

445th Reserve Citizen Airmen head to New York City 'COVID Commandos' deploy to NYC to battle COVID-19

By 1st Lt. Rachel Ingram
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

With only 24 hours' notice, seven Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 445th Airlift Wing packed their bags, said goodbye to their families and boarded a C-17 Globemaster III bound for New York City, where more than 123,000 people have tested positive for COVID-19. The team of Air Force medical professionals volunteered to deploy in response to the coronavirus crisis in New York.

"You've trained for this, and I know you are ready. I

tor and all components of the armed services in response to COVID-19.

"This is what we're trained for," said Lt. Col. Karen G. Keller, nurse practitioner, 445th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, and mother of four. "We're responding to the need."

For some, this notification of need arrived just hours prior to departure.

First Lt. Jennifer Gerritsen, a prior-enlisted medi-



Mr. Patrick O'Reilly



Courtesy Photo

(left) A doctor and several nurses from the 445th Airlift Wing's Aerospace Medicine and Aeromedical Staging Squadrons, board a C-17 Globemaster III, April 5, 2020, heading to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey. The Airmen were notified April 4, 2020 that they would be mobilized to New York City to help with the COVID-19 pandemic. (right) The Reserve Citizen Airmen pose for a photo before heading to JBMDL. Air Force Reserve units from across the nation mobilized doctors, nurses and respiratory technicians to support COVID-19.

can't thank you enough for accepting this call to serve. We stand behind you," briefed Col. Raymond A. Smith, commander of the 445th Airlift Wing, as the crew prepared to depart Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, on Sunday afternoon.

The physician, nurse practitioner and five nurses, who are members of the 445th Aeromedical Staging Squadron and 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, flew to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, and then continued on to New York City, where they joined medical professionals from the civilian sec-

cal technician with nearly 20 years of military service, was covering a 12-hour overnight shift in the intensive care unit at Wright-Patterson Medical Center over the weekend. A clinical nurse, she works for the 88th Medical Group and is also a traditional reservist assigned to the 445th ASTS.

"They called me during the shift and asked if I was willing to go, and I said yes," Gerritsen recalled. "I thought I would leave on Monday."

See COVID COMMANDOS, page 5

FM tip of the month - GTC access update

CitiBank recently changed its website. Previously, all customer actions were conducted on the CitiBank site. Now cardholders have access to the CitiManager site.

If you are a cardholder, you may self-register on the CitiManager site so you can view your account information, view statements and balances, and perform other self-service tasks such as updating your alerts.

To self-register as a cardholder please complete the steps below:

1. Navigate to www.citimanager.com/login.
2. From the CitiManager site login screen, new users section, click the self registration for cardholders link. The self registration for cardholders — select registration process screen displays.
3. Select the fill the card's

data radio button, click the continue button and proceed to step 7 (Currently, the best option for cardholders is to use the card data option.)
(Steps 4-6 not needed)

7. In the card number field,



type your card number exactly as it appears on your billing statement, no spaces or dashes.

8. In the account name field, type your account name exactly as it appears on your billing statement.

9. Click the continue button. The self registration for cardholders — sign on details screen displays.

10. Complete the required fields (*) for self-registration.

Note: The username and password requirements display in a pop-up window as you enter them. A checkmark displays when the requirement is fulfilled.

The fields displayed and the username and password requirements vary based on your company's setup.

11. When you are finished, click the continue button. The self registration for cardholders — confirm screen displays.

Complete details of the Self-registration for Cardholders can be found at <https://www.citi.com/credit-cards/citi.action>.

Connectedness supports psychological, physical well-being

By Ms. Jennifer Marquez
445th Airlift Wing Director of Psychological Health

The world looks much different today than it did a few months ago.

During these uncertain and difficult times, it is important to stay connected--connection to others and connected to the person you are in everyday life.

While we are encouraged to practice social distancing, you may find it challenging to connect to others.

Connection isn't always about physical distance to another person(s). Connection is an emotional tie that you may have to a person or an object. For example, military members are often separated from

their loved ones. Though they may feel physically disconnected, they can maintain an emotional connection through phone calls, video calls, emails, texts or letters.

All of these ways of connection not only support psychological and physical well-being they also create a coping mechanism for dealing with separation.

People who stay connected find purpose in their lives.

As we head in to the upcoming months and the unknown, it is important to sustain connection with others.

For those who live with others, they may

feel stronger connections during this time but they may also feel stressed as their routine has changed and they are trying to navigate this new change in their life.

For those who live alone, the stress may be the lack of contact with others through their jobs or social events.

If you are feeling distressed, you are not alone. What you are feeling is normal. Several organizations have free resources and coping skill ideas to navigate through this time of uncertainty.

- NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) 800-950-6264. See

resource guide for coping with Covid 19 on their website: <https://www.nami.org/covid-19-guide>

- SAMHSA 800-985-5990 if you feel distressed and need support. Link for resources and info on staying safe <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/tips-social-distancing-quarantine-isolation-031620.pdf>

- <https://www.unit-edway.org/our-impact/featured-programs/2-1-1>. Simply call 211 from your phone and don't forget to mention if you are a military member as there are resources specifically for members.



CES firefighters train with local community

By 1st Lt. Rachel Ingram
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The 445th Civil Engineer Squadron, based at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, partnered with the Dayton Fire Department March 7, 2020 to meet an annual training requirement for a structure fire.

Air Force firefighters train, equip, mobilize and provide professional emergency services anywhere and anytime, whether flames are involved or not.

“Our duties might entail providing advanced EMT skills during a cardiac arrest or extinguishing someone’s house fire,” said Master Sgt. Eric Baldrige, assistant fire chief, 445th Civil Engineer Squadron, Fire and Emergency Services Flight.

The Reserve Citizen Airmen rely on hands-on training to stay current on the constantly-evolving technologies and methods, he noted.

“Many of the folks on this team also work on a fire department in the civilian sector,” Baldrige said.

For example, Airman 1st Class Zane Standridge is new to the Air Force, but he’s also a volunteer firefighter with Huntertown Fire Department in Indiana, where he’s responded to nearly 20 structure fires over the course of two years.

“It’s really important in that moment right before you step into a burning building, that you aren’t second-guessing whether or not your team can communicate and move together,” Standridge said. “Those are skills you want to practice and refine before you actually get out there.”

In the Air Force, fire protection teams respond to not only structure fires, but also traffic accidents and emergencies unique to aircraft,

like stuck landing gear, fuel spills, smoke in the cabin and crashes.

“We’re on standby for emergencies, but fire prevention is our main priority,” said Senior Airman Austin Taylor, fire protection apprentice. “The goal is to not have to fight fires, we’d rather prevent them.”

Around base, sprinklers, smoke alarms and fire retardant building materials help mitigate the risk of fire damage.

“We’re here to ensure the safety of Airmen and our assets,” Taylor added.

For the firefighters, being ready to respond during crisis is one of the most rewarding aspects of the job.

“On the potential worst day of someone’s life, it’s a great feeling that my team and I can be there to help,” Baldrige said.



Photos by 1st Lt. Rachel Ingram

(left) Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 445th Civil Engineer Squadron, Fire and Emergency Services Flight, approach a live fire in a structure at the Dayton Fire Department Training Center in Ohio, March 7, 2020.

(center) Senior Airman Matthew Archer, firefighter with the 445th CES, Fire and Emergency Services Flight, and teammates prepare to breach the door at the Dayton Fire Department Training Center, March 7, 2020.

(right) Inside a Dayton Fire Department Training Center facility, a basement fire blazes while a team of Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 445th CES, Fire and Emergency Services Flight, maneuver a hose through the building.



445th maintainers keep mission going during COVID-19



Reserve Citizen Airmen assigned to the 445th Maintenance Group wash a C-17 Globemaster III, March 27, 2020. The wash is part of a process called post aircraft wash corrosion control and is done every 180 days.



Senior Airman Devin Crider (left) and Staff Sgt. Dominic Fredo, both assigned to the 445th MXG, wash a C-17 Globemaster III, March 27, 2020, to prevent corrosion and ensures lifelong structural integrity of the aircraft.



Tech. Sgt. Rodney McElfresh, 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, verifies strut pressure on a C-17 Globemaster III, April 9, 2020.



Staff Sgt. Matthew Miklasevich, 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, changes an auto flight control panel of a C-17 Globemaster III, April 13, 2020.



(left) Staff Sgt. Andrew Hall, assigned to the 445th AMXS, attaches a C-17 Globemaster III tire onto a hoist, April 9, 2020. Maintenance personnel from 445th Airlift Wing continue to maintain the fleet of C-17 aircraft, staying mission ready despite the COVID-19 crisis.



Airman 1st Class Luis Ramirez-Rosado, 445th AMXS, retrieves tools from his toolbox prior to changing tires on a C-17 Globemaster III, April 9, 2020.

Photos by Master Sgt. Patrick O'Reilly



Command post supports mission during COVID-19

By A1C Erin Zimpfer
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Many 445th Airlift Wing Airmen and their families are facing a variety of challenges in their day to day lives as the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic are being felt by everyone. Many full-time wing members are able to telework to minimize exposure and protect themselves and their families, while others are essential and report to work each day.

One of those is the command post. The command post remains a 24-hour manned operation in spite of the current pandemic. The critical nature of everything the command post coordinates and communicates, means it would not be possible to shut down. The command post acts as the central hub of all incoming and outgoing communications.

They are responsible to act as liaison between commanders and personnel. Due to limited activities at the wing, the department is trying out telework themselves, having one person in the post and the other telework as they tag team the essential priorities that must continue no matter what. With the vast majority of Airmen telecommuting right now, some challenges have arisen for the command post.

“The biggest change with everyone teleworking is it is hard to get in touch with the normal offices that

are usually manned,” said Master Sgt Amber Church, 445th Command Post superintendent. “They don’t have access to their office phone numbers and we are relying heavily on email to get in contact with support agencies.”

Another difference Church noted during the wing-wide telework is the need for accurate information in order to get in touch with people via cell phone since most are not reachable in the offices.

Church added that another challenge presented by base-wide changes is the closure of the new gate. “It has caused a lot of headaches because more than half of us utilize that gate to come in,” said Church.

Some other changes that have come are similar to those being felt everywhere. Common touch points are being sanitized twice a day, while the de-

creased traffic is helping to keep things safe for those who do have to come in to work.

The wing is still mission focused, delivering supplies and troops where needed. The important thing is that the wing continues maintaining operations and personnel to continue and transition seamlessly through an evolving situation.



A1C Erin Zimpfer

Master Sgt. Amber Church

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She finished her shift at 6 a.m. on Sunday, April 5, 2020 and went home to her family. Three hours later, she got another call.

“When I hung up the phone, I just looked over at my husband and told him, ‘They want me to leave today,’” Gerritsen said. “He immediately said, ‘Let’s get you packed.’”

Her husband, Senior Master Sgt. Kiley Gerritsen, is no stranger to deployment. In the past, the couple has deployed together. This time, Kiley is staying home with their children.

“It’s always hard to say goodbye, but we just told them, ‘Hey kids, mom has to leave. But she’s going to help people and she’ll be back,’” Gerritsen said.

The team of seven, who affectionately and informally named themselves the “COVID Commandos” are working at Lincoln Medical

Center in Bronx, New York.

“This virus is an invisible war. We have a responsibility and a calling to step up,” said Col. Hans F. Otto, commander of the 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron and allergist, immunologist, and internist in the civilian sector.

As a commander, Otto said he was initially concerned that the individuals wouldn’t have sufficient time to make necessary financial, legal and medical arrangements prior to departure. He also has young children at home and a family to care for. As the pandemic unfolded, he had given his civilian employer an early warning that he may be tasked for duty, yet he was still caught off-guard.

“I communicated with my supervisor that we would know more in coming days or weeks, but then it ended up being days,” he said.

“Suddenly what had been a possibility became certainty.”

His employer, along with the other Airmen’s employers, were supportive and understanding, despite the abrupt departure.

“Two months ago, nobody could have predicted this. Yet the team already had their bags packed,” Otto said. “They didn’t know what might come up one day or where they might be needed, but they were ready for the call; we are always ready.”

“We know what it’s like to be tired and work long shifts. We know this is going to be hard work,” Otto said. “We’re ready to join the fight.”

This deployment is part of a larger mobilization of doctors, nurses and respiratory technicians from Air Force Reserve units across the nation provided to support COVID-19.



SPOTLIGHT



Courtesy Photo

Rank/Name: Tech. Sgt. Kristine Belcher

Unit: 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron

Duty Title: Aeromedical evacuation technician

Hometown: London, Ohio

Civilian Job: Emergency Room registered nurse at The Ohio State University and emergency medical technical (EMT) at Sterling Joint Ambulance District

Education: I received my Associate of Applied Science in nursing from

Clark State Community College and my Bachelor of Science in nursing from The Ohio State University. I'm currently working on my master's of science with a focus in Family Nurse Practitioner.

Hobbies: I enjoy camping, hiking and playing outside with my husband and two dogs.

Career Goal: I hope to one day work as a family nurse practitioner and commission in the Air Force as a flight nurse.

What you like about working at the 445th?: The camaraderie. It is one giant family with everyone willing to step up and help when an Airman is in need.

Why did you join the Air Force?: After losing a friend overseas, I wanted to help the men and women down range when they needed it most. I wanted to help our wounded warriors return home.

445th Security Forces train to maintain proficiency



Photos by Senior Airman Amelia Burnett

(left) Airmen from the 445th Security Forces Squadron participate in a training exercise at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, March 8, 2020. The Airmen started their morning with a ruck march, then split into four smaller squads and proceeded to different training drill stations. Throughout the morning they practiced everything from assessing the best places to establish vantage points to digging a fox hole in the frozen soil and filling sandbags to create a secure position.

(right) Senior Airman Krista Tungett and Staff Sgt. Kody Hildebrand from the 445th SFS, participate in a training exercise at Wright-Patterson AFB, March 8, 2020.



News Briefs

445th AW App



AF Connect

Get the 445th Airlift Wing app. Download the Air Force Connect app from the Google Play or Apple Store and search for and select the 445th.

Hit next to bring up the Air Force Connect page. Slide to the left and the 445 AW page will appear. For more information, call the public affairs office at 937-257-5784.

Awards

Air Force Meritorious Service Medal

Maj Erik Anderson, AMXS

Air Force Achievement Medal

Maj Ryan Wellman, 89 AS
TSgt Roselys Baugh, FSS
SrA Ashley Thacker, ASTS

Promotions

Senior Airman

Derek Reighard, AMXS
George Thomas, 87 APS

Staff Sergeant

Vanessa Faur, 50 IS
Alex Greene, 50 IS
Christopher Lewis, AMXS
Travis Miller, MXS
Scot Rowe, 820 IS
Tyler Stanley, 63 IS

Technical Sergeant

Nicholas Beatty, MXS
Breona Calvert, 50 IS
Stephen Jeffries, 655 ISRG
Jacob Longoria, 23 IS
Amy Mench, 63 IS
Melissa Sherman, AMDS
Justin Smith, 23 IS
Paul Wooley AMXS

Master Sergeant

Danielle Martinez, 23 IS

Senior Master Sergeant

Carrie Ruby, OSS

Retirements

May 2020

Maj Donald Miller, FSS
Maj Jason Vance, LRS
CMSgt David Howerton, 14 IS
MSgt Adam Yankush, 14 IS
TSgt Matthew Murrell, AMDS
TSgt Richard Ratliff, MXS
TSgt Jeffrey Stanforth, CES

Financial Management

The 445th Financial Management office is open and providing services. To promote social distancing, the services are not on a face-to-face basis.

For military pay questions, please call 937-257-4397 or email 445aw.payhelp@us.af.mil. For travel pay questions, please call 937-713-1607 or email 445FM.dtshelpdesk@us.af.mil.

Orders and other documents may be dropped in the box outside the FM office or emailed to the appropriate email address.

A&FR

The 445th Airman & Family Readiness Office is available to assist the community now and after this coronavirus pandemic ends. The office can provide information and referral services from many resources on base and in the local community. The primary service needed

during the coronavirus to be the for per-financial tance.

The A&FR office can provide points of contact with local resources to assist with mortgage/rent payments, utility bills, food, employment and budgeting limited income over a long period of time.

Please call 937-204-0335 or email: alvin.dennis@us.af.mil.



Captain promotions

Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center announced on April 4, 2020 those officers selected for promotion to captain.



There were 383 officers selected for promotion to captain.

The complete list is available on myPers and the ARPC website.

Congratulations to five 445th Airlift Wing officers selected for captain:

Olutola Banjoko, Devona Bithos and Megan King, 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron; Cecilia Photinos, 89th Airlift Squadron; and Benjamin Trick, 445th Aero-medical Staging Squadron.

For more information, call the Total Force Service Center at DSN 665-0102 or 210-565-0102.

Buckeye Flyer

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445th LRS selected for two AFRC awards

445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs



Air Force Reserve Command announced on March 31, 2020 the Air Force Reserve Command Logistics Readiness Unit, Individual Award winners and the Golden Derrick finalists and winners.

The unit awards recognize squadrons, depot units and any other major command organizations that have excelled in performance and made outstanding contributions to the Air Force and/or Department of Defense Logistics Readiness mission.

The 445th Logistics Readiness Squadron won the Daedalian Major General Warren R. Carter Logistics Effectiveness Award.

The 445th LRS managed the maintenance supply liaison program with 361 mission capable supplies and processed 770 due in for maintenance estimated at \$32.7 million and sustained 93 percent C-17 Globemaster III mission capable rate. The squadron manages the LRS vehicle operations flight with more than 70 vehicles in the fleet, \$3 million transferred assets and vehicles. LRS manages the Wing Support Agreement Program, \$2.6 million in reimbursable costs and fees identified and funding secured for the wing to be mission ready.

LRS Airmen manage \$2.6 million in uniforms, personal protective equipment and mobility equipment, supporting Airmen in 33 units and 11 geographically

separated units (GSUs). The unit uncovered counterfeit contract operations and were credited for recovering \$50 million recovered from the transportation management office flight.

LRS partnered with Germain Ford a car dealership, resulting in a higher number of hands-on vehicle maintenance training.

The individual awards recognizes individuals who excelled in performance and made outstanding contributions to the Air Force or DoD Logistics Readiness mission. The Outstanding Logistics Readiness CGO of the Year went to Capt. Phillip G. Sobers.

Capt. Sobers, 445th LRS deputy director of operations, managed 87 unit deployment managers and installation personnel readiness members and deployed 169 passengers through the Area of Responsibility with zero errors. He was a vital player for the readiness of two wings by supporting logistics, supply and transportation for 34 units, 12 geographically separated units, 799 unit type codes and 2, 583 passengers.



Sobers created a materiel management rotation plan resulting in 24 members updated in breadth, depth for four sections; increased readiness by 30 percent; meeting Chief of Staff of the Air Force revitalization vision. Sobers led an 18-man team supporting the Air Force Marathon by moving and organizing 96 pallets of supplies, 2,000 tables and chairs, and 100 signs to support 13,000 runners.

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