

BUCKEYE FLYER



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Photo by Senior Airman Ethan Lamb

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New Commander



STAC



4 Pillars of
CAF



This fall connect through four pillars of CAF

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

The Air Force's four pillars of Comprehensive Airman Fitness (CAF) are anchored in: physical, mental, social and spiritual fitness.

This holistic framework empowers resilient and mission ready Airmen, creating a strong foundation for personal and professional success.

Spiritual fitness plays a vital role in enhancing commitment and resilience among military members.

Overall resilience embodies the strength to rise above stress, wield effective coping strategies and confront challenges head-on.

While physical fitness often takes center stage, it is crucial to remember true fitness also encompasses spiritual, mental and social dimensions.

Physical fitness is not only about passing a test; it is about cultivating the stamina and strength essential for accomplishing the mission and preventing injuries.

As we embrace the fall season, a time of back-to-school excitement, the thrill of football, and the refreshing cooler weather, let's keep in mind the CAF model calls for connection.

Building relationships with family, friends, coworkers and the community is key for Airmen, fostering a sense of support, value and understanding.

These social connections are essential components in enhancing resilience and long-term well-being.

Taking the time to foster a sense of connection and belonging within your family, military and community is vital for maintaining the key factors that embody balance.



Airman Leadership School Class 25-F students complete a ruck march at MacDill AFB, Florida, in 2025. (Photo by Senior Airman Zachary Foster)



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

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Buckeye Flyer

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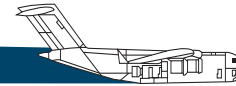
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445th Airlift Wing

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Air Force Reserve welcomes new commander

By Lt. Col. Carrie Kessler
Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. -- Members of the Air Force Reserve Command welcomed their new leader during an assumption of command ceremony held at the Robins' Museum of Aviation Aug 21.

Lt. Gen. Paul R. "Speedy" Fast took command in a ceremony presided over by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ken Wilsbach. Fast succeeds Lt. Gen. John P. Healy, who retires in October after 37 years of service.

The new AFRC Commander, who has served under Wilsbach's command multiple times, was readily endorsed by the CSAF.

"I've seen Speedy's brilliant leadership first-hand," said Wilsbach. "He has the operational credibility, the strategic vision, and the command experience to lead this enterprise."

As the new Reserve commander, Fast will have full responsibility for nearly 70,000 Reserve Airmen and civilians at three numbered air forces, 34 flying wings, eight independent groups, a space wing, a cyber wing, and an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance wing, and other subordinate units. As Chief of Air Force Reserve, he will serve as principal adviser on reserve matters to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Air Force Chief of Staff.

Wilsbach emphasized to the hundreds of reserve command Airmen in audience that "the challenge ahead of us is clear. We must continue to accelerate our modernization, integrate our forces, and break down any barriers to our collective readiness."

He added, "Our adversaries are watching, and our unity of effort is our strongest deterrent signal."

Following receipt of the guidon, Fast presented five Task Areas that will continue to be refined over the coming weeks.

Task Area 1: Prepare for war, Ready Always!

Task Area 2: Develop our Airmen

Task Area 3: Preserve and protect our Reservists' ability to serve

Task Area 4: Fiercely manage and execute our resources

Task Area 5: Curate a Reserve force of the future

"We'll be the reserve that the nation needs and leverages the unique set of attributes and capabilities that can only be found in the Air Force Reserve," said Fast.

He added that, "as challenging as these tasks will be in the coming years, there has never been a better time to get after them."

Fast entered the Air Force in 1991, after receiving his commission through the Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. While serving on active duty from 1992 to 2001, he accumulated more than 1,000 hours in the E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System. In October 2001, Fast joined the Air Force Reserve.

Throughout his 25 years as a Reservist, he has supported exercises and operations across the globe, served as the interim 36th Wing commander at Andersen Air Force Base and interim deputy commander of Joint Region Marianas, Guam, and led the re-

constitution of Andersen Air Force Base after Super Typhoon Mawar. Prior to assuming his current role, Fast served as the 4th Air Force commander.

"Over the past year, as Commander of Fourth Air Force, he immersed himself in Mobility Air Force dynamics, executing the largest mobilization of Reserve forces in over 30 years for Operation Epic Fury," said Wilsbach. "[Fast] knows how to generate, present, and deploy combat power at scale."

Fast ended by addressing his gratitude for the opportunity to continue to serve.

"To my teammates in Air Force Reserve Command, I am honored and I am humbled to lead with you now and in the coming years," said Fast. "Thank you for accepting me as your new commander. I can't wait to fly and fix and fight and win alongside every one of you. Fight's on."



Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ken Wilsbach hands the guidon to Lt. Gen. Paul Fast, chief of the Air Force Reserve Command and commander of the Air Force Reserve, during an assumption of command ceremony at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Aug. 21, 2026. (Photo by Erica Webster)



445th AW showcases C-17 during kids 'deployment' event

By Amanda Dick
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The 445th Airlift Wing participated in the annual Operation KUDOS Aug. 7 held by the 88th Air Base Wing Military and Family Readiness Center.

The event, which stands for Kids Understanding Deployment Operations, offers military children aged 4 to 12 a unique, hands-on look into the lives and missions of their parents through interaction with various units and equipment on base, including a 445th AW C-17 Globemaster III aircraft.

It is designed to demystify the deployment process through interactive, age-appropriate experiences that mirror the preparation and training their parents undergo.

"The 445th AW provided a critical component to Op KUDOS," said Tech Sgt. Benjamin Duck, 88th M&FRC Readiness NCOIC and event coordinator. "Without the 445th, it would be extremely difficult to showcase and explain the deployment process and transportation aspect of the U.S.

Air Force. Additionally, it was great for the Total Force to be represented – a true representation of how everyone works together to accomplish the mission."

Col. Deana Dominguez, 88th Medical Group commander, expressed her gratitude to the participants during opening remarks.

"Today, it's our turn to say thank you for your dedication to the Air Force, for being a military kid and for serving just like your parents are," Dominguez said.

Throughout the day, the young "recruits" visited interactive displays set up by local units like the 88th Security Forces Squadron, fire department, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Wright-Patt Fitness Center, and 445th Airmen with the 89th Airlift and 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadrons.

"The kids were shown the cargo compartment; we explained how the aircraft works; and they were encouraged to visit the flight deck so they could sit in the pilot seats and see the cockpit," said 1st Lt. Austin Schutte, 89th AS pilot. "It was a big highlight for most of them. Watching the kids

light up when they stepped onto the C-17 and got to sit in the cockpit and seeing their genuine curiosity and excitement made it clear the event was helping them understand a little more about what their parents do. That interaction was the best part."

The children's joy was evident by all.

"The C-17 was an absolute hit with the participants," Duck explained. "Wright-Patterson military children absolutely loved being able to explore a military aircraft and learn about the plane they see flying over their own homes."

An event of this scale relies heavily on the collaboration of key support networks and helping organizations across the installation. These agencies were on hand to provide resources, guidance, and fun activities to assist families during the mock deployment, ensuring both parents and children felt supported. These resources included Blue Star Families, the WPAFB Chaplain Corps, Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce, family childcare and school programs.

"The 445th AW is a crucial part of Operation KUDOS," Duck said.

"Not only was the C-17 pivotal to the event, but the invite is also always open for 445th personnel to join 88th M&FRC events. It's always a joy working with the 445th AW, and specifically, the 445th AW M&FRC."

As the deployment training concluded, the participants walked away with certificates presented by 88th Mission Support Group command team, Col. Dorinda Sanders and Chief Master Sgt. Michael Sierra. By bringing families and units together, the event hopes to continue fostering resilience, understanding and community for the base's youngest heroes.

"It was an honor to support Operation KUDOS," Schutte exclaimed. "Programs like this give military kids a safe, hands-on way to understand deployments and see the aircraft and people their parents work with. Representing the 89th AS, and showing the kids the C-17, was a great reminder of why community engagement matters."

(Alyssa Janeway, 88th Air Base Wing Public Affairs, contributed to this article)



Senior Airman Braxton Younkman, 89th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, helps direct military children toward the flight deck as part of the 445th Airlift Wing participation with Operation KUDOS at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Aug. 7, 2026. (Photo by Senior Airman Ethan Lamb)



News Briefs

Newcomers

Maj Hunter Begy, FSS
Maj Steven Zimmer, FSS
Capt Jessica Wray, AMDS
SSgt Danielle Morgan, 87 APS
SrA Nuvia Palacios Espinoza, OSS
A1C Luiza Lopes Da Silva, ASTS
AB Samson Moore ASTS

Promotions

Senior Master Sergeant
Michael Bell, AMDS

Master Sergeant
Michael Cage, MXG
Jared McCabe, AES
Bradley Scheidt, SFS
Matthew Shaw, AES
Charles Swaim, MXS

Technical Sergeant
Haley Andrews, AMDS
Hannah Elam, ASTS
Serenity Ferreira, AES
Jackson Martin, MXS
Linstead Noah, AMXS
Grant Reigelsperger, AMXS
Jermaine Richards, AMXS
Faith Schuster, AES
Lindsay Smith, AMDS
Zane Standridge, CES

Staff Sergeant
Samuel Shaffer, FSS

Senior Airman
Cameron Andrade, AMXS
Daniel Azubuike, AMDS
Pranil Biswa, CES
Makaylie Black, CES
Mason Browning, CES
Christopher Ciampi, MXG
Erika Cruz Martinez, ASTS
Josiah Gierman, MXS

Shwun Oo, AES
Caleb Richardson, MXS

Airman 1st Class
Anup Baruwal, 87 APS

Wing Developmental Series

The 445th will have a Developmental Series Sept. 12. Everyone is invited to attend. The topic will be: How to build a competitive package. For information on time and location, please read the September UTA Happenings email.

BAH Recertification

This is the final month to complete the BAH recertification, a triannual requirement for all members receiving with dependent rate BAH. Members have until Sept. 30 to recertify or face a BAH reduction.

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

Great Smoky Mountain Trip

Explore the Great Smoky Mountains with a trip with Outdoor Rec Sept. 18-20. Join them for a weekend adventure getaway to the Smoky Mountains for two nights of outdoor camping, hiking and exploring, ATV riding, and an evening in Gatlinburg. Most meals are included and all camping equipment is provided. The trip is open for those 18 and older with

base access, including active duty, Guard and Reserve members; retired military; federal civilians; federal contractors; dependents; and veterans with MWR privileges. The cost is \$30 per person. Call Outdoor Rec at 937-789-8272 to register today.

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 and location, please read the September UTA Happenings email.



STAC event highlights partnership between 445th, AFMC



Left: First Lt. Austin Schutte, 89th Airlift Squadron pilot, provides insight about the C-17 Globemaster III during Air Force Materiel Command's Summer Trainee All Call (STAC) at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Aug. 13, 2026. The event highlighted the partnership between AFMC and the 445th Airlift Wing and acted as a networking event for newer government employees.

Right: Col. Karen Gharst, 445th Maintenance Group commander, briefs attendees at Air Force Materiel Command's Summer Trainee All Call (STAC) at Wright-Patterson AFB, Aug. 13, 2026. The event included information booths, mission briefings from various base organizations, and C-17 static tours. (Photos by Senior Airman Ethan Lamb)

445 AW, Marines conduct joint training on flightline



Left: Master Sgt. Shaun Turpin, 89th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, guides a Marine with the 4th Law Enforcement Battalion, Charlie Company, driving a M1151 humvee onto a C-17 Globemaster III during a Marine Corps Mobility Exercise at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Aug. 2, 2026. The exercise was to gauge how quickly they could stage and mobilize when called upon.

Right: Marines with 4th Law Enforcement Battalion, Charlie Company, load cargo onto a 445th Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Wright-Patterson AFB, Aug. 2, 2026. (Photos by Senior Airman Ethan Lamb)



Air Force, Army conduct AE training in Kentucky



Soldiers with Charlie Company, 5th Battalion, 159th General Support Aviation Battalion and Airmen with the 445th Airlift Wing transport a simulated patient from an Army Black Hawk helicopter to a 445th Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft as part of tactical aeromedical evacuation and joint-service patient transfer training at Fort Knox, Ky., July 29, 2026. The training allowed seamless patient transition from front-line tactical care to long-range airborne intensive care wards. (Photos by Patrick O'Reilly)



Left: Tech. Sgt. Trey Naber, 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron medical technician, checks the vitals of simulated patients played by Soldiers from Charlie Company, 5th Battalion, 159th General Support Aviation Battalion during training on a 445th Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Fort Knox, Kentucky, July 29, 2026.

Right: Lt. Col. Angela Washington, right, 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron flight nurse, and Staff Sgt. Amaya Hagler, left, 445th AES medical technician, check the vitals of simulated patients played by Soldiers from Charlie Company, 5th Battalion, 159th General Support Aviation Battalion during training on a 445th Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Fort Knox, Kentucky, July 29, 2026. (Photos by Senior Airman Ethan Lamb)



Rapid Sustainment Office produces first-of-its-kind part to repair damaged C-17

By Derek Hardin
Air Force Life Cycle Management

In the early morning hours of March 4, 2025, strong winds, large hail and severe thunderstorms whipped through the Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, area.

Tornado warnings rang out in the darkness as wind microbursts of up to 80 mph ravaged buildings and trees. When it was all over, storms had left considerable destruction throughout the area, including at the Perot Field Fort Worth Alliance Airport.

A C-17 with the 445th Airlift Wing parked overnight on the airport tarmac received extensive damage to its left side door, fuselage and nose area after two private Bombardier Challenger jets were blown into the aircraft.

Needing obvious repair, the C-17 was forced to fly home to the Dayton, Ohio, area with a temporary left nose panel repair, qualified by Boeing and approved by the Air Force, and its landing gear down. Upon its return to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, the 445th Maintenance Group was able to repair the damaged door and fuselage but determined the left nose panel would require replacement.

However, Boeing, the aircraft manufacturer, ascertained no vendors would be willing to create tooling to build an isolated part. After an unsuccessful repair attempt, the C-17 seemed doomed to sit in storage for at least a year, with repair work requiring an additional year to complete.

Such an extensive grounding of one of only nine mission-essential C-17s was deemed unacceptable, so the 445 MXG reached out to the Air Force Rapid Sustainment Office (RSO) to find a solution. RSO is part of the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center and is a division within the Combat Readiness Directorate.

The Air Force Rapid Sustainment Office (RSO) Division's Advanced Manufacturing Program Office Automation and Robotics (A&R) team quickly determined this part was an ideal candidate for its Incremental Sheet Forming (ISF) system, a robotic technology that progressively deforms metal sheets into functional parts.

Collaborating with engineers from the University of Dayton Research Institute (UDRI), the A&R team began production of the panel in January 2026. The panel moved rapidly through the production process, advancing from formation



The newly formed nose panel undergoes an initial fit check on a C-17 Globemaster III at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, April 20, 2026. (Photo by Casey Tromp)

on the ISF, located at the RSO's Integrated Technology Operations Center, to an initial fit check and panel testing to ensure the part was flightworthy.

Following a final fit check in April, Boeing and the 445 MXG installed the completed panel on the C-17 in July.

"When the mission demanded immediate action, the RSO stepped up," said Mary Schuler, RSO A&R lead program manager. "By leveraging the ISF, with critical support from UDRI, we didn't just meet the need. We significantly decreased our timeline, reducing the repair process from years to only a few months."

Final repair steps included a front landing gear test and some minor adjustments to the nose area. The C-17 returned to the skies July 30, resuming support of the 445 AW's essential mission.

"This is a tremendous win for our maintenance group," said Col. Karen Gharst, 445 MXG commander. "Using the ISF technology to rapidly produce an otherwise unobtainable part allowed us to avoid a prolonged work stoppage. The RSO was exceptionally responsive, delivering a part for fit check in just over a month. We are incredibly thankful for the partnership with the RSO that was instrumental in moving this critical project forward during a period of increased operational tempo."



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