445th aeromedical evac techs train active-duty Airmen

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

Four aeromedical evacuation technicians from the 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron stepped up to provide critical support to the active duty U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine program, Sept. 14-16, 2020, helping ensure that mandatory training for new AETs could continue as scheduled. The AE Airmen each provided more than 30 hours of training.

The 445th Airlift Wing provides some routine equipment support to USAFSAM, which is a required follow-on training course for all new active duty, and many Reserve, flight nurses and flight medics before they can become fully qualified to fly AE missions.

“For the past couple of years, we have provided a C-17 aircraft for schoolhouse use about once a quarter,” said Col. Jay Smeltzer, commander, 445th Maintenance Group. “When they have a class getting ready to graduate, we take a plane over by their schoolhouse and ensure it is ready for their check flights.”

The aeromedical evacuation initial qualification course is approximately one month long.

“During the first portion of the schoolhouse, the emphasis is on the academic side of things. There are aspects of the job which can be taught through static training missions with model airframes,” said Master Sgt. Joseph Valenzuela, aeromedical evacuation examiner, 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron.

The schoolhouse, based at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio since 2013, has technologically-advanced model fuselages which very closely mirror real-world equipment and are useful in mock training missions, Valenzuela explained.

“Ground training provides opportunities to practice some of those skills,” he said, “but to become fully qualified in this career field, you have to get off the ground.”

To complicate matters, the in-flight portion of the training requires a 1:1 ratio of students to cadre.

“Every student must have an instructor with them while up in the air,” said Master Sgt. Nathan Hutchison, NCO in charge of aircrew training, 445th AES.

Hutchison has augmented the AE schoolhouse in the past, serving as a temporary instructor for more than a year, along with several other 445th AES members, when there was a cadre shortfall.

“Sometimes we can offer new insight or different perspectives, simply because of our real-world experience,” Hutchison said.
Keep it simple, trust your troops

By Lt. Col. Jason Bordas
445th Civil Engineer Squadron Commander

It’s human nature to overcomplicate things, and as an engineer, I’m guiltier than most in that regard. However, I’ve realized over the years that if you keep things simple and trust your troops, great things happen.

As an Air Force civil engineer, I’ve completed large projects within tight timelines. The best results have occurred when I broke down the overall effort into manageable chunks and assigned those I trust to complete each task.

You start with the goal (i.e., build a tent city), and you break it down into small, simple tasks with a deadline and a task leader which makes seemingly insurmountable projects easier to plan, schedule and deliver.

By visualizing your project/dilemma this way, you and your team can collaborate on defining tasks, the relationships between them, and the resources necessary to complete them.

I won’t say this solves every problem on a project, but once everyone sees the plan and the simple steps to get to the end, the work will flow much smoother and choke points/solutions are discovered in advance.

The key component of this work breakdown process is the people you assign to bring the task over the finish line.

You must trust your troops and their ability to get the job done. Trust is a tricky thing. Without trust, you spend too much time micromanaging and not enough mentoring and empowering your troops.

If the team sees trust bestowed from the commander to the task leader, they will trust that person is in charge of their crew or team. If the crews do not see the trust then productivity drops.

There is a good book by Charles Feltman on the subject called, The Thin Book of Trust: an Essential Primer for Building Trust at Work, which does a great job of explaining trust in the workplace. The book discusses how good work suffers from a breakdown in trust and creates an environment of frustration, resentment, and resignation.

According to Mr. Feltman, there are four dimensions of trust: sincerity, reliability, competence and care.

Sincerity is meaning what you say, saying what you mean, and acting accordingly. All leaders are under the microscope and it is critical that your actions align with your statements. If not, you lose credibility, lose trust, and unit performance will suffer.

The second element of trust is reliability. This is about keeping commitments and being able to deliver on your promises. If you are unsure of an order or task, request clarification before you commit. Once you make the commitment, you own it and the expectation is to finish it.

The third part of trust is competence or having the ability to do the task assigned. It doesn’t mean you’re the expert, it means you know what needs done and who to ask for help.

The final dimension of trust is care. This element puts everyone on the same page by realizing we’re all in this together. Essentially, understand how your actions or inactions will impact the desired outcome. Listen to others, seek feedback, and remind the team of the end goal. Realize that the decisions you make are not always the popular ones; however, they will understand why the decision was made.

Once you trust your troops, they feel empowered to make decisions freely without negative judgement and lead very effective teams.

Once you put simplicity and trust into practice, I’ve found your troops will move mountains to accomplish the mission.
(1) Staff Sgt. Jeremy Whitlow, 445th Security Forces Squadron combat arms instructor, identifies a target to Staff Sgt. Zachary Walker and Senior Airman Scott Araujo during a range training day, Aug. 17, 2020 at Fort Knox, Kentucky. The 445th SFS travels to this facility annually for heavy weapons training on numerous types of equipment, including the M240 machine gun and M249 light machine gun.

(2) Senior Airman Bradley Scheidt, 445th SFS combat arms instructor, looks over an M240 machine gun between firing sessions. To remain fully qualified in heavy weapons, security forces members must fire several hundred rounds through a variety of types of weapons on an annual basis.

(3) Senior Airman Jacob Beard (left) and Senior Airman Anthony Miller, both home station check (HSC) crew chiefs with the 445th Maintenance Squadron, prepare to replace a flap cone on a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft, Sept. 20, 2020 at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.


87 APS sharpens skills using the Halvorsen Loader

By Capt. Wilson Wise
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Reserve Citizen Airmen of the 87th Aerial Port Squadron’s Ramp Operations Section trained throughout the weekend, Sept. 18-19, 2020, on the Halvorsen Cargo Loader.

Also referred to as the Next Generation Small Loader (NGSL), the Halvorsen is a rapidly deployable, high-reach mechanized aircraft loader than can transport and lift up to 25,000 pounds of cargo and load it onto military and civilian aircraft.

“This type of hands-on specialized training is required to load the underbody of the aircraft. The Halvorsen provides the ability to quickly and safely load large amounts of cargo,” said Master Sgt. Jon Webber, 87th APS air transportation technician and load planner.

In addition to its ability to streamline cargo loading, the naming of the machine is a proud reflection of a central person in our Air Force’s heritage, Col. Gail Seymour “Hal” Halvorsen, whom the machine honors, will celebrate his 100th birthday in October of this year. As a lieutenant, he flew C-47 and C-54 cargo planes in the Berlin Airlift of 1948-1949. The airlift provided critical supplies to citizens of West Germany who had supply lines interrupted.

Unbeknownst to his supervisors, Halvorsen began to drop candy from miniature parachutes to German children on the ground. Known as “The Berlin Candy Bomber”, “Uncle Wiggly Wings”, and “The Chocolate Flier” Halverson dropped more than 23 tons of candy to children during the airlift and became a national hero for his efforts.

Like the Air Force colonel, the Halverson Cargo Loader has served our Air Force and our allies faithfully overseas. Capable of carrying three pallets at one time, the loader helps expedite cargo transport in less than ideal conditions.

“A few years ago in Kandahar (Air Force Base, Afghanistan) we had difficult load conditions. This vehicle’s ability to adapt to un-leveled surfaces and safely and quickly load cargo kept the mission humming,” said Webber.

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hood, assistant supervisor, Ramp Operations, led the training for a dozen Airmen who were being recertified or training for the first time on the loader.

“This group really soaked up all of the information I provided. I couldn’t be more proud of how well they did while training,” he said.

The Airmen are required to become trained at a rapid pace.

“It is really hard to believe that for most of them this is the first time they have ever driven this vehicle. I am extremely impressed,” Staff Sgt. Hood complimented.

Master Sgt. Webber agrees.

“Practice on our equipment is essential to ensure timely loads. These Airmen are dedicated to success and take pride in their work. The rate at which our Airmen can learn and retain new information to make our mission run safely and efficiently testifies to the quality of people we have at the 445th,” he said.
445th CES Airmen battle wildfires, train in Texas

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

Six Airmen from the 445th Civil Engineer Squadron had a hand in battling a wildland blaze that burned more than 80 acres on Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, Aug. 25, 2020.

“I was on the first engine company to arrive on scene,” said Senior Airman Ryan Guenther, fire prevention journeyman, 445th CES. “We chased it into the woods and did our best to contain it until mutual aid arrived.”

At one point, the base’s family camp area lay only a couple hundred yards away, and recreational vehicles were within the firefighters’ sight.

“Texas is so dry the wind carries the fire across the grass rapidly,” Guenther said. “In this case, it moved across the grass and into a wooded area.”

To mitigate the spread, emergency responders from a number of agencies, including Texas A&M Forest Service, used heavy machinery to dig barrier trenches and remove underbrush from the fire’s path.

“We, collectively, were out there for a long time,” said Airman 1st Class Zane Standridge, fire prevention apprentice, 445th CES. “Once we were able to establish control lines and Guenther ran a handline, we got it ahead of it and finally could stop it from going further.”

The Reserve Citizen Airmen were working with the active duty fire department at Dyess as part of their two-week annual tour requirement. Guenther and Standridge were both on shift at the time, while the other four 445th members were off-duty but were then recalled to the fire station to provide support in battling the blaze.

“The cloud of smoke was visible all the way across the base,” Standridge said.

Both Guenther and Standridge work as firefighters for community departments when they are not in military status.

“At all, it took us about six hours to extinguish the fire, and then we continued to return to the site and monitor it for flare-ups for 24 hours,” Guenther said.

Weather conditions have exacerbated wildfires across the western half of the United States, and in Texas, the wind led to several flare-ups throughout the night and into the next day.

“At one point the flames reignited in the same area and it took us about 20 minutes to extinguish it again,” Standridge said.

The fire was officially declared extinguished the following evening, 26 hours after initially reported, and the base did not suffer any lasting damage.

A total of 12 firefighters from 445th CES completed training at Dyess AFB Aug. 17-31 and Sept. 7-21, 2020. The annual live fire training consisted of using handlines and Aircraft Rescue Firefighting vehicles to successively extinguish training fires resulting from a simulated large frame aircraft emergency. Dyess AFB has one of the few existing fossil fuel (no propane) training pits left in existence. Fossil fuel, such as JP-8, fires are much more realistic and provide firefighters with better training scenarios.

in-flight emergency.

“The intention behind this schoolhouse is to teach AET students, from the ground up, how to configure and then function within the aircraft,” said Tech. Sgt. Nickolaus Burns, 445th AES flight instructor.

While some AE technicians from the Guard and Reserve components attend the schoolhouse, others receive the training in-house with their squadrons.

“When you go out to fly real sorties, you may end up flying with other units from the Guard or active duty, so it’s important that everyone is on the same page,” said Tech. Sgt. Kristine Martin, 445th AES flight instructor. “I didn’t attend this schoolhouse for my initial training, but I still learned those skills through training with my unit, and now I can pass that knowledge on to the newest batch of AET’s.”

The four 445th AES flight instructors spent three days augmenting the cadre at the schoolhouse, and there is a possibility the squadron may provide more cadre support in the future.

“These aren’t tasks that we have to do; it’s a cooperative effort. They need help, and we can provide it, so we do,” Smeltzer said.
Yellow Ribbon Program changes announced

By Tech. Sgt. Stephanie Blevins
445th Airlift Wing Yellow Ribbon Representative

This has been an unusual year for all to include the Yellow Ribbon Program. Before I discuss changes, I want to give you a brief background on the Yellow Ribbon Program.

The Yellow Ribbon Program is designed to help educate Airmen, families and friends on potential and immediate problems while providing you with resources that you may not have been aware are available to you. Overall, the program prepares you and your family for deployment as well as reintegrating you when you return. These events typically occur every month on a Friday through Sunday.

You and your guests are put on orders to attend the event. Flights are booked centrally at no cost to the guest. Meals are reimbursed up to the allotted amount depending on location. The hotel is reimbursed for the event dates through your voucher submittal.

As a pre-deployer, you are eligible to attend one event 120 days prior to your deployment orders beginning. As a post-deployer, you are eligible for one year after your deployment order ends to attend two events.

Yellow Ribbon changes
Eligibility changes: All Air Force Reservists who have been called to active duty in support of a deployment (active duty tour supporting contingency operations, deployment (i.e., theater security operations, humanitarian missions, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff exercises (CJCS) orders) for 90 days or an accumulation of 90 days or more during a 24-month period, resulting in 50 percent or more separation from their support systems. If you need help determining if you are eligible, please email me.

Pre-deployers: As we progress through 2020, we have looked into conducting virtual events for pre-deployers. If you would be interested in attending a virtual event, please let me know, and I can work on setting this up while coordinating with other bases. You still must be within your eligibility window of 120 days prior to your deployment order beginning.

Post-deployers: There is a waiver in place for all post-deployers to have the opportunity to attend their two events past the one year requirement. If you were eligible to attend an event in March of 2020, you are eligible for a waiver. If you aren’t sure if you were eligible you can reach out to me.

The year ahead is still unpredictable. We are planning for November and December events in Orlando, Florida in hopes that we do not have to cancel.

If you need help connecting with resources, please reach out to me and I will help you. I can be reached at stephanie.blevins@us.af.mil or 937-424-6559 (cell).
## Awards

**Meritorious Service Medal**
Lt Col Keith Larson, AES

**Air Force Commendation Medal**
Capt Abdeel Roman, MXS
CM Sgt Bryan Cepluch, SFS
TSgt Benjamin Anspaugh, AMXS

## Community resources for upcoming season

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

Fall is upon us and before too long winter. During these times, connection and support are important. During this time of year, feelings of stress, grief/loss or loneliness reach a peak. While resources may not solve any of the aforementioned feelings there are tools that are good to have when or if you need them.

**Counseling Resources**
- Employee Assistance Program (Civilians & ARTs): (866)588-9078 www.afpc.af.mil/eap
- Military & Family Life Consultants 937-972-1054
- Military One Source: 800-342-9647
- Vet Center: 877-927-8387

**Financial/Employment Resources**
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services: 877-852-0010; www.jfs.ohio.gov
- Ohio Means Jobs: www.ohiomeansjobs.com
- United Way VETSLINK (Veteran Resources): 211 or 937-225-3001; www.dayton-unitedway.org
- Salvation Army: 800-728-7825; www.salvationarmyusa.org
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- Salvation Army: 800-728-7825; www.salvationarmyusa.org

**Connection and Grief Resources**
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS): 800-959-8277; www.taps.org
- Operation HomeFront (Various Resources): (877) 264-3968; www.operationhomefront.org
- Crisis Line: 800-273-8255 or text 741741

This time of year can be tough for many but you don’t have to face it alone. Please reach out to those that support you and bring you comfort. Need support and not sure who to call. Call me at 937-701-1124.
Members of the 445th Airlift Wing received a visit from the highest ranking enlisted member of 4th Air Force Sept. 11-13, 2020.

Command Chief Master Sergeant Cynthia Villa came to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base to meet 445th Airmen and leadership.

The chief visited every squadron during the three-day visit and spoke about the numbered Air Force (NAF) leadership’s mission to “Command, Advocate and Ready the Force.” The 4th Air Force is the largest NAF in Air Force Reserve Command, with more than 35,000 members.

Chief Villa also stressed the importance of open communication with leadership. She has an open door policy and believes the Wingman concept should be a normal part of life. She also emphasized her passion for Airmen development.

Saturday morning, the command chief had the opportunity to connect with 10 “rising six” Airmen from various squadrons ranked E-6 and below at a breakfast in the wing headquarters building. Exemplifying her passion, she shared some words of wisdom with the group, “Set yourselves up for success because the opportunities will come,” said Villa. “Shoot for the stars and let your work ethic speak for itself.”

Villa emphasized that she is a product of great mentorship and more than one second chance. Her words inspired the Airmen around the wing at a time when so many are being faced with multiple challenges.

The visit was not just for morale, the command chief also solicited feedback from each squadron to see what, if any, problems existed that 4th Air Force leadership could assist with. She wanted to get a pulse on the organization and gathered the information to take back to Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Pennington, 4th Air Force commander and other key leaders.

“We are one team, no seam. And there is a solution to every obstacle and one can always find a way to yes,” the chief said.