



PATRIOT

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SUPERINTENDENT
Master Sgt. Andrew Biscoe

VISUAL INFORMATION
William C. Pope

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Capt. Meghan Smith

NCOIC
Tech. Sgt. Stephen Winn

STAFF
Tech. Sgt. Amelia Leonard
Tech. Sgt. Malcolm Tevanian
Staff Sgt. Tamara Williams
Senior Airman Monica Ricci

UTA SNAPSHOT

>> Family Christmas Party on Dec 3, 10 a.m. at building 1100.

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New retirement system | **pg. 6**

There is an App for | **pg. 7**

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ON THE COVER >> More than 100 runners participated in the annual Turkey Trot which took place at Westover on Nov. 5. The Pioneer Valley USO supplied five turkeys for the winners in three categories including fastest male, fastest female, and best costume. Staff Sgt. Lea Rodrigues, 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and Lt. Col. Rodney Furr, 439th Force Support Squadron, took first place in their respective categories. Senior Master Sgt. Albert Raymond won for best costume. (U.S. Air Force photos/Tech. Sgt. Amelia Leonard)



COMMANDER'S CHEER >> In long-standing Westover tradition, the commanders of the 439th Airlift Wing's flight, squadrons, and groups serve the Thanksgiving lunch to the troops during the November UTA. Lt. Col. Qais Ajalat, 42nd Aerial Port Squadron serves up turkey and a smile to Tech. Sgt. Leonard Brower from the 337th Airlift Squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Amelia Leonard)

I want to lead the charge in encouraging redeployers to attend a Yellow Ribbon event. If you haven't heard of the program yet, you will. It's amazing. The Air Force Reserve sends you and your dependents or parents or significant other to a resort. Events are held each month, and I've seen the positive results.

Yellow Ribbon events give Airmen an invaluable opportunity to reconnect with loved ones, recharge their batteries after a long deployment, and learn about countless resources available to them.

Recent attendees have raved, "This was truly an amazing, uplifting, encouraging event!"

"Awesome program, very informative and helpful! I learned of so many benefits for my family that I wasn't previously aware of."

"The weekend was well-structured and organized. There was a great variety of breakout sessions that related to me. I enjoyed the ones that I was able to attend."

The program's full name is the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. It's a series of events which provide members and families with essential resources prior to departure, and successful reintegration techniques after the deployment.

The DoD began the program in 2008 following a Congressional mandate. Through the Yellow Ribbon Program, the Air Force Reserve trains 8,000 deployers and family members each year in

education benefits, health care, retirement information, and more.

In the next six months, the program is of increased significance to the Patriot Wing as we welcome back more than 250 members from deployments across the globe.

Did I mention that it's free?

Members and two guests (or all dependents) can attend one event prior to deployment and two events within 365 days after redeploying. The Air Force Reserve pays all associated costs for members and their loved ones to attend Yellow Ribbon events, including airfare, lodging, and meals. Upcoming event locations include Orlando, Florida; Denver, Colorado; Atlanta, Georgia; and Tucson, Arizona.

It's a good deal. Planners build in time for R & R, as well as bringing in informative speakers.

Since wing commanders are often invited to attend, I hope to see you there!

Editor's note: For information on the program, please contact the Wing Yellow Ribbon Coordinator, Capt Alan Fairey, at 413-557-2718 or email Alan.Fairey@us.af.mil.

Col. Jay Jensen
439th Airlift Wing Commander



BRIEFS

SECAF cuts back on CBT's

In a move to streamline Air Force training, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James has a new plan that will eliminate fifteen standalone CBT courses and streamline another sixteen. This plan will start in January.

Angel Tree

If you picked up an angel last month from the Airman and Family Readiness Center please bring in your donation Sat., Dec. 3 by 12 p.m.

Drug Testing Office has moved

The drug testing office is now in bldg. 5100, the base services building located next to the enlisted dorms. Also a reminder that while the state of Massachusetts has legalized marijuana, its use is not allowed by service members.

Children's Christmas Party

The party will take place Dec. 3, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the base conference center, ellipse, and Airman and Family Readiness Center. There will be plenty of parking at the conference center and chapel. There will be train rides for kids and adults around the ellipse, the movie Polar Express will be playing at the conference center, and arts and crafts will be held at the chapel. Santa will be arriving at 12 p.m.

Extension cords

Base fire prevention officials remind that it's not a good idea to improvise with electrical decorations. Please pay attention to the proper use of extension cords, daisy-chaining them is never a good idea. Don't overload circuits, and never use them as permanent wiring.

Driving with a cell phone

Cell phone use while operating a motor vehicle on base is authorized. However, you may not be holding your electronic equipment and you must be utilizing a hands free device. This is also the same off base. AFI 36-2903 section 6.3.3 governs. While off base check the individual state laws via a dot GOV website.

Food Drive for local Pantry

Westover's Top Three organization set up donation boxes for each unit to benefit Lorraine's soup kitchen and pantry in Chicopee. Check your orderly room for your donation box if you are interested in donating. They will be picking up the boxes on December 5.

Westover adds nearly \$200M into local economy in 2016

by Lt. Col. James Bishop

The 439th Airlift Wing added \$197 million into the community in fiscal year 2016. The number represents a decrease of nearly \$24 million from last year.

The wing impacted communities within a 50-mile radius with an economic impact of \$197,257,006 from Oct. 1, 2015 to Sept. 30, 2016. In 2015, the base's economic impact was \$221,175,721.

Previous years' economic impact were

2014 - \$220,856,889

2013 - \$224,946,752

2012 - \$237,936,751

2011 - \$237,568,913.

Construction and related expenditures decreased \$23.5 million last year, according to Dan McCarthy, Westover cost and management analyst. Other factors included the timing of the base operating support contract award process when the base contractor



changed hands last year. Additionally, the loss of eight aircraft affected base expenditures last year, McCarthy said.

The base saw a decrease of \$1.6 million in payroll last year, due in part to a decrease in Air Force civilian employees working at the base, McCarthy said. Westover lost 23 full-time civilians last year, down from 675 to 652.

The value of estimated jobs created increased by about \$1.2 million as a result of an increase in the number of traditional reservists placed on active duty last year, McCarthy said. The estimated value of indirect jobs created is derived from a federal formula that calculates goods and services off base which members purchase. The estimate amounted to \$47.5 million in 2016, up from \$46.2 million in 2015.

The total number of base employees - active duty, reserve, and civilians - increased from 3,345 in 2015 to 3,371 in 2016.

The economic figures and personnel counts do not include the base's

28 tenant units, which include ten Army units and three Marine units, which together employ about 1,680 people, mainly reservists.

"Despite declining military budgets, we're glad to see that Westover's joint-base operations continue to provide a powerful economic engine for Western Massachusetts," said Col. Jay Jensen, 439th Airlift Wing commander.

26 Airman awarded CCAF degrees

by Tech. Sgt. Amelia Leonard

Twenty-six enlisted members from Westover were awarded their Community College of the Air Force degree during a ceremony held here Nov. 5. It was the first CCAF graduation ceremony held at Westover.

"The ceremony went very well," said Tech. Sgt. Kristy DeWall, education and training specialist with the 439th Force Support Squadron. "It was great to see so many participants and their families, leadership, and fellow Airmen there supporting them."

The Community College of the Air Force is the world's largest community college system. It's a federally-chartered institution that serves the United States Air Force's enlisted total force and serves more than 300,000 active, guard and reserve enlisted personnel, according to the Air University

website. More than 22,000 associate in applied science degrees from 68 degree programs are awarded annually.

The mission of the CCAF is to, "Offer and award job-related associate in applied science degrees and other academic credentials that enhance mission readiness, contribute to recruiting, assist in retention, and support the career transitions of Air Force enlisted members."

Having your CCAF degree can open up opportunities for your civilian career, as well as your Air Force career, said DeWall. Obtaining your CCAF degree is now mandatory in order to make the rank of master sergeant, according to Air Force Instruction 36-2406.

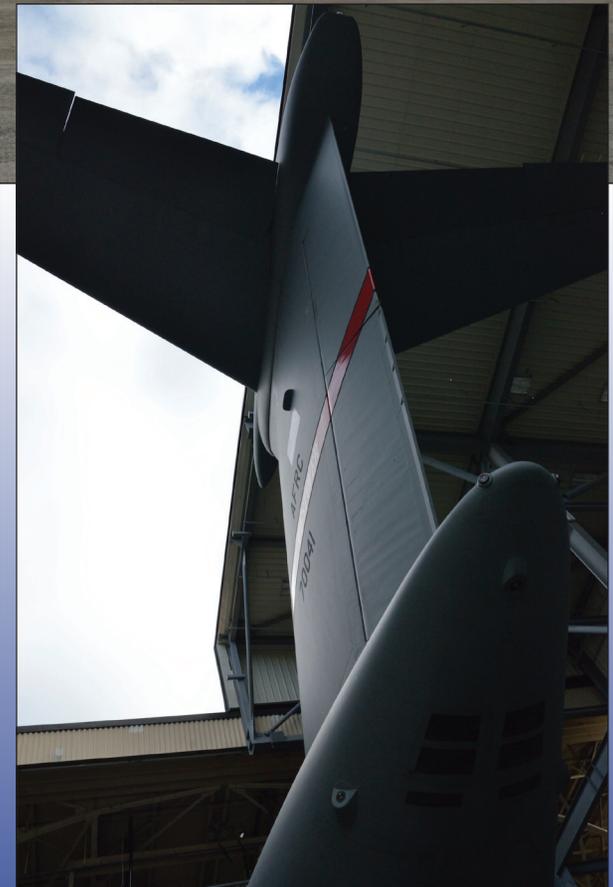
"Don't strive for the standard. Be the standard," said Master Sgt. Christopher Houde. Houde was awarded his third CCAF degree during the ceremony.



7041 GOES SOUTH FOR MAKEOVER



THIS ISN'T GOODBYE >> Headed to Georgia for new engines -- The last TF-39 equipped C-5B model in the Air Force to go through an Isochronal Inspection rolled out of the ISO hangar October 31. Westover is slated to have eight renovated C-5Ms by July 2018. Westover is scheduled to receive its first C-5M next year. (U.S. Air Force photos/William C. Pope)



BLENDING RETIREMENT: OPT IN OR STAY WITH THE OLD SYSTEM?

Knowing the Difference Can Earn You Thousands

by Staff Sgt. Tamara Williams

The new Department of Defense Blended Retirement System isn't for everyone. The new retirement system scheduled to take place January 2018, differs from the current Legacy Retirement System and could impact military members significantly.

Members who are eligible to opt into the new system are vested from early on and will receive some money even if they serve a minimum of two years. In the old system, you have to serve 20 'good' years to receive anything, said Capt. David Bulman, 439th Airlift Wing finance officer.

The current retirement system's monthly pension is based on the service member's years of service times a "percentage" times service member's retired base pay. "Their years of service are multiplied by 2.5 to determine the percentage of their retired base pay they receive for their monthly pension" with at least 20 years. The amount of retirement funds accrued amounts to more than the new retirement system, but members who separate before their 20 years get nothing.

The new system combines the old retirement system, with the Thrift Savings Plan, (<http://militarypay.defense.gov/BlendedRetirement/>). With the TSP included, current members who opt-in will receive DoD contributions at 1 of their base pay, plus the DoD will match up to 4 of whatever funds invested. For members who enlist for the short term, it is a perfect way to secure retirement funding. For those who plan on serving 20 years, or have already served ten or more, it might be more beneficial to remain



The U.S. Uniformed Services Blended Retirement System

Reserve Component

The Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act provides our military force with a modernized retirement plan built for retirement savings. Beginning in 2018, Reserve Component service members can get **automatic and matching Thrift Savings Plan contributions, a mid-career compensation** incentive, and if they obtain 20 years of service, **monthly retired pay** for life starting at age 60.* All service members under the current system are grandfathered into today's retirement system.

Effective Date: January 1, 2018



Retirement System Selection

- Reserve Component members with more than 4,320 retirement points will remain under the legacy retirement system.
- Reserve Component members with less than 4,320 retirement points as of December 31, 2017, will have the choice of whether to opt into the new Blended Retirement System or remain in the legacy retirement system.
- New accessions after January 1, 2018, will automatically be enrolled in the new Blended Retirement System.

Reservists and Guardsmen While Serving

Thrift Savings Plan Contributions



You Contribute	DoD Auto Contribution	DoD Matches	Total
0%	1%	0%	1%
1%	1%	1%	3%
2%	1%	2%	5%
3%	1%	3%	7%
4%	1%	3.5%	8.5%
5%	1%	4%	10%

The DoD automatically contributes 1% of your basic pay or Inactive Duty Pay to your **Thrift Savings Plan** after **60 days of service**.

You'll see matching contributions at the start of 3 years through the completion of 26 years of service, and...

You're fully vested — it's yours to keep — after completing 2 years of service and it goes with you if you leave.

Continuation Pay

Received at the mid-career point



At the mid-career mark, you may receive a cash payment in exchange for additional service.

Retired Reservists and Guardsmen Eligible for Retirement Pay

Monthly Annuity for Life

$$2\% \times \text{Years Served} \times \text{Retired Pay Base}$$

Calculate your **retired pay base** by averaging the **highest 36 months** of basic pay.

You'll gain this monthly annuity for life after completing 20 qualifying years of service and attaining age 60*

*or earlier based on qualifying active service.

Collecting Your Retired Pay

OPTION 1 Full retired pay annuity beginning at age 60 or earlier based on credited active service

OPTION 2 Lump sum **or** Reduced retired pay as monthly annuity

25% or 50% lump sum and reduced monthly annuity at age 60*
Monthly annuity bumps back up to 100% at full retirement age (67 in most cases).

You can find additional information at <http://militarypay.defense.gov/BlendedRetirement>
Sources: Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, sections 631, 632, 634, and 635

Created: 8/2016

under the current system, said Bulman.

The most significant difference between the two systems are the monthly pension multipliers used. The new system uses a 2 percent multiplier, whereas the current system's multiplier is 2.5. The 0.5 might sound small but can be significant. Even with the

addition of DoD TSP contributions, the DoD is projected to save about \$1.2 billion dollars annually in the long run.

The new retirement system has continuation pay at the ten-year point as well. This "may" apply to reservists, according to the DoD.

People who join the military after Jan. 1, 2018, will be automatically enrolled in the new retirement system. Some others have the choice to opt in. If you entered the military after Dec. 31, 2005 and have

accrued less than 4,320 points before the first day of 2018, you can choose to take the new retirement system or keep the current system.

In the end it's an individual decision that depends on how long you see yourself staying in the Air Force.

Find out more at (<http://militarypay.defense.gov/BlendedRetirement/>).

FROM CAMEROON TO WESTOVER: Airman Takes Next Steps Toward Entrepreneurship

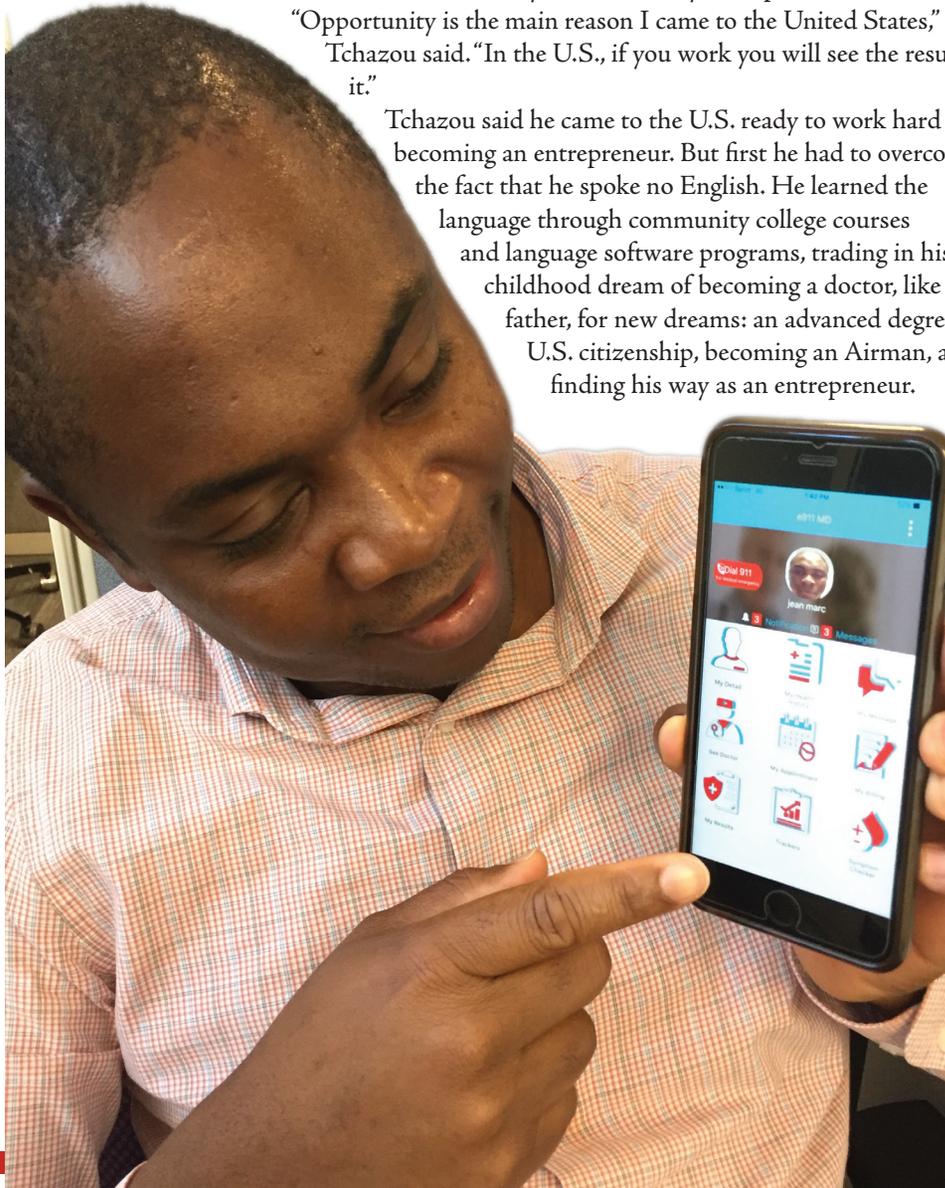
by Capt. Meghan Smith

Jean Marc Tchazou left Cameroon in 2007. He said the government of his homeland was oppressive, and he knew that his only chance at success meant moving to the United States.

Now a senior airman in the Air Force Reserve, Tchazou's journey to citizenship was highlighted in a 2013 Patriot Magazine article. He said by acquiring his U.S. citizenship, he left behind in Cameroon a system strafed by corruption.

"Opportunity is the main reason I came to the United States," Tchazou said. "In the U.S., if you work you will see the results of it."

Tchazou said he came to the U.S. ready to work hard at becoming an entrepreneur. But first he had to overcome the fact that he spoke no English. He learned the language through community college courses and language software programs, trading in his childhood dream of becoming a doctor, like his father, for new dreams: an advanced degree, U.S. citizenship, becoming an Airman, and finding his way as an entrepreneur.



After arriving in the U.S. with a bachelor's degree in finance from Cameroon's University of Douala, Tchazou completed his master's degree in accounting at Fitchburg State University in Massachusetts. Tchazou also frequently takes individual college courses to learn new skills, recently adding computer science and coding courses to his ever-increasing roster. It was during one of his computer courses that Tchazou got the idea for his latest endeavor: marrying technology with healthcare.

"My goal is to bring healthcare to people through their phone." Tchazou had a military friend who was battling depression after multiple deployments but refused to seek treatment because of the stigma associated with a PTSD diagnosis. After many months, Tchazou was finally able to convince his friend to seek treatment. "I am developing the app e911md with a medical clinic in Washington, D.C., to help people connect with a doctor, but remain anonymous."

Having enough doctors participate in the program will be key to its success. Tchazou is initiating a marketing campaign to attract additional healthcare professionals who will be available to app users. Another option to expand services is to license the app to individual clinics.

While the app can help any prospective patient, Tchazou said, "Mental health and drug addiction is our main focus." The app is in beta testing now, but when it is fully functional, Tchazou said it will connect patients with doctors for remote consultation, counseling, to receive medical records for review by medical staff, or to refer a patient to a local provider if necessary.

Tchazou said the inspiration for e911md.com came from a paternal source as well as a practical one.

"My father used to travel in Africa and Asia practicing medicine, and one of the ways my father consulted with his patients was by telephone," said Tchazou, whose father was a generalist physician and died in 2014. "I knew I wanted to do something that mixed medicine with technology, and after visiting the hospital with a sick friend and waiting for hours just to spend a few minutes with a doctor, the idea came to me."

Tchazou joined the Westover community over four years ago, and he said he has no plans of leaving anytime soon — even if his business takes off.

"Westover is like family to me," he said. "I'd like to continue to grow here as an Airman, and as an entrepreneur."



VETERAN'S DAY CEREMONY HELD IN HERITAGE PARK

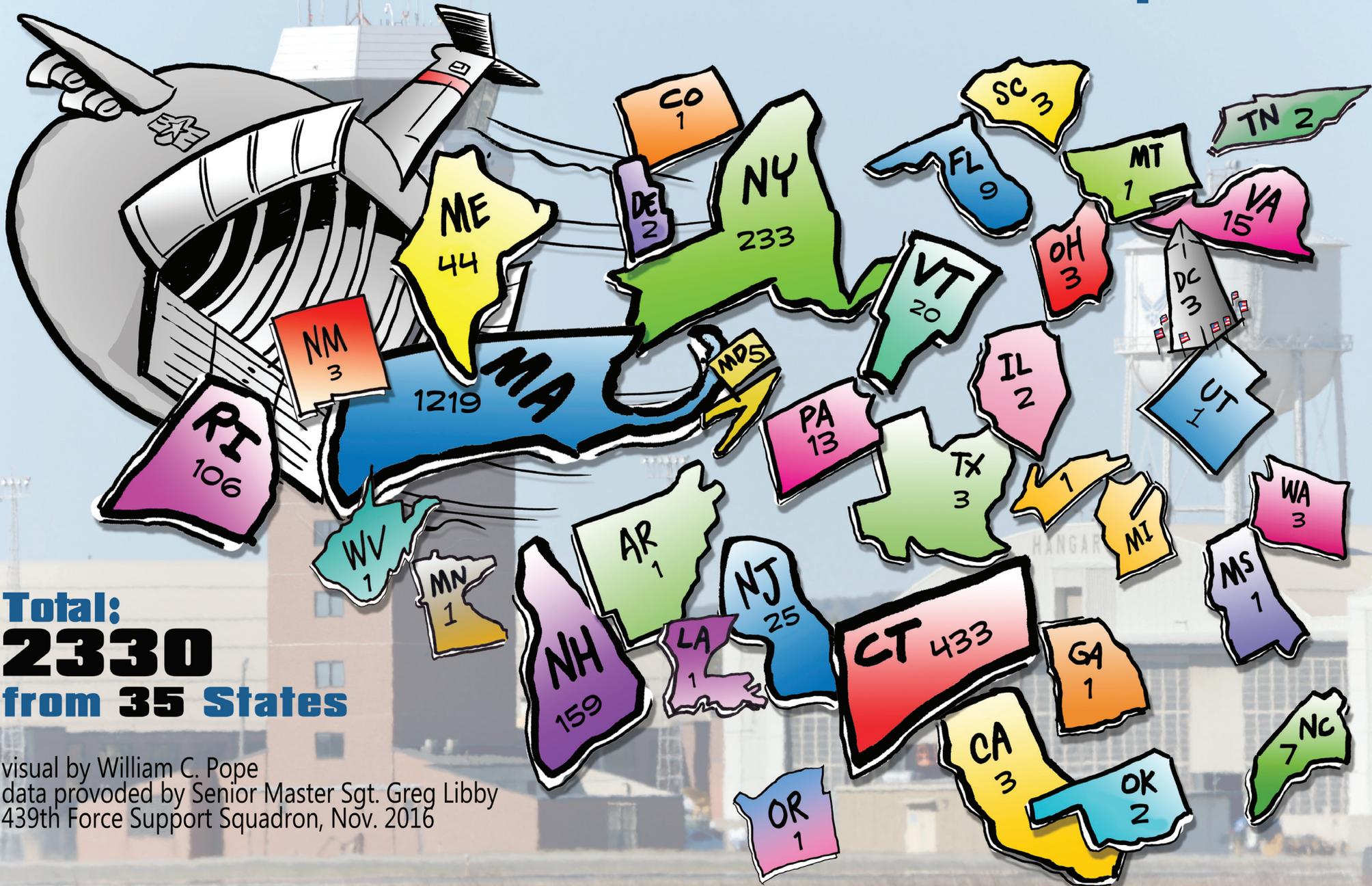


Staff Sgt. Ashley Williamson, from the 439th Airlift Wing Honor Guard, plays taps during the Veterans ceremony Nov. 5. Nearly 75 wing members participated in the ceremony. Col. Richard "Rick" Tubbs, 439th AW Vice Commander, officiated, in one of his last wing functions before leaving the wing. He spoke of the two groups of veterans who hold a special place in his heart: Vietnam veterans, and wounded veterans. (U.S. Air Force photos/Lt. Col. James Bishop)

Senior Airman Drew Balderston and Staff Sgt. Nicholas Call, from the 439th Airlift Wing Honor Guard, pay respects to the flag during the Veterans ceremony Nov. 5. Nearly 75 wing members participated in the ceremony.



Westover Reservists by State



Total:
2330
from 35 States

visual by William C. Pope
data provided by Senior Master Sgt. Greg Libby
439th Force Support Squadron, Nov. 2016

“What are your thoughts on the new combined UTA schedule?”



“As long as there is more access to computers, I'm fine. People are also (billeted) all the way out in Hartford, but they have been pretty good getting people on and off the base with the re-opening of the gate, so that's good.”

**Senior Airman Ryan Kellerman,
42nd Aerial Port Squadron**



“It was a bit congested. All of a sudden there was a computer shortage, and we were used to having a computer to ourselves. It would be nice if Wi-Fi was an added feature so people could bring in their own laptops...”

**Staff Sgt. Darell Smith,
42nd Aerial Port Squadron**

“I haven't experienced any immediate effects. Our commander told us to make our (billeting) reservations ahead of time, so I made mine a whole year out.”



**Senior Airman Tyler Skiff,
42nd Aerial Port Squadron**

POPE'S PUNS by William C. Pope



PROMOTIONS

Master Sergeant

Christopher Angeloni
Dean Lischke
Matthew Joanides
Nicole Talaia
Jason Weaver



Technical Sergeant

Jarred Firth
Michael Lombard
Markmichael Mckunes
Demetri Rosa
Yevgeniy Shatrovskiy
Arthur Statezni
Patrick Wade
Robert Zeuli



Staff Sergeant

Steven Diaz
Tyler Lesniak
Stephanie Long
Michael Muise
Raymond Rodriguez



Senior Airman

Thomas Anyon
Jessica Chauvin
James Harmon
Brad Hing



Airman First Class

Shane Brien
Shatoya Dowdell
Michael Fortis



Airman

Katelyn Ekmalian
Emily Misenis
Caleb Perez
Isaac Stone



RETIREMENTS

Senior Master Sergeant

Gary Smith

Master Sergeant

Warren Brodmerkle

Technical Sergeant

Stephen Lochirco
Douglas Moore

Staff Sergeant

Tracy Needham
David Wilson, Jr.

FACES OF WESTOVER

Senior Airman Andrew LaFontaine

42nd Aerial Port Squadron



by Tech. Sgt. Amelia Leonard

Senior Airman Andrew LaFontaine, 42nd Aerial Port Squadron, is one of the thousands of Citizen Airmen here at Westover. As such, he is constantly juggling life as a stay-at-home father, full-time student, and part-time reservist at Westover.

LaFontaine enlisted in 2010 and left for basic duty and returned from tech school a 2T2, or aircraft arms maintenance specialist. "I wanted to serve something. It was something I had always wanted to do," he said.

After serving six years active-duty, his commander gave him two options; either deploy in three months, or take advantage of Palace Chase and end up in the Reserve. He chose the latter. His wife was pregnant at the time, and decided to transfer to Westover to be closer to family. The difference between his previous command and this one is night and day, he said. "The morale here has improved my faith in the Air Force."

When he isn't at Westover for unit training assemblies, he spends his days at school or at home with his young son. He is a senior at the New England Institute of Technology, working towards a degree in electronic engineering.

westoverservices.com

SERVICES CALENDAR

Club >> DJ Kuls will be performing Dec. 3 from 7 to 11 p.m. in the lounge, which opens at 3 p.m. Join us for the Holiday meal Dec. 15, 11 to 1 p.m. for lunch and 5 to 7 p.m. for dinner enjoy a holiday themed meal. Bring the kids for Breakfast with Santa, Dec. 17, 9 to 11 a.m. in the ballroom; meet Santa, decorate cookies, games, and play in the bounce house. The cost for club members is \$8.95 and their kids are free. The cost for a non-member is \$9.95 and Kids ages 2 to 10 are \$5.95.

The Grind >> Holiday flavors return! Enjoy a hot or iced Gingerbread Latte, Peppermint Mocha Latte, Crème Bruleè Latte, and Peppermint Hot Chocolate.

Bowling Center >> Peppermint Pin Fri. and Sat. nights during the month of Dec., bowl; strike the peppermint head pin and win a free game. Decorate a pin contest, stop in and pick up the free pin to decorate! All Entries will receive a coupon for a free game. Prizes will be given for the best decorated Pins. Entries are due by Dec. 22. Kid's Vacation Bowl will be held from Dec. 27 through 30, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., one dollar Games and shoe rentals for Cosmic Bowling.

Outdoor Recreation >> All of your winter essentials are her including skis, snowboards, ski tuning, snow blowers, and more!

Fitness Center >> Intramural Basketball Coaches Meeting Will be held Dec. 21, 5 p.m. Sign Up Dec. 1 to 30, the season starts in Jan. Circuit Training classes every Tues. and Thurs. starting at 6:45 a.m. Register for the Wallyball tournament, Dec. 5 to 9, games will be played Dec. 13 to 16. Badminton tournament registration is Nov. 1 to 25, games will be played Dec. 12 to 16.

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Westover.MOBAPP.at



PATRIOT



Look for WNN on local
community access channels



Published monthly for Patriots like Capt. Kimberly Askew, 439th Logistics Readiness Squadron and more than 4,700 people assigned to Westover Air Reserve Base.

Congratulations on the 4th Quarter Award Winners for 2016

The last quarter of the year award winners were picked during the November UTA and the esteemed recipients are Airman of the Quarter Senior Airman Cameron Hayworth, 439th Maintenance Squadron; NCO is Staff Sgt. Glenda Nathaniel, 439th Force Support Squadron; Senior NCO is Senior Master Sgt. Ryan Leveille, 439th FSS; Company Grade Officer is 1st Lt. Steven Marchegiani, 439th Airlift Wing; and Civilian is Richard Hernandez, 439th MXS.



VICE GOES OUT WITH A SPLASH >>

In his final flight piloting a Westover C-5, Col. Richard Tubbs leaving Westover was received with a splash on Nov. 10, in a time honored Air Force tradition of soaking the departing Airman. (U.S. Air Force photo/ Tech. Sgt. Amelia Leonard)

