

Pinned

Golf tournament

Foster families

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing

**Wing fine-tunes
ORI preparations**

Post-9/11 G.I. Bill

Basic values

*Commentary by Lt. Col. Dwayne McCullion
39th Civil Engineer Squadron commander*

INCIRLIK AIR BASE, Turkey (AFNS) -- Making a difference in today's world starts with you.

It doesn't matter if you are an airman basic, general officer, retiree or family member, it starts from a simple desire to treat people the way you would like to be treated.

It's as easy as actions like sharing, putting things back where you found them, saying you're sorry, picking up a piece of trash or holding the door open for someone.

It is easy to get caught up in all of our daily activities and forget these little things. We all learned these basic rules in grade school, but sometimes we forget to apply these in our daily lives.

Your core values play a big role in how you conduct daily activities. These personal values are generally developed from different experiences you have had throughout life. Most of your values can be traced back to your parent's teachings.

Other values have been influenced by friends, teachers, church or the neighborhood you grew up in. These values guide us in daily activities and help us determine the difference between right and wrong. Core values contribute greatly to your overall attitude and behavior. It is important to instill these values early in life and continue to reinforce them as we get older.

Because your values have a significant impact on your attitude, they affect the way you look at the world and how you interact with the people around you. Waking up with a good attitude is the most important part of your day. It will set your course and determine how you will handle difficult situations you face.

Your attitude can also affect and influence the people around you. You know the old saying, "One bad apple can spoil the bunch." This is very true when it comes to attitude. Keeping a positive attitude will help you overcome most obstacles you face.

Your daily behavior and actions are other important aspects of your personality. Our society puts a fancy title on this like "integrity," but it's as simple as doing the right thing when nobody is looking. If you are seen working hard and giving your all in everything you do, others will notice and want to emulate your actions.

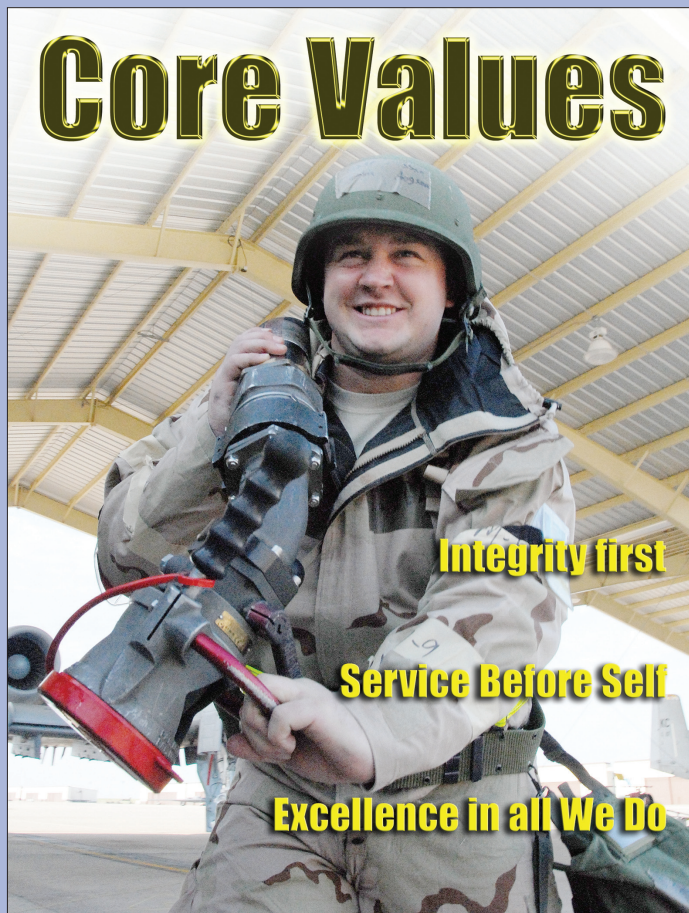


PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

Staff Sgt. Jordan Aggson, 442nd Logistics Readiness Squadron, finishes a refueling operation.

A great example of this was observed while President Ronald Reagan was hospitalized from the assassination attempt on his life. Hospital staff spotted him getting out of bed and wiping up spilled water from the floor because he didn't want his nurse to get in trouble. It's this type of behavior that instills confidence and respect in your abilities.

In closing, your values, attitude and behavior will empower you to make a difference each and every day. Start each day with a good attitude and the desire to make those little impacts in the lives around you. Don't forget all the little things you learned in kindergarten. Strive to be that person that says "Thank you. You are welcome. Or I'm sorry." Do your best and always look for an opportunity to help others. Others will follow your lead!

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing

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September 2009
Charge-of-quarters



MASTER SGT. BLAINE EDWARDS
442ND CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON
Call the CQ from on-base at 99-1 (660) 238-7428.
From a local off-base number (i.e., Concordia,
Warrensburg, Sedalia etc.), dial (660) 238-7428. To
call toll free from off-base, dial (800) 260-0253 and
press seven after the prompt.

COVER PHOTO: Tech. Sgt. Piotr Cymer helps Senior Airman Adam Riegle, both 442nd Maintenance Squadron members, through a decontamination station during an exercise held in preparation for the Wing's upcoming Operational Readiness Inspection. For more on this and related activities see pages six and seven. (Photo by Master Sgt. Bill Huntington)

MOHAWK

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T 442nd Fighter Wing Tip of the Spear

TECH. SGT. KAREN HAHN
442ND MEDICAL SQUADRON

Tech. Sgt. Karen Hahn is a 442nd Medical Squadron medical technician and the NCOIC of that squadron's life support section. She also supervises the Reserve component physical health assessment program. Sergeant Hahn is the wing's profile director and ensures the process is maintained and efficiently operated to maximize the worldwide duty status of wing personnel.

Sergeant Hahn was instrumental in streamlining the physical examination process and she implemented transfer of programs in physical exams to provide shorter wait times and mission completion. She was a key player in acquiring more than 90 percent immunization readiness for the wing. She is instrumental in completion and certification of medical staff for emergency medical technician requirements. At the same time, Sergeant Hahn received a score of "excellent" during the last health services inspection.

While not on duty, Sergeant Hahn is an emergency medical technician for the Wabash General Hospital in Wabash, Ill. She maintains Firefighter One and Two certification and serves as an instructor on the subjects of hazardous materials, advanced cardiac life support, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, emergency medical technician, pediatric advanced life support and pre-hospital trauma life support.

Pinned



PHOTO BY MAJ. DAVID KURLE

Two 442nd Fighter Wing officers recently pinned on their new rank, one for the first time and one for the fifth time.

Above: Lt. Col. Jeff Morris, 442nd Fighter Wing staff judge advocate, stands in front of a Minuteman II missile on static display at Whiteman Air Force Base, Aug. 1, as his parents, Calvin and Margie Morris, pin on his lieutenant colonel insignia to mark his recent promotion. The Minuteman missile has special significance for Colonel Morris and his father. Colonel Morris is a former Minuteman II missile-launch officer, while his father served at Whiteman from 1963 to 1965 guarding Minuteman missiles in what was then called the Air Police, now known as Security Forces.

Right: Newly "minted" 2nd Lt. Phillip "Ben" Werner, has his gold bars pinned on by his wife, Melanie, and his son, Max, on the occasion of his graduation from the 12-week long Officer Training School at Maxwell AFB, Ala., July 22. As the 442nd's newest commissioned officer, Lieutenant Werner made the transition to the officer corps after attaining the enlisted non-commissioned officer rank of technical sergeant while a member of the 442nd Security Forces Squadron.



PHOTO BY MAJ. JOE WALTER



PHOTO BY MAJ. DAVID KURLLE

GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES MONEY FOR WRIGHT FLIGHT

Staff Sgt. Joel Keltner, 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron, makes a fairway shot toward hole number four at the Royal Oaks Golf Course, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Aug. 1, in a charity golf tournament to benefit the Wright Flight program. Wright Flight is a program to teach kids self determination and goal setting using aviation as its theme. Many members of the 442nd Fighter Wing volunteer their time for the Wright Flight program through the wing's Human Resources Development Council. The tournament raised more than \$1,500 for the program.

AFRC NEWS DIGEST

710th MDS reservists recognized by AFRC as top medical service people

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. – Two 710th Medical Squadron members were among reservists, and units, from California to Massachusetts receiving Air Force Reserve Command medical service awards for fiscal year 2008.

Command officials announced the award recipients in a letter to commanders Aug. 13, and Maj. Donald Pruden, earned the Brig. Gen. Donald B. Wagner Administrative Excellence Award, while Master Sgt. Debra Bernhardt was recognized as the top deployable medical unit Air Reserve Technician NCO.

The 710th MDS is one of two geographically separated units at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb. that the 442nd Fighter Wing is responsible for.

Individual awards went to the following people:

- Brig. Gen. Beverly Lindsey Nursing Leadership Excellence Award - Lt. Col. Lynne

Taylor, 932nd Airlift Wing, Scott AFB, Ill.

- Aeromedical staging squadron Reserve officer - Capt. Sandra Tisdale, 349th ASTS, Travis AFB, Calif.

- ASTS Reserve NCO - Master Sgt. Christopher Barone, 914th ASTS, Niagara Falls International Airport Air Reserve Station, N.Y.

- ASTS Reserve airman - Senior Airman Tyler Underwood, 349th ASTS, Travis AFB

- ASTS air reserve technician NCO - Tech. Sgt. Victorine Byrnes, 914th ASTS, Niagara Falls IAP ARS

- Non-deployable medical unit Reserve officer - Maj. Jennifer Korkosz, 926th Aerospace Medicine Flight, Nellis AFB, Nev.

- Non-deployable medical unit Reserve NCO - Tech. Sgt. Regina Gordon, 926th AMDS, Nellis AFB

- Non-deployable medical unit ART NCO

- Senior Master Sgt. Janet Faust, 459th AMDS, Andrews AFB, Md.

- Aeromedical evacuation squadron ART officer - Maj. Marie Dufault, 439th AES, Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass.

- AES ART NCO - Senior Master Sgt. Shane

Cayson, 932nd AES, Scott AFB

- AES Reserve officer - Maj. Shaun Carter, 932nd AES, Scott AFB

- AES Reserve NCO - Tech. Sgt. Michael Stauth, 932nd AES, Scott AFB

- AES Reserve airman - Senior Airman Starkey, 439th AES, Westover ARB

Unit awards went to the following:

- Aerospace medicine squadron with generation support mission - 439th AMDS, Westover ARB

- Medical squadron with generation mission - 932nd MDS, Scott AFB

- 250/150 bed ASTS - 445th ASTS, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

- 100 bed ASTS - 439th ASTS, Westover ARB

- AES with C-130 primary mission design - 45th AES, MacDill AFB, Fla.

- AES with primary mission other than C-130

- 911th AES, Pittsburgh IAP ARS, Pa.

- Medical quality initiative - 439th AES, Westover ARB

- Reserve Officers Association Outstanding Reserve Medical Squadron - 911th AES, Pittsburgh IA PARS.

Reserve recruiters shatter enlistment goal well ahead of Sept. 30 deadline

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. -- Air Force Reserve Command recruiters recorded their 8,800th enlistment of the year Aug. 3, breaking the record for reaching their annual recruiting goal the fastest - two months before deadline.

The 400 men and women who recruit nationwide for the Air Force Reserve had until Sept. 30, the end of the fiscal year, to make the goal. Their achievement marks the ninth straight year the command recruiters have reached their annual target number for enlistments.

Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., AFRC commander, praised the recruiters and spoke with glowing enthusiasm about their accomplishment.

"Our Air Force Reserve recruiters are fantastic," he said. "They have no peer, and they continue to impress me."

"Not only have they reached their target two months ahead of schedule, but this is the earliest they've ever reached their goal," the general said. "They're number one of all of the Department of Defense's recruiting services for the ninth year in a row. My heartiest congratulations to all of them on a job, once again, extremely well done."

Enlistee number 8,800 was Trahelle Miro of Abilene, Texas, who was put in by Master Sgt. Michael Nienhaus at Dyess AFB, Texas.

In addition to smashing this year's goal earlier, the recruiters outpaced where they were last year at this time. In early August 2008, their total enlistments - also called accessions - were at 7,498, more than 1,300 behind this year's result. (*Air Force Reserve Command News Service*)

With ORI just ahead Wing aims for a *...Clean sweep!*

Master Sgt. Mark Kuhaneck, 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron, fills out a report following PAR and Sweep team exercises held during the August Unit Training Assembly.

ALL PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

Story by Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

When hearing the words “sweep” and “par” the visual of Tiger Woods putting with a broom might come to mind, but for those working in the 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron during the August Unit Training Assembly, there is a completely different meaning.

“Post Attack Reconnaissance teams or PAR teams are responsible for surveying an area for possible concern,” said

Lt. Col. Mark Davison, 442nd CES commander.

It is critical for the engineers to determine if a site can be occupied on transition day as to keep personnel safe from the hazards of war.

“Some of our apprehensions stem from: enemy presence, unexploded ordnance, booby-traps, chemical hazards and anything that could bring harm to airmen or hinder our mission,” Colonel Davison said.

The 442nd engineers focused on what they do before they set up a perimeter for a potential occupied base.

“We’re sweeping the site to clear it of hazards and secure it so we can insure who comes in and out,” Major Ross McAfee, 442nd CES director of operations said. “First we’ll set-up supply and control, then we’ll construct the facilities so four or five hours later-- there’ll be a tent city here, complete with a water facility, supply, hazardous material facility and

a temper-tent with floors and primary power and air conditioning.”

The engineers used their experiences to hone skills needed for October’s Operational Readiness Inspection.

“Once we’re fully operational we’ll look to make improvements. It’s all simulated this weekend but in September it’ll be real,” Major McAfee said.

“We learned a lot during the Readiness Assistance Visit,” Colonel Davison said.

One thing is the old Cobra site on the east side of Whiteman Air Force Base wasn’t well suited for the upcoming ORI. That site was vacated and two additional, more realistic sites have been set up closer to the ORI “play” area.

“The Cobra site had constructed buildings and cement pads which made the training scenario all too artificial,” Colonel Davison said. “There was confusion before. We cured that with a bare field—just the basics.”

As in any training atmosphere there are many obstacles which often times can only be addressed in a time of confrontation.

“You don’t know-- what you don’t know,” said Master Sgt. Nathan Hooton, 442nd CES. “We expect surprises at any and all times but especially during convoys we’ll be anticipating snipers and UXO’s.”

For many Airmen the most dreaded part of the ORI is the extensive amount of time spent in Mission Oriented Protective Posture four. While airmen are taking cover and sweating it out, PAR teams are sweeping the area to guarantee their safety once airmen come out from under the rubber and breathe that first breath of fresh air.

“People can’t get out of MOPP four until its safe,” Colonel Davison said. “There are 22 teams on the base and CE is responsible for three of them. Those folks are covering a 100 foot by 100 foot section, so it is critical we get out after an attack and maintain security as well as make sure the air is clear.”

While in Missouri it can be difficult to remember the purpose of training is to prepare airmen for the rigors of southwest Asia, but those who have been there can testify of the benefits of combat focused training.

“I’d say my gear including the weapon is about 40 or 50 pounds. It doesn’t affect me—I’ve spent 16 months in Iraq wearing it,” said Senior Airman Kevin Genke, 442nd FW CE. “It’s good for people who haven’t deployed so they can get acclimated to functioning in it.”



Above: Tech. Sgt. Marvin Hittle, 442nd Maintenance Operations Flight, goes through the overboot removal station during decontamination exercises held in preparation for the Wing's Operational Readiness Inspection to be held in October.

Below: Senior Master Sgt. Ed White (right), 442nd Maintenance Squadron, instructs a wing member on the decontamination process.



Making The right play

Post-9/11 G.I. Bill brings flexibility, concerns Right information helps put members in scoring position

By Senior Airman Danielle Wolf

The education season has begun and you may still be deciding what veterans' benefit will score you the best field position to obtain your degree.

The new Post-9/11 G.I. Bill has kept education offices busy, and Airmen confused.

While the new G.I. Bill may be the best option for many active-duty Airmen, reservists may have trouble finding out what military time counts toward the 90 days of consecutive active-duty time required for eligibility.

But one thing you should know is that there is no turning back. Once Airmen have elected to switch to the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, they may not switch back

to the previous Montgomery G.I. Bill – but may still be eligible for tuition assistance.

For further play tips members of the 442nd are advised to speak with the 442nd Military Personnel Flights educational "Coach" Tech. Sgt. Ron Watkins in the wing education office. Hopefully his educational playbook will help decide what will suit you best.

Post-9/11 G.I. Bill guidance sent to Airmen

By Maj. Beth Kelley Horine
Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFNS) -- Air Force Personnel Center officials here provided updates to the field recently on the Air Force implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The updates, effective Aug. 1, include guidance on how eligible Airmen can choose to transfer part or all of their educational benefits to family members enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System.

"Since the Transfer Education Benefits Web site began accepting applications in July, more than 4,000 Airmen have re-

quested transfer of benefits to their family members," said Maj. Jamison Braun, the AFPC deputy chief of transformation.

The request to transfer is initiated by an Airman through TEB, a Department of Defense portal, to the Total Force Service Center-San Antonio for validation, and then sent back to the DOD and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"However, the DOD portal experienced difficulties at first that limited our ability to push validation of eligibility back to the DOD and the VA in a timely manner," Major Braun said. "Now that the kinks have been worked out, we anticipate the total process from application to approval to take between 30 to 45 days. Please be patient with the new rollout and we'll continue to keep you up to speed on changes."

Time on active duty - percentage:

Time on active duty	percentage:
36 or more months	100
30 months	90
24 months	80
18 months	70
12 months	60
6 months	50
90 days	40

Accumulated after 9/11

3 Tiers of Benefits

- Tuition
- BAH
- Books & Supplies (up to \$1,000 per year)

PENALTY: No BAH given to active-duty spouses

EXTRA POINT: One-time \$500 payment to individuals relocating from highly rural areas

0- 4 0- 3 0- 2 0- 1 0-

Basic eligibility

All Airmen serving greater than 90 days of active duty, post-Sept. 11, 2001, are automatically eligible and enrolled for the new GI bill benefit. For additional information and eligibility requirements, visit www.gibill.va.gov.

Next, if only applying for personal use of benefits (not transferring to dependents), go to the VA online application, or VONAPP, Web site at <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp> to apply.

Transferability

Active-duty and selected Reserve Airmen who meet all of the VA's Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit requirements, who are on duty as of Aug. 1, who have already served at least six years, and who commit to four more years of service, have the option to transfer their benefits to eligible dependents.

Before applying to transfer benefits, an Airman should do four things to ensure a smooth and efficient application process.

The very first step for all Airmen is to seek counseling from your Education Center on GI Bill options, said Rudy Torres, the AFPC education services and benefits program deputy chief. "Next, ensure you have at least four years left of retainability before transferring benefits, unless retirement eligible. If you need additional retainability, visit your military personnel section for counseling on your reenlistment or extension options," Mr. Torres said.

Third, Airmen must sign a statement of understanding to acknowledge acceptance of their active duty service commitment. The statement of understanding is available in military personnel sections, education offices and on the "Ask" AFPC Web site.

"If you've already applied to transfer your benefits, a copy of the (statement of understanding) will be sent to you for signature via email from the Total Force Service Center-San Antonio. In the near future, the SOU will be available on the virtual MPF to allow Airmen to complete this action digitally," Major Braun added.

And finally, all Airmen should verify family member infor-

mation is accurate in DEERS.

A printable version of this checklist is available on the AFPC Web site under the Post-9/11 GI Bill link.

How to apply

After completing the checklist above, Airmen can apply to transfer their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits at the TEB site. Applicants must use a common access card, a DOD self-service user identification, or a Defense Finance and Accounting Service personal identification number to access the site. The TEB site is also posted on the AFPC Web site and the Air Force Virtual Education Center on the Air Force Portal.

"If for some reason an applicant doesn't meet eligibility requirements, the application will be returned to the TEB site and AFPC will provide the applicant with a statement of why it was disapproved, or guidance on what actions are required before approval can be granted," Major Braun said.

Once Airmen receive approval of their transfer application from the VA, family members may apply to use transferred benefits by completing VA Form 22-1990e in VONAPP. The VA Form 22-1990e should only be completed and submitted to VA by the family member after TEB approval. Further information is available at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>.

Additional guidance about GI Bill options can be found at the following resources:

- DVA GI Bill
- DoD Post-9/11 GI Bill -- http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/2009/0409_gibill/
- AFPC Post-9/11 GI Bill -- <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/library/gibill/index.asp>
- Post-9/11 GI Bill link on the "Ask" AFPC site -- <http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>, or
- Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102.

NOTE: For specific details on selected reservists transferring GI Bill benefits, contact the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102, option 3.

Types of Education covered

- Undergraduate
- Graduate
- Some Vocational & Technical
- Transfer coverage from M.G.I. Bill 1606, 1607, Chapter 30
- PENALTY:** Choose CAREFULLY, Chap. 30 is irreversible
- EXTRA POINT:** Tutorials, licenses, & certificates also covered

Transferability

- Post 9/11 GI Bill may be divided between dependents or given in whole
- Member must have 6 years of service with four more of retainability, or have already served 10 years
- PENALTY:** Children are only eligible until age 26
- EXTRA POINT:** If member is eligible for retirement before Aug. 1, 2010, no additional commitment is required

Life's a family affair ...

...for Wing members opening hearts and homes to foster children

Story and photo by Senior Airman Danielle Wolf

The 442nd Fighter Wing is all about family.

Not only do its members respect and honor each other, but they have supported each other's families and the surrounding communities for years. A few members of the 442nd Fighter Wing have responded to a calling within those communities that few have the courage to do.

These members are foster and adoptive parents who are unique; they are amicable and selfless, and have sacrificed for their families.

Senior Airman Tracy Brown is a weapons loader with the 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. As a civilian she works at Show Me Youth Christian Home in La Monte, Mo.

Show Me Home is a non-profit organization that serves the community by fostering children long-term. These children are placed by the state and Child Services.

There are six homes owned by the organization, all of which have a house mother and a house father – except for Senior Airman Brown's house. Although she is not married, the staff at Show Me Home was confident in her ability to care for a family on her own. So by day, she works in the office assisting with administration, but she is capable of caring for up to five children at a time.

Senior Airman Brown begins her day at 5:30 a.m. – long before reveille. Once she is ready, she wakes up the children by 6 a.m. They have breakfast as a family before doing devotions and daily chores. By 8 a.m. they are off to school, and Senior Airman Brown heads across the street to the organization's office for work. After school, the routine is very similar. There is time for homework, chores, a family dinner and individual time with each child before bed.

As a Citizen Airmen, there are a few times Senior Airman Brown remembers the children being a little nervous around her.

"Initially they were scared of me," she said. "They had never met anyone in the military before, so they thought I would be mean."

"At first they would tell the other kids that I made them do push-ups all night long," she said as she laughed. "But now I show them pictures and my award, which is up in my room, and we talk about the military."

Senior Airman Brown said that for children who aren't around the military often, their view of it can be very skewed by what they've seen on TV.

"When they saw me in uniform, I think they were scared

because they think of killing and guns," she said. "But it's not like that at all, it's about helping people."

Although she said she loves her family at Show Me Home, Senior Airman Brown has always wanted to serve the Air Force on a deployment.

"We talk about deployment openly," she said. "They know I want to go on one, and it worries them. But I tell them I'm not afraid – which is the truth – and I think that assures them a little bit."

In addition to her notable military record, having won weapons safety Airman of the year and load crew of the quarter, Senior Airman Brown would make any recruiter proud.

"I encourage my kids to talk to me about the military," Senior Airman Brown said. "Most of them don't have (biological) families, so they may not have a bright future automatically. I encourage them to think about the Air Force, because it would give them consistency, which is what they really need."

Already, her children have developed a respect for the military, based on their experiences with Senior Airman Brown.

"Their demeanor changes when I'm in uniform," she said. "They need good role models and I think we provide that, even if we only get to make an impact briefly."

Tech. Sgt. Eric Anderson, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, agrees that children need good role models. For the last few years he and his wife have been foster parents to several children.

They began fostering after caring for a friend's child for an extended period of time.

"My wife was working with a lady who was working three jobs," Sergeant Anderson said. "She had a 2 or 3-year-old baby girl and we started to babysit a lot."

After a while, the Andersons started taking care of her full time – and eventually, even opened their home to the child's mother.

"We knew fostering was something we'd like to do," he said. "So we started the 12-week training classes."

Despite an unexpected Base Realignment and Closure in Oregon, the Andersons were able to complete their course here in Missouri.

"At first we were just thinking, 'We'll foster one kid,'" he said. "But then the lady said they had a little boy for us, and he had a brother; they were going to put him in another home, but we didn't want them to be separated, so we just took in both of them."

The boys, who were 2 and 4 years old at the time, quickly became part of the family. But they weren't the only ones. Shortly after, the Andersons had a few more additions to their family.

"At first we were just thinking, 'We'll foster one kid.' But then the lady said they had a little boy for us, and he had a brother; they were going to put him in another home, but we didn't want them to be separated, so we just took in both of them."

— Tech. Sgt. Eric Anderson

"I came home from work one day and my wife told me to close my eyes. I thought she had brought home a puppy or something," he said with a laugh. "So I sat down and she said, 'Hold your arms out,' I did and she put something in my arms. I didn't know what it was, but I knew it wasn't a puppy."

Sergeant Anderson's wife had placed a two-week old baby girl in his arms. The baby wasn't alone; she had a 1-year-old brother as well.

So for months the Andersons cared for the four children and eventually a fifth, until the baby and her brother were adopted.

"We still see her from time to time and she runs up to us and gives us a hug," he said. "We have pictures of her on our phone and everything."

As for the brothers, "They just seemed to fit in so well with our family," Sergeant Anderson said. "So we decided to adopt them."

The family integration hasn't come without its challenges.

"At first they didn't show a lot of emotion," Sergeant Anderson said. "But now they reach out for you and hug you."

Russell, who is now 5 years old, is Sergeant Anderson's little helper.

"He always wants to do whatever I'm doing," Sergeant Anderson said. "The other day he asked me if I would take him to work, he said, 'I like airplanes!'"

The Andersons know that an extended period of time away from the children would be difficult for the family. But Sergeant Anderson knows that deployment is a not foreign concept to the 442nd.

"When I go to work Russell always asks if I'm coming back," he said. "Day to day, I have to assure him that, 'Yes, I'm coming back.' A deployment right now definitely wouldn't be easy, but we'll deal with it when it happens."

Sergeant Anderson said a great deal of his military training has been helpful in his role as a father. Not only does his CPR and Self Aid Buddy Care training make him more confident with small children in the house, but he said staying fit has helped him be more active with the children.

"This is keeping me young," he said. "Working on the aircraft out here allows me to go home and have a couple kids piled on me."

He said his time management and organizational skills also help make things a little less hectic for his family.

"Routine is very important for us," Sergeant Anderson said. "It means security. It shows them that they are going to be fed, they are going to have bedtime, and they're going to be kept warm – they need to know this. The smallest things are so important to them."

Sergeant Anderson and Airman Brown have contributed to the community in their military service and their dedication to their families. Master Sgt. Vickie Chambers of Airman and Family Readiness said this is a trend for members of the 442nd.

"I have been part of several reserve units and I can honestly say that the 442nd is one of the best units around," Sergeant Chambers said. "We truly are a family and when there is a serious situation, our unit pulls together to help any way they can. We have had members lose everything in a tornado; flood or death and our unit stepped up to the plate and delivered 110 percent unselfishly."

Tech. Sgt. Eric Anderson, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, holds one of his foster children as he watches his daughter (left) and his other foster children enjoy playing in the water on a warm afternoon in the yard. Sergeant Anderson, an A-10 crew chief, and his wife have been foster parents for several children over the past few years.



With most of the work completed on the 303rd Fighter Squadron's new building, workers continue to put finishing touches on the interior in preparation for a planned building dedication in November. (Photo by Master Sgt. Bill Huntington)

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
442ND FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS
931 ARNOLD AVE.
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TO THE FAMILY OF:



Throughout its history, the Air Force has constantly re-invented itself to meet evolving threats – one of the primary reasons we have such air dominance today.

Indeed, all of the services are challenged to find the right balance between preserving what is unique and valuable in their traditions, while at the same time making the changes necessary to win the wars we are in and to be prepared for future threats.

-- Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates

442nd Fighter Wing on line -- www.442fw.afrc.af.mil