unit's peak operational readiness.

Edwards directly led a 13-member squad during state-side movement operations to meet real-world deployment build-up, balancing mission guidelines, Airmen welfare and strict accountability to successfully meet U.S. Air Forces Central requirements.

SNCO of the Quarter

Master Sgt. Kevin Shaffer, 87th Aerial Port Squadron passenger service supervisor, is the Senior NCO of the Quarter. Shaffer resolved an explosives cargo bottleneck during 30-plus days of missions and accelerated over \$1 billion in munitions for U.S. Army and Air Force aircraft that directly supported overseas operations.

Additionally, he led a team that supported an Army unit by processing over 95 tons of cargo and two M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System batteries for airlift within 24 hours on three missions. The rapid airlift enabled the unit to bypass contested terrain and achieve mission success.

The master sergeant pioneered an innovative training tracker that managed upgrade and refresher tasks for over 20 aerial port Airmen which fostered 114 task completions and strengthened critical unit readiness and proficiency.

Shaffer coordinated a 10-member joint operation to direct transportation of more than 130,000 tons of munitions valued at \$54 million.

CGO of the Quarter

Capt. Evan Postma, 445th Operations Support Squadron officer in charge of training operations, is the Company Grade Officer of the Quarter. Postma directed a combat intelligence cell during an operation that led a 24/7 imminent threat analysis and armed over 2,000 analysts and 200 air crews across 20 sites to secure U.S. Central Command air dominance and aircrew safety.

Additionally, he revamped the operations intelligence training pipeline that established a standardized qualification baseline and accelerated readiness by generating around 1,500 mission summaries while also sustaining approximately 4,000 zero-fail sorties.

Postma re-engineered Air Mobility Command's A2 Intelligence Directorate Graphic Intelligence Summary reporting framework by fusing around 2,000 mission summaries to predict imminent attacks, tracking around 8,000 threats and delivering over 90 actionable products to more than 1,000 analysts.





SPOTLIGHT

Rank/Name: Master Sgt. Amber Walz

Unit: 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron

Duty Title: Public Health Technician

Hometown: Munith, Michigan

Civilian Job: I am a Certified Ophthalmology Assistant at Pediatric Ophthalmology Associates in Columbus, Ohio. We treat patients from newborns to adults, ranging from fitting a child for a pair of glasses to managing complex eye disorders.

Education: I have two CCAFs from previous careers, and two biology classes remaining to complete my Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences.

Hobbies: My main interests are

sports, travel and the outdoors. I'm a die-hard Maize and Blue fan and love watching any game. I also like traveling, both within the U.S. and overseas, as well as getting outside to hike and explore nature.

Career Goal: I want to finish out a 20-year career in the Air Force and potentially serve even longer. What drives me most is the opportunity to continue serving alongside some of the amazing people I would have never gotten the pleasure to know outside of the military.

What do you like about working at the 445th? I really enjoy the camaraderie at the 445th, especially keeping the Ohio versus Michigan rivalry alive and the day-to-day banter with my coworkers. The experience and knowledge of the team have been invaluable in helping me develop as a leader.



Why did you join the Air Force? I joined the Air Force during a time when I was struggling to find my way in college while playing basketball. I needed direction and guidance, and the military gave me exactly that, along with a newly discovered love for traveling the world.

Stork's Nest program helps ease the burden for 445th AW families

By Senior Airman Ethan Lamb
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

For many military families, the cost of diapers, wipes and formula can add up quickly. At the 445th Airlift Wing, the Stork's Nest program is helping ease that burden by connecting Airmen in need with volunteers who provide essential baby supplies.

Airmen can request assistance anonymously through their first sergeant or supervisor.

"The Stork's Nest is a program that the First Sergeant's Council identified would help assist the needs of our members with diaper-age children," said Master Sgt. Jason Cordle, 445th Airlift Wing First Sergeant Resiliency Integrator. "Our members, their first sergeants or their supervisors can sign a member up for items they need, such as diapers, wipes and formula."

The idea for the initiative grew out of another wing program after organizers noticed an increasing number of requests for essential baby items.

"We had a lot of people requesting diapers and wipes during the 2025 Angel Tree, and we wanted to keep Angel Tree more for fun gifts for your kids for Christmas," Cordle said. "From that, we decided to come up with a program that

would support that request."

After a request is submitted, organizers compile a list of needed items into a "nest egg." Individuals, shops and squadrons can volunteer to fulfill the request by purchasing the listed supplies. The donated items are then assembled and distributed to the recipient.

Although the program is still in its early stages, it has already made a meaningful difference for Airmen and their families.

"I expected a few diapers and some wipes, not an entire box of each," said one recipient, who asked to remain anonymous. "Baby items are expensive, and it's not a one-time purchase. You are spending a lot of money every week and sometimes every day."

For Cordle, the program represents more than providing diapers and formula. It reflects the Air Force's commitment to taking care of its people by ensuring Airmen have the support they need both on and off duty.

By reducing financial stress and encouraging fellow Airmen to support one another, the Stork's Nest program demonstrates service before self extends beyond the mission..

"I think Airmen need to feel like someone is thinking about them," the recipient said. "This program showed us that someone cared, and that made a real difference."



News Briefs

Newcomers

1LT Noah Lewin, ASTS
SMSgt Nathan Karlen, AMXS
TSgt Caleb Mosher, AMXS
TSgt Mark Richardson, ASTS
TSgt Adam Srock, MXS
SSgt Cody Isaac, CES
SSgt Alexander Simmons, MXS
SrA Noah Blaine, MXS
SrA Cameron Caton, AMXS
SrA Nolan Marcum, AMXS
SrA Wyatt Schweizer, AMXS
SrA Kendrick Van Tress, AMXS
A1C Krishna Acharya, LRS
A1C Ijeoma Nzerem, AMDS
AB Caleb Rusk, ASTS

Promotions

Chief Master Sergeant
Bemelis Bonano Branch, FSS

Master Sergeant
Justin Brothers, 89 AS
Devin Copeland, AES
Alexandria Fearon, AMXS
Ryan Guenther, CES
Michelle Logan, AMDS
Victor Peden, MXG
Brittany Smith, LRS

Technical Sergeant
Krista Blaser, MXG
Viktoriya Ceylan, AMDS
Alexis Cockle, SFS
Bronte Graham, FSS
Erin Heberlie, MXG
Ian Steck, MSG
Tyler Teel, CES
Precious Turner, FSS

Staff Sergeant
Kyleeann Engle, MXS
Nathan Ernst, AMXS
Allie Grady, MXS
Dustin Kleiman, SFS
Zachary Slone, FSS

Senior Airman

Jessica Adair, ASTS
Obed Akwa, ASTS
Danny Corbett, ASTS
Matthew Damron, MXG
Derik German, AMXS
James Grady, MXS
Michael Inema, AES
Jahkeiah Loftis, SFS
Jack Rott, MXS
Lorwy Valmir, FSS

Airman 1st Class

Adja Fall, AMDS
Jillian Jones, MXS
Matias Suarez Frias, 87 APS
Taylor Susil, SFS

Airman

Jiel Abrasia, 87 APS
Abraham Choba, 87 APS

First Developmental Series

The 445th Airlift Wing will have its first Developmental Series Aug. 12. Everyone is invited to attend. The topic will include using AI tools for awards, decorations, evaluations, etc. For information on time and location, please read the August UTA Happenings email.

BAH Recertification

BAH recertification is a triannual requirement for all members receiving with dependent rate BAH. Members have from now until the Sept. 30 to recer-



tify or face a BAH reduction.

Emails with documentation to recertify must be sent from af.mil email address to 445aw.fm.bahrecert@us.af.mil. Don't wait until the last minute.

Stork's Nest

Stork's Nest Family Link is an initiative focused on supporting 445th Airlift Wing Airmen with diaper-aged children across the wing.

The program connects Airmen in need with voluntary, wing-based support through a structured quarterly cycle. To register to receive items, please scan the QR code.

First Sergeants will validate the requests to remain anonymous and discreet.



Family Day

Unpack your fun and get ready for the 445th AW Family Day!!! The event will be held Sept. 12. There will be a kid's section, cornhole, football tournament, food trucks, moon bounces (to include squadron relays), firetrucks, C-17 static, etc. Mark your calendar!! For more information on time, location, and entry for family members and guests without base access, please read the August UTA Happenings email.



445th SFS conducts shoot, move, communicate during UTA



Left: Senior Airman Hayden Arnold, center, and Staff Sgt. James Thaker, right, 445th Security Forces Squadron fire team members, shoot at targets while instructor Tech. Sgt. Brandon Bertsch, left, observes during shoot, move and communicate training at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, July 11, 2026. SF Airmen sharpened their communication and combat arms skills that is used in a deployed environment during the training.

Right: Senior Airman Graham Simpson, back, and Tech. Sgt. Jon Prather, front, 445th Security Forces Squadron fire team members, bound to a new location during shoot, move and communicate training. SF Airmen honed their skills of adaptability and communication. (Photos by Tech. Sgt. Joel McCullough)

LRS trains on wrecker recovery at drill weekend



Left: Senior Airman Andrew Castle, 445th Logistics Readiness Squadron vehicle operator, holds for direction during wrecker recovery training at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, July 12, 2026.

Right: Senior Airman William Taylor, 445th LRS vehicle operator, tightens a ratchet strap during wrecker recovery training.

Bottom: Senior Airmen Andrew Castle, front, and William Taylor, back, conduct wrecker recover training.



A healthful journey from enlisted to officer

By Senior Airman Ethan Lamb & Amanda Dick
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Making the choice to move from the enlisted ranks to pursuing a commission is a momentous decision and not knowing the appropriate steps can be a deterrent in moving forward with that decision.

In the healthcare professions, recruiters make that an easier transition for the many Airmen who strive to commission as a natural progression in their Air Force career or who want a job change.

Once enlisted Airmen start the selection process, they are often met with years of preparation, heartbreak, long nights pursuing additional degrees and meetings with their recruiter.

"The process was very challenging but incredibly rewarding," expressed 1st Lt. Maira Mitchell, 315th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron health services administrator at Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina. "For me, it was a multi-year journey that involved earning a Master of Business Administration, gaining leadership experience both in my civilian healthcare career and the Air Force Reserve, and seeking mentorship from officers who had successfully navigated the process themselves."

Second Lt. Mary Czarnecki, 445th Aeromedical Staging Squadron nurse, reached out to a recruiter when she decided to pursue her commission.

"As an enlisted member, I was a medical technician at the 445th ASTS," Czarnecki said. "I wanted to be a nurse, and once I met those requirements, I expressed my interest to my recruiter and my chief nurse in my unit. My recruiter made the process easy on my part."

Knowing who to reach out to can be confusing when starting the commissioning process. With healthcare specifically, that line of communication can be streamlined.

"The first step is to reach out to me and see what their interests are in the positions that we have available," stated Master Sgt. Michelle Shutler, 445th Recruiting Service Health Profession recruiter. "After that, we make sure they have the qualifications for the job they selected, and then we start gathering the required documents."

With the healthcare professions, going enlisted to officer is not like the Deserving Airman Program done through the force support squadrons which is why there are specific healthcare professions recruiters.

This also means those interested in commissioning into one of those professions don't have to meet a board or take the Air Force Officer Qualifying Test.

"We fill positions as they become available, so we have to make sure that they're qualified," Shutler explained. "Once we do a grade calculation, then they have to do their medical."

The enlisted members must complete a commissioning

physical with their Reserve Medical Unit, or RMU, which is different than someone who commissions off the street.

"Most of the time, the aerospace medicine squadron knows if they're going to require a waiver or need a little more information," Shutler said. "So, sometimes they just run the whole commissioning physical. Then after we [recruiters] get the physical, we do the interview with the unit."

The competitive nature of the selection process and limited slots available will sometimes mean there are candidates who qualify for positions that aren't open at their base. The good news is there are generally opportunities throughout the country.

One such example was Mitchell, who wanted to go into a medical service corps job as medical administration. The 445th didn't have any positions available, so Shutler found one in South Carolina.

Those wanting to commission into health professions will have different requirements based on which career they are looking into. For example, Shutler said nurses would need their Bachelor of Science in Nursing, at least a year of acute care experience. For mental health nurses, they have to be serving at a hospital in a mental health capacity at least 36 hours a week.

Another example is for those who want to be flight doctors. According to Shutler, those interested would need to complete all their school to be a doctor.

"We do have the stipend program which pays for residency and/or fellowship," the recruiter said. "So, we have that with the expectation that you're going to be in the Reserve. The concentrations they're looking for are critical care, family, internal or emergency medicine, because those cross-over more seamlessly to the job they would be doing as a flight doc."

The stipend program requires one year of service for every six months of school paid for.

Throughout the enlistment to officer process, both Mitchell and Czarnecki realized commissioning was more than checking boxes and making rank.

"I learned commissioning is about demonstrating you're ready to lead Airmen, make decisions and contribute at a broader organizational level," Mitchell recalled. "Persistence and mentorship were critical throughout the process, and it's allowed me to create a greater impact for both the airmen and the military healthcare system as a whole."

For Czarnecki, it came down to service.

"I wanted to use my knowledge, skills, and leadership abilities to serve others and make a meaningful difference," the nurse said. "I wanted the opportunity to make the lives of those in need better while serving my country."

Health professions jobs are always in demand at the 445th. Those interested in commissioning into one of these jobs or who want to know more information about the process can contact Shutler at michelle.shutler@us.af.mil.



445th AW fosters relations with NATO partner countries



Left: International air cadets with the International Air Cadet Exchange take a photo with Airmen from the 89th Airlift Squadron following a tour of a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, July 22, 2026.



Right: Tech Sgt. Jeanne Caron, center, 89th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, instructs a cadet from Great Britain how to filp an Aerial Delivery System rail used to slide pallets, as other international cadets look on during an IACE visit to the 445th Airlift Wing.

The 445th Airlift Wing fostered international relations with NATO partner countries during a visit to the wing by international air cadets at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base July 22.

Around 30 cadets from Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Belgium toured a wing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft, interacting with Airmen from the 89th Airlift Squadron, 445th Maintenance Squadron and 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

The tour included the cockpit, a walk around the aircraft in a hangar and discussions on the airlift mission of the 445th and how the aircraft work.

The visit was part of a larger program called the International Air Cadet Exchange where international air cadets visit the U.S. and U.S. Civil Air Patrol cadets visit the partner nations, as CAP is the U.S. representative.

The exchange fosters partnerships between NATO countries while cadets engage in cultural immersion and take part in aviation-related activities and tours.



First Lt. Joe Calandra, 89th Airlift Squadron pilot, talks to international air cadets about capabilities of the C-17 Globemaster III aircraft during a visit to the 445th Airlift Wing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, July 22, 2026. (Photos by Senior Airman Ethan Lamb)



445TH AIRLIFT WING/PA
BUILDING 4014, ROOM 113
5439 MCCORMICK AVE
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB OHIO 45433-5132

FIRST CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
USAF PERMIT NO. 1161