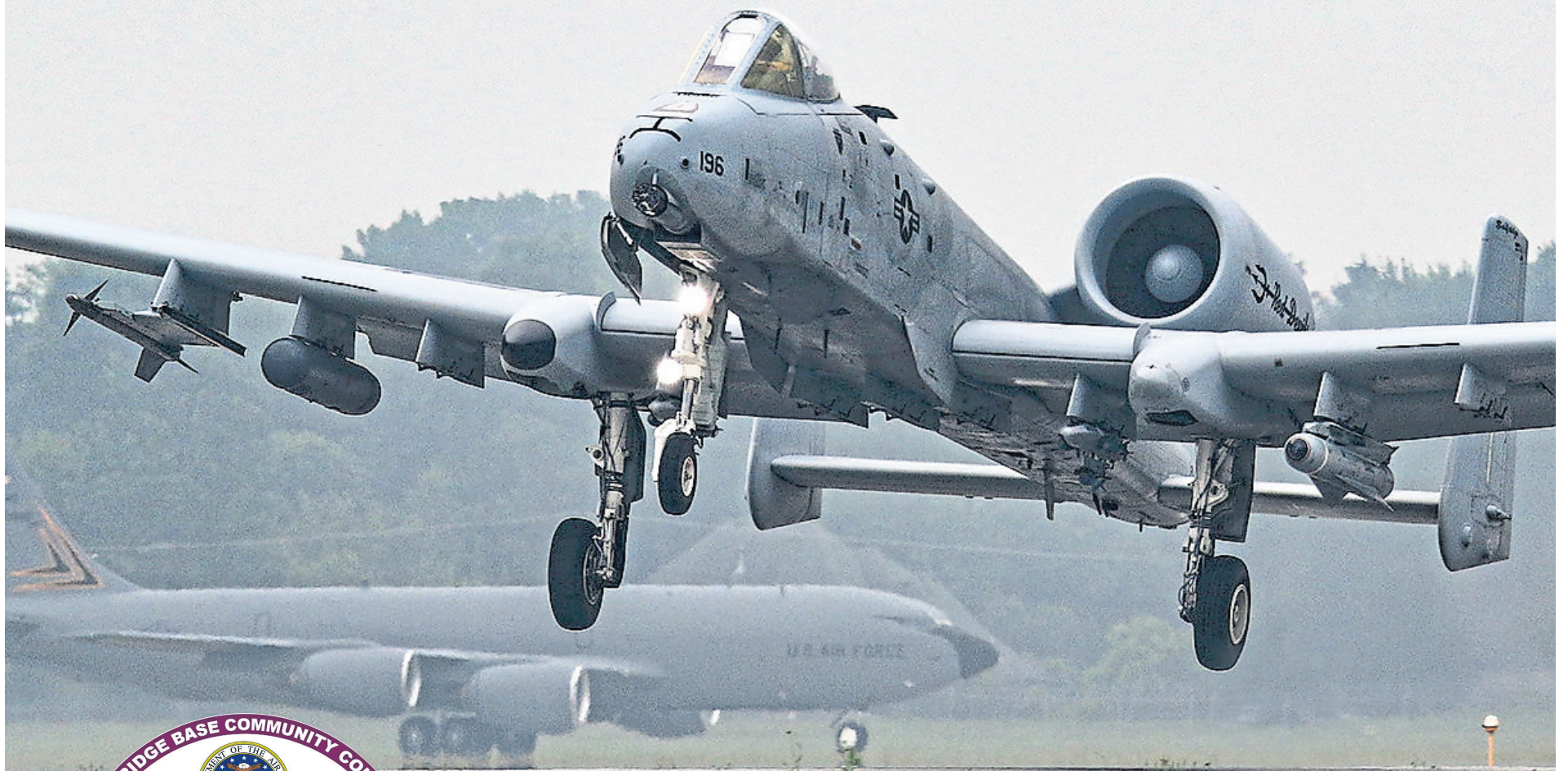


SELFRIDGE FLYER

Volume 6, Issue 4

"127th Wing – Your Hometown Air Force"

July/August 2023



FROM THE BCC

New president for Selfridge Base Community Council

By **Drema D. Isaac**

Past BCC President

It has been an exhilarating two years serving as president of the Selfridge Base Community Council (BCC). I am immensely proud to have held the position as the second woman in its history since the organization's establishment in 1940. Working alongside General Mammen, Team Selfridge, and over 240 council members who advocate for the Selfridge Air National Guard Base has been an absolute pleasure.

The BCC has a rich heritage of nurturing relationships between the military population on Base and the local community. As a council, we actively raise funds through membership dues and hosting charitable and social functions that bring people together.

In 2022, the BCC successfully allocated \$50,000 to various military units and local military organizations. This financial assistance plays a vital role in promoting the prosperity and enhancing the quality of life for our military defense and civilian communities. This support extends to scholarships and educational programs dedicated to the Base's service members and their families.

Additionally, the BCC plays a significant role in helping the Selfridge Air National Guard Base to plan, promote, and execute a highly successful Open House and Air Show. This awe-inspiring event stands as one of the largest community gatherings and fundraisers, uniting both military and civilian members alike. It was an amazing experience to work with Team Selfridge, supporting partners, and the BCC membership to once again welcome the public inside the



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD COURTESY PHOTO

Base Community Council leadership at their June meeting on Base at the Enlisted Heritage House. Outgoing council president Drema D. Isaac was honored with an eagle statue presented on behalf of Brig. Gen. Rolf E. Mammen, Commander of the 127th Wing.



Drema D. Isaac

gates and provide a successful event.

As the president of the BCC, I have relished the opportunity to contribute to such a remarkable organization. The position has allowed me to witness first-



Jonathan Vandenbossche

hand the unwavering dedication, resilience, and unity displayed by the Selfridge Base Community. I am honored to have been part of this extraordinary journey, and I look forward to the Council's continued ac-

complishments in the years to come.

Effective July 1, 2023, the role of president transitioned to Jonathan Vandenbossche. He has been an active Council member for over 10 years, serving on the membership committee and as treasurer.

Jonathan looks forward to strengthening the BCC's financial and moral support to Selfridge military members and their families. He is passionate about serving the brave men and women in our armed forces who serve us.

Jonathan has been a Harrison Township resident his entire life, living in the shadows of Selfridge ANGB. Growing up and raising a family close to the Base has

contributed to his ongoing commitment to supporting Team Selfridge. He continues to live in the Township with his wife and two children, who love watching the Selfridge jets fly over their house.

Jonathan also serves as vice-chair of the Anchor Bay Chamber of Commerce, where he sits on multiple committees that support business, government, and residents of Northern Macomb and Southern St. Clair Counties.

The Selfridge Base Community Council meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 11:15 a.m. For membership information, please visit our website at selfridgecommunitycouncil.com.

SELFRIDGE FLYER

Volume 6, Issue 4



SELFRIDGE BASE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Presidents

Jonathan Vandenbossche (Current)
Drema Isaac (Past)

The Selfridge Base Community Council's mission is to continue improving outstanding relationships between both the civilian and military-service communities centered at Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

Wing Commander

Brig. Gen. Rolf E. Mammen

Vice Wing Commander

Col. David Spehar

Wing Command Chief Master Sergeant

Chief Master Sgt. Richard Gordon

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PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

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On the cover: An A-10C Thunderbolt II ground attack and close air support aircraft of the 107th Fighter Squadron, the "Michigan Red Devils", launches on a training sortie from Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, on June 27, 2023. In addition to routinely scheduled training activities, two A-10C Thunderbolt IIs from the 107th FS of the 127th Wing at Selfridge participated in a flight commemorating the 100th anniversary of aerial refueling. A KC-135T Stratotanker aerial refueling aircraft can be seen taxiing to takeoff position behind the A-10C. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tom Demerly)

AGILITY

Maintainers make history during AFSOC mission

By Tech. Sgt. Chelsea FitzPatrick
127th Wing Public Affairs

While the world was sleeping and the sun was just rising above the horizon on a Spring Sunday over Wyoming, 11 members of the 127th Maintenance Group's "ACE" team watched Air Force Special Operations Command Airmen parachute out of the MC-130J Commando II aircraft they were flying in.

The Selfridge Air National Guard-based team of Citizen-Airmen were invited by AFSOC to participate in exercise Agile Chariot, a training event that was historical, in part, due to the number and type of aircraft involved. The ACE team supported landings and takeoffs of the MC-

130J, MQ-9 Reaper and two of their own A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft on Wyoming Highway 287.

ACE, an abbreviation for "agile combat employment," is an operational concept adopted into Air Force doctrine in 2022, in response to the global reduction of Air Force presence dating back to World War II. From then until 2018, the Air Force overseas footprint reduced by 65%. In addition to reduction in physical presence, the threat of a variety of new adversarial technological advances puts remaining air bases at significantly increased risk of attack, according to, "Air Force Doctrine Note 1-21."

"To generate combat power from a number of locations to create dilemmas for an adversary... I just

need a runway, a ramp, a weapons trailer, a fuel bladder and a pallet of [meals read to eat.]" said Gen. C.Q. Brown, Jr., Chief of Staff of the Air Force in September 2019. "That's maybe a little bit bold, but the point is, we've got to be light, lean and agile."

The ACE Team from Selfridge has taken Brown's call to heart.

Already deployed as part of a 100+ member temporary duty mission to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, in support of an A-10 weapons instructor course, the 11 ACE team members loaded up their weapons trailer, and the accoutrement necessary to receive, launch and turn attack jets on a highway into a C-130 Hercules aircraft.

MAINTAINERS » PAGE 4



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD COURTESY PHOTO

Members of the 127th Maintenance Group's "ACE" team, conduct integrated combat turns on an A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft on a Wyoming highway as part of Exercise Agile Chariot, Apr. 30, 2023. The Selfridge Air National Guard-based team of Citizen-Airmen were invited by AFSOC to participate in exercise Agile Chariot, a training event that was historical, in part, due to the number and type of aircraft involved. The ACE team supported landings and takeoffs of the MC-130J, MQ-9 Reaper and two of their own A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft on Wyoming Highway 287.

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EXERCISE AD23

U.S. Airmen in Germany for Air Defender

By Tech. Sgt. Chelsea FitzPatrick

127th Wing Public Affairs

Approximately 200 members of the 127th Wing, Michigan National Guard are in Germany to stand up a notional expeditionary air base. The worldwide muscle movement, nearly two years in the making, delivered several hundred U.S. Air National Guard Airmen to the U.S. European Command's area of responsibility in advance of the German Armed Forces-led exercise, Air Defender 2023.

The largest air deployment exercise to be held since NATO's inception, Air Defender 2023 is a live-fly exercise showcasing robust, multinational operations and collaboration with allies and partners.

"These are the same National Guard members who respond when national disasters strike a local community," said Brig. Gen. Rolf E. Mammen, commanding officer of both the 127th Wing and the ANG element for exercise Air Defender 2023.

Designated as the lead wing for the exercise, approximately 30 members of the 127th Wing's air staff have convened to set up the command and control, or C2, element. By the time the exercise kicked off June 12, the C2 will be leading approximately 2,600 Airmen representing more than 42 U.S. states on the ground and fully integrated with the German host nation.

"It's critical for these Airmen to train alongside the multinational military units they could potentially be deployed with," Mammen said.

In this capacity, AD23 will give the wing the opportunity to train as an Air Force deployment element known as an expeditionary air base, practice unifying command over a variety of flying units and do so alongside host-nation partners. This type of exercise will reinforce existing partnerships among NATO countries.

"We want to demonstrate determined allied air power," said Lt. Gen. Ingo Gerhartz, chief of staff, Luftwaffe. "Together with the U.S. and our allies in Europe, the Luftwaffe will send a highly visible and powerful signal of credible deterrence in the air domain."



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS NATHAN WINGATE

U.S. Airmen assigned to the 127th Wing, Michigan National Guard are welcomed to Jagel Air Base, Germany, June 7, 2023 in preparation for Exercise Air Defender 2023 (AD23). Exercise AD23 integrates both U.S. and allied air-power to defend shared values, while leveraging and strengthening vital partnerships to deter aggression around the world.

Maintainers

FROM PAGE 3

This wasn't the first ACE opportunity for the team, who made history in June 2022 when they successfully received, refueled, armed and launched multiple aircraft on a Michi-

gan highway during exercise Northern Agility 22-1, including AFSOC aircraft and operators from Hurlburt Field, Florida.

"After working with AFSOC during Northern Agility [22-1], we were able to demonstrate our high-level of professionalism," said Capt. Charles DiCiuccio, ACE team officer-in-charge,

127th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "[AFSOC] invited us to support Agile Chariot and we jumped at the chance, not only to exercise our mission, but to work with such a great team."

The ACE Team checked off a new item on their "bucket list," during Agile Chariot when they loaded

and unloaded their equipment and arrived on the remote landing site by way of MC-130 aircraft. The concept of packing up the equipment you need and delivering aircraft maintainers to austere locations around the world, is a key component to solving the reduced Air Force footprint. In doing so, maintenance

Airmen are cross-trained in multiple disciplines, for instance weapons troops with crew chief and refueling skills. The result of this cross-training is referred to by the Air Force as, "multitasking Airmen." The ACE Team members are definitely multitalented.

"The ability to grow and strive towards becoming an

MCA has opened up more learning opportunities," said Master Sgt. Joshua Eby, an aircraft armament systems technician assigned to the 127th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and ACE Team member. "As part of the ACE team I've done things I never thought possible in my career."

MILESTONES

Michigan flyovers honor 100 years of aerial refueling

By 127th Wing Public Affairs

The Michigan Air National Guard conducted flyovers of nine Michigan communities on June 27 as part of the United States Air Force's commemoration of 100 years of aerial refueling excellence. Integral to every aerial mission, from humanitarian aid to medical evacuation, maintaining safe borders and supporting global strike capability and the strategic deterrent mission, midair refueling is the one mission that supports all others.

Across the U.S. Air Force, the new KC-46 Pegasus, the KC-10 Extender and the backbone of the aerial refueling fleet, the KC-135 Stratotanker, are force multipliers. These aircraft, their crews and support personnel are truly the logistical center of gravity for all U.S. airpower.

The first aerial refueling took place in the skies between Los Angeles and San Diego, California on June 27, 1923. During this groundbreaking flight, 1st Lt. Virgil Hine and 1st Lt. Frank W. Seifert successfully transferred fuel in flight between two De Havilland DH-4B biplanes. The receiver DH-4B of Capt. Lowell H. Smith and 1st Lt. John P. Richter took on fuel from a flexible hose trailed by 1st Lt. Hine and 1st Lt. Seifert, and global airpower was changed forever.

The global strategic impact of aerial refueling as a force multiplier became reality on February 26, 1949, when a U.S. Air Force B-50 Superfortress named "Lucky Lady II" of the 43rd Bombardment Group took off from Carswell Air Force Base in Texas to begin an incredible 94-hour non-stop circumnavigation of the globe, the first in history. Only 11 years later, on Janu-



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY MUNNAF H. JOARDER

A KC-135T Stratotanker from the 171st Aerial Refueling Squadron of the 127th Wing at Selfridge Air National Guard Base simulating air to air refueling of an A-10C's from the 107th Fighter Squadron on an aerial refueling sortie on June 27, 2023. In addition to routine aerial refueling training in all conditions, aircraft from the 127th Wing, including A-10C Thunderbolt II attack aircraft of the 107th Fighter Squadron, commemorated the 100-year anniversary of the first aerial refueling conducted on June 23, 1923.

ary 16, 1957, a B-52B Stratofortress named Lucky Lady III completed this same around-the-world flight in less than half the time, 46 hours, using five midair refuelings.

Since these historic mid-air refueling milestones, aerial refueling has been central to every aerial conflict the U.S. has supported, from Korea to Vietnam, the Gulf Wars and Global War on Terror into the modern global air power mission of today. This proud legacy will continue into

the future with aerial refueling support for the upcoming B-21 Raider and the Air Force's next-generation fighter concept, the F-X.

Selfridge Air National Guard Base joined the aerial refueling mission back when it was an Air Force base in January 1959. The first tanker at Selfridge, the KC-97 Stratotanker, was operated at Selfridge by both the 4045th Air Refueling Wing and the 500th Air Refueling Wing. The KC-97 of both wings supported the global nuclear deterrent

mission along with strategic air defense as a key component of America's nuclear defense triad. Since then, the aerial refueling mission at Selfridge has only become more important.

Today, the 127th Wing's 171st Air Refueling Squadron supports nearly every Air Force mission, either directly through aerial refueling, or indirectly through logistical support.

The 171st Air Refueling Squadron conducted its first air refueling flight in September 2007, when it

first became equipped with KC-135T Stratotanker aircraft. The 171st was created during World War II, first as a fighter squadron and later as an airlift squadron, flying cargo transport aircraft. The 171st is supported locally by the 191st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 191st Maintenance Squadron and several smaller units. Approximately 300 Airmen are directly affiliated with the air refueling mission at Selfridge. Over the last several years, KC-135 aircraft and personnel

from Selfridge have supported missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Europe and the Pacific region.

"Our KC-135 crews, maintainers and support personnel have served all over the world, bringing a little bit of Michigan with them wherever they go," said Mammen, also a KC-135 pilot at Selfridge.

A crucial requirement for tactical and strategic support, no mission is more central to projecting global air power than aerial refueling. Here's to 100 years!

MINGSTAP

Education benefits give boost to Guardsmen

By Senior Master Sgt. Dan Heaton
127th Wing Public Affairs

Recently-expanded state education benefits are helping several members of the Michigan Air National Guard's 127th Civil Engineer Squadron to reach their personal and professional goals.

Senior Airman Richard Johnson, Senior Airman Mya Bellinger, Tech. Sgt. Daniel Hicks and Airman 1st Class Mitchell Grams are all using the Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program, or MINGSTAP, to work toward their education goals. All four spent part of June 2023 taking a break from their studies to participate in a two-week training deployment with the 127th CES, building housing for veterans in the Cherokee Nation, near Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Senior Airman Richard Johnson

Johnson recently graduated from Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Michigan. There, he earned an associate degree in culinary arts — which is quite a difference from his job with the Michigan Air National Guard as a firefighter.

"I wanted to try something different and the Guard gave me that chance," Johnson said. MINGSTAP paid for his tuition and book costs at Schoolcraft.

Johnson is a traditional member of the Guard, generally serving one weekend per month and two weeks of active duty per year. He joined the ANG in 2019. As a civilian, he is a sous chef, working for two restaurants and also serves as a part-time firefighter for the city of Novi, Michigan.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SENIOR MASTER SGT. DAN HEATON

Airman 1st Class Reid Kerr and Senior Airman Richard Johnson, 127th Civil Engineer Squadron, Michigan Air National Guard, install a heating and cooling system during the Cherokee Veterans Housing Initiative in the Cherokee Nation, near Tahlequah, Oklahoma, June 20, 2023. U.S. military construction units are working with the Cherokee Nation to build houses for veterans who are members of the tribe.

"All the training certificates I earned in the Guard transferred to the state of Michigan," Johnson said.

He said his long-term plan is to continue to work as a firefighter and gain paramedic status. He hopes that job will allow him to save up to open his own restaurant some day.

"The two things are really working together," he said.

Senior Airman Mya Bellinger

Bellinger is working toward a bachelor of social work degree at Spring Arbor University. She recently finished her associate degree — paid for by MINGSTAP.

In addition to being a student, she is an electrician in the Michigan Air National Guard, also as a traditional, drill-status Guardsman.

As a social worker in training, why serve in the Guard as an electrician?

"I like working with my

hands," she said after a day installing wiring in a new home construction. "And I got here and I liked the people. That's what makes me stay."

Bellinger joined the ANG in 2017.

She said so far, her favorite experience in the Guard came in 2022, when she was part of a team supporting the landing of a Michigan ANG A-10 Thunderbolt II attack aircraft on a highway in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The landing showcased the Air Force's ability to launch fighter aircraft in austere locations.

"That was pretty awesome seeing how it all came together and watching that A-10 land on the highway, get refueled, reloaded and take off again," she said.

Tech. Sgt. Daniel Hicks

After spending six years on active duty, Hicks joined the 127th Civil Engineer Squadron in 2018. He's been



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. ABIGAIL OLSEN

Senior Airman Mya Bellinger, 127th Civil Engineer Squadron, Michigan Air National Guard, paints a door during the Cherokee Veterans Housing Initiative in the Cherokee Nation, near Tahlequah, Oklahoma, June 13, 2023. U.S. military construction units are working with the Cherokee Nation to build houses for veterans who are members of the tribe. The military units provide the labor in order to train in their military specialties and the tribe provides the materials.

a pavement and equipment operator his entire time in the military. Since he joined the ANG, Hicks has been going to school for occupational therapy, working toward becoming a certified hand therapist. Hicks completed his undergraduate degree at Michigan State University and is now in a graduate program at Eastern Michigan University. He used the post-9/11 GI Bill to pay for his studies at Michigan State. The MINGSTAP program is supporting his studies at Eastern.

While Hicks is studying to enter the medical field, he said he intends to remain a "dirt boy," working



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. ABIGAIL OLSEN

Tech. Sgt. Daniel Hicks, 127th Civil Engineer Squadron, Michigan Air National Guard, prepares a housing lot before pouring the concrete foundation during the Cherokee Veterans Housing Initiative in the Cherokee Nation, near Tahlequah, Oklahoma, June 13, 2023. U.S. military construction units are working with the Cherokee Nation to build houses for veterans who are members of the tribe.

with heavy equipment in the ANG.

"I still like this aspect of my life," he said. "I like the deployments for training. I enjoy coming in on drill weekend and being a part of the team."

Hicks expects to be finished with his education in June 2024.

Airman 1st Class Mitchell Grams

Grams joined the Michigan ANG in 2020. He completed a year of school at Oakland University prior to attending his Basic Military Training and technical school. Now, with those programs complete, he is serv-

ing as a power production specialist with the 127 CES and has resumed school at Oakland Community College, with MINGSTAP covering the cost of tuition and books.

Studying toward a degree in electrical engineering, Grams said he hopes that his hands-on experience working with electrical equipment and systems in the Guard helps give him a leg up with his education.

"The electrical theory I learned in my Air Force training — that doesn't change," he said.

The MINGSTAP benefit was created by the state in 2014. It provides up to \$14,400 per year for Airmen and Soldiers in the Michigan National Guard to put toward paying for an associate or bachelor's degree. MINGSTAP provides up to \$6,000 per year for training or certificate programs. Earlier this year, the state modified the law to allow National Guard personnel to share their benefits with their spouse or dependent children. The benefit is available to all Michigan National Guard Soldiers and Airmen in good standing.

The Post-9/11 GI bill is a federal benefit that is awarded in increments to military personnel based on how much time they have spent on active duty, with members becoming available for 100% of the program's funding after three years of combined active duty time. The Post-9/11 GI Bill covers all tuition costs, provides a stipend to help pay for books and provides a living allowance to students during their studies.

For more information about joining the Michigan Air National Guard call 586-239-5511.

DEPLOYMENTS

127 CES supports Oklahoma housing program

By Senior Master Sgt.
Daniel Heaton
127th Wing Public Affairs

The families of several veterans in Oklahoma will receive new housing, thanks in part to work performed this summer by three dozen Citizen-Airmen of the Michigan Air National Guard.

The Michigan Airmen, from the 127th Civil Engineer Squadron at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, spent two weeks working in the Cherokee Nation near Tahlequah, Oklahoma. They were assigned to the Cherokee Veterans Housing Initiative, a three-year project that saw multiple rotations of military National Guard and Reserve units visit the Cherokee Nation to provide construction assistance on the project.

During the initiative, the Nation provided the materials and the military provided the manpower to build 21 houses. The project provided benefits to each party, with the tribe gaining housing for local veterans in need and the military units gaining needed hands-on training for its construction teams.

"This deployment for training provides an opportunity we just can't get at home station," said Major Andrew Matejek, 127th CES commander. "Our Airmen are stepping up and accomplishing an important project for our partners in the Cherokee Nation, while at the same time gaining valuable cross-training opportunities that help them to be the Multi-Capable Airmen we need in today's Air Force."

Over the course of the summer, seven different Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Civil Engineer squadrons will rotate through the project in two-week increments, working



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SENIOR MASTER SGT. DAN HEATON

Airmen from the 127th Civil Engineer Squadron, Michigan Air National Guard stand on and in front of a home they helped build during the Cherokee Veterans Housing Initiative in the Cherokee Nation, near Tahlequah, Oklahoma, June 21, 2023.

on transforming a vacant plot into a two- or three-bedroom single-family home. During two of the rotations, a Canadian Armed Forces unit supported the effort as well. In years one and two of the project, in the summers of 2021 and 2022, Army National Guard and Reserve, Navy Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve units participated as well.

"In all, we are building \$3.6 million worth of housing during this third phase," said 1st Lt. Benjamin Carlisle, a member of the 116th Civil Engineer Squadron from the Georgia Air National Guard, who has been serving as part of the duration staff, spending the whole summer of 2023 at the job site. "Having all these different units work together provides an opportunity too for our teams to get the experience of working together to coordinate the work flow."

During the deployment for training, which was a part of the Dept. of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training program, the Selfridge Guardsmen conducted just over 3,000 total manhours of training, with more than half of that as cross-training, when an individual works

outside of his or her own specific skill set, such as a heavy equipment operator assisting with carpentry work.

"The cross-training allows each Airman to gain an appreciation for what others on the team are doing and also strengthens the team as a whole, when anyone can jump in and lend a hand where needed," said Senior Master Sgt. Jeremy Webber, who served as the operations lead for the 127th CES.

The Michigan Guardsmen spent two weeks working on the project, followed by a day in which they visited the Cherokee Heritage Center in Park Hill, Oklahoma. There, the Airmen were given a brief overview of Cherokee history and participated in several traditional Cherokee sporting events including archery, an outdoor game known as marbles and stickball, a team sport somewhat similar to lacrosse.

The 127th CES is a subordinate unit of the 127th Wing, based at Selfridge. The squadron provides fire protection, emergency response, facilities engineering and operation support, infrastructure and environmental management services to the wing and to the base.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SENIOR MASTER SGT. DAN HEATON

Tech. Sgt. Robert Johnson, 127th Civil Engineer Squadron, Michigan Air National Guard, installs an electrical box during the Cherokee Veterans Housing Initiative in the Cherokee Nation, near Tahlequah, Oklahoma, June 20, 2023. U.S. military construction units are working with the Cherokee Nation to build houses for veterans who are members of the tribe. The military units provide the labor in order to train in their military specialties and the tribe provides the materials.

Macomb County Schools Students and Staff

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