

SELFRIDGE FLYER

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"127th Wing — Your Hometown Air Force"

September 2019



CHANGE IN COMMAND

Daniel Kramer takes command of 127th Mission Support Group

By Tech. Sgt. Daniel Heaton

Col. Daniel Kramer has assumed command of the 127th Mission Support Group, Michigan Air National Guard, at Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

Kramer formally took command of the nearly 700-personnel unit during a change of command ceremony Aug. 17, at Selfridge. Kramer replaced Col. Shawn Holtz, who recently was named as the commander of the Battle Creek-based 110th Wing. The selection of Kramer was announced by 127th Wing Commander Brig. Gen. Rolf Mammen, who presided at the ceremony.

During the tradition-soaked event, Kramer held aloft the Group's guidon as he stood in front of the Civil Engineer, Security Forces, Communications, Force Support and Logistics Readiness Squadrons, which make up the group.

Kramer most recently had been serving as the

commander of the 217th Air Operations Group in Battle Creek.

Kramer said the 127MSG builds on a traditional of excellence, of supporting multiple units and missions at Selfridge, while its own members also often deploy and provide agile combat support services to the Air Force and beyond.

"As strong as we are, we can always improve, always be moving forward, always be working to develop the next generation of Airmen," Kramer said.

Earlier in his career, Kramer had served as a C-130 Hercules navigator assigned to Selfridge. He's spent the past approximately dozen years in various capacities at Battle Creek.

"Col. Kramer has been working at a strategic level, looking at the big picture. In this new capacity, he will be leading Airmen who are very much at the tactical level, with hands-on. I believe his vision and experience will serve our Airmen well," Mammen said.



Lt. Col. Tom Sierakowski stands with the Airmen of the 127th Mission Support Group at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Aug. 17, 2019. Serving two different flying missions, comprised of nearly 700 personnel, and servicing the largest Air National Guard base in the nation, the 127th MSG is the country's most complex and diverse mission support group.



Col. Daniel Kramer holds the guidon of the 127th Mission Support Group, while observed by Brig. Gen. Rolf Mammen, Master Sgt. Doug Shippy and Col. Shawn Holtz at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich., Aug. 17, 2019. Mammen is the 127th Wing commander. Holtz is the outgoing and Kramer the incoming commander of the group. Shippy is the group first sergeant.

U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. DANIEL HEATON

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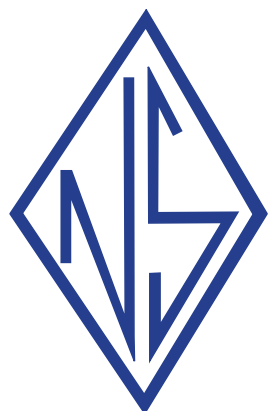
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On the cover: Six pilots of the 107th Fighter Squadron here, taxi their A-10 Thunderbolts down the flight line after returning from a combat deployment on July 26, 2019. More than 200 Airmen Selfridge Air National Guard Base returned from Afghanistan this week after serving up to six months in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. (U.S. Air National Guard Photo by Terry Atwell)



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DEPLOYMENTS

127th Wing welcomes home deployed Airmen

By Tech. Sgt. Chelsea E. FitzPatrick

More than 200 Airmen of the 127th Wing received a warm welcome from the Michigan Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist and base leadership as they returned home from a recent combat tour.

Deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility in Afghanistan, Selfridge operators, maintainers, and support staff were responsible for supporting close air support missions, aircraft maintenance, and logistics operations.

"First and foremost we are excited to see everyone back safely," said Brig. Gen. Rolf Mammen, 127th Wing and Selfridge Air National Guard Base commander. "Now we want to get them in processed as quickly as possible so they can enjoy some well-earned time with their families."

Airmen from Michigan's Hometown Air Force executed sustained operations in support of Operations Freedom's Sentinel, Inherent Resolve, and Spartan Shield.

"Being ready for the mission downrange is what we constantly train for," said Mammen. "We are an operational reserve, and this successful deployment is a testament to our combat capability."

The lieutenant governor added that, "the men and women of the 127th Wing continue to go above and beyond in their duties, and their service makes our state, country, and world safer. We are truly grateful for their commitment," said Gilchrist.

Michigan National Guard's commander-in-chief, Gov. Gretchen Whit-

mer, visited Selfridge earlier in the day, touring both the 107th Fighter Squadron and 171st Air Refueling Squadron to become familiar with the flying missions here.

"Selfridge has been a cornerstone of Michigan communities for more than a century and I'm proud to welcome home these brave men and women who have dedicated their lives to serving our country," Whitmer said. "They've been on the front lines every day fighting to ensure our safety and now that they're home, it's on us to ensure we treat them with the respect they've earned."

Before the troops' arrival, family members gathered in a hangar where the Selfridge Base Community Council, Family Readiness Group, and the Red Cross provided refreshments. Lt. Gov. Gilchrist mingled with the families and waited, alongside Wing leadership, for the Airmen to return.

"The men and women of the 127th Wing are heroes, and it is a tremendous honor to welcome them home after a long deployment away from their families," Gilchrist said. "I want to recognize the families who provide the support for them to be successful."

As the flight was delayed and the sun set, mosquitos and mayflies swarmed the crowd and parents rocked tired children.

"He took a nap in the car for about 20 minutes," Staff Sgt. Brianna Werr, 127th Wing Headquarters staff, said of her one-year old son Lincoln, after she'd been waiting with him for nearly three hours late into the night. Her husband, Staff Sgt. Brennan Werr had been deployed with the 127th Maintenance Group's



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTOS BY TERRY ATWELL

Capt. Benjamin Best, a pilot with the 107th Fighter Squadron here, reunites with his sons, Colin and Conor, after returning from a combat deployment on July 24, 2019. Best was one of more than 200 Airmen of the 127th Wing who returned from a deployment of up to six months overseas, stationed in Afghanistan.

munitions team.

But the energy of the crowd quickly grew with anticipation after the plane landed, the Airmen started exiting the plane, and were reunited with their families. For many, three hours was nothing compared to six months.

"It's been a long wait," Werr said. "But we are so ready."

More than 200 Airmen of the 127th Wing were welcomed home by the Michigan lieutenant governor, and Michigan National Guard leadership, as they returned home from a combat tour, July 24, 2019.



TRAINING

Airman sharpens skills in first training trip



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. SAMARA TAYLOR
Airman 1st Class David Johnson stands in the warehouse at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, Aug. 26, 2019. Johnson is a member of the 127th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Michigan Air National Guard.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DANIEL HEATON

Senior Airmen DeAngelo Bates and Javid Workman work together in the warehouse at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, Aug. 26, 2019. Both Airmen are members of the 127th Logistics Readiness Squadron of the Michigan Air National Guard.

By Tech. Sgt. Daniel Heaton

Airman 1st Class David Johnson said he likes to work best when he can dive right in and get going. His first annual training mission as a member of the Michigan Air National Guard is right up his alley.

Johnson is one of about 30 Citizen-Airmen of the 127th Wing from Selfridge Air National Guard Base who are spending two weeks at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska sharpening their skills by working directly with their counterparts in the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing.

"I like to get in the warehouse and be part of the organization of it. To me, every piece of equipment

in the warehouse is important because at some point, someone is going to need it to complete their mission," Johnson said.

Johnson is working alongside Airman 1st Class Sidney Dacquel. Johnson is a member of the 127th Logistics Readiness Squadron. Dacquel is in the 176th Readiness Squadron. Both Airmen are assigned to their respective warehouses. For two weeks, they are working together in the warehouse at Elmendorf.

"We are matching Airmen with their direct counterparts, to share best practices and to learn by doing," said Senior Master Sgt. John Harvey, a Selfridge Airman who has been working to coordinate the trip.

Johnson has been a member of

the 127th Wing at Selfridge for about two years, joining directly out of high school. He is a "traditional" member of the Michigan Air National Guard, generally serving one weekend per month and a couple of weeks a year on annual training. In his civilian capacity, Johnson works a couple of part-time jobs and is a part-time student at Macomb Community College. During his annual training, he received a call from a police department back home. He's hoping to become a police officer and the call was asking him to come in for an interview.

"The Guard has been good for me so far. I like to get involved, be moving forward and doing something positive. That's what this is all about," he said.

CELEBRATION

Cake and Steak: 127th Wing celebrates Air Force birthday

By Tech. Sgt. Chelsea E. FitzPatrick

The 127th Wing recently hosted members of the Team Selfridge community to celebrate the 72nd anniversary of the Air Force's establishment as an independent military branch in the United States.

Approximately 30 volunteers from Detroit Market Outback prepared food, grilled steaks and served lunch to Selfridge Air National Guard Base servicemembers and employees at the 127th Wing dining facility for the second year in a row.

"We're here to thank the military community for everything they do for us," said Col. Daniel Kramer, commanding officer of the 127th Mission Support Group here. "I gotta tell you folks, the team in the back [is] motivated, they belong in the military."

The lunch kicked off with a ceremonial cake cutting. As is tradition, the oldest and youngest members of the unit were present to cut the cake.

Senior Master Sgt. Dan Klik, a Hamtramck native, represented as the oldest 127th Wing member, having retired earlier this month at 60 years old, after serving 25 years. Airman Hailey Brewer, a St. Clair Shores native, represented as the youngest 127th Wing member, at 20 years old, after serving for nearly two years.

Klik and Brewer used a U.S. Army Air Corps saber, loaned by the Selfridge Military Air Museum, to cut the birthday cake. The saber originally belonged to Pvt. Herschel S. Cromwell, a member of the 9th Aero Squadron, the first unit formed here in July 1917. According to the museum, Cromwell serving in the unit during World War I.

As a token of appreciation, Kramer presented the Outback team with a commemorative photo. The image, depicting an A-10 Thunderbolt II being refueled mid-air by a KC-135 Stratotanker, represents the two primary flying missions of the 127th Wing and Selfridge.

"Are you ready to eat?," Jennifer Szewc, joint venture partner with Detroit District Outback asked the crowded room of approximately 500 people. The crowd replied with a collective chuckle.

"We are ready for you to eat!," she said.

With that, the troops proceeded to chow.



Top: The lunch kicked off with a ceremonial cake cutting. As is tradition, the oldest and youngest members of the unit were present to cut the cake. Senior Master Sgt. Dan Klik, a Hamtramck native, represented as the oldest 127th Wing member, having retired earlier this month at 60 years old, after serving 25 years. Airman Hailey Brewer, a St. Clair Shores native, represented as the youngest 127th Wing member, at 20 years old, after serving for nearly two years. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Munnaf H. Joarder)

Left: Approximately 30 volunteers from Detroit Market Outback prepared food, grilled steaks and served lunch to Selfridge Air National Guard Base servicemembers and employees at the 127th Wing dining facility for the second year in a row. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Terry Atwell)

SEEN AROUND SELFRIDGE



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN RYAN ZESKI

Tech. Sgt. Dan McKnight and Staff Sgt. Chris Muller, 127th Maintenance Squadron egress specialists remove an ACES II egress seat from an A-10 Thunderbolt II at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Sept. 15, 2019. A specialized lift is used to hoist the seat out of the cockpit.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DAN HEATON

Airman 1st Class Angela Southward serves lunch to Student Flight Trainees at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Aug. 17, 2019. The Trainees are the newest members of the Michigan Air National Guard, conducting in-processing requirements before shipping out to Basic Military Training.

EDUCATION

Service and school a good mix for Michigan Airmen

By Tech. Sgt. Daniel Heaton

An annual training trip at the same time that the school year begins didn't stop three Michigan Air National Guard Citizen-Airmen from completing their mission – or their school work.

"I was able to talk with several of my instructors in advance and they were totally supportive of my military service," said Airman 1st Class Derek Ferracciolo, who is about to begin his first year of college at Washtenaw Community College.

Ferracciolo, Staff Sgt. Jamie Foster and Senior Airman Noah Campbell are all full-time college students and members of the Michigan Air National Guard's 127th Wing. All three serve generally one weekend per month and two weeks per year of active duty for training as communications specialists in the 127th Communications Flight, based at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. The three spent the last week of August and the first week of September on a training mission at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

For Foster, that means bringing several thick text books along so that during the flight to Alaska aboard a KC-135 Stratotanker, she could get some study time in.

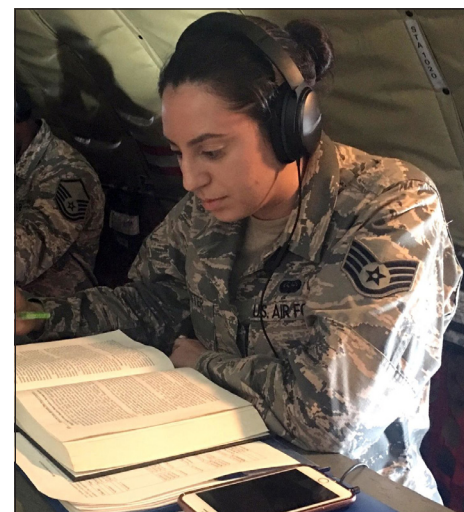
"It is all about time management," said Foster.

She is beginning her second year as a law student at the University of Michigan Law School. She completed a bachelor's degree while on active duty in the Air Force. She hopes to be able to eventually serve as a lawyer in the Air Force, as part of the Judge Advocate General corps. Foster moved to Michigan and transferred in to the Michigan Air National Guard after she was accepted at Michigan Law.

Influenced by her father who was a police officer, Foster started taking classes in the criminal justice realm, but discovered she had a greater attraction to law classes.

An unexpected encounter with the military justice system further cemented her desire to attend law school and set a goal to become an Air Force lawyer. An Airman in her squadron while on active duty was placed on trial in a court-martial. Her commander required members of the squadron to attend the court-martial, as a teaching moment.

"I was watching the JAG officers in the trial and the whole process was so interest-



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DAN HEATON

Senior Airman Jamie Foster works on homework during a flight aboard a KC-135 Stratotanker, enroute from Michigan to Alaska, Aug. 25, 2019. Foster is a second year law student at the University of Michigan Law School and a member of the Michigan Air National Guard's 127th Wing.

ing to me that it sealed my interest," Foster said.

She's been using the GI Bill and related benefits to pay for her education.

Campbell is also taking advantage of his military education benefits. He's in his third year as a student at the University of Michigan-Flint, where he is working on a bachelor's degree in computer information systems. He hopes to use that degree to further a career in computer systems with the federal government.

"I am going to school full-time and I am debt free," Campbell said. "The Air Force has been the key to opportunity for me."

Campbell said he's been able to juggle being a student and being a Guardsman by being proactive about talking to instructors and staying ahead on school assignments.

The Michigan Air National Guard offers tuition assistance of up to \$6,000 per year to college students. Additional GI Bill benefits are available for many Airmen, depending on the amount of time they have served on active duty.

To learn about educational benefits for those who serve as members of the Michigan Air National Guard, recruiters at Selfridge can be reached at (586) 239-5511.

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