

From four to eight children in three years Williams family puts AF core values into action

By Staff Sgt. Rachel Ingram
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

While traveling with a religious organization in East Africa during the summer of 2005, Master Sgt. Frank Williams, longtime member of the 445th Airlift Wing and current 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron member, placed a phone call that would ultimately change the course of his life.

He was in Uganda, one of poorest nations in the world, where families live on just a few dollars a day.

"I called my wife and said, 'There's this little boy.' She immediately completed my thought and said, 'I know,'" recalls Frank, who met his wife, Kim, while both were serving active duty in the Air Force, stationed in Japan. "It was one of those weird situations where we both knew that this was real—we weren't in a position where we had to persuade one another. She told me, 'Just go to the embassy and figure out how this whole thing works,' so I did."

The Williams family originally ventured to Uganda to participate in humanitarian relief efforts with their church. During the course of just a few weeks, they visited multiple villages and United Nations-run internal displacement camps.

The camps, Frank explains, exist as safe havens for Ugandans displaced within their country due to civil war and conflict.

"When I saw the children in those camps, many of whom were orphaned, I felt compassion for them, but it wasn't like I was seeking out children to bring home," Frank says. "Then I met Nathan, and it was different. This was much deeper and much more spiritual—a God thing, a divine appointment. It wasn't coincidence. It's been life-changing."



Courtesy photo

Master Sgt. Frank Williams, 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, poses with his family. Williams and his wife Kim adopted four children from Africa to become a family of 10.

Room to grow

Born the only boy among three sisters, Senior Airman Aaron Williams, an elementary-schooler at the time, welcomed the idea of a brother.

"Before my dad and sister left for the mission trip, they were asking everyone what they would like as a souvenir from Africa," Aaron says. "My sisters wanted things like African drums or certain dresses. I, half-jokingly, said 'I want a little brother.'"

The Williams family decided to adopt 10-year-old Nathan, along with his biological, 6-year-old sister, Sophia. Prior to this, the siblings were living in displacement camps on opposite sides of the country.

"We had never discussed adopting," says Frank, mentioning that he and Kim married nearly three decades ago. "We had four biological children and we thought we were done, but there was something about Nathan. I couldn't shake it."

Lightning strikes twice

A couple years later, the Williams' had the opportunity to reunite two more siblings through adoption. Lydia and Joshua were orphaned toddlers whose terminally-ill grandmother could no longer care for. One of the children had been moved to Kenya, so the siblings were living in totally different countries prior to their adoption into the Williams family. Between the years 2007 and 2010, they finalized four adoptions.

"It was a family decision. We were all for it," says Aaron, who is a Citizen Airmen in the 87th Aerial Port Squadron.

Blending a family

While the children acclimated to life in America,

Empowering the supervisor, Airman relationship

By Maj. David Ruiz

445th Civil Engineer Squadron Commander

In building a solid foundation for the next generation of Citizen Airmen, the importance of the first-line supervisor simply cannot be overstated.



Throughout the ebbs and flows of Air Force evolution and the prioritization of resources, the one constant that remains true is that people are our most precious resource.

All of the weapons systems and emerging technologies available to the Air Force are of no value without the integrity, service, and excellence that every Airman brings to the fight.

It's long been my observation and belief that staff sergeants are the backbone of the enlisted force

and are absolutely critical when it comes right down to the care and feeding of our Airmen.

From the moment a supervisor meets an Airman that has made it through basic training and technical school, a special relationship is formed. The relationship forms a bond brought about by the supervisor's acceptance of his/her responsibility to guide the Airman's professional development and the trust and confidence that the Airman places in the supervisor.

For reservists, this relationship is especially challenged by the fact that a supervisor has his/her own personal and professional accountability items to take care of over the course of a unit training assembly weekend in addition to taking care of their Airmen.

Conversely, even the simplest of tasks can waste precious UTA hours and create an environment where success is harder to achieve

if the Airman does not have the required guidance and mentorship.

It is my hope in writing this article that no matter where you are in the chain-of-command, empowerment of the supervisor and Airman relationship is something every single airman can and will support.

It is important to recognize and appreciate the factors that hamper a supervisor's ability to be a great supervisor. Some ideas that come to my mind are limiting additional duties for supervisors, ensuring that supervisors are not in upgrade training, encouraging communication between UTAs and whenever possible providing the resources, time and training for supervisors to be more effective.

There is no single solution but hopefully shining a little awareness on the topic provided some food for thought.

Thank you for your service to our Air Force.

Buckeye Flyer

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

Wing welcomes community readiness consultant

The 445th welcomed a new resource to aid Airmen and their families.

Alvin Dennis joined the 445th Force Support team as a community readiness consultant in December of 2016.

Mr. Dennis is a retired Air Force member who served for 13 years with the state of Ohio as a local veteran's representative and transition assistance facilitator. He also served for 11 years at the 88th FSS Airman and Family Readiness Center as the Air Force Aid Officer and TAP facilitator.

Core services offered by the community readiness consultant include: transition assistance program; deployment assistance; information and referral services; personal financial readiness; employment assistance; and Air Force Aid Society assistance.

Other services available through referrals include: key spouse program; Veterans Administration benefits advisors; Disabled American Vets represen-



Alvin Dennis

tatives; school liaison officer; military life consultants; exceptional family member program; and volunteer resources.

Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday, and 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on unit training assembly weekends.

Mr. Dennis is located in building 4014, room 170A and can be reached at (937) 522-4607.



445 FSS Airmen garner AFRC awards

Air Force Reserve Command announced the 2016 winners for manpower, personnel and services awards March 3, 2017. The 445th Force Support Squadron garnered five awards and will represent AFRC at the Air Force level.

Staff Sgt. Jessica McMillian, 445th FSS NCO in charge of career development, won Force Support NCO of the Year. Sergeant McMillian was recognized for her contributions in the unit. She processed 660 gains and departures and processed more than 400 enlisted promotions. McMillian processed 567 re-enlistments and 95 extensions with \$888,000 bonuses paid.

Master Sgt. Jamie Pope, 445th

FSS NCO in charge of customer support, captured the Force Support Senior NCO of the Year. Sergeant Pope in-processed 285 newcomers to the wing. She coordinated 96 hours of briefings with 13 organizations to the new wing members. Pope provided sound council through four casualty cases, taking care of the next-of-kin. She led the awards and decorations program audit, resulting in 3,500 updates and corrections.

The 445th FSS Military Personnel Section won the Gerrit D. Foster, Jr. Outstanding Military Personnel Program. The men and women from the MPS processed more than 400 enlisted promotions and 80 combat support

taskings. They certified 432 Servicemembers Group Life Insurance 238 Family Servicemembers Group Life Insurance changes. The section rehabilitated the student hire program and distributed more than 200,000 in appraisals.

FSS was awarded the Nathan Altschuler Outstanding Education and Training Program of the Year. The unit also won the Professional Development Program of the Year. The 445th FSS processed 859 tuition assistance requests. They offered 120 testing sessions to the 445th AW and 88th Air Base Wing Airmen, proctoring 768 exams. The unit processed 859 tuition assistance requests and 283 3-level technical training school requests.

Around the wing...



Staff Sgt. Rachel Ingram

Tech. Sgt. Michael Shepherd, 445th Logistics Readiness Squadron, takes a shot during the March Mania Basketball Tournament Mar. 4, 2017 sponsored by the 445th Force Support Squadron. LRS won the championship title.



Stacy Vaughn

Family, friends and fellow 445th Airlift Wing Airmen welcome home four reservists from the 89th Airlift Squadron at the Dayton International Airport, Dayton, Ohio March 3, 2017. The Airmen returned from a deployment in Southwest Asia.



WILLIAMS, from page 1

Kim homeschooled them, based on their individual needs. One major hurdle was the fact that none of their adopted children spoke English.

“We communicated primarily through hand gestures and pointing,” Aaron remembers. “My mom is a saint.”

Despite the language barrier and other obstacles, Aaron maintains that life was good throughout those years.

“Going through it, you don’t think twice. My entire life experience growing up was awesome. I thoroughly loved it,” Aaron says. “Looking back, I can see how some people would think it was crazy.”

In an effort to help the individual family members to relate to one another, Frank and Kim ensured that each of their children visited Uganda at least once, totaling approximately 15 trips within a few years.

“This is more than just going over there and sitting in a courtroom, going to the embassy, etcetera. We wanted to create a shared experience by allowing the kids to see the culture and customs firsthand because it would help us relate to each other and our new family members,” says Frank, a West Virginia native.

Doing so, he adds, tremendously impacted the entire family.

“Going there is such an experience,” Frank says. “The decisions we’ve made have changed the course of our family for generations to come.”

Hands-on learning

One such trip resulted in an eye-opening experience for Aaron, Frank shares.

“Aaron had saved some money to take on the trip with him,” Frank says. “He became friends with a little boy, Richard, in a village over there. They played together and bonded. Eventually, Aaron decided to buy Richard a gift, and asked me what I thought Richard might like—a soccer ball or a pair of shoes. I suggested that he ask Richard, so he did, but Richard responded, ‘Thank you for the generous offer of a soccer ball or pair of shoes, but what I would really like is to go to school.’”

Aaron did not have enough money saved up to pay for Richard’s school, and he did not want his parents to do it for him.

“So Aaron came home bound and determined to send Richard to school,” Frank says.

To raise money, Aaron cut grass and performed odd jobs until he saved enough money to pay for Richard’s education.

“If I had just gone to Africa on my own, met Rich-



Courtesy photo

Master Sgt. Frank Williams, 445th Aerospace Medicine first sergeant, poses with his son, Senior Airman Aaron Williams, 87th Aerial Port Squadron and his daughter Airman 1st Class Sarah Williams, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard.

ard, then returned home and told Aaron that he should earn money for Richard, Aaron would’ve had zero interest in that,” Frank says. “He was able to go, see, experience and connect. That one trip gave Aaron more perspective about the rest of the world than anything else in his entire childhood. The problems they face in third-world countries are nothing like the problems we face.”

Aaron agrees.

“I think I’m a more understanding person than I would have been if I hadn’t experienced everything I did during my childhood,” Aaron says. “With a family of 10, there’s a lot of different personalities.”

Service before self

A multicultural perspective is something the Williamses carry into their military service.

“At 16, I knew I wanted to join the military,” says Aaron, who is married with one child, and another on the way.

His sister, Sarah, is a member of Ohio Air National Guard.

“We live in the greatest nation on earth and have opportunities that don’t exist in any other country,” Frank says. “That’s only because of the men and women who put on that uniform and sacrificed to afford us this lifestyle. I want to make sure my grandchildren and future generations have the same thing. That’s why I still put on my uniform.”

Military heritage is something that flows deep in the Williams family, and Frank says it’s likely that one or two of his adopted children will pursue military service in the future.

The love of a family

“Shortly after the adoptions, the word ‘more’ hit me,” Frank recalls. “Whatever you have in your current home life—spouse, children—when you adopt, you’re going to get more of that. If your family is full of strife and sibling rivalry, that’s what you’re going to have more of. If your family loves one another deeply and tries to serve each other, then when you introduce an adopted child into that family, you’ll get more of that. It is a complex situation, but that’s a really simple way to explain it.”

When asked what he is proudest of in his life, Frank has only one answer.

“There is nothing that I could ever be prouder of than my family and my children,” he says. “They are all amazing kids. I’m a very blessed and fortunate man.”



Wing announces 1st quarter CY17 award winners

Airman



Staff Sgt. Shawn Haggerty, 89th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, is the 445th Airlift Wing Airman of the Quarter, first quarter. Sergeant Haggerty flew 48 sorties in 99 combat and combat support hours. He moved 1.8 million pounds of cargo and 530 passengers in support of Operations Freedom's Sentinel and Inherent Resolve. Haggerty transported 175,000 pounds of munitions to Incirlik Air Base, Iceland. He flew a mission in support of the 482nd Fighter Wing, ensuring its 42 members were prepped for their deployment. Haggerty was awarded the 816th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron Aircrew of the Month award. During his off-duty time, Haggerty led multiple C-17 tours for more than 300 students, veterans, local area civic leaders and base employees. He joined 28 fellow Airmen and picked up trash along one mile of Huffman Dam River. Haggerty is pursuing a Master of Science degree in human-computer interaction at Wright State University.

NCO



Staff Sgt. Aaron Fritz, 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron AMXS craftsman, is the 445th Airlift Wing NCO off the Quarter, first quarter. Fritz flew support on 100 sorties, flying 15 missions, delivering 713 passengers and 2.6 million tons of cargo to the area of responsibility. He was the dedicated crew chief for four Home Station Checks, directing an eight-man all-purpose general mechanic team. He volunteered for a humanitarian mission to Haiti, helping to deliver 14 pallets of water and food to hurricane victims. As the trainer and certifier for high-lift maintenance equipment, Fritz boosted a 12-hour fix rate by more than 200 percent. During his off-duty time, Fritz volunteered more than 60 hours to support the Preble County Fairgrounds improvements, scholarships. He provided 60 hours of mentoring to 12 local youths in the Preble County 4-H Youth Program. Fritz is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in aviation business administration.

SNCO



Senior Master Sgt. Daniel Porta, 445th Maintenance Group superintendent, quality assurance, is the 445th Airlift Wing Senior NCO of the Quarter, first quarter. Porta streamlined the maintenance instruction process by reviewing and approving more than 40 local publications; 20 percent ahead of the group's goal. He ensured accountability, safety and adherence to procedures that led to 14,000 mishap-free maintenance actions. Porta leads a combat ready and cost-effective force; 358 flight hours with a 33 percent depot rate resulted in the highest Air Force Reserve Command hours in February 2017. He evaluated Air Mobility Command fuel boarding checks and servicing 794,297 gallons of fuel with no discrepancies. During his off-duty time, Porta is an active member in Knights of Columbus, third degree, dedicating more than 40 hours of his time orchestrating events and fundraisers for the organization. Porta is currently pursuing a graduate degree in aviation adult education.

CGO



Capt. Ryan Armstrong, 89th Airlift Squadron C-17 pilot, is the 445th Airlift Wing Company Grade Officer of the Quarter, first quarter. Armstrong flew 74 sorties in 190 hours, moving 1.1 million pounds of cargo. He volunteered for deployment for the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, flying 35 sorties in 58 combat hours, moving one million pounds of cargo. He led the 816th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron to have a 100 percent on-time mission execution rate, by executing 398 hours of combatant commander-directed alerts. As chief of scheduling, Armstrong provided 131 crews for 156 missions, flying 136 training sorties. He was one of 126 chosen from more than 3,500 Air Force captains to attend High Flight 2016. During his off-duty time, Armstrong mentored more than 100 high school students and 300 ROTC cadets during various career day events. He's an active member of his church, donating personal time for special events and usher duties.



87 APS Airman works with uncle during AT

By Staff Sgt. Joel McCullough
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs



(left) Tech. Sgt. Jaime Mellenkamp, 87th Aerial Port Squadron, poses for a photo during his annual tour to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. (right) Tech. Sgt. Mellenkamp and his uncle, Chief Master Sgt. William Villarreal, 48th Aerial Port Squadron superintendent, enjoy time at the beach during off-duty hours while at Hickam AFB.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Joel McCullough

Tech. Sgt. Jaime Mellenkamp completed his annual training in February with the 87th Aerial Port Squadron from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

Besides being in the exotic location of Oahu, Hawaii, this trip was special for Sergeant Mellenkamp because he has a family member who works on base, in the same unit he's augmented. Mellenkamp's uncle, Chief Master Sgt. William Villarreal, is the superintendent of the 48th APS.

Many people who join the military have someone who influences their decision, whether it's a family member, a friend of the family, or just a friend. Villarreal is that influence for Mellenkamp.

"He is the reason I joined the Air Force. He's been a mentor," said Mellenkamp.

Other than his great grandfather, Sergeant Mellenkamp had no other family member who chose a military career. At a young age he was introduced to the Air Force life through his aunt's husband, Villarreal.

When asked how the chief influenced his choice of a military career, Mellenkamp responded, "I always thought it was cool. Growing up that was always in the back of my mind, maybe I could do that."

While deciding to join the military, the sergeant originally swayed toward the Army.

"I almost joined the Army," said Mellenkamp. "He (Villarreal) told me to do what I wanted to do, but he explained to me the benefits of the Air Force."

He joined with the intent of working closely with aircraft, either a mechanic or a loadmaster. Neither ended up working out for him, so he consulted his uncle. Chief Villarreal recommended an aerial port job and Mellenkamp took the advice.

"I am very proud that my nephew is a 'Port Dawg,'" said Villarreal. "I have known him since he was 6 years old. To see him join the Air Force and then choose this career field is just too cool."

"He's that quiet, get it done kind of guy," said the chief while explaining what kind of person his nephew is. "At the same time he's always looking for the next big thing."

Sergeant Mellenkamp was on active duty like his uncle but eventually used the Palace Chase Program to switch to the Air Force Reserve. He has been with the 445th Airlift Wing for approximately seven years.

This is not the first time the two have crossed Air Force paths. "How often do you get to work alongside a family member in the Air Force? I am proud and it's cool that I get to be here at his unit," added the sergeant.

Both shared a sense of pride not only in the fact that they are both Air Force members, but that they work in the same career field. One being proud in his family member's accomplishments and getting to work alongside him; the other being able to see his nephew making great life choices and progressing through a wonderful career.

Diamond Sharp Award



Tech. Sgt. Anthony Springer

Master Sgt. Ashley Byers, 14th Intelligence Squadron first sergeant, presents the Diamond Sharp Award to Staff Sgt. Aaron Fisher, 87th Aerial Port Squadron, March 4, 2017. The award is given for exemplary performance and adherence to the Air Force Core Values, attitude and appearance.



News Briefs

Retirements

April 2017

MSgt Robert Caskey, MXG
 MSgt Melissa Caylor, AMDS
 TSgt David Alexander, MXS
 TSgt Gerald Ewing, MXS
 TSgt Monty Murphy, AMXS

Promotions

Airman

Bryce Postle, CES
 Wilfredo Vargas, MXS

Airman First Class

Matthew Crotty, ASTS
 Travis Smith, AMXS
 Aaron Thompson, AES

Senior Airman

Brandan Adams, AES
 Mariah Martin, MSG
 Alyssa Moreno, FSS

Staff Sergeant

Michael Briggs, FSS

Quincy Brown, MXS
 Jared Dexter, FSS
 Shane Ellinwood, ASTS
 Santiago Holley, 14 IS
 Joshua Huber, SFS
 Ginette Lykins, AMDS
 Kelly Retherford, FSS
 Taylor Smith, LRS

Technical Sergeant

Trevor Dixon, 89 AS
 Andrew Finley, ASTS
 Amar Hoxha, AMDS
 Casey Lovelace, AMDS
 Joseph Manderachia, CES
 Jacob McCorkle, SFS
 Omar Reyes, ASTS
 Cody Smeltzer, AMDS
 Siarra Williams, FSS

Master Sergeant

James Brown, AMXS
 Kevin Kelly, SFS

Senior Master Sergeant

Heather Wherry, AMDS

Newcomers

Maj David Borden, 87
 APS

Maj Jeremy Mary, 89 AS
 Capt Bradley Kuhn, AMDS
 TSgt Deon Madsen, AES
 SSgt Anthony Anderson, MXS
 SSgt Joseph Bosak, MXS
 SSgt Nathan Bowman, FSS
 SSgt Ana Curu, AES
 SSgt Jeffrey Pozo, AMXS
 SSgt Gayle Wilkinson, CES
 SrA Kevin Harris, 71 IS
 SrA Raquelle Lockaby, CES
 SrA John Meade, 64 IS
 SrA Justin Meek, 87 APS
 SrA Austin Rollins, CES
 SrA Adam Schaefer, CES
 SrA Emily Wilson, 71 IS
 A1C Kendra Drew, AMXS
 A1C Tori Wilcoxson, ASTS
 AB Kiara Brothers, 87
 APS
 AB Omoregie Inneh, FSS
 AB Kamrie Thompson, ASTS

STEP II

The Stripes for Exceptional Performers (STEP II) board will convene July 17-21, 2017.

Packages are due to the 445th Force Support Squadron Career Development office by 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 23, 2017.

The Career Development SharePoint page has helpful information to include a STEP II Guide and 1206 examples: <https://afrc.eim.us.af.mil/sites/445aw/445MSG/445FSSharepoint/445CAREERDEVELOPMENT/SitePages/Home.aspx>

To access, click Enlisted Promotions then Stripes for Exceptional Performers STEP II.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this message, please contact the career development office at (937) 257-4382.

SPOTLIGHT

Rank/Name

Senior Airman Katherine Redavide

Unit

89th Airlift Squadron

Duty Title

Squadron aviation resource manager

Hometown

Springfield, Ohio

Civilian Job

Air Reserve Technician

Education

I am currently working on my bachelor's degree at Park University and Commu-

nity College of the Air Force degree.

Hobbies

Cooking, traveling and shopping

Career Goal

I definitely see myself retiring from the Air Force. I'm here for the long haul. I am currently enrolled in Airman Leadership School via distance learning so I will be ready to put on staff sergeant when the opportunity presents itself.



Tech. Sgt. Anthony Springer

What do you like about working at the 445th?

The people—the men and women of the 445th have become a second family to me.

Why did you join the Air Force?

I come from a mili-

tary family, so I wanted to follow in my dad and my uncle's footsteps. My dad served in the Air Force and my uncle retired from the Navy Reserve after 20 years of service.





Photos by Tech. Sgt. Patrick O'Reilly

1. Senior Airman Dexter Alleyne, 445th Logistics Readiness Squadron, prepares a track loader to be painted while performing his annual tour at Kadena Air Base Japan, March 13, 2017.
 2. Senior Airman Gage Brunswick, 445 LRS, tapes a track loader in preparation for painting. The paint is used as corrosion control because of the region's humid weather.
 3. Chaplain (Capt.) Job Morales, 445th Airlift Wing Chaplain Corps, briefs incoming Kadena Air Base Airmen during a newcomers briefing, March 14, 2016.
 4. Airmen from the 445 LRS attend a mid-tour briefing with Lt. Col. Patrick Launey, 18th LRS commander, March 15, 2017.
- Airmen from the 445 LRS and members of 445th Chaplain Corps trained and provided support during their annual tour to Kadena Air Base Japan, March 8 – 22, 2017.

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