KEESLER NEWS

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Train. Fight. Win.

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Strong, positive leaders engage Airmen

By Col. Jason Beck

51st Security Forces Squadron commander

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas — The stripes, bars, oak leaves, eagles and stars on our uniforms tell the world that we are leaders. Strong, positive leadership is crucial in today's ever changing Air Force and the rank on our uniform illustrates visible symbols of our leadership authority that the Air Force has placed on us. But being a leader consists of much more than the rank that you wear on your uniform. I have been fortunate in my career to be surrounded by phenomenal leaders. The lessons I learned from them helped me develop into the officer I am today. I pass these "essentials" of leadership on to you in the hopes that they help you as much as they have helped me.

Remember, you are a leader 24/7, in and out of uniform, on and off base - not just when it is convenient for you. When your Airmen are working hard, don't spare yourself, do the same and set the example. Leadership by example isn't something you can delegate. You must demonstrate it daily. Clock watching shouldn't happen, especially in today's "do more with less," resource-constrained environment.

As a leader, it's your responsibility to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence in your unit. While being honest with others is paramount, you also have an obligation to be honest with yourself. Don't do things just to make yourself look good in front of the boss. If this is your idea of being a good leader, you've lost before you've even started.

It's imperative we leaders get actively involved in the lives of our Airmen. Demonstrate through actions, not words, that you care about your Airmen and about the conditions they live and work in. Always accept total responsibility for any organizational failures and remember, leaders fix mistakes and never blame others.

Organizations achieve success by having responsible "doers," not dreamers. Large projects and meaningful achievements are accomplished by brave Airmen in the trenches, not by those who watch from a distance; not by the fans in the stands but by the focused, committed players and coaches on the field; not by those leaders who stay in the middle of the road where things are safe but by those leaders who get off the fence of indecision, even though their decisions are sometimes unpopular. Be a leader and take the decisive action needed; earn your rank every day.

Set standards high and insist everyone else measure up. Haircuts, uniform wear, basic customs and courtesies; these may not be at the top of your priority list as a leader, but if these small details start falling off in your organization, it won't be long before things such as discipline and job performance begin to suffer. Ensure you work hard for your subordinates - they deserve the best and count on you to set the right tone in your unit.

Communicate with your Airmen daily. Be able to articulate how the role of each Airman contributes to the unit's mission and how that mission fits into the role of the wing. Know your role and ensure your Airmen are intimately familiar with theirs. Communicate with your Airmen in their work centers, not yours, make yourself available and take the message to them. As hard as it can be, always take the time to leave your desk and make yourself visible in their work areas to demonstrate genuine concern for what your Airmen are doing and thinking. Listen. Airmen are full of great ideas, but they won't see the light of day if a positive communication climate is not established and fostered.

Above all, be honest with your subordinates and superiors. Tell it like it is and insist that your Airmen do the same. There are few things that can be more disastrous to the dynamics of an organization than "yes" people, half-truths and a lack of integrity.

I sincerely hope that you've had the good fortune to be surrounded by great leaders in your career like I have. There are as many principles of good leadership as there are people who serve as leaders. However, that doesn't diminish the importance of strong, positive, engaged leadership.

As a leader, it is imperative you select and carry out the principles that work the best for you and your Airmen.

Setting a financial 'tone from the top'

By Maj. Frank Skrypak

65th Comptroller Flight commander

LAJES FIELD, Azores — It has been said that no one can accurately predict where the U.S. military will need to respond next: the workload and requirements are uncertain. Nearly as unpredictable is the future of the nation's finances. With much talk of the fiscal cliff in the news recently, how quickly can the U.S. economy recover, and what will happen to the global economy?

After Social Security, defense is the largest component of the nation's $3.8 trillion budget in 2013, so defense will always be influenced by the overall financial situation. The secretary of defense noted, "The most immediate threat to our ability to achieve our mission is fiscal uncertainty, not knowing what our budget will be, not knowing if our budget will be drastically cut, and not knowing whether the strategy that we've put in place can survive."

Even at base level, our ability to continue to execute our mission with excellence is directly related to how we manage our precious resources. While it is clear we will have fewer resources available in the future, it becomes absolutely paramount that we use those resources wisely without a penny to waste. We must develop warriors who help change our organization from a culture that values spending every dollar to one that values cost awareness and best value.

In other words, there currently exists an overemphasis on securing funding versus managing funding. Moving forward, we've been challenged by our government and our nation to better manage funding. Meeting that challenge starts with a mindset that the financial community calls a "tone at the top," characterized by a commitment toward openness, honesty, integrity and ethical behavior. Setting that tone is the catalyst of fiscal responsibility required at all levels of Air Force leadership, and is enforceable by every Airman.

When implemented successfully, we begin to ask how much we need rather than how much funding we can get. A culture of savings and restraint is built on the idea that reducing costs is a permanent, unwavering commitment, not a reaction to the latest financial crisis.

So, it might seem like hard work to implement and maintain a focused program on fiscal responsibility because many of us in the Air Force have never had to operate in an environment of real budget reductions. Those who have been through the experience must teach the future warriors how to navigate through this new set of challenges.

Additionally, each of us already has the tools required to make a difference. Those tools are our powers of observation and a willingness to question the costs of the things we observe.

For example, needlessly duplicating what another unit, program or department buys doesn't have to be the default answer. Consider it your duty to question why things are needed, know your programs to understand the context of its cost and entertain the notion that there might be a cost effective alternative. The goal is to maximize return on investment. Examples of fiscal responsibility are out there, from challenging Air Force instructions to gain efficiencies in services to developing unit-level travel policies, we have the opportunity to step up and help ourselves.

As leaders at all levels move into the future with an increased national and Air Force-level focus on fiscal responsibility, know that comptroller professionals are at your service. Our budget and financial management functions are fully equipped and trained to help units manage and execute well-planned, effective and responsible budgets.

So, set the "tone at the top" of your organization and embrace the fiscal challenges and opportunities ahead of us as an Air Force. With the right mindset and plan in place, fiscal responsibility and flexibility can truly go hand-in-hand.

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Brig. Gen. Brad Spacy
81st Training Wing commander

81st Training Wing Public Affairs

1st Lt. Victoria Porto
Chief

Jerry Taranto
Deputy chief

Senior Airman Heather Heiney
Keesler News co-editor

Steve Hoffmann
Keesler News co-editor

Kemberly Groue
Photojournalist

Public affairs staff
Staff Sgt. Eric Summers Jr.
Joel Van Nice
Tim Coleman
Susan Griggs

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ON THE COVER

Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Johnson, 81st Security Forces Squadron combat arms, answers questions from Marine Sgt. Maj. Bryan Battaglia, senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, about training with an M4 assault rifle at the indoor firing range Jan. 16 at Keesler. Battaglia's one-day visit allowed him to acquaint himself with Keesler's people, mission and contribution to the bigger military picture. He also talked to enlisted Keesler members about the CJCS' four priorities, his own key themes and his thoughts on bridging the basics and total force fitness.

Photo by Kemberly Groue

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Birthtime significant for Dad, doctor

First-time parents Senior Airman Danielle and Tech. Sgt. Christopher Jarrell look at their sleeping daughter, Aubrianna, Jan. 14 in the Keesler Hospital's family birthing center. Aubrianna was born Jan. 13 at 2:17 a.m. weighing 7 pounds, 11 ounces and was 20-1/2-inches "tall." Her time of birth, 2:17, is unique because it corresponds to 2/17 or Feb. 17 which happens to be the birthday of both her dad and the physician who delivered her — Lt. Col. (Dr.) Stephen Jones, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron. Danielle is a member of the Arkansas Air National Guard and is in the process of transferring to the Mississippi ANG. Christopher is assigned to the 81st Security Forces Squadron as a military working dog kennel master.

Photo by Steve Pivnick

Airman of the Month

Airman 1st Class David Nazario, 335th Training Squadron, is the 81st Training Group's Airman of the Month for December 2012. His award was presented during a ceremony Jan. 15 on the drill pad. Nazario is from Kissimmee, Fla. The four squadrons that train nonprior service students each select one Airman to compete at a monthly group board. The Airmen respond to questions about customs and courtesies, dress and appearance, enlisted force development and current events from that week's issue of the Keesler News. They are also asked questions about the Airman's Creed. The 334th TRS won the military training flight of the month. The 336th TRS won the MTF of the quarter and of the year. The 338th TRS is the drill team of the year.

Photo by Kemberly Groue

MTL of the Month

Staff Sgt. Lamar Gardner, 335th Training Squadron, won the Dragon Award for outstanding military training leader for December 2012. His award was presented during a ceremony Jan. 15 on the drill pad. One MTL is nominated from the four squadrons that train nonprior service students. Nominees take a knowledge test of the Air Force Instruction that governs the MTL job and perform control of flight marching and open ranks. The award is intended to raise the level of adherence to military training standards and military excellence set for technical training students.

Photo by Kemberly Groue

Keesler food service delivers quality, awards

By Steve Hoffmann
Keesler News co-editor

When most of us think of slashing our food budget, we think of ramen noodles or frozen burritos. But when the 81st Force Support Squadron food services does it, you can hardly tell the difference.

According to Maj. John Ponton, 81st Force Support Squadron commander, food services has faced a number of significant challenges over the past year. Not uncommon to much of Keesler was a reduction of the budget. Food services had its budget cut by $1.25 million.

But according to Sam Foster, 81st FSS food services director, how they made their cuts was completely up to them.

"Our fair share was to take our $1.25 million cut," Foster said. "But how we cut costs by that much was truly a C3 cost-cutting initiative. We were allowed to get creative in the ways we were going to make the cuts."

So Foster pulled together representatives from the food services contractor, the 81st Training Group and the quality assurance evaluators and they sat down and brainstormed how they might find ways to reduce costs.

Photo by Kemberly Groue

Airman Basic Cody Ellis and Airmen 1st Class Matthew Merkel and Jack Woodman, 334th Training Squadron, are served a meal by Sandra Newsome, line server, at the Azalea Dining Facility.

"The simple answer was to close one dining facility — you've saved the money, you're done," said Foster. "But we needed to stay within the mission of feeding our Airman while still cutting costs."

One way Foster and his team were able to find efficiencies was to cut hours to the Live Oak Dining Facility and expand hours at Azalea and Magnolia Dining Facilities. By doing daily half-hour counts of actual customers using these facilities, they were able to determine that Live Oak's breakfast and dinner hours were being underutilized. So by cutting those hours and letting Azalea and Magnolia absorb those customers, they were able to make significant cuts.

Keeping a close watch on who is eating where and when and how much, both by looking at register reports and working with the 81st TRG to track student populations, food services is able to get a fairly accurate indication of how many meals they'll need to prepare. This greatly reduces the amount of food that gets wasted.

Food services also employs a central preparation kitchen at the Azalea facility which alleviates the need for redundant operations at each of the three facilities.

Also, a new grab-and-go line was introduced to alleviate the morning bottleneck of students rushing to get breakfast before classes. For those who just want something quick and easy, a dedicated line was set up which has greatly increased the efficiency with which meals are being served.

Another point of pride for Keesler's food service operations is how it performed during Hurricane Isaac. It would be enough to say that they simply stayed open during the storm, but that doesn't quite tell the story. The food service contractor struggled to find enough employees willing and able to come to work, but they did it and ended up serving more than 8,000 meals to the entire lodging and student population throughout the storm.

And you might think that with all these challenges, changes and budget cuts that quality control and customer service would be compromised. But, as usual, Keesler's food service operations is in the running to win the John L. Hennesey award for the third year in a row.

"The food service contractor and the four full time QAE's that oversee the contract get the credit for winning these awards," said Foster. "It's all the little things that count — it's sanitation, it's constantly looking at the checklist, making sure it gets performed well, checking the freezer every hour on the hour, checking food temperatures, keeping logs and checking register reports. Those things are what keeps us winning awards."

Off limits establishments

The following establishments are off limits to Armed Forces personnel with duty at Keesler:

Biloxi:

• Ya-ya's – 2751 Pass Rd.

Gulfport:

• Herbal Alternatives, 1909 E. Pass Road and 11530 U.S. Highway 49

BJ's Bar (Club 228), 17920 16th St.

Sinsations Night Club, 1809 30th Ave.

Nick's Place, 12460 Hwy. 49

Pascagoula:

• Bunksmall Apartments, 708 S. Pascagoula St.

LeaveWeb 4.0 rolls out February 2013

Following a 2010 Air Force Audit Agency report, the LeaveWeb Project Management Office began a concentrated effort to upgrade the system and bring it into compliance with the Federal Information System Management Act and Defense Finance Accounting Services Bluebook until the system is subsumed by the Air Force Integrated Pay and Personnel System.

Some key changes in LeaveWeb 4.0 include:

• Allowing all leave to be managed from a central location for system and audit purposes.

• Establishing a hierarchical view capability from the Air Force-level through the various organizations to the individual members.

• Expanding LeaveWeb capabilities to process all 18 types of leave.

• Requiring digital signatures for all levels of military leave approval.

• Maintaining approved Department of Defense forms 2875 within the system.

• Eliminating the use of tracking numbers, which limits the need for emails to LeaveWeb users.

The goal is to rollout LeaveWeb 4.0 in February.

Air Force implements civilian hiring freeze

By Staff Sgt. David Salanitri
Air Force Public Affairs Agency

WASHINGTON — Air Force senior leaders directed a force-wide hiring freeze among other workforce actions in a memorandum sent to senior commanders Jan. 16.

The actions are part of the Air Force's efforts to pursue reversible or recoverable steps to avoid impacts to core readiness caused by the looming possibility of sequestration and budgetary shortfalls.

Civilian pay makes up a large share of the Air Force's operating budget. With budgetary uncertainty and a projected fiscal year 2013 $1.8 billion shortfall in the Air Force funding for overseas contingency operations, Air Force leadership is taking these immediate actions to reduce the force's expenditure rate.

The temporary hiring freeze applies to all positions that are open to applicants outside the Air Force for permanent, temporary and term vacancies in all appropriations, according to the memo. Reassignments and promotions within the current work force will continue because they do not affect the current force size.

The memo, issued by Lt. Gen. Darrell Jones, deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., states hiring actions already in progress where a selection was made and an entry on duty date already established will continue, and set EODs may remain. External hiring actions where a job offer has not been made will be withdrawn. Exemptions from previous hiring controls do not carry over.

Additionally, commanders are directed to immediately release temporary employees, and not renew term employees. All temporary and term employees, to include reemployed annuitants that are not considered mission critical, should be separated in accordance with already established procedures.

More specific guidance on actions related to the civilian workforce hiring freeze and management of temporary and term employees is being developed and will be distributed through command channels as soon as details are available.

"These are uncharted waters concerning the federal budget and the effect it will have on the Air Force," Jones said in the memo. "It is imperative we work closely together to balance mission needs and minimize impacts to our dedicated civilian employees and their families."

Morin talks sequestration, budget actions

By Staff Sgt. David Salanitri
Air Force Public Affairs Agency

WASHINGTON — The acting under secretary of the Air Force described how the nation's fiscal challenges are affecting the service to a group of civic and industry leaders in Arlington, Va., Jan. 15.

Dr. Jamie Morin spoke to members of industry, the Air Force, the Air Force Association and media as part of AFA's monthly breakfast program that provides a venue for senior Air Force and Department of Defense leaders to communicate directly with the public and the press.

Despite the encouraging progress made by Congress by enacting the Defense Authorization Bill and delaying the spending cuts that would have been put in place by the budget control act, Morin said, "there's a lot more work to be done."

Air Force officials are bracing for the potential combined impact of operating under a continuing resolution and the looming possibility of sequestration.

"The uncertainty associated with this threat makes it even harder for the institutions of defense," Morin said. "It greatly complicates resource planning at a time when we need to squeeze the maximum amount of combat capability out of each tax dollar that is entrusted to us."

Morin and Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Larry Spencer issued guidance to all major commands Jan. 14, outlining near-term actions to reduce spending rates and minimize budget execution risks.

"We are facing a complicated, uncertain fiscal environment. There will be pressure to choose between fiscal responsibility and a strong national defense — that is, in my mind at least, a false choice."

— Morin

"We put restrictions in place of civilian hiring; we directed curtailment of non-readiness and non-mission critical flight operations and travel; we also said defer, curtail and reduce any non-essential purchases," said Morin.

"Similarly, we said we're willing to accept a bit of pause in our facility sustainment, renovations modernization and we should focus resources only on emergency work."

At a glance, these actions may seem substantial, but Morin emphasized that sequestration would be much harsher.

"The actions that we've directed so far only take a small step towards sequestration reductions," said Morin. "This is in no way, shape or form implementing a sequestration reduction. If sequestration is triggered and we remain under a continuing resolution for a year, the impacts are blunt, the impacts are heavy, and they are very serious."

In light of the unknown, Morin stressed the importance of leaders working together and sticking to the defense strategy.

"The tighter the resource environment, the more critical that the nation and the defense establishment align closer to the new strategic guidance," he said. "Uncertainty does not give us a pass on our need to do good strategy and our need to make good resource choices in the near term, medium term and the long term."

Though Morin said he believes the strategy aligns well with U.S. security and economic interests, as well as the global environment, there are a host of implications that come from the strategy — to include a balanced force structure, the need to improve readiness levels and a requirement to modernize the force.

"These are principles that Air Force leaders use to guide budget decisions in 2013; principles that we intend to stick by in 2014, and the future," Morin said, highlighting the importance of preserving the Air Force's distinctive capabilities. "We believe the current budget is right-sized to provide those goals and to meet the requirements, but it involves making tough choices."

One of those choices was to trade size for quality, he said, adding that throughout the budget planning process leaders will remain focused on preserving key military advantage.

"We are facing a complicated, uncertain fiscal environment. There will be pressure to choose between fiscal responsibility and a strong national defense — that is, in my mind at least, a false choice," Morin said. "We can and should recognize that the long-term health of the U.S. economy, the U.S. military and our position in the world depends on us being good stewards in defense and getting more combat capability out of each dollar."

Marine Sgt. Maj. Bryan Battaglia, senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, speaks to members of the Keesler Marine Corps Detachment Jan. 16 at the Welch Theater. Battaglia's one-day visit allowed him the opportunity to acquaint himself with Keesler's people, mission and contribution to the bigger military picture. He also talked to enlisted Keesler members about the CJCS' four priorities, his own key themes and his thoughts on bridging the basics and total force fitness.

Photos by Kemberly Groue

Battaglia learns about the 81st Training Group's leadership rope program and the meaning behind the different colors from Tech. Sgt. Julie Hammond, 81st TRG, at the Levitow Training Support Facility.

Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Johnson, 81st Security Forces Squadron combat arms, stands by for assistance as Battaglia fires an M4 assault rifle at the indoor firing range.

Battaglia delivers thoughts on total force fitness

By Senior Airman Heather Heiney

Keesler News co-editor

Once a person dons the uniform of their branch of service, it can be easy to let their identity as an Airman, Marine, Soldier or Sailor cloud the fact that they are a member of a larger United States military. Keesler Airmen had the opportunity to be reminded of the bigger picture Jan. 16 when Marine Sgt. Maj. Bryan Battaglia, senior enlisted advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the highest-ranking enlisted member of the U.S. military, visited Keesler.

During the SEAC's visit, he had the opportunity to acquaint himself with Keesler's people, mission and contribution to that greater military picture.

"I've seen a lot of good things on this base in a short amount of time, even some things that I'm going to take back up to D.C. with me," Battaglia said.

He also said his favorite part of the visit was meeting Airmen and listening to the pride they have for what they do for the 81st Training Wing.

"I love having opportunities to approach service members and listen to you talk about your jobs. There's nothing better or more refreshing or more rewarding for me than to do that," Battaglia said.

Keesler trains Airmen across a spectrum of specialties and also hosts Marines and Sailors for joint weather training.

"Our non-prior service Airmen that are training here at Keesler Air Force Base are our top priority. Training is what we do, it's our mission and we're very proud of it," Chief Master Sgt. Angelica Johnson, 81st TRW command chief, said.

"You never have a rank that makes you exempt from learning," Battaglia said. "If I don't practice my skill, my art, it becomes perishable. The lack of proficiency brings on irrelevancy, so it's vitally important that we continue to train and educate."

A few benefits of a joint training environment, like that of Keesler's weather school, are that it allows service members to share different ideas, thoughts and practices.

"The joint environment provides us the opportunity to set our parochialism and our egos aside, listen to some other thoughts and ideas that our peer group may have and inject them where we can to make our military more efficient and effective," the SEAC said.

The SEAC also held and enlisted call at the Welch Theater to reiterate the CJCS' four priorities, his own key themes and total force fitness.

The chairman's four priorities are: achieve our national objectives in the current conflicts, develop joint force 2020, keep faith with our military family and renew our commitment to the profession of arms. Battaglia's key themes parallel those of the CJCS: bridging the basics by enhancing core competencies, preserving readiness and strengthening our commitment to the total force.

"If they're the chairman's priorities, they should be our priorities," the SEAC said. "That's why we're all here as members of this armed force, that's why we all serve."

He also said he uses the oath of enlistment, which is identical for all enlisted members no matter what their rank or branch of service, to renew his commitment to the armed forces and remember why he serves.

"Whether you know it or not, you're willing to give your life for your nation. Think about that — it's pretty powerful," Battaglia said. "And you volunteered. That says a lot about your character."

If he could give one piece of advice to enlisted members, Battaglia said it would be the same advice he received early in his career to do his job to the best of his ability and follow orders.

"I found that those two golden rules helped me along the way and probably played a significant impact as to why I'm sitting in this position today," he said.

Battaglia speaks during an enlisted call at the Welch Theater.

Tech. Sgt. Patricia Boydston, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the 81st Inpatient Operations Squadron intensive care unit, demonstrates the unit's state-of-the art equipment boom system to Battaglia during his visit to the 81st Medical Group's Back Bay Tower.

Pay delays anticipated for officers, enlisted Airmen promoted in March

By Tech Sgt. Steve Grever

Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas — Officers and enlisted Airmen getting promoted in March will experience pay delays because of the Military Personnel Data System upgrade occurring that month.

"Individuals getting promoted from March 4 to March 26 will not get their promotions updated in MilPDS because of the upgrade," said Lt. Col. Shelley Strong, Air Force Personnel Center operations division chief. "Their promotions will be projected in MilPDS and will automatically update as soon as the system is back online."

Airmen are authorized to sew on their new rank on their respective promotion dates, but they will not receive an increase in pay until their promotion is updated in MilPDS and processed by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

"Unfortunately, until MilPDS is back online, promotions that become effective during this window will not be able to be processed," said Strong. "Once the system is available, they can view their promotion data in the virtual Military Personnel Flight application to ensure their promotion information is accurate and updated."

Airmen should contact their base military personnel section if their promotion information is not updated in vMPF within 10 days after the MilPDS upgrade is completed. Base military personnel sections will track local personnel records to avoid overpayment for Airmen who received a promotion cancellation or delay. AFPC officials are also requesting that base commanders accomplish Stripes for Exceptional Performer promotions before the MilPDS upgrade to avoid pay delays.

The Air Force is upgrading and transferring the Military Personnel Data System to the Defense Information Systems Agency's Defense Enterprise Computing Center in March. The upgrade project is scheduled to take approximately 23 days to complete, during which time, MilPDS will not be available.

The information above also applies to Reserve promotions as well with the exception of STEP promotions which are not applicable. Reserve members should contact their MPS if their promotion information is not updated in vMPF within 10 days after MilPDS upgrade is completed. More information is available on the myPers website at https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/22654/kw/r12/p/16%2C18.

Guard members should review the "MilPDS Upgrade/Migration Guidance — Unit Assigned Members" section on the myPers website at http://mypers.af.mil under the "Alerts" or "Announcements for Airmen" sections.

MilPDS is the primary records database for personnel data and actions that occur throughout every total force Airman's career. MilPDS is also used to initiate Airman pay actions, maintain Air Force accountability and strength data and support a host of interactions with other Air Force processes and systems that rely on personnel data.

Officials will continue to release additional information and guidance to the Air Force's manpower, personnel, services and pay communities and total force Airmen to educate them on how the service will perform critical personnel and pay tasks during the MilPDS upgrade.

For more information about enlisted promotions and the MilPDS upgrade, visit the myPers website at http://mypers.af.mil.

Health, welfare inspection results released

WASHINGTON — The Air Force released the results of the service-wide health and welfare inspections that were completed in an effort to emphasize an environment of respect, trust and professionalism in the workplace.

"Every Airman deserves to be treated with respect. They also deserve to work in a professional environment," said Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, Air Force chief of staff. "I've talked with Airmen across the force, and believe that some units were not meeting those standards. It's simply unacceptable that we have people who don't feel comfortable in their workplace, so we're addressing it, head on."

The purpose of the inspection was to reinforce expectations for the workplace environment, correct deficiencies, and deter conditions that may be detrimental to good order and discipline. Commanders looked for and removed items that hinder a professional working environment.

Commanders inspected thousands of units at more than 100 Air Force installations, where almost 600,000 Air Force military and civilian personnel work. Commanders looked for and removed three broad categories of material: pornographic, inappropriate or offensive, or unprofessional.

According to the results, in the three categories, the Air Force found 631 instances of pornography (magazines, calendars, pictures, videos that intentionally displayed nudity or depicted acts of sexual activity); 3,987 instances of unprofessional material (discrimination, professional appearance, items specific to local military history such as patches, coins, heritage rooms, log books, song books, etc); and 27,598 instances of inappropriate or offensive items (suggestive items, magazines, posters,

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Be considerate. Keep your car radios at a reasonable volume.

Health,

from Page 16

pictures, calendars, vulgarity, graffiti). In total, 32,216 items were reported.

Identified items were documented and either removed or destroyed. In some instances, findings were turned over to the Air Force Office of Special Investigations where appropriate. The areas inspected were all government workspaces and shared common areas such as briefing rooms, break rooms and computer drives.

The health and welfare inspection is a tool routinely used by unit commanders, command chiefs and first sergeants. Welsh tasked commanders during the Nov. 28 Wing Commanders Call to examine their work settings and ensure Airmen at all levels consistently apply standards of professionalism and respect across the service.

"The Air Force succeeds because of the professionalism and discipline of our Airmen," Welsh said. "We have a significant number of Airmen who feel they have to 'go along to get along' by ignoring inappropriate images, workplace comments, or other material that makes them uncomfortable. That's simply not the Air Force we want to be. EVERY Airman is critically important and everyone deserves to be treated with respect. Anything less reflects a lack of discipline and a failure to honor our values. It also marginalizes great Airmen, degrades mission effectiveness and hurts unit morale. We simply can't, and won't, tolerate it."

The inspections are one in a series of moves the Air Force has undertaken to combat sexual assault. The Air Force conducted bystander intervention training service-wide, examined supplementary training for commanders and made multiple avenues of support available to every victim of sexual assault. Support services include counseling, medical, mental health, and safety services and victim advocates among other things.

Also of note, the Air Force launched a pilot program designed to provide legal assistance to victims of sexual assault that will begin later this month. Starting Jan. 28, The Special Victims' Counsel Program will give sexual assault victims legal assistance and help them navigate the criminal justice system with lawyers trained to handle their unique needs.

Results of the health and welfare inspections are available at the Air Force FOIA Reading Room at http://www.foia.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-130118-015.pdf.

KEESLER NOTES

AFAS grants

Keesler's airman and family readiness center received $4,000 from the Air Force Aid Society for 10 spouses to take the physician's office assistant course through Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. Applications are available at the airman and family readiness center or can be emailed upon request. The deadline to turn in completed applications is 3 p.m. Feb. 1. The scholarship is open to non-military spouses of Air Force members assigned to a Keesler unit. If the military member is Air Guard or Reserve, Title 10 orders showing they will be on active status from Feb. 20 through May 15 are required. Active-duty members must have orders showing they will be at Keesler through May 15.

All applicants will be notified if they are selected or non-selected no later than Feb. 15.

The course will be held evenings at the MGCCC Jeff Davis Campus. For more information go to www.mgccc.edu.

Black History Month

Black History Month activities organized by Keesler's African American Heritage committee include:

Soul food sampling 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Feb. 7 at the youth center.

A three-on-three basketball tournament 8:30 a.m. Feb. 16 at the Blake Fitness Center.

The ninth-annual bowling tournament noon Feb. 21 at Gaudé Lanes.

A gospel concert 6-8 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Triangle Chapel.

The AAHC Black History luncheon 11 a.m. Feb. 28 at the Roberts Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Facility.

Motorcycle safety

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation basic rider course, is scheduled 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 7-8, March 1-2 and April 18-19 in building 0233 on the corners of Hangar Road and H Street. Student must provide their own motorcycle and riding gear.

Successful completion of BRC and its knowledge and skill tests, which consists of approximately five hours of classroom and 10 hours of on-cycle instruction conducted over two sessions, may serve as a license test waiver program in some states. Also, a course completion card may provide a rider an insurance discount depending on insurance company policies.

Register online via 81 st Training Wing CoP https://afkm.wpafb.af.mil/community/views/home.aspx?Filter=OO-SE-AE-02.

For more information call 228-377-2007.

Commissioning

Commissioning briefings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. in the education services office, located in the Sablich Center, Room 224.

Phishing scam

Please be advised that there is a known phishing attempt for personal information related to the cancellation of follow-on assignments. Do not respond to this type of email and do not provide Personally Identifiable Information. PII is information that can be used to uniquely identify, contact or locate a single person or can be used with other sources to uniquely identify a single individual. Phishing is typically carried out by email spoofing and it often directs users to enter details at a fake website or respond to an email address with PII.

All official Air Force-generated email notifications from the virtual military personnel flight will end with an @us.af.mil nomenclature. An official vMPF automated assignment notification, to include modifications and cancellations, will reflect the following 'from' address: "System Generated Email [Do Not Reply] [palcompsys@us.af.mil]."

If Airmen receive assignment notifications, modifications or cancellations from any domain other than an @us.af.mil email address, they should be treated as fraudulent. All Airmen receiving such emails should advise the Air Force Relocation Operations office.

For more information email afpc.prpreloworkflow@randolph.af.mil.

Mardi Gras parades

Keesler involvement in 2013 Mardi Gras events includes:

• Ocean Springs Elks Parade 1 p.m. Saturday. The 81st Training Group Honor Guard and 50-Flag Team are scheduled to march in the parade.

• Second Liners Mardi Gras Parade in Biloxi 1 p.m. Saturday. The Keesler Honor Guard are scheduled to march in the parade.

• Long Beach Mardi Gras Parade 6 p.m. Feb. 2. The Keesler Honor Guard are scheduled to march in the parade.

• Ocean Springs Night Parade 7 p.m. Feb. 8. The Keesler Honor Guard is scheduled to march in the parade.

• Jeff Davis Elementary School Parade 2 p.m. Feb. 8. The Keeesler Honor Guard is scheduled to march in the parade and grand marshals include Col. Mark Vivians, 81st Mission Support Group commander and Lt. Col. Jileene Vivians, 2nd Air Force.

• North Bay Area Mardi Gras Association Parade in St. Martin and D'Iberville 1:30 p.m. Feb. 10. The Keesler Honor Guard, 50-flag team and drum and bugle corps are scheduled to march in the parade.

• Gulf Coast Carnival Association Parade in Biloxi 1 p.m. Feb 12. The Keesler Honor Guard is scheduled to march in the parade.

Dating violence

Team Keesler will join the nation to recognize "Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month" throughout the month of February.

Paula Spooner, family advocacy outreach manager, said "Interpersonal violence is a crime that harms individuals, ruins families, weakens communities, undermines readiness and is contrary to the institutional values of the armed forces."

She added, "We are in immediate need of active-duty and civilian volunteers who would like to help in our efforts to raise domestic violence awareness and prevention at Keesler."

For more information call 228-376-3459.

81st TRW quarterly awards

The 81st Training Wing quarterly awards luncheon is scheduled for 11 a.m. Friday at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

Keesler Events Calendar

Today

9 a.m. — Interview skills and salary negotiation workshop at the airman and family readiness center.

6 p.m. — Intro to sewing 101 at the arts and crafts center.

Friday

11 a.m. — 81st Training Wing Quarterly Awards Luncheon at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

5 p.m. — Boss and buddy night at the Bay Breeze Collocated Club.

— Texas Hold'em tournament at the Bay Breeze Collocated Club.

6 p.m. — Ladies night at the arts and crafts center.

Sunday

7 p.m. — Tops in Blue at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum.

Monday

1 p.m. — Civilian format resume writing class at the airman and family readiness center.

Tuesday

5:30 p.m. — Monthly birthday dinner at the Azalea Dining Facility.

Wednesday

6 p.m. — Watercolor painting class at the arts and crafts center.

Jan. 31

1 p.m. — Ten steps to a federal job class at the airman and family readiness center.

3:30 p.m. — Airman on the move class at the airman and family readiness center.

5 p.m. — Family ceramic night at the arts and crafts center.

— Youth wildlife poster contest entries due at outdoor recreation.

— Retreat ceremony at the flagpole in front of 81st Training Wing headquarters.

Feb. 2

4 p.m. — Give parents a break night at the youth center and child development center.

— Parents' night out at the youth center.

Feb. 3

9 a.m. — Super Bowl scramble at the Bay Breeze Golf Course.

4 p.m. — Super bowling party at Gaudé lanes.

— Super Bowl party at the Bay Breeze Event Center Collocated Club.

Feb. 4

9 a.m. — Deployment briefing at the airman and family readiness center.

3:30 p.m. — 81st Training Wing enlisted promotion ceremony at the Bay Breeze Event Center.

Feb. 6

8 a.m. — Newcomers Orientation at the airman and family readiness center.

10:30 a.m. — Art for wee at the arts and crafts center.

3 p.m. — USA Jobs federal job search class at the airman and family readiness center.

5:30 p.m. — Make it "app'n" at you library at the McBride Library.

6 p.m. — Watercolor painting class at the arts and crafts center.

Keesler's genetics lab receives accreditation

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

Keesler's Air Force Medical Genetics Laboratory has received accreditation from the College of American Pathologists.

The CAP officially notified the genetics laboratory staff of the accreditation in December following an on-site inspection conducted in November.

Keesler operates the only genetics center — combined comprehensive genetics clinic and laboratory — in the Department of Defense.

The CAP advised facility medical director Dr. David Rigdon of the national recognition and congratulated the staff for the excellence of services they provide. The Keesler genetics laboratory, an element of the 81st Medical Operations Squadron, is one of more than 7,000 CAP-accredited facilities worldwide.

Dr. Rigdon said, "I am extremely proud of our genetics team. It is extremely rare for zero deficiencies to be found during an intensive on-site CAP accreditation inspection. We know we provide superior service, but it is nice to be recognized by other professionals, especially when they are of such high caliber as was this group of inspectors."

Capt. Linda Beeman, genetics flight commander, added, "I am very proud to lead a team of genetics professionals dedicated to their work and each other. The excellent score and their daily hard work prove that to be true."

The CAP news release announcing the achievement noted, "During the CAP accreditation process, designed to ensure the highest standard of care for all laboratory patients, inspectors examine the laboratory's records and quality control of procedures for the preceding two years. CAP inspectors also examine laboratory staff qualifications, equipment, facilities, safety program and records as well as overall management."

Photo by Steve Pivnick

Medical cytogenetic technician Gayle Bowman analyzes a patient's chromosomes. Keesler's genetics laboratory recently received accreditation from the College of American Pathologists and is the only combined comprehensive genetics clinic and laboratory in the Department of Defense.

Hospital honors volunteers at awards luncheon

By Steve Pivnick

81st Medical Group Public Affairs

The Keesler Hospital's volunteer services honored their own during the organization's annual Volunteer Services Awards luncheon Dec. 7 in the Bay Breeze Event Center.

Col. Catherine Nelson, 81st Medical Group deputy commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Michael Wood, 81st MDG superintendent, presented awards to the volunteers based on their time of service:

40 years or more: Louise Turpel.

30-39 years: Usa Jones and Dean Todd.

20-29 years: Margarite Edwards, Rosalina Jackson, Joseph LaFrance and Frankie Petty.

10-19 years: Seconda Baker, Harry Crawford, Robert Holgate, Dean Huffer, Robert Meleady, Christiane Sharp, Ruth Taylor and Thomas Varble.

2-9 years: Gilbert Camburn, Donna Cifranic, David Clark, Jill Clayton, Bonnie Cotman, Scott Cotman, Patricia French, Edward Guardanapo, Jeanne Hawkins, Elvin Kellum, Mary King, Ana McKitrick, Teresa Olague, Daniel Scott and Bernie Seal.

One year or less: Alicia Augustine, Robert Boston, Iris Bryson, 2nd Lt. Marshall Carpenter, Betty Francis, James Francis, Jerry Haynes, James Hobbs, Leticia Kammer, Lawrence Kimpel, Phyllis Kimpel, Dawn Lyons, Raymond Lyons Jr., Rosewitha McVeigh, Yoseline Morales, Hannah Ogao, Lorraine Santo and Donald Stoner.

Photo by Steve Pivnick

Awards luncheon guests give Louise Turpel a standing ovation as she walks to receive an award for 44 years of service with Keesler Hospital's volunteer services. She is the organization's longest-serving volunteer.

Helping others: how Keesler can help

By Senior Airman Heather Heiney

Keesler News co-editor

Editor's note: This is the third in a series of four on common New Year's resolutions.

For many people the New Year brings with it the desire to start fresh, set goals and do something to make themselves better in one way or another. While not everyone creates a resolution each year and those that do tailor their goals to their specific needs, four of the more common resolutions are to quit smoking, be healthier, help others and learn more. Each week throughout the month of January, this series will explore the four resolutions above and how different Keesler agencies can help individuals reach their goals.

Photo by Kemberly Groue

Airman 1st Class Kristen Berckefeldt, 81st Surgical Operations Squadron; Johnny Craig Foshee of Petal, Miss.; Tech. Sgt. Allison Edwards, Senior Airman Christopher Boyd and Airman 1st Class Isaiah Owens, 81st Diagnostic and Therapeutics Squadron; and Airman 1st Class Jason Parker, 81st Aerospace Medicine Squadron, volunteer their services by preparing sack lunches for the athletes and volunteers during the Special Olympics Mississippi Summer Games, May 12, 2012, at Keesler.

Week three: help others.

Donating time or money, no matter how small the contribution, can make a significant difference. Volunteering not only helps those on the receiving end, it can give contributors a sense that they were a part of something bigger than their own lives.

From an Air Force perspective, volunteering in the local community also fosters positive relationships between Airmen and members of society who may not know what the military does for their country or what it's really like to serve.

Sandra Brzovic, Keesler's volunteer services coordinator, said, "Our volunteers are a great liaison between Keesler and the community. Volunteering creates positive public relations for the base and helps make a significant contribution to people and agencies in need."

Keesler members average more than 300,000 officially reported volunteer hours per year.

"Many agencies downtown say that they could not do their jobs without the aid and support of our Keesler volunteers," Brzovic said.

Leslie Pitre from the local chapter of the American Red Cross said, "We absolutely benefit from Keesler volunteers. Many times Keesler volunteers reach out to the American Red Cross to lend a hand before we even ask for their support."

People volunteer for many different reasons — to simply help others or support a cause, to enhance job skills, to make friends or to do something with their free time. Whatever the reason, people usually walk away feeling something.

Jackie Pope, section chief for the airman and family readiness center, said "Volunteerism is contagious! When you volunteer, it not only gives you the opportunity to meet new people, you're building a sense of community not only for yourself but for those that you're helping. It's a win-win for all!"

Staff Sgt. Alexandria Valdez, 335th Training Squadron, said, "I like volunteering because it gives me a sense of purpose. Feeling that I have made a dent in something that is bigger than myself and all of us makes me feel important."

Some new enlisted members may see the "community and base involvement" section of an enlisted performance report and wonder why that's a factor in determining how they're doing as an Airman. After all, they go to work every day, do their job well and stay out of trouble. But volunteering shows that they are dedicated to the second core value outside of regular duty hours.

"The core value that volunteering pertains to the most is service before self. The Air Force core values should not only be with us while on duty but rather they should be instilled in us with everything we do," Valdez said. "Serving our community during our free time is a great way to practice that core value. Time off is valuable to all of us, but the fact we choose to help our community can be infectious and inspiring to others to want to do the same."

Brzovic said that she is always looking for more volunteers, whether for an event, project or long-term commitment.

"I serve as a focal point for volunteer activities both on and off base," she said.

She also sends out weekly volunteer opportunities to the base and implements the volunteer of the quarter program as well as the annual volunteer recognition ceremony and the Volunteer Excellence Award, a lifetime achievement award for volunteering, during National Volunteer Week.

For more information and to get involved, call 228-377-0155, or stop by the volunteer coordinators office in Room 134 of the Levitow Training

Photos by Kemberly Groue

Blaze Dunn, 334th Training Squadron, steadies himself on a paddle board after recovering from a fall into the cold waters of Biloxi's Back Bay during the polar bear regatta Saturday at marina park. The event was sponsored by outdoor recreation.

Polar bears in Back Bay

The first heat of kayakers make their way through the marina to complete the frigid regatta course.

81st Training Wing
Street Survival School

Saturday 23 Feb 2013
0730-1600

Discounted Keesler Price: $35
(Normally a $75 course)

"Limited to first 20 students registered"

Look us up on YouTube
Search: Keesler Street Survival

Contacts:
Wing Safety Office: 377-7023
or
Event Coordinator:
MSgt Sam Frontera 376-3202

Email: keeslerautox@gmail.com
PayPal Payments: GCRSCCA@gmail.com

http://streetsurvival.org

...*"It's about more than DRIVING. It's about LIVING!"*

- Founded by the BMW CCA Foundation in partnership with the Tire Rack ™ in 2002, the aim of the school is to reduce deadly car crashes involving teenagers and young drivers by offering a hands on course.
- It teaches students to avoid accidents by thinking and looking ahead. Students learn in their own cars so that they learn the limitations of the car they drive daily. Students learn by doing instead of a classroom.
- KAFB is the only USAF base to offer this program thanks to volunteers from the KAFB community and the Sports Car Club of America. Since it's start in Nov 2011 we have conducted a total of 5 classes with over 100 students.