The Pratt & Whitney F135 engine for the F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter is shown here during a test in the Engine Test Facility Sea Level test cell at AEDC in 2016. (U.S. Air Force photo/Travis Powers)

The AEDC Model Shop steps up to fulfill customer request

By Raquel March
AEDC Public Affairs

The AEDC Model and Machine Shop recently stepped up to meet a short notice need for the markings by far the most critical to meeting an accelerated Air Force Test Center rapid fielding schedule.

In an effort to meet a tight execution schedule for the needed test articles, the Advanced Precision Kill Weapon Systems (APKWS) Program Office requested AEDC assistance. “AEDC has performed remarkably helping our Program execute test asset availability needed to address an Air Force Central Command Urgent Operational Need,” said Maj. Jesse Moreno, APKWS Program Office. Panarisi, second from left, as assistant to the APKWS Program Office by recommending the Model Shop complete its time sensitive request. Pictured are Calder Smith, Michael Panarisi, Michael Panarisi, Jr., and Reanna Panarisi looking at items fabricated by the AEDC Model Shop. (U.S. Air Force photo/Nolly Peterson)

Butler receives William M. Dunne People’s Choice Award

By Raquel March
AEDC Public Affairs

Kirk Butler, a scramjet test engineer at AEDC, recently received the William M. Dunne People’s Choice Award. Butler is instrumental in developing a backup plan for a non-operational high pressure gaseous nitrogen system at the APTU facility, which resulted in the completion of a $1.6 million loan.

The award was established in 1996 and named after William M. Dunne, an environmental engineer who served as a chief of the AEDC Environmental Management Division. Butler is a resident of Tullahoma and has worked at AEDC for eight years.

AEDC Advanced Missile Signature Center Team receives Gossick Team Excellence Award

By Debra Ortiz
AEDC Public Affairs

Members of the AEDC Advanced Missile Signature Center Team received the Semi-Annual General Gossick Team Excellence Award for the second time since July 20, 2015 in ceremonies at the AEDC Quarterly Awards Breakfast July 27 at the Arnold Lakeside Center. This image was engineered to emphasize the subject. (U.S. Air Force photo/Nolly Peterson)

AEDC F135 Test Team receives AFMC award

By Raquel March
AEDC Public Affairs

The AEDC Propulsion Ground Test Team, who performed engine tests on the Pratt & Whitney F135 engine for the F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter, recently received an Air Force Materiel Command Competition and Evaluation Award. The award recognizes a team for superior test and evaluation achievements and contributions within AFMC.

The team was noted in the award nomination for making test cell modifications and upgrades which increased testing capabilities for the JSF Program Office. From January to December 2015, the F-135 testing consisted of accelerated mission testing, corrosion testing, corrosion testing and a suite of altitude testing for both the Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing and the Conventional Take-Off and Landing engine variants.

The team was also cited for the ability to cross-train in multiple test cells which saved the customer money in scheduling tests. Additional training included engine maintenance and inspection skills making team members qualified to original equipment manufacturer standards during a test for the first time at AEDC.

The team’s notional tests and progresses resulted in utilities cost savings for the customer, according to the nomination. The Air Force team members were Brandon Landry, John Kelly, Richard Wilcox Jr., Eric Traud, Jonathan Lates, Paul Wright, Stephen Maccarone, Yancey Burchett, Vestor Todd, Jason Harrel, Reinald Floyd, Adam Moon, Paul Nalin, Michael Parmen- ter, Michael Wrenn and Kate Tedford. Numerous AEDC contractor personnel were also involved in implementing all of the initiatives cited in the award nomination according to Brandon Landry, an AEDC F135 test manager.

“Without our contractor teams in the Turbines (Turbin) Engine Combustion Total Test Fuel, there is no way this award would have been possible for AEDC,” said the team.

The team will compete at the U.S. Air Force for possible nominations as the Air Force Association Test Team of the Year Award.

In this Issue....

Base Access Validation more stringent for visitors, customers and guests...Page 3

OSI provides prevention tips for scams to team members...Page 3
Transparency leadership: An old concept for modern times

By Col. Sean Larkin
National Air and Space Intelligence Center

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio (AFNS) - We’re living in an age of hyper-connectivity. With sensors everywhere and supercomputers in our pockets, there’s a wealth of information available to everyone, whether it’s a review of a restaurant, our heart rate or the speed of an unladen swallow (African or European). There are unfiltered forums and social media groups devoted to almost everything – including our Air Force. Further, your words and actions can come online indefinitely on the internet. Nothing stays in Vegas. Now, more than ever, to quote Gen. George P. Patton, “You are always on parade.”

The combination of instant information, rapid social interaction and recorded behavior has changed the environment and expectations for leaders. Our Airman expect and deserve leaders whose actions match their words and whose decision-making is open, fair and consistent.

While discretion and the safeguarding of unclassified, classified and personal data remain critical to the Air Force’s success, the fact remains that any pop-up alert that says what you say and what you do will be evidence, one way or another. But there is no reason to fear such scrutiny; in fact, we must embrace transparency to lead in the 21st century.

Transparency is not a new concept. Political scientists, journalists and policy advocates have been touting its importance for more than a century. In 1913, Louis Brandeis, who would go on to serve as a justice U.S. Supreme Court, famously referred to sunlight (transparency) as “the best disinfectant.” An organization that embraces open records and honest dialogue, and is accountable for its actions, is less likely to violate the public trust.

Court, famously referred to sunlight (transparency) as “the best disinfectant.” An organization that embraces open records and honest dialogue, and is accountable for its actions, is less likely to violate the public trust.

The benefit of transparency goes beyond our external relationships, to the heart of our organization. Open, honest and consistent interactions between leaders and followers, strengthen relations and bolster our core values.

For example, as a component of transparency, there should be tough decisions on personnel matters, strategic priorities, resources and mission execution. I trust my team to provide the best available information and then recommend decisions. While I could technically make decisions without seeking such advice, involving the right subordinates and stakeholders in a transparent decision-making process is essential to leading effectively and building organizational trust.

Transparency helps ensure that the trust we have our mission partners can see how we’re aligning our state priorities and vision.

Finally, transparency can reinforce and uphold the Air Force core values. I believe in these values and wholeheartedly believe we need to work with integrity and excellence, every day, every level. When your leadership style is transparent and collaborative, it is easier to model and enforce the ethical behavior we expect from everyone in the Department of Defense. Additionally, an open environment with honest and constructive encourages reinforces positive behaviors that violates our values.

What we say is important, but our actions are what really speak to our Airmen. Leading with transparency creates strong, transparent organizations built on trust and guided by the Air Force core values. So, let some sunlight into your leadership style – it’s a great day for a parade.

Col. Rodney Todaro
AEDC Commander
By Rich Trail
AEDC Security Forces

As you may have already learned, the Air Force has made a huge leap in stepping up the game in terms of security and access controls. AEDC has added even more secure methods for entry to base through a push to enhance, more secure, the Real ID program required by the federal government’s ID, in order to gain access to federal facilities and equipment.

These states are not concerned with the federal government’s Real ID program requiring verification of state driver’s license and state identification credentials with less likelihood of being cloned or falsified.

First and foremost, if your visitor(s) is/are not an airman or an employee of the AEDC, the visitor will have to verify who you are when they arrive. The visitor will be asking what your name is, what your visitor control number is, and what your escorted authority is.

Next determine if your visitor has an acceptable entry credential. Military IDs and CAC cards require no further voting, but may require other local credentials such as a base badge. If no acceptable entry credential is determined, determine if your visitor has identification from one of the four states/territories listed above. If so, ascertain if they have any other acceptable form of identification as listed above.

Finally, if they don’t have approved identification and are a U.S. citizen, determine if the visitor is absolutely necessary, locate an escort authority to help you secure your visitor, and be prepared to follow your procedures at all times while on base.

Regardless of how you process your visitors, always access the base, TSD-SF and the VISITING OFFICER STATION before you ready to advise and assist you in your endeavors.

OIS provides prevention tips for scams to team members
By Bailey McArthur
Ashforth Memorial Boulevard Arnold AFB

There are many common scams out there and by many different names, but all are attempts to defraud your hard earned money, and possibly steal your personal financial information. These scams are found in various forms through misrepresented calls and emails, online, and even door-to-door. Always be aware of these schemes as they are common in today’s times, but always with the same common intent. Most of these requests require thoughtful, law-abiding citizens as laughable hoaxes – some are presented very professionally and well-engineered to take advantage of honest and unsuspecting citizens.

The bins are being used by a small army of dedicated recyclers for the composting of personal food scraps and paper towels.

As you move about AEDC, you may have spotted a number of black bins scattered throughout the base. These bins can be used to throw away the raw food materials used in the composting program as a way to reduce the amount of waste sent to the landfill and divert a portion of the waste stream to use in the production of composts.

Composting at AEDC was the brainchild of Anna Clements, who applied for and received a grant in 2014 to start the program. The home company, Amaze was a firm believer that even small personal efforts in conservation could add up to big things if enough people got involved. Amaze has taken a position in private industry and there is no longer here at AEDC, but influence residuated in the recruitment of a dedicated cadre of composting professionals who have actively continued her legacy. Currently of the AEDC composting program is that it operates at cost to the government (a side effect from the initial grant funding), yet has a positive impact on waste disposal.

As an Air Force Civilian, where can I find help?
We all face challenges, but we don’t have to face them alone. You need help with... TALK TO THESE AGENCIES & THEIR RESOURCES

ALL EMPLOYEES

Mental Health and substance abuse
Employment assistance
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
American Association of Poison Control Centers

Crisis Pregnancy Assistance Center

Military OneSource
AIDS Health and Life Cycle

Military Child Support Center
Health and Wellness Coalition

National Military Family Wellness Center

ARMY Family Counseling Center

AFSC Wellness Support Center
Civilian Health Promotion Services

Employee Assistance Program

National Commission for the Protection of Child Abuse Victims

Women’s Bureau of the Department of Labor

American Association of Poison Control Centers

U.S. Passport

Employment assistance

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

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To receive more information on how you can participate, call 454-4284.

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Falcon 9 rocket, common satellite successfully launched

The 57th Adversary Tactics Group, with the new “splinter” paint scheme, trained as the ‘world’s premier air combat forces. To represent these threats more accurately, the 64th AGRS gets creative in extra ways, such as paint schemes to accurately and better represent threats. We act like, look like, or anything you can think of, we try so we can be true to the threats. We’ve had some jets that are painted like a regular F-16, and then we’ve had some that have more of a tiger-stripe pattern. Our F-16 Viper paint schemes have been similar to threats in the past and this new scheme is more representative of today’s threats. In order to better emulate these threats, the 64th AGRS went to the MI Support Services in order to make their vision a reality. "The 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron’s Viper Aircraft Maintenance Unit approached the paint scheme through the approval process. Once it was approved, we proceeded to paint the aircraft."

The process of painting the newest scheme on the F-16 aggressors is one that doesn’t happen overnight. It took nearly three weeks to finish the first version. “It is also a hard line paint scheme rather than a solid one,” Dezell said. “Basically, rather than painting all the colors at once, with this new paint scheme we have to paint one color at a time. It’s more labor intensive and takes longer to complete. It’s a one of a kind paint job that has no one has done before.”

This one-of-a-kind splinter scheme is one of two different paint schemes that will be introduced in the coming months. "This is the first F-16 aggressor with the newest scheme and we are working on a second ‘shark' scheme because the 45th AGRS would like to see two threats eventually," Dezell said. "That scheme is in the design stages right now and the preliminary designs have been sent over to Viper (AMU) for their changes and approval."

The new paint schemes are just the two of the multiple ways the 45th AGRS provide advanced, relevant, and realistic training to air combat forces.
By Christopher Ball
379th Operations Support Squadron Public Affairs

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — AFTC accomplished another first recently by executing three Joint Attack Surface Standoff Missiles, or JASSMs, from the internal weapons bay of a B-52 Stratofortress here. The aircraft has long been capable of carrying JASSMS on its wing pylons, but this is the first time they have been successfully released from Conventional Rotary Launcher in the internal bay.

“arly was a first ever for the B-52, and it is also going to be another amazing enhancement to B-52 combat capability for Global Strike,” said Brig. Gen. Carl Schaefer, 412th Test Wing commander, who flew the F-16 photo chase plane for the JASSM mission. “I got to chase the first ever JASSM drop from the internal weapons bay of the B-52. We dropped it right here on the range at Edwards.” The venerable bomber could carry up to 12 JASSMs on its wing pylons, said Jose Estrada, a weapons integration engineer with the 776th Test Squadron. Integration of CRL in internal weapons bay adds a capability of carrying eight more missiles in the aircraft, increasing the B-52’s JASSM payload by more than 60 percent. The previous, or legacy, launcher used in the B-52 internal bay was the Common Strategic Rotary Launcher. This launcher was only capable of carrying conventional munitions, or “dumb bombs.”

Another advantage to carrying weapons internally is that less drag is created on the aircraft with increased efficiency, said Brian Pin, also a weapons integration engineer with the 776th. “For long range operations, this means less drag. The aircraft can fly further and faster and still return to base after the mission.” Estrada said. Although the release of missiles was the milestone, the missiles weren’t the main focus of the testing, Estrada said. “The CRL is really what we’re looking at. We’ve already validated the Joint Direct Attack Munition.”

Estrada, who works on the CRL Integration Program team, project manager, said this separation test was part of the first three phases, and primarily focused on data collection. “We accomplished all fit checks, making sure the weapons had clearance within the weapons bay, while rotating on the CRL, demonstrating a clean separation of the weapon in flight, and made sure everything was done safely,” he said. The next phase – the interface test – will include more of the same testing, but with the addition of live weapons. And the third phase will validate the CRL system’s full capability. The JASSM is a longrange, conventional, air-to-ground, precision standoff missile for the U.S. and allied forces. According to Lockheed Martin, the weapon’s producer, it is designed to destroy highvalue, wellprotected, fixed and relocatable targets, while JASSM’s significant standoff range keeps aircrews well out of danger from hostile air defense systems.

B-52 releases JASSM from internal bay: Success marks another ‘first-ever’ for AFTC

By AEDC Safety

Nearly all adults experience low back pain at some point in their working lives. This condition poses serious risks to the leading causes of lost work days and individual suffering. Steps aren’t taken to minimize a healthy back, the pain can become longterm and disabling.

Preventing back injuries is a major work place safety challenge. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than one million workers suffer back injuries each year, and back injuries account for one of every five workplace injuries and illnesses. This year, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration focused on data collection, placing, carrying, holding and lowering are involved in manual handling. The BLS survey shows that four out of five injuries occur while lifting or carrying, while the lower back, and that four out of five injuries occurred while the employee was lifting. No approach has been found for totally eliminating back injuries caused by lifting, though it is felt that a substantial portion of this can be prevented by effective controls including retraining of program and ergonomic design of work tasks.

OSHA is considering one or more of the best practices that have been successful in preventing lifting injuriesadministrative controls and engineering controls. The former includes careful monitoring and/or training of workers so they can safely perform lifting tasks. Engineering controls attempt to redesign the job so lifting becomes less hazardous. Suggested administrative controls include:

• Strength testing of existing workers, which one study showed can prevent up to one-third of work-related injuries.
• Assignment of workers to jobs that exceed their abilities.
• Training employees to utilize lifting techniques that place minimum stress on the lower back.
• Physical conditioning or stretching programs to reduce the risk of muscle strain.

Suggested engineering controls include:

• A reduction in the size or weight of the object lifted. The parameters include maximum allowable weights for a given set of task requirements; the compactness of a package; the presence of handles, and the stability of the package when being handled.
• Adjusting the height of a pallet or shelf. Lifting, which occurs below knee height or above shoulder height is more strenuous than lifting between these limits. Obstructions which prevent an employee’s body contact with the object being lifted also generally increase the risk of injury.
• Installation of mechanical aids such as pneumatic lifts, conveyors, and/or automat ed materials handling equipment. In a recent study it was determined that up to one-third of common back injuries could be eliminated through better job design (ergonomics).

The factors include frequency of lifting, duration of lifting activities, and type of lifting, as well as individual variables such as age, gender, body size, state of health, and general physical fitness.

Further details can be found in the Federal Register.

August 22, 2016 • 5
Tankers enable long-range bomber capability during Polar Roar

By Air Mobility Command Public Affairs

A KC-135 Stratotanker refuels a B-52 Stratofortress above Minnesota July 31. Four KC-135s from McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., assisted in refueling two B-52s to reach Polar Roar. Polar Roar is a mission in the Arctic Circle that demonstrates the ability to provide a flexible and vigilant long-range, global-strike capability. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Christopher Thornbury)

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SR-71 pilots, crew relive absolute speed record

By Angela Woolen 78th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. (AFNS) - In 1976, it was a different time. The Cold War with the Soviet Union was in full swing and Americans were standing in line to buy gas. That year was also the country’s bicentennial birthday. To celebrate, officials decided to attempt to break some records with an aircraft known as the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird.

On July 28, 1976, retired Maj. Gen. Eldon Joyce, the pilot, and retired Lt. Col. George Morgan, the reconnaissance systems officer (RSO), set the world absolute speed record for jet-powered aircraft on July 28, 1976. The two were at the Museum of Aviation in Warner Robbins, Georgia, for the 40th anniversary of the historic flight. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tommie Horton)

On July 28, 1976, retired Maj. Gen. Eldon Joyce, the pilot, and retired Lt. Col. George Morgan, a former reconnaissance systems officer, sit inside the cockpit of the SR-71 Blackbird. They were standing in line to buy gas. That year was also the country’s bicentennial birthday. To celebrate, officials decided to attempt to break some records with an aircraft known as the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird.

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Today, that plane sits in the Robins Air Force Base Museum of Aviation, and for three days, the museum hosted Joyce and Morgan, and 12 other crewmembers and pilots who were part of the SR-71 program. About 300 people also visited the museum July 30 for a public event commemorating the 40-year anniversary of the record-setting flight. “The way we look at it, we represent the crew, we represent the airplane and we really represent America,” Joyce said.

Both men were able to get back in the cockpit of their famous aircraft for a while during their visit to the museum. “It’s an impressive sight when I first saw it and flew it. Every time I flew it, it was my favorite memory,” Morgan said.

There were only 52 pilots and RSOs who were trained to fly the SR-71 operationally. Another 40 or so were trained to fly test flights for the plane, said Bar Carper, a former SR-71 pilot who is now a docent at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum annex in Chantilly, Virginia.

The SR-71 never had a family in its 30-plus years of operation. Tom Joyce, an instrument and inlet technician on the SR-71, also attended. Joyce was decision maker if any of his favored memories was hearing the aircraft crack with its start cart containing two 450-cubic-inch engines.

Joyce, who worked on the SR-71 from 1973 to 1988, said he remembered the first time he went out to see the Blackbird. “It was amazing. It doesn’t look like an airplane and then you put two people in the plane,” he said, smiling.

Most of the missions the Blackbird flew are still classified. Those reconnaissance operations are what brought peace and what gave some teeth to the American front during that Cold War. “Thank you from a country that could not have won the Cold War without your efforts,” Col. John Cooper, the 461st Air Control Wing commander, said during the July 30 event.

The SR-71 came to Robins in 1990, with more than 2,885 hours of air time in its career. It spent every day in its career at the museum. It was a different time. The Cold War with the Soviet Union was in full swing and Americans were standing in line to buy gas. That year was also the country’s bicentennial birthday. To celebrate, officials decided to attempt to break some records with an aircraft known as the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird.

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AF duo key to Army medical aid in Honduras


By Capt. David Capiga
Joint Task Force-Bravo Public Affairs

SOTO CANO AIR BASE, Honduras (AFNS) – Medical readiness training exercises (MEDRETE), military partnership engagements and mobile surgical team (MST) deployments have been the backbone of Joint Task Force-Bravo's humanitarian mission in Central America for the past 23 years and have touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, built partner nation capacity and fostered goodwill toward the U.S. in the region. These missions are almost completely run and supported by the Army – almost.

Behind missions conducted by Army medical personnel using Army helicopters for transportation and security provided by Army military police, there are two Airmen who bring more than just the token “joint forces” label to these important operations.

Air Force Capt. Amber El-Amin, a JTF-Bravo operations medical planner, and Senior Airman Synethia Robinson, the JTF-Bravo medical operations NCO in charge, play a vital role in the joint operations planning process. The process includes building concepts of operation; synchronizing and de-conflicting all logistics and support elements; scheduling and leading meetings and rehearsal of concept drills; ensuring all mission personnel, to include Honduran employees, possess all appropriate passport and country clearances; and that all personnel and equipment are manifested and ready for transport on the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment helicopters.

“This job is nothing like we do back home,” said El-Amin, who is deployed here from the 60th Medical Support Squadron at Travis Air Force Base, California. “My specialty match is medical logistics, and I’ve spent the majority of my time in that field. Here though, I’m really a project manager, and there are a lot of moving pieces and units to synchronize for a mission.”

That part of the puzzle is where Robinson, a health services management specialist deployed here from the 23rd MDSS at Moody AFB, Georgia, comes in.

AEDC Milestones

25 YEARS
David Porter, NAS
20 YEARS
Stacy Jones, AF
James Lucas, NAS
Paul Smith, NAS
15 YEARS
David Clark, NAS
Billy Emberton, NAS
Kendall Lacey, ASO
Jennifer Lightfoot, NAS
Kay Odell, NAS
Gregory Sandlin, NAS
10 YEARS
Brewnen Griffish, NAS
Christine Hughes, AF
Ozzy Young, AF
5 YEARS
Michael Marana, NAS
Patrick Weaver, NAS
INBOUND MILITARY
Mag. Virginia Trimmble, AF

NEW HIRES
Blake Beaton, ASO
Jeremy Dinsmore, FSS
John Duncan, ASO
Stephen Farrington, FSS
Luke Frederick, ASO
Jesse Musall, ASO
Dr. Rodger Oren, AF
David Parson, ASO
George Trussell, FSS
Martha Wheeler, ASO
Randy Wotton, AF

CERTIFICATES
Suzanne Luthi received a Master of Business Administration, NAS
Andrea Stephens received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Project Management, ASO

RETIEMENTS
Barry Bennett, AF
NEW HIRES
Blake Beaton, ASO
Jeremy Dinsmore, FSS
John Duncan, ASO
Stephen Farrington, FSS
Luke Frederick, ASO
Jesse Musall, ASO
Dr. Rodger Oren, AF
David Parson, ASO
George Trussell, FSS
Martha Wheeler, ASO
Randy Wotton, AF

AEDC Woman’s Club presents TV-writer and author April Kelly

By Barbara McGuire

The Sept. 6 meeting of the AEDC Woman’s Club at the Arnold Lakeside Center will feature April Kelly, a television writer and author from Lynchburg.

After working as a creative director for a Florida advertising agency in the early 1970s, Kelly moved to California and became a comedy writer. She was part of the original writing staff of the sitcom “Mork and Mindy,” which introduced Robin Williams to the world as an actor, and she wrote 15 episodes in the first two seasons. Later she moved to New York to produce “Love, Sidney,” starring Tony Randall, for which she received her second Emmy nomination. She now lives in Lynchburg but will leave the farm long enough to talk about “Mork and Mindy” and what it was like being one of only a few female comedy writers in television. She will also give away three copies of her books.

Table donations from the September meeting will go to the Motlow Ladies Philanthropic Society.

The September meeting is open to the public and provides the opportunity to meet the AEDCWC members and become a member. You don’t need to have military connections or be involved with Arnold Air Force Base to visit and become a member.

For information about the AEDCWC call 455-3569.

The social hour of the meeting starts at 9:30 a.m., with the business meeting and program beginning at 10 a.m.

Disclaimer: This is a private organization which is not part of the Department of Defense or any of its components and has no governmental status.
“It’s very easy to drop a ball; thus, Senior Airman Robinson and I have to make sure that we’re always on top of it,” El-Amin said. “She’s been doing a great job here, and I couldn’t do any of this without her.”

Joint environments are by no means new or unique, but they can present distinct challenges to those experiencing them for the first time. “I volunteered to come and be a part of the mission here at JTF-(Bravo),” Robinson said. “This is my first deployment, and so far I have been amazed at how much I have learned and adapted to working with our sister services.”

In addition to training exercises, El-Amin and Robinson also plan for JTF-Bravo involvement in Honduran-led military partnership engagements, which are very similar to the training exercises but are conducted by the host nation. “We have to conduct a reconnaissance for each mission, which means we’re essentially planning two major events per mission,” El-Amin said. “So really, we’re planning six separate missions every month with their own transportation, manifests, security, funding and everything else that makes a mission successful.”

The duo spends approximately 180-200 hours over 12 weeks preparing for each training exercise, military partnership engagements and MST, and sometimes more if the mission is outside Honduras. While the majority of past missions have been in Honduras, JTF-Bravo is working with U.S. Embassy country teams and ministries of health in the other Central American nations to conduct exercises within their borders.

El-Amin and Robinson were heavily involved in the planning and execution of recent MEDRETEs in Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras, however, they rarely get to see firsthand the impact of what they do. “We’re behind the scenes and generally don’t go on the missions,” El-Amin said. “I did get to go visit one MEDRETE when I first arrived. I could see the excitement of the people as the helicopters came in to land, and I got to walk through the entire process. It was really amazing to see what our team does.”

There have been more than 300 MEDRETEs conducted, and JTF-Bravo MEDEL personnel have treated more than 326,000 medical patients and 69,670 dental patients since October 1993. An average operation allows more than 1,000 people living in remote, austere environments to receive medical, dental and preventive medical care. “It’s been busy and we’ve had a steep learning curve, but it’s rewarding,” El-Amin said. “There’s a lot that goes into these missions, but each month we provide humanitarian assistance to thousands of people. It’s an honor to play such an important part in the JTF-Bravo mission.”

Capt. Amber El-Amin, a Joint Task Force-Bravo operations medical planner, and Senior Airman Synethia Robinson, the JTF-Bravo medical operations NCO in charge, help load equipment into a CH-47 Chinook helicopter July 25 at Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras. El-Amin and Robinson play a vital role in the joint operations planning process for JTF-Bravo missions. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Scotia B. Ray)