

# SOUTHERN FLYER

## 908TH ENHANCES READINESS DURING EXERCISE AUBURN TIDE IN PREPERATION FOR ITS LARGEST DEPLOYMENT



From little girl in Ghana to legislative fellow in U.S. Government Excellence In All We Do CSAF & CMSAF Share Thoughts



AIR FORCE RESERVE

908TH AIRLIFT WING, MAXWELL AFB

MAY - JUNE 2021

## Excellence In All We Do

A few years ago, the 908th Maintenance Group was led by a dynamic and innovative leader, Col. Cauley von Hoffman. She was generous with her time and graciously mentored myself and another junior Lieutenant Colonel, Ken Ostrat. Brigadier General von Hoffman, who was recently nominated for the rank of Major General, used to say that the 908th Maintenance Group was not only executing their mission with excellence, they were “exporting excellence” to the rest of the wing and beyond.

In our recent Extremism Training we are reminded of our oath to support and defend the constitution of the United States and of our Air Force Core Values; Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do. Last July, I wrote that I thought, “Woven into each of the three values is respect; respect for yourself, respect for the organization and respect for each other. We all have the responsibility to hold each other accountable to respecting the Core Values and each other, it’s integral to the success of each team and the organization at large.” I would add that alarm bells should go off if we ever believe one airman or group of airmen are being treated differently.

In this commentary, I want to align with General von Hoffman and focus on one of our Core Values: Excellence in All We Do. Over the last year, I’ve witnessed the entire wing not only executing the mission with excellence, but exporting excellence along the way. The wing is delivering excellence under some of the most challenging circumstances one could possibly imagine; a 100-year pandemic emergency, executing the largest deployment in the history of the wing, while planning for a re-mission the likes of which the Air Force has never even attempted before. These unique challenges have resulted in a wing that has banded together to take care of one another and to make sure every airman is ready for deployment and beyond. You boldly accepted the challenge to stare down the adversity we faced and reach for excellence – TOGETHER.

During the April “A” UTA, I witnessed the 908 ASTS execute a medical rodeo to meet the medical requirements for more than 300 deployers and alternates. The rodeo took weeks of planning to coordinate out of town quest help so our Airmen could efficiently receive what they needed. Additionally, they did this while ensuring our members had access to the COVID vaccine AND while deploying several medical providers and key members of their staff. Excellence In All We Do.

The 908 MSG has worked tirelessly to process over 300 taskings to the wing. They have also validated and processed dozens, if not hundreds, of changes to those taskings. TSgt Corey Hall and the entire 908 LRS team have been extraor-

dinary, as have TSgt Tiana Lee and the 908 FSS team; all under the direction and leadership of Lt. Col. Doug Werner. The 908 SFS has made sure everyone had the required firearm training, the 908 CES made sure required CBRNE training has been completed and the 908 APS will play a key role in making sure our airplanes are properly loaded for departure. They all did this while deploying a large number of their own personnel from each organization. Excellence In All We Do.

I’m especially proud of what the Maintenance and Operations Groups have accomplished – together. Their teamwork has been so strong that I can’t speak of one group alone, I have to speak of them collectively. After the Secretary of the Air Force announced the 908 AW as the preferred alternative for the new MH-139 Formal Training Unit mission, it could have been easy to settle for the status quo. Not our Maintenance Ops team! Recently, while battling through innumerable challenges and with little notice, the 908 MXG prepared a primary and spare plane for deployment to support another wing. They executed this short notice task while conducting a very important and involved safety of flight check of all of our aircraft. Concurrent with these events, they were generating enough aircraft at precisely the right time for the OG to be above straight line with their semi-annual training requirements. In all my years of military aviation, I’ve never seen an operations group above straight line! The 908 OG has gone even beyond that, boldly developing new tactics and better ways to raise their readiness level for combat. In what may be our last year in tactical airlift, the Maintenance Ops Team is raising the standard in AFRC for how to be ready for combat, delivering tactical airlift! Excellence In All We Do.

Everywhere I look, as General von Hoffman would say, we are exporting excellence. And...working together we are stronger, living out our wing motto of *Readiness in Strength*. Keep aiming higher 908th, everyone else is looking up to follow your lead.



COL. CRAIG DRESCHER  
Commander, 908th Airlift Wing

## CSAF Brown & CMSAF Bass share thoughts at Leadership Summit

Many times in our careers we ask why we don’t get information from the top down or why we only get to see or hear what senior leadership has to say when we see or read in media outlets. I thought I would take a few moments and share with you what I recently learned from Air Force senior leadership.

I recently attended a course where the 22nd CSAF, Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., and the 19th CMSAF, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass, provided attendees a view from their perspective. I would like to share some of that experience with you all.

Chief Bass discussed many different topics with us during the course. Some of the topics she spoke about were the importance of balancing our spiritual, mental, physical, and social lives. As well as the challenges we face, focusing on the “long-game,” General Brown’s Action Orders, and the Air Force Culture.

Chief Bass asked us to go back to the “little brown” (AFI 36-2618) and “little blue” (AFI 1-1) books to remind us of some of our core competencies and standards. Chief Bass encouraged us to connect our Airmen’s talents to the needs of the Air Force. Finally, she asked us to look at the culture in our Wings and reinforce diversity, inclusion, and respect.

General Brown also spoke to us about his priorities and thoughts on leadership. General Brown reminded us of his action orders on developing our Airmen and trusting them to do their jobs. He also encouraged us to look at bureaucracy and cutting down on our decision making time. General Brown reminded us to look to see where we are at and where we need to be in relation to our adversaries, and asked us where we, the Air Force, want to be in 2030-2040.

Here are a few comments he made on leadership. General Brown told us we have to be able to lead ourselves before we could lead others, know what you’re good at and what you’re not good at, get varied perspectives from our members, understand where we are going and why are we going there, build positive relationships; we have to empower Airmen to continue innovating, and to find the “frozen middle” and crush it.

All of General Brown’s words point directly toward his strategic approach of “Accelerate Change or Lose.”

In closing, I would like for you to consider the

information I have passed along to you and see where you and your Airmen fit into the big picture. You should have the ability to map you and your Airmen’s jobs all the way back to where it fits into the priorities of the SECAF, CSAF, and your local commander. Take a few moments to review the National Defense Strategy, National Security Strategy, and any other documents that will help clarify the importance of your job, your position, and your “why” in relation to the Air Force. I look forward to continued service with you and am always available to discuss these and other topics with you. “Readiness in Strength”



CMSGT. TRACY CORNETT  
Command Chief, 908th Airlift Wing



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*"The 908th is made up of service members who are Capable, Innovative Citizen Airmen ... Ready Today, Leading Tomorrow who Provide Combat Capability Anytime...Anywhere."*

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# From Little Girl in Ghana to Legislative Fellow in the U.S. Government

## RESERVE CITIZEN AIRMAN EMBODIES THE AMERICAN DREAM

by Maj. John T. Stamm  
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.** – Her tepid attempt to subdue a smile betrayed a subtle amour-propre, grounded in mollifying unpretentiousness, as she sketched a picture of her childhood home in a sub-region of West Africa on a yellow Post-It note. Called a "compound house," she shared the square-shaped structure with her great grand-parents, cousins, and several other members of her extended family. Rooms lined the walls facing inward toward an open living-area where the resident children would spend their days playing.

Senior Master Sgt. Eva Appiah (ah-pee-ah), 357th Airlift Squadron first sergeant, was raised by a working-class single mother in the small village of Agona Swedru in the Republic of Ghana, a country along the Gulf of Guinea in the Eastern Atlantic Ocean. Her mother and grandmother consistently stressed the importance of education, she reminisces, because they wanted her to have a better life than they had. Every school day, her grandmother would pay for a cab service to drive her and her cousin to attend.

Appiah's mother sent her to study at Swedru International School (SWIS), a boarding school 45 minutes from their home, as it was more economical than funding a daily commute. As a result, she learned to become self-reliant at an early age. Appiah chuckled as she remarked, in a tongue-in-cheek manner, that her life at the boarding school prepared for life in the military.

"As typical of children in Africa, I became independent quickly," she said as she twisted gently from side to side in her swivel-chair, her head tilted slightly upward and her eyes scanning the recesses of her memory for dusty images of a time long ago. "In boarding school, our parents weren't there to get us up for school or get us ready. We were structured to wake up, clean the campus, get ready for school, walk one-quarter mile to the school, and go in and study. Sometimes we had extra duties such as making sure all the tables and chairs were aligned properly."

Though she had a few friends at SWIS, there wasn't much time for socialization. Some people chose to participate in sports and other extra-curricular activi-



ties. Appiah, a self-proclaimed "nerdy-type," tried out for track and field, but didn't much care for it, instead opting to join choir. She cites her exposure to classmates from different cultures and dialects as preparing her for her eventual move to the United States.

Appiah longed to move out of Africa. With relatives in London, Amsterdam, and other European cities, she assumed she would end up there. However, in 1996 her mother announced she was getting married and the two of them were moving to America to join her step-father. In early October, at the age of 14, she and her mother arrived and settled in at Smiths Station, Alabama. One week later, on October 17, she enrolled at Smiths Station High School.

Her new classmates did not receive her openly. Even though she could read, write, and understand English (at

*See Appiah, Page 6*



COVER PHOTO:

Loadmasters from the 357th Airlift Squadron work with air transportation specialists from the 25th Aerial Port Squadron to load cargo onto a 908th Airlift Wing C-130 in preparation for a tactical air drop exercise. The air drop was part of a Tactical Flying week, which was also part of a larger wing wide exercise known as Auburn Tide to highlight the wing's readiness. (U.S. Air Force photo by Bradley J. Clark)



## Appiah Continued from Page 5

SWIS, one could be expelled for failing to attain proficiency in the subject), she spoke with an accent. It didn't help that she was more intellectually advanced than her peers. As a freshman she was taking classes with students in higher grade levels. Fellow students would say "not so nice" things to her and about her. She would go home and cry to her mother every night how she didn't fit in.

As is characteristic of her unstoppable drive and hyper-optimistic view of life, Appiah turned an adverse situation into a growth opportunity. She began mimicking pronunciations of those around her, honing her observation skills and attention to detail, attributes befitting military service. For instance, back in Ghana, they would pronounce the English word "girl" as "gell." She would over hear someone say something like, "hey, girl" or "come here girl," and she would make a mental note and practice the pronunciations when at home. She slowly lost her accent and began to articulate in the local vernacular.



After graduating high school, Appiah's mother urged her to join the United States Navy. Appiah declined. "I wasn't going into anyone's Navy," she stated matter-of-factly as she shook her head with the corners of her mouth drawn down in the "uh-uh, no way" configuration. "I don't know how swim." That was that, and it was off to attend college at Auburn University Montgomery in Montgomery, Alabama.

During her freshman year, she moved off campus with her roommate. Appiah, un-familiar with the provisions of student financial aid, believed that she could use the funds for rent. She could not, a lesson she admittedly learned the hard way.

"All of a sudden I realized, hey, I have to pay half these bills. I need a job."

Appiah obtained two part-time jobs, which she worked at for a few months, but then decided she wanted to join the military. On May 30, 2002, without her mother's consent, she enlisted in the United States Air Force Reserve. After basic training and technical school, she was assigned to the 908th Airlift Wing, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, where she served several years in several different positions within the Logistics Readiness Squadron.

In 2016, armed with a master's degree in health administration, Appiah applied for an officer commission in the Air Force Reserve, hoping to serve in the medical field. Her application was turned down. Though she was disappointed, she didn't let it set her back. She had been

told by numerous Airmen and senior noncommissioned officers that she would make an excellent first sergeant, so that's what she became.

As a first sergeant, Appiah helped implement and lead quarterly enlisted calls. These were meetings held during the Reserve's monthly Unit Training Assembly where important information, such as deadlines for Enlisted Developmental Education Board, Enlisted Education Plan, or Stripes for Exceptional Airmen packages, were discussed. While reading the EDEB invitation to apply and course descriptions, she noticed the opportunity to serve as Air Force Reserve Command Enlisted Legislative Fellow.

The fellowship provides hands-on experience through education and development activities consisting of an intensive orientation of Congress. The 54 month commitment includes six months of academic courses, one year on Capitol Hill as staffer to a member of congress or committee and a 36-month post-fellowship active-duty service commitment in the National Capital Region. The position intrigued her; however, she also noticed they were only looking for one primary and one alternate for the position and didn't further consider applying.

Ironically, during the next enlisted call, facilitator Senior Master Sgt. Justin Nettles, a 908th Airlift Wing Operations Group loadmaster, mentioned the legislative fellow position. Appiah raised her hand and informed him that they were only accepting one person as the primary. Nettles then posed a question to the audience which would change the trajectory of her career: "What if you are that one person?"

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic reared its ugly head and the country-wide shutdown began. The U.S. military was not exempt, as meetings, conferences, classes, and other mass gatherings were promptly cancelled or indefinitely postponed. Appiah received a notice that the EDEB had been cancelled, except to convene to decide the legislative fellow.

Appiah remembered Nettles' question, how she encourages Airmen to aim high, and thought, "What if I am the one person?"

"I've always had interest in policies, and how they are developed, debated, and enacted for the betterment of servicemembers," she said. "I also strongly encourage every Airman to look for opportunities and not be afraid to take a leap. I needed to take my own guidance."

With the help of her then group commander, retired

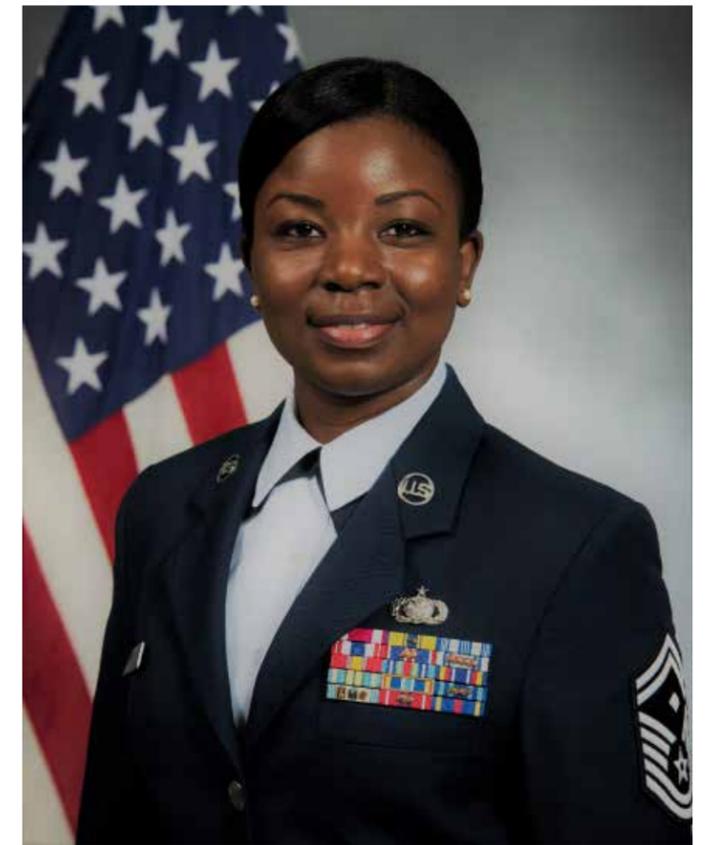
Col. Don Richey, the 357th Airlift Squadron's director of operations, Lt. Col. Diane Patton, and wing command chief, Chief Master Sgt. Tracy Cornett, Appiah submitted her application. Soon after, she was notified she was a finalist. A few days after a virtual interview with three panel members, she was notified that she had been selected as the primary. Her leap of faith worked. Indeed, she was the one.

"I'm a bit nervous," she confessed. "I've spent most of my life here in Alabama, but if I'm to accomplish bigger and better things I need to step out of my comfort zone. That is how we grow. We take that first step. I believe in having faith over fear."

This is not at all surprising considering the meaning of her name. "Eva" is from the Hebrew "Eve" meaning life, living one, or full of life. The surname "Appiah" dates to the Ashanti Empire (1701 to 1957) and means king, prince or fearless warrior. Quite literally, "Eva Appiah" means "Fearless Warrior of Life."

With an inextinguishable spirit and an ostensible tranquility, Appiah knows if she falls she will pick herself back up and keep moving forward.

"I'm ready for the challenge," she declared. "I'm ready."



# Combat Casualties aren't Always Human

by Maj. John T. Stamm  
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.** – The United States military has employed Military Working Dogs since the Revolutionary War; first used as pack animals, advancing to pest control, to today where they see action world-wide helping to safeguard military installations and personnel by detecting explosives and drugs.

MWDs have become an integral part of military operations and security, yet many people don't realize dogs are vulnerable to the same environmental and occupational hazards. They can suffer heat stroke, post-traumatic stress disorder, combat wounds, or any number of the same injuries that can produce a human casualty.

"Military Working Dogs are critical assets for military police, special operations units, and others operating in today's combat environment," said Capt. Beth Byles, Section Officer in Charge, Fort Benning Veterinary Center, Georgia. "Many people don't realize that the (military working) dogs often require medical attention."

Though dogs are similar to human biologically, they react differently and therefore specialized techniques are needed to provide proper care to the animal and protect the caregiver. That is why it is highly beneficial for military medical personnel to receive canine-specific medical training; and it's why Byles, a team of Fort Benning veterinary interns, and 42nd Air Base Wing Security Forces personnel provided MWD evacuation familiarization training to the 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron personnel, here, March 7.

"There are a very limited number of veterinarians in the military, so when MWDs get injured, quite often they are treated by medical personnel trained to provide care to humans," Byles said. "Expectations are that injured working dogs will receive the highest level of resuscitative care as far forward as possible, often in the absence of veterinary personnel."

The team taught 908 AES personnel the basics, such as how to check for vital signs and patient assessment. Other topics included emergency airway management, shock management, heat and cold injuries, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and virtually every other triage technique that medical personnel could employ in a combat environ-



ment. Training on artificial canines, personnel also learned how to properly sedate, secure, and transport the animals.

Participants learned that it is acceptable and effective to use medications developed for humans on canines. However, transfusing human blood into a canine would prove lethal.

"It would be equivalent to giving 'A-positive' blood to an individual with an 'O-negative' blood type," Byles said.

908 AES officer in charge of mission planning, 1st Lt. Kristian M. Taylor, recognized the gap in training and medical knowledge of MWD care within the unit and set up the training with the subject matter experts.

"As flight nurses, we understand that our patients are not limited to being human and take on the responsibility of having to provide care for a MWD, perhaps even in the absence of a handler," he said. "We aren't selective in who we treat. Our job is to provide the best care to anyone who needs it, including canines."

908 AES commander Lt. Col. Amy Sanderson re-emphasized the importance of the training, as flight nurses and medical technicians are often the first medical care the animals receive when injured.

"We transport them aboard our aircraft, and they are considered our patients while they are in our system," she said. "It is vital we learn proper care."

The training manual "Clinical Practice Guidelines for Military Working Dogs" can be found online at [https://jts.amedd.army.mil/assets/docs/cpgs/Military\\_Working\\_Dog\\_CPGs/MWD\\_CPG\\_12\\_Dec\\_2018\\_ID16.pdf](https://jts.amedd.army.mil/assets/docs/cpgs/Military_Working_Dog_CPGs/MWD_CPG_12_Dec_2018_ID16.pdf)



## Loadmasters Vital to Tactical Air Drop Mission

By Staff Sgt. Max Goldberg  
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.** – Members of the 357th Airlift Squadron took part in a few tactical air drops as part of a monthly tactical flying week that happened to take place during a wing-wide exercise named Auburn Tide here in late March.

The exercise is intended to demonstrate the 908th Airlift Wing's pre-deployment readiness while sharpening the skills of 908th Airmen in the weeks leading up to the largest deployment in the wing's history.

Loadmasters with the 357th AS rigged and loaded heavy equipment bundles onto several aircraft which were then dropped over a predetermined location. These drops simulated the way supplies are delivered to service members in deployed locations across the globe.

Loadmasters are responsible for properly placing both cargo and personnel on the aircraft before flight. Calculating proper weight distribution and securely fastening equipment are all considerations a loadmaster must make before the aircraft can safely take off.

The exercise required cooperation on the part of several units in order to successfully prepare, drop and recover the bundles. Airmen from the 25th Aerial Port Squadron have a hand in securing and recovering the drops, 357th AS navigators determine the time and location of the drops and 357th loadmasters ensure the cargo is safely and properly loaded and placed on the aircraft.

"When we train like this, we just drop sandbags but we're actually simulating mission critical supplies," said Senior Airman Wyatt Slayton, a loadmaster with the 357th AS. "In a combat situation we need to get those troops down on the ground, so this training is really important."

The 357th AS plays an integral part in the 908th's tactical airlift mission and demonstrated its readiness throughout the course of this exercise. Auburn Tide concluded after a week and served to enhance mission readiness as the wing gears up for its biggest deployment to date.



# 25th APS Hones Air Drop Capabilities during Auburn Tide

By Staff Sgt. Max Goldberg  
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.** – The 25th Aerial Port Squadron took part in a series of tactical air drops here over the course of a tactical flying week in late March.

These drops were part of the larger exercise named Auburn Tide, a wing-wide demonstration of pre-deployment readiness aimed at sharpening the skills of 908th Airmen in the months leading up to the largest deployment in the wing's history.

The 25th APS is responsible for processing personnel and cargo, rigging for drops and the recovery of equipment. Throughout the week, aerial porters planned, coordinated and executed drops to simulate delivering cargo from the air to deployed locations.

“We get a lot of good training out of this because we’re getting ready to deploy,” said Master Sgt. Neal Moore, lead rigger with the 25th APS. “This is the exact way we would be doing this in a deployed environment.”

Aerial porters have a hand in the air drop process from packing and inspecting parachutes to recovering and transporting cargo at the drop zone.

“This training is good practice because when we have to go hands on for a real-life mission we are as accurate as possible,” said Tech. Sgt. Gary Broaden, an air transportation specialist with the 25th APS. “Whether it be making sure we are rigging cargo correctly for air flight safety or even something as important as food or ammo to troops in deployed environments. Everything has to be precise, there’s no room for error.”

The 25th APS ability to quickly load and recover cargo, all while effectively working with its counterpart units is necessary in achieving deployment readiness. Auburn Tide concluded after a week and served to bolster mission readiness as the wing gears up for its biggest deployment to date.



# Patient Care at forefront as 908th ASTS Participates in Wing-Wide Exercise

By Staff Sgt. Max Goldberg  
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.** – The 908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron took part in a simulated casualty care exercise here, March 23.

The exercise took place as part of the larger exercise Auburn Tide, a wing-wide demonstration of pre-deployment readiness.

The role of the ASTS is to establish and operate aeromedical staging facilities and develop critical care air transport teams. During this exercise, ASTS assessed, treated and transported “casualties” with various medical emergencies ranging from physical trauma to mental health crises.

The ASTS Airmen were tasked with the treatment of 16 human patients and one military working dog. Patients were treated in a temporary field hospital before being transported to a hospital to receive the next level of medical care.

“The purpose of the Aeromedical Staging Squadron is to get their patients prepared for their next level of care and to get them ready for their transient flight,” said Maj. Myte Dahl, the senior medical administrator for the 908th ASTS. “Whether it be through C-130 or whatever means to get them to their next level of care, all of our medical technicians and nursing personnel are all caring for those patients to get them onto those expedited flights.”

The process of transporting patients requires the cooperation of several different units. The ASTS must coordinate patient care with the 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, communicating the specific needs of each patient. The AES in turn will continue treatment during transport while working with air crews to safely and effectively transport patients.

The members of the ASTS faced challenges throughout this exercise which replicated situations they could encounter in a deployed environment. Ranging from trauma sustained by explosives to psychiatric episodes, all patients require unique treatment that ASTS Airmen must be equipped to handle. Even a Security Forces canine counterpart received the same level of care afforded to human patients.

“This exercise provided various types of patients in different scopes of injury phases,” said Dahl. “It is imperative that our members comprehend the complexity of patient care and treatment throughout the staging system and that they can execute the ASTS mission during wartime.”

The casualty care exercise conducted by the ASTS demonstrated its ability to act effectively under pressure and work cohesively with its counterparts. The week-long exercise, Auburn Tide, concluded with the goal of wing-wide readiness as the 908th prepares for its largest deployment to date.



## A Grateful Goodbye

by Senior Master Sgt. Eva Appiah  
357th Airlift Squadron First Sergeant

Teammates, it has been an honor and a privilege to have served with each of you for the past 18 years. In May 2003, I reported to newcomers as an airman basic assigned to the 908th Logistic Readiness Squadron in the Material Management flight. In June 2017, I was selected to serve as the First Sergeant for the 357th Airlift Squadron. Throughout my career, we have cried together as a Wing when we've lost members to an untimely death and laughed together while enjoying Family Day activities. Moreover, we have celebrated congratulatory moments from marriages, births, promotions. We have deployed together as Wingmen who took care of each other. With no reservations, we have endured difficult moments together this past year; and through the tough conversations we gained more knowledge by relying on each other's expertise and experiences. Consequently, we are a more resilient force than ever. We continued to stay the course, and remained focused on the mission while knowing our "Whys."

I'm extremely humbled to announce my selection as

the AFRC Enlisted Legislative Fellow through the CY21 Enlisted Development Education Board (EDEB). As I depart the 908th Airlift Wing to embark on this journey as a Fellow in the National Capital Region, I reflect on the lessons learned and personal growth gained. This opportunity wouldn't have been possible without the guidance and leadership from numerous members. While the names are too many to list it is with a grateful heart, I say "thank you," to all.

I leave with these words of encouragement: Do not allow fear to prevent your growth. Do not be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone and to seek new opportunities within the Command to develop both personally and professionally. Always remain humble, be teachable at each step of your career, and share the knowledge. Finally, remember to take the opportunity to deliberately mentor and develop our Airmen.

Truly, I've enjoyed working with and learning from each person, and looking forward to the next chapter. Thank you for all you do and may God bless you in your future endeavors like He has mine. Wishing you all the best!

## 908th Proves Readiness for Wing's Largest Deployment during Exercise Auburn Tide

By Bradley J. Clark  
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.** – For more than a year now the 908th Airlift Wing has been faced with the task of figuring out how to protect its members and their families from COVID-19 while still being able to answer the nation's call when it comes. One of the first things the wing commander, Col. Craig Drescher, said in readjusting the wing's priorities was that, "we have to find a way to lean forward and still accomplish and preserve as much of the mission as possible."

In the last year, the wing has taken the commander's words to heart, as it knew it was facing the largest deployment in the history of the 908th AW this year.

To help showcase the wing's motto, "Readiness in Strength," the 908th held a wing-wide exercise in conjunction with one of the many monthly tactical airlift training weeks it has had in the past year.

While Exercise Auburn Tide, aptly named for Alabama's only Reserve wing, didn't feature every member of the wing, it did focus on many of the jobs needed to accomplish the tactical airlift mission of the wing. Featuring maintainers from the 908th Maintenance and Aircraft Maintenance Squadrons to fix, prepare and generate aircraft for missions; air transportation specialists from the 25th Aerial Port Squadron to pack, rig, and provide various equipment used for air drops; medical community members from the 908th Aero-

medical Evacuation Squadron and the 908th Aeromedical Staging Squadrons to prepare and provide patient care to wounded members downrange, inflight, and at local medical treatment facilities; and lastly the aircrews that fly all of these important missions, either delivering supplies or troops to the front lines, or air evacuation mission of bringing members back to a safe treatment facility.

"The main goal of this exercise is to ramp up our operations and challenge our members," said Capt. Justin Bell, director of inspections for the 908th inspector general's office. "We create situations that are tailored towards combat operations that are close to what we'll encounter in a deployed environment. As an inspector I'm looking to ensure that all our members are ready to carry out the mission and can be deployment capable within 72 hours."

The ability to deploy anywhere, anytime at a moment's notice is critical to the 908th's tactical airlift mission. Auburn Tide will serve to bolster our Reserve Citizen Airmen's readiness and mission capability.

"While we've had our share of adversity this past year, the members of the 908th have consistently adapted and overcome every challenge," said Drescher. "I have full confidence that our members will continue to be resilient and mission ready as they deploy."

# GIVE A SHOUT TO YOUR FELLOW AIRMEN! ...

...by nominating them to be featured in  
"I am The 908th"

"I am The 908th" is a weekly publication which aims to highlight members of the wing who go above and beyond to achieve our mission of providing combat capability anytime, anywhere.

Send the name and unit of your nominee to 908th Public Affairs at [908aw.pa@us.af.mil](mailto:908aw.pa@us.af.mil) and get your wingmen recognized for all their hard work



"READINESS IN STRENGTH"



## LOVED ONE PREPARING TO DEPLOY?

I have some FREE resources available for you and your family! Contact me!!

### Coloring/Activity Books with crayons for children:

10 Things you need to know when your mom or dad comes home

10 Ways to cope with your mom's or dad's deployment

My parent is going away

My parent is coming Home

Military Family 12-month Deployment Calendar

Military kids bracelet

Military Kids pencil set in bag

### Books for Adults:

Yellow Ribbon Program

Reunion and Reintegration

6 issues to discuss before deployment

Readiness and Deployment

Preparing for Deployment and Returning Home

Coping with being apart from your loved one

Reintegration for Spouses

Reintegration for Parents

Military Kids

Family member benefits

Deployment Journal

### Other:

Deployment stress cards

Together again bears

### United Through Reading (UTR) program:

UTR the member is provided with a book and they are recorded reading that book. Their child will have the book and recording to stay connected while deployed.

To schedule a time for the UTR the member needs to call, 953-2353, and schedule a date/time to go and be recorded.

### Air Force Dolls:

The Air Force Doll face is plastic, so the member can slide a photo of themselves in that area. One doll per child. **The member can stop by the Active Duty A&FRC (beside the dining facility) to pick up a doll.**

Our Military Kids Grants:

For children of Reservists deployed overseas 120 days or more \$500 (max) grant per child. Can be used for youth sports, fine arts, or tutoring. Ages 5 through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Apply at [www.ourmilitarykids.org](http://www.ourmilitarykids.org)

### Other Resources available through the 42<sup>nd</sup> A&FRC:

Baby & You Class (42nd) 953-2353

Heart Link (42nd) 953-2353

Give Parents A Break (42nd) 953-2353

Hearts Apart Dinner (42nd) 953-2353

Mental Health Clinic 334-953-5430

TRICARE Prime 1-877-298-3408 or <http://www.tricare.mil>

tricare.mil

### 908th Helping Agencies:

A&FRC Ms. Christina Lacy 334-953-9018

TAP, Readiness, Resume Writing, Employment, Finances, Key Spouse Program, Resources and Referrals

Chaplain team 953-5372 (office)

Director of Psychological Health Ms. Amy Kemp-Wellmeier 334-953-5980 (work)

EO Advisor MSgt Toni Page 334-953-3064 (office)

Yellow Ribbon Coordinator Tech. Sgt. Gabrielle

Bates 334-953-2219 (office)

Command Post 334-953-7474

ID Cards 334-953-5522

Be sure to stay informed of all the resources and services the A&FRC has to offer by visiting <https://www.facebook.com/908familyreadiness/> or

<https://afrc.eim.us.af.mil/sites/908AW/MSG/A&FR/SitePages/Home.aspx>



## UTA Lodging

\* Make reservations, cancellations or changes at least 48 hours prior to your arrival.

\* Maxwell Toll-Free 1 (800) 673-9356  
Direct (334) 953-8557/8558

\* Input your unit authorization code (Given by unit's First Sergeant)

\* Dial 953-8557 or 953-8558

\* Upon request, input USER ID

\* Upon request, input PIN number, then "#." PIN is assigned during Newcomers. If not known, contact your Squadron Lodging Rep.

\* Make, change, cancel, check reservation  
Reservation: input arrival date followed by departure date, then type [ADT, IDT, or both (ADT: Annual Tour, Mandays, Special Tour) (IDT: UTA, AFTP, RMP, Make-up UTA). UTA is IDT.]

> ADT only? Call Lodging: (334) 953-6133

\* If a scheduled UTA weekend, system will tell you where you will be staying

Questions?

Contact Master Sgt. Ce'Drea Young (334) 953-1690, option 1

Emer cell: (254) 258-1884

DSN: 493-7332 [cedrea.young@us.af.mil](mailto:cedrea.young@us.af.mil)

### Checkout time:

No time to go to the front desk, or phone charge? Drop the keys in the drop box in Bldg 682 (Main Lodging) for your convenience.

DO NOT USE this box if you have charges on your bill.

In accordance with AFI 34-246 smoking is prohibited in lodging rooms. You may be charged a minimum of \$50 for cleaning for violating this AFI.

### UTAs FY21

Oct. 3-4 (17-18)	April 10-11 (17-18)
Nov. 7-8 (21-22)	May 1-2 (15-16)
Dec. 5-6 (19-20)	June 5-6 (26-27)
Jan. 9-10 (23-24)	July 10-11 (24-25)
Feb. 6-7 (20-21)	Aug. 7-8 (21-22)
March 6-7 (20-21)	Sept. 11-12 (18-19)

Parentheses indicate Bravo UTA

## 908<sup>TH</sup> UNIT TRAINING ASSEMBLY

# May

Start	End	Event	Location/OPR
<b>Friday, April 30, 2021</b>			
1500	TBD	Commander's Staff Meeting	Bldg 1050/357th Conf Rm
1700	TBD	First Sergeants' Meeting	Bldg 845/AMXS Conf Rm
<b>Saturday, May 1, 2021</b>			
0630	0700	Sign In	Orderly Room
0730	1530	Clothing Issue	Bldg 1154/Rm 131
0730	0815	Mask Issue for Weapons Qual	Bldg 1154
0800	1100	Lab work/DNA/HIV/Blood testing	Bldg 760/Lab
0800	1530	Physicals	Bldg 760/Flr 1
0830	1530	Immunizations	Bldg 760/Flr 1
0900	1100	Newcomer's MPS Inprocessing	Bldg 1056/Classroom
0900	0930	SAPM Training	Bldg 1056/CC Conf
0900	1000	UDM Meeting	Bldg 848/ CF Classrm
0900	1000	Fitness for Duty (DD 689)	Bldg 760/Flr 1
0900	1000	First Duty Station Briefing	Bldg 1056/Classroom
1230	1530	CDC Testing	Bldg 903/FSDE
1600	1630	Sign Out	Orderly Room
<b>Sunday, May 2, 2021</b>			
0700	0730	Sign In	Orderly Room
0700	1100	CBRNE	Bldg 1154/Room 119
1200	1600	CBRNE	Bldg 1154/Room 119
1230	1300	Readiness Reporting/DRRS/ART Briefing	Bldg 1055/908 CAT
1400	1600	AFSC SPECIFIC TRAINING	Designated Workcenter
1600	-	Sign Out	Orderly Room

Support functions' schedule		
Activity	Dates & hours of operation	Location/Ext.
Newcomers' Trg Flt	Sat 0700-1600	Bldg 1056/Rm 101
MPS Customer Svc	Sat 1300-1600 Sun 0700-1300 M-F 0900-1600 <i>(Closed 1300-1600 every Wed except drill week)</i>	Bldg 1056/3-5522
Reserve Pay	MTTHF 0800-1600 / Wed 0800-1200 Sat 0900-1500 Sun 1200-1500	Bldg 1056/3-6722
Medical Records	Sat 0800-1500	Bldg 760 2nd Floor/ 3-5714
Individual Equipment		Bldg 1154/3-6020
Clothing Sales	Sat 0900-1500	Bldg 851/3-7505
Restricted Area Badge	M-F 0730-1600	Bldg 502/3-4283
Geneva Conv Cards	M-F 0730-1600	Bldg 502/3-4283
Dining Hall	Breakfast: 0600-0800 Lunch: 1100-1300 Dinner: 1600-1830	Bldg 668/3-6450
Lodging Office		Bldg 682 /240-5600
Photo Lab	M-F 0730-1600	Bldg 926/3-7981
Comm Help Desk		Bldg 848/3-9703

**908th Airlift Wing  
401 W. Maxwell Blvd.  
Maxwell AFB AL 36112-6501**

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TO THE FAMILY OF:



**Members of the 908th Airlift Wing exercised their ability to perform tactical air drops during a recent Tactical Flying week the wing held. This Tac Week was different as it was also part of a wing-wide, week-long exercise known as Auburn Tide to enhance the wing's readiness. (U.S. Air Force photo by Bradley J. Clark)**

