

445th medical units provide health care to Georgia residents Total Force members provide nearly \$1 million in medical care

*By Senior Airman Erin Zimpfer
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs*

More than 160 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines arrived in Georgia June 6 for the 2021 East Central Georgia Medical Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) with a mission to provide no cost health care services to four counties in rural Georgia.

The teams provided 10 days of medical exams; dental services including exams, fillings and extractions; eye care services consisting of screenings, prescriptions, and single vision eyeglass fabrication; and veterinary services including screenings, dental exams, vaccines, and spays and neuters for small animals.

The team performed 30,587 medical procedures for 1,561 patients. The estimated fair market medical value of the care was \$858,869.

The Georgia event was part of a Department of Defense initiative. The Innovative Readiness Training delivers joint training opportunities to increase deployment readiness, approved by a team from the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The scope of these readiness trainings for reservists and guardsmen includes health care, construction, cybersecurity, and transportation.

The IRT mission in east central Georgia provided hands-on training to Reserve and National Guard

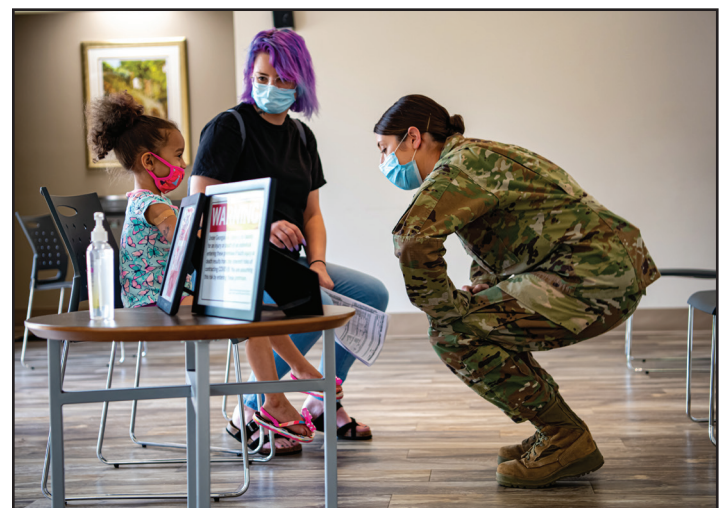
medical and medical support personnel, while simultaneously providing valuable services to the communities. The event yielded 14,019 training hours for the military members.

"A lot of us need our proficiencies maintained and it is a great way for us to achieve that, while serving the community," said U.S. Air Force Reserve Maj. Kim Ebel, mission officer in charge, 445th Aeromedical Staging Squadron.

Approximately 18 medical and support personnel from the 445th ASTS, Aeromedical Evacuation and Aerospace Medicine Squadrons, and Airlift Wing participated in the IRT. The training mission was filled with doctors, nurses, optometrists, dentists, veterinarians and the many 'behind the scenes' positions it takes to support these fields. While their roles are diverse, the joint services group, both enlisted and officers, all share common goals – honing their individual skills, being part of a team, and serving the people of the community.

Accomplishing the training in concert with commu-

— See *HEALTH CARE*, page 5



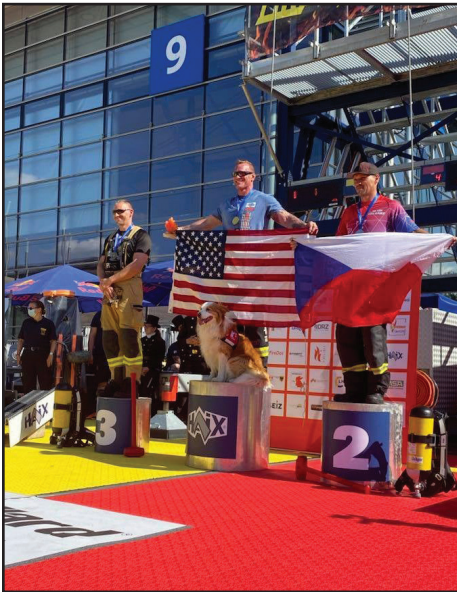
Photos by Master Sgt. Patrick O'Reilly

(left) Capt. Adam Fannin, 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron optometrist, assesses a patient at Jenkins County High School, Georgia as part of East Central Georgia Medical Innovative Readiness Training, June 9, 2021.

(right) Tech. Sgt. Caitlin Donnelly, 445th Aeromedical Staging Squadron medical technician, talks to a young patient prior to receiving care at Hancock County Health Department, Hancock, Georgia, June 10, 2021. The IRT mission provided no-cost health services and opportunities for military medical, engineering, and support personnel to receive training while making an impact in local communities throughout the state of Georgia.

445th firefighter earns world champion title for 2nd time

By Capt. Rachel Ingram
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs



Photos by Capt. Rachel Ingram

(left) Master Sgt. Sean Sullivan, 445th Civil Engineer firefighter, takes to the podium at the FireFit Europe Championships in Hannover, Germany, representing the United States with a first-place win in the over-40 age category, June 20, 2021. (center) Sullivan sprays a charged fire hose at a target before moving on to the next component of the race. (right) The CES assistant chief of training puts on gear before competing, June 20, 2021.

Sean Sullivan, a 445th Civil Engineer Squadron firefighter, secured first place in the over-40 age category at the FireFit Europe Championships in Hannover, Germany, amid sweltering heat June 20, 2021.

The multinational competition started with 400 pre-qualification contenders at the beginning of the week. By the final rounds on Saturday and Sunday, 120 competitors were still in the running. On Sunday evening, Sullivan was named the fittest firefighter in his age category, and he placed eighth overall.

Following his performance in the 2019 FireFit World Championships in Oshawa, Canada, Sullivan received an invitation to compete in the FireFit Europe Championships, originally scheduled for summer 2020, but postponed due to COVID-19.

He and his wife, MJ Sullivan, travelled more than 4,000 miles from their home in Frankfort, Kentucky, for the championship competition, which was open to adult firefighters from around the world. While nations like the Czech Republic, Germany, Iran and Poland sent full teams to compete in the obstacle course-style race, Sullivan was the only competitor to travel from the United States for the event.

FireFit competitions are standardized to feature five flights of stairs, which competitors climb while carrying a 45-pound hose pack. Once there, they hoist a 45-pound rolled hose to the top of the tower, by hand, from the ground below. Then they run back down the steps, pick up a sledgehammer and use it against a

weighted block until it moves to its designated position, simulating forcible entry in an emergency situation, Sullivan explained. Next, the competitors sprint about 40 yards, navigating around fire hydrants, drag a charged hose, and spray it at a target. The last element involves dragging a 175-pound, 6-foot victim simulator 100 feet backwards across the finish line.

The entire course must be completed in full protective equipment, including an oxygen tank and mask.

The most competitive firefighters in the world complete this course in just over one minute.

The inaugural FireFit competition occurred in Canada in 1994, following a few years behind the 3M Scott Firefighter Combat Challenge. Sullivan regularly competes in iterations of both competitions, which he says are only slightly nuanced. Both emphasize real, technical skills routinely employed by professional firefighters.

"My original goal was just to improve," said the now 47-year-old, who became a firefighter in the Air Force Reserve in 1994 as part of the 445th CES. A few years later, he also joined Frankfort Fire Department in Kentucky.

He first began competing in firefighter challenges in 2007, completing a few races that year.

"I was terrible," he said, "and I didn't like that. I was exhausted by the time I got to the top of the tower, and

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Meet your wing Yellow Ribbon rep



Master Sgt. Angela Potchik is the new point of contact for the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. Potchik is a long-time member of the 445th Airlift Wing and 445th Maintenance Group commander support staff superintendent.

She volunteered for the extended tour to lead the newly revised program and implemented new changes to the program.

The Yellow Ribbon Program is designed to help educate Airmen, families and friends on potential and immediate problems and provide resources.

Overall, the program prepares Airmen and families for deployment as well as reintegration upon return.

The events typically occur every month. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Potchik modified the curriculum to provide a virtual course for outgoing Airmen.

"This vital program promotes the well-being of the Reservist and their loved ones by connecting them with the vital resources they will need before and after their deployments. Most deployments are stressful enough and Airmen shouldn't have to stress over how to handle financial, legal or interpersonal matters while preparing to deploy," said Potchik.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program began in 2008, following a Congressional mandate by the Department of Defense to assist Reserve and National Guard members in maintaining resiliency as they transition between their military and civilian roles. Each member is eligible for one pre-deployment and two post deployment events. Members are eligible 120 days prior and must have a deployment date.

Airmen and their 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 cost is reimbursed for the event dates through voucher submittal.

Potchik said pre-COVID members had one year to complete post one and two. However it has been extended to two years from last March 2020 to June 2021.

During the COVID pandemic, all in-person events were cancelled. In-person events are set to begin in July. The event spans over three days over a weekend, starting on Friday night and ending on a Sunday afternoon. Members will attend lectures, breakout sessions and other informational events throughout the weekend, but they also have time to explore the city as well.

"There are three reasons why you should attend a Yellow Ribbon Event as a Reserve family. One, you may not feel like you are part of the military, attending an event will help the family receive step-by-step information about the deployment cycle. Attending an event is about reducing the stress in and out of each phase of the deployment.

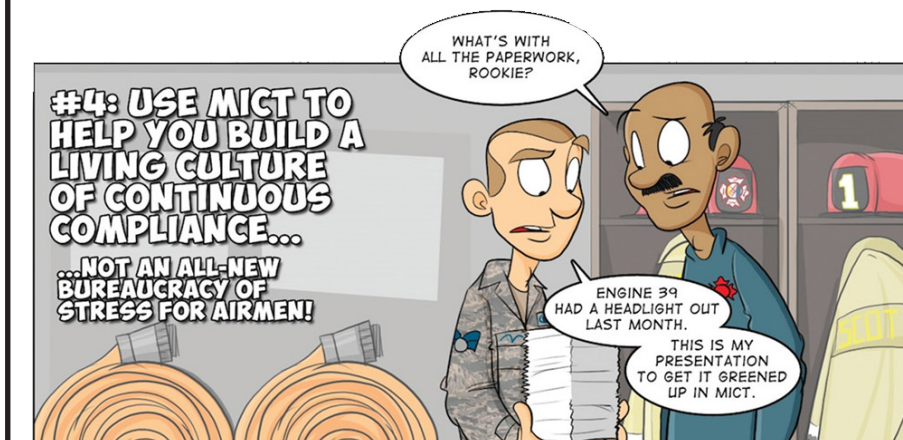
"Two, Yellow Ribbon events are great places to meet other military families. You will be able to meet other families that you may have something in common with. It is also important to connect with others who share the same experiences.

"Three, Yellow Ribbon events provide numerous resources from federal, state and local levels. They all are there to support your family every step of the way before and after the deployment," Potchik said.

In closing, Potchik has expressed excitement about her new role and looks forward to serving the 445th deployers and their loved ones.

"If you are a pre-deployer or a post-deployer and you are not on my distro email list that I send out monthly or you have eligibility, please reach out to me at angela.potchik@us.af.mil or 937-257-0381 and I would be more than happy to add you."

445th AW Inspector General Tidbits



How does AFIS work?

AFIS uses Risk Based Sampling Strategies to identify potential areas of concern. It also uses complimentary inspections (Horizontal, Vertical, By-Law and Readiness) for maximum effectiveness.

Why do we need AFIS?

AFIS is designed to continuously improve the inspection construct so there is an ever-shrinking difference between mission readiness and inspection readiness. It allows Airmen and commanders to focus on the mission, not on the inspection.



Around the world in 5 days, cargo flown to multiple time zones

By Ms. Stacy Vaughn

445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

A 445th Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster III aircrew recently earned several stamps in their passports when they participated in a contingency mission that took them around the world in five days.

Over the course of five days that began May 19, 2021 and accrued 60 hours of flying time, the C-17 and its aircrew visited and transited military bases and locales to include Creech Air Force Base, Nevada; Portsmouth International Airport at Pease, New Hampshire; Ramstein Air Base, Germany; Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar; Naval Support Facility Diego-Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory; Kadena Air Base, Japan; Andersen AFB, Guam; Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii; Barksdale AFB, Louisiana; and back home to Wright-Patterson AFB.

The trip was broken up into two missions. The first mission transported unmanned aerial vehicles to Southwest Asia and the second mission transported ground equipment to Barksdale.

Maj. Cassidy Helregel, 89th Airlift Squadron C-17 pilot, said the trip was unique and appreciated the support at each location that made for a smooth transition at each stop along the way.

"It was amazing how all this came together. Each stop along the way had to be just right to keep going and the support was phenomenal," Helregel said.

The aircrew flew across all time zones and the in-

ternational date line.

"When we'd fly to the west, we were chasing the sun. We actually saw the sunset for 8 hours. Also there was a time when you'd see the sunrise then set then rise then set, etc." Helregel said.

Helregel said toward the end of the trip, it was like he was reliving another day.

"It was Sunday in Japan then at our next location, we went backwards in time to Saturday the day before!"

Part of the aircrew included a flying crew chief (FCC) from the 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. The FCC is responsible for the overall airworthiness of an aircraft while out in the system and are responsible for all servicing required while out on the road.

Master Sgt. Rodney McElfresh, 445th AMXS propulsion element chief, is a former flying crew chief with his fair share of stories of flying such a mission Helregel was on.

"On a mission like this, working with other military members is mostly the same as if you were at home station. There are various differences in some of the verbiage between the Air Force and sister branches and the equipment can be a bit frustrating as theirs is designed for different kinds of aircraft," said McElfresh. "The same can be said if in a foreign country; the equipment may be different and also the language barrier is often an obstacle to overcome."



Photos by Maj. Cassidy Helregel



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nity partnerships is another unique aspect of the IRT. This Georgia mission was sponsored by the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission, a non-profit planning and development agency based in Augusta. CSRA-RC applied to the program after having successfully cooperated with IRT in 2019.



An Army Reserve veterinarian performs sterilization surgery at the Warren County Career Academy, Hancock, Georgia, June 17, 2021.

The community partners welcomed the military medical services and the four counties where the clinics were located were grateful, because these communities are separated from larger cities making it difficult to access health care.

Georgia Sen. Max Burns, 23rd District, visited the Jenkins County location to tour the operations and expressed his gratitude to those who came to the district to improve the quality of life for the residents.

"This is a unique and challenging community. This is a rural area of Georgia that is dramatically underserved," said Burns. "We have a population that often does not get the medical support that they need, either through lack of education, or knowledge, or opportunity. We try hard to provide health services access to our top tier medical capacity in the state. We have some great ones in Augusta, Savannah, Macon and Atlanta, but sometimes when you're out in the rural areas you don't have access to them."

Ebel, who participated in an IRT in 2018, felt called to lead a mission and applied for the position. The officer in charge has a lot of passion for helping people and it shines through in the tireless way she serves.

"We love it," she said, "We are just so happy to be

here and serve the community. It's very rewarding."

Regardless of planning efforts, it is essential to be resilient in the face of adversity as obstacles to mission execution arise, as no amount of planning can totally eliminate unforeseen events. This mission was no exception. From shipments of equipment not arriving as scheduled, to manning dropouts, flat tires, water advisories in the area, being able to roll with the punches is a sign of great leadership and another training benefit of a real life mission.

"As a team we have been able to adapt on a dime and make sure the mission happens in spite of all the hiccups," said Ebel. "At the end of the mission, it actually feels even more satisfying knowing that everyone here went above and beyond, and rose to the occasion when called upon, that is what matters."

Planning, overcoming the obstacles, and mission execution are all a big part of the training for the officers selected to be in charge of the mission. In addition to the applicable job and leadership training, all of the participating service members also received the DOD's new Tactical Combat Casualty Care training, or TCCC.

The course introduces life-saving techniques more applicable to the situations faced by the joint services in the new deployed environment. The training team also planned useful and practical professional development training opportunities for all of the service members, such as bullet writing, completing performance reports and using the Defense Travel System.

With all of the diverse training, real world impact and benefit to the community, Ebel said she believes that everyone who has the opportunity to participate in an IRT should do so.

"It's life changing," she added.



Photos by Master Sgt. Patrick O'Reilly

Maj. Michelle Setliff, 445th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, and Lt. Col. Amelia Morgan, 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, apply a tourniquet to a training dummy during Tactical Combat Casualty Care training at Burke County High School, June 8, 2021.



SPOTLIGHT



Rank/Name: Master Sgt. Zachary Loechler

Unit: 87th Aerial Port Squadron

Duty Title: Air Transportation Craftsman, 87 APS Safety and Security Manager

Hometown: New Albany, Ohio

Civilian Job: Lyft Inc. - General Liability Claims Advocate

Education: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Otterbein University

Hobbies: Spending time with family and friends, coaching youth baseball and playing guitar/singing.

Career Goal: I want to complete my Community College of the Air

Force degree and Senior NCO professional military education, while continuing to lead and mentor our next generation of Airmen.

What do you like about working at the 445th?: The people. The men and women in uniform who push and mentor you to be better. The wingman who is there to celebrate with you, to listen and lift you up. It's the people.

Why did you join the Air Force?: I joined to serve others and to serve a mission that is bigger than myself. I identify most with the Service Before Self core value and strive to live within that framework everyday.

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that part is at the beginning of the course."

While the FireFit competition is a visibly physical challenge, it's also a mental feat, Sullivan noted.

"Early on, I would have these thoughts mid-race where I was questioning whether to even continue," he recalled. "I felt like I had failed—physically and mentally."

Despite this, Sullivan continued registering for firefighter competitions, and he's competed in nearly 80 such events, in a wide range of states and countries, since 2007.

At the beginning of his competitive career, his goals included bringing his course run-time to sub-2:30. Later, he set his sights on winning a medal in any category.

"Each time I reached a goal, I adjusted and set a new one," Sullivan said. "I don't want to ever stop moving forward, or to stop living life."

He credits his family with motivating him to be his best, in all aspects. He retired from the Frankfort FD in 2017, after 20 years of service to the agency, so that he could spend more time with his three children, Jaiden, Kaleb and Maddie.

"That's my fuel," he said, noting that when it comes to scheduling potential training and competition

opportunities, family time always comes first. "It matters more to me what my kids think of me than any other person on this planet."

As part of his professional-development and self-improvement strategy, he trains with current Combat Challenge individual world champion, Jared Johnson, who lives in Austin, Texas.

"We touch base every week," emphasized Sullivan, who serves as the assistant chief of training in the 445th CES.

Sullivan said his coach, Johnson, provides nutrition tips, tailored workouts to accommodate previous injuries and goal-setting assistance, along with general mentorship.

"He helps me spot my weaknesses and pinpoint the areas I need to improve on, because I won't always see that for myself," he said. "It's priceless to have somebody else who can see those things and will tell me."

This concept of mentorship extends to fellow course competitors as well.

"You race against the same people at various competitions throughout the years, and you get to know them," Sullivan said.

Despite the fact that, on the

course, the other firefighters are Sullivan's direct competitors, the spirit of camaraderie is what initially drew Sullivan to the competition.

"Yes, we're trying to win, but more than that, we're sharing best practices and motivating each other to improve," he said.

In the fire service, performance and efficiency translate to lives saved and mishaps prevented. Through firefighter fitness challenges like these, agencies across the world can share and learn, ultimately benefiting the communities they serve.

His dedication and ambition were recognized by his state's governor, as well as local media outlets on site at the FireFit Europe Championships. Gov. Andy Beshear officially named Sullivan a Kentucky Colonel in May.

"Next up, I'm training for the Firefighter Combat Challenge's 30 year anniversary competition next month in Bismarck, North Dakota," he said.

As for Sullivan's early goal of running a sub-2:30 course completion? His official run-time at the European finals on June 20 was 1:29.46.



News Briefs

Retirements

Lt Col Eduard Bonser, 445 AES
Capt Scott Madden, MXG
CMSgt Joseph Gough, 89 AS
SMSgt Victoria Errett, MXG

Promotions

Senior Master Sergeant
Sean Schluter, MSG

Master Sergeant
Misty Mayes, AW
Anthony Minor, CES
Michael Scinto, OSS

Technical Sergeant
Zachary Allen, 89 AS
Michael Bailey, CES
Nicholas Berardi, AMXS
Wendy Glover, LRS
Jarell Davis, ASTS
Steven Dishong, MXS
Mackenzie Logan, LRS
Andrew Wolf, MXS

Staff Sergeant
Matthew Colonna, 87 APS

Christopher Davis, OSS
Brianna Eveland, FSS
Nadene Giannolous, MXG
Alissa Gibbs, ASTS
David Hinerman, OSS
Bryce Phelps, 87 APS
Terrence Raglin, 89 AS
Dalton Wagoner, 87 APS
Nicholas Whiting, MXS

Senior Airman
Quinn Creager, AMDS
Esa Edwards, AES
Spencer Mullins, AMXS
Samantha Schinker, MXG
Christopher Snider, AMXS
Haylee Strack, SFS

Airman 1st Class
Daniel Clickovich, AES
Jenna Gassawaysteere, AMXS

Awards

Air Force Commendation Medal
TSgt Matthew Card, MXS
TSgt Jimmy Scardo, AMXS

Air Force Achievement Medal

TSgt Anthony Anderson, MXS
TSgt Steven Dishong, MXS
TSgt Douglas Pinkerton, MXS
SSgt Devin Crider, MXS
SSgt Dominic Fredo, MXS
SSgt Joshua Glass, MXS
SSgt Dustin Swift, MXS
SSgt Hai Zhu, MXS
SrA Michael Cage, MXS

Newcomers

Capt Joshua Coffman, AMXS
Capt Andrew Huellemeier, OSS
1 Lt Amanda Jones, ASTS
2 Lt Kevin Markiewicz, AES
TSgt Holly Knox, OSS
SSgt Luke Albritton, CES
SSgt Ryan Davis, AMXS
SSgt Ethan Martinez, AMXS
SSgt Taylor Stover, AMDS

SrA Jacob Bennett, OSS
SrA Sarah Maher, OSS
SrA Charles Reano, FSS
SrA Raymond Rowland, 87 APS
A1C Alan Fierro, MXS
A1C Carter Kelly, AMXS
A1C Spencer Mullins, AMXS
A1C Grant Reigelsperger, AMXS
A1C Michael Torres, AMXS

Buckeye Flyer

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Around the wing...



Capt. Wilson Wise



Senior Airman Angela Jackson

(left) Master Sgt. Shawn McKellop, 445th Airlift Wing Inspector General Inspections, inspections coordinator, teaches the 445th Development and Training Flight marching maneuvers, June 13, 2021. (right) Col. Raymond A. Smith Jr., 445th Airlift Wing commander, passes the guidon to Lt. Col. Edward W. Hale, III, incoming 445th Maintenance Group commander, during the 445th MXG Assumption of Command ceremony, June 6, 2021.



D&TF prepares future Airmen for service

By Capt. Wilson Wise
445th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Have you ever wondered what happens to Airmen after being recruited and before they enter basic military training? New incoming Airmen to the 445th Airlift Wing have the opportunity to develop their skills in the Development and Training Flight (D&TF).



Sisters Katherine and Olivia Pietras

The mission of the D&TF is to mentally and physically prepare Air Force Reserve trainees for the transition from civilian to military life. The flight provides structured academic and physical training programs during the period of time from enlistment through departure to formal training schools for non-prior service members. It is similar to a delayed entry program for active-duty personnel.

The program falls under the

purview of the 445th AW command chief, Chief Master Sgt. Christopher Williams, and is run by Staff Sgt. Paula Newman, 445th Security Forces Squadron.

"We have found that our trainees are better prepared for basic training after going through the program. We've had several distinguished graduates at BMT from the 445th," Newman said.

Newman relies on others in the wing to lend a hand in the training process. Master Sgt. Shawn McKellop, inspections coordinator with the Inspector General's office, is a former military training instructor and honor guard leader and works with the flight on marching maneuvers.

"When I returned to the 445th in 2014, there was an opportunity to assist with the development flight. I have enjoyed working with them over the last seven plus years and will continue to do so as long as they will have me," McKellop said.

Newman lauds her colleague. "Sergeant McKellop's assistance with the trainees is top-notch. You can see the level of respect our trainees have for his leadership and we are fortunate to have his help in the program," she said.

The current flight is unique in that there are two sets of siblings in the program. Twin brothers Kehinde and Taiwo Olaware moved to

America from Nigeria in 2018 and are both college students at Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis. They will be the first in their family to serve in the military. Kehinde will serve in the force support squadron and Taiwo in the civil engineer squadron.



Twins Taiwo and Kehinde Olaware

Sisters Olivia and Katherine Pietras are originally from Wheaton, Illinois. Their father was in the Army and encouraged them to consider military service. Both sisters will serve in the aeromedical staging squadron. "We are excited about our chance to serve here in the future," the sisters said.

The program demonstrates the flexibility of the 445th and its people to carry on the mission of adding excellent Airmen to the 445th family.

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