



# BAGRAM NEWS EXPRESS

*Start Right, Finish Strong*

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## 755th ECES broadens local workers' job opportunities

By Staff Sgt. Jason Lake  
455th AEW Public Affairs

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

Reservists assigned to the 755th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron live by this proverb every day while trying to improve the infrastructure here and provide a better living for local Afghan workers.

In the past eight weeks, more than 50 civil engineer specialists deployed from Wright-Patterson's 445th Civil Engineer Squadron have been putting together a training program to recruit and certify local workers for construction projects on base.

The Training Afghan Craftsmen program, or TAC, also aims to build up job résumés for local skilled workers with the goal of getting them higher paying jobs.

Staff Sgt. Mike Nelson, a readiness management specialist working as a structural craftsman who developed the training program, said the idea came a few months ago when a local worker providing unskilled labor told Nelson's unit that he was a skilled mason and could help on construction projects.

The unit let the contractor demonstrate his skills and was surprised to find an untapped resource.

"He did a great custom job that we could not have done," Nelson said. "He knew how to incorporate some of the local natural resources into the project. [After that] we realized we could use workers with these hidden



Air Force/Senior Airman Erik Cardenas

**Abdul Jalil, a local contractor, paints a rail on the top floor of the new Mortuary Affairs facility, at Bagram Air Field. Mr. Jalil and several local contractors, under the supervision of the 755th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, are participating in a new job training program to improve their construction skills and improve their quality of life.**

talents as force multipliers on various construction projects."

Sergeant Nelson said his unit saw an opportunity to help workers they had come to know through various unskilled labor projects - while also providing certified labor continuity for the next rotation of Airmen who could use their skills sets.

Rather than start a training and certification system from scratch, Sergeant Nelson decided to use the Air Force enlisted Career Field Education and Training Plan as a template.

"The only thing that was missing was a verifiable system and training program," he said. "Now we're taking

workers through a series of verifiable and quantifiable training events with core tasks just like in the CFETP."

Sergeant Nelson said the new TAC program has four major phases.

The application phase screens workers with at least some experience in a skill set from the pool of local workers who apply for work on Bagram.

After the screening process, Sergeant Nelson said the applicants are given a few days worth of safety and basic engineer skills training and taught basic English speaking for use in the workplace.

"We teach them things like how to work safely, or how to use a tape measure

# TRAINING

... basic skills they'll need for any of the specialties we are training them in," explained Sergeant Nelson. "We also teach them English words used at the workplace like hammer, safety or lunch."

The workers then go on to the upgrade training phase, similar to enlisted upgrade training in the Air Force.

"We pair the workers up with one of our Airmen in the corresponding career field they're interested in for 12 to 18 months," he said. "Like Air Force upgrade training, we'll document their training and certify them on tasks for upgrade training on several different skill levels."

Sergeant Nelson said his unit then provides training certificates for the workers and also helps them write résumés in English and their



**Sergeant Nelson**

native language, Dari, with the goal of fetching a higher paying contract job on- or off-base.

"The skills and training we give them will help them more in the long run than if we just built something for them," Sergeant Nelson explained.

Tech. Sgt. Clay Bucy, a structural craftsman for the 755th ECES, is training

three carpenter apprentices how to cut dry wall for the first time while building a new mortuary affairs facility here.

"We've been showing them a few tricks of the trade," he said. "Once they're trained, we give them their tools and let them go at it."

Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Lemaster, a structural craftsman for the 755th ECES, supervises six TAC workers working for a month to expand Entry Control Point One where local villagers wait in line each day for random job opportunities.

"They've helped us with a lot of the big projects we're working on here at Bagram," the Independence, Ky.-native said of his carpenter apprentices who have developed their own friendly handshakes when they greet each other. "We're doing our

part to win the hearts and minds of the local population. We have developed great relationships with them."

While Sergeant Nelson said developing the program took a lot of effort - building up relationships with his workers and finding creative ways to make contacts and get the resources needed to implement the program - but it was all for a good cause.

"It's all about engaging the system for their sake and finding people who want to know how to make themselves better and taking the initiative to help them do it," Sergeant Nelson explained. "If TAC helps these workers find a contractor who will pay them what they deserve, then I'm more than willing to put forth the effort," he said. "We hope this program will have a long-lasting effect on the workers and their families."

Congratulations to the following Airmen at Camp Cunningham who were promoted Feb. 1 during a mass promotion ceremony.

**Senior Master Sergeant**  
Jenkins, Thomas M

**Master Sergeant**  
Anderson, Brian  
Darrow, Phillip  
Johnson, Kevin  
Lanning, Travis  
Lyons, Lisa  
Saddler, Shane

**Technical Sergeant**  
Adams, Chas  
Campbell, Mitziehugh  
Deleon, David  
Ethen, David  
Ford, Phillip  
Greene, Alfred  
Yaniec, Micheal

**Staff Sergeant**  
Bond, Shaun  
Cantrell, Jonathan  
Davidson, Joseph  
Ferguson, Jonathan  
Fisk, Christopher

Marks, Jonathan  
Smith, Olin  
Smith, Paul  
Swallers, William  
Wisdom, William  
McCartney, Patrick

**Senior Airman**  
David, Christopher  
Howell, Joshua  
Hwang, Sung Yoon  
Jones, Christopher  
Lathrop, Christopher  
Luker, Clayton James  
Mcintosh, Terrance  
Pedri, David  
Peterson, Joshua  
Pittman, Laquanna  
Rhett, Rashaad  
Rodriguez, Tessa  
Sanders, Bridgette  
Sunder, Elvis  
Wray, Erman

**Airman 1st Class**  
Bailey, Jeffrey  
Camarillo, Lacey  
Johnson, Andrew  
Lamey, Seth  
Serrecchia, Phillip  
Tully, Bryan

**Airman**  
McGuire, Zachary

## AWARD WINNERS

### Outstanding contributor

- Spc. Kimberly Kessler, Task Force Med

### Airman of the Month

- Senior Airman Maren Smith, TFM

### NCO of the Month

- Tech. Sgt. Matthew Wiese, 755th Air Expeditionary Group

### Senior NCO of the Month

- Master Sgt. James Mogren, 755th AEG

### Company Grade Officer of the Month

- Capt. Nathan Olsen, 755th AEG

### Civilian of the Month

- James Grindstaff, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group

### Start Right Awards

- Capt. Matthew Strohmeier, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Staff  
- Tech. Sgt. Patrick Day, 455th EOG  
- Maj. James Cooper, 455th EOG  
- Capt. Jesse Fritz, 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group  
- Senior Airman Abraham Bagley, 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group  
- Master Sgt. Loretta West, TFM  
- Senior Airman Zackery Wood, 755th AEG  
- Senior Airman Paul Leonardi, 451st Air Expeditionary Group

### Finish Strong Awards

- Lt. Col. Jon Julian, 455th AEW Staff  
- Maj. Patrick Miller, 755th AEG  
- Tech. Sgt. Leslie Orr, 455th OG

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# NEWS BRIEFS

**COLD WEATHER GEAR:** Per the USAFCENT Commander: the only authorized uniform in the AOR is ABUs (w/exception of Civil Engineering AFSCs – 3E0X1, 3E0X2, 3E1X1 and 3E8X1). However, because All Purpose Environmental Clothing System (APECS) demand continues to outpace existing inventory and projected production levels, the DCU Gortex jacket w/liner and the DCU field jacket are authorized for wear with the ABU in the AOR until May 1. Additionally, those Airmen who process through an Army Power Projection Platform and are issued ACU patterned cold weather gear may wear the uniform items inside the wire, as determined by their commander.

**NATO MEDALS:** The NATO Medal typically takes approx. 90 days upon arrival for approval and distribution back to PERSCO. PERSCO has a spreadsheet posted to the SIPR public drive which you can view to see the status of your medal. If you notice any errors, please contact the following POCs: SSgt Amethia Dandy or MSgt Jesse Rouse at 431-2070/4409 or email 445EMSG.PERSCO@afghan.swa.army.mil

**GOING TDY:** All Air Force members are required to in and out-process through PERSCO for TDYs, Emergency Leave or R&R Leave/Pass. The PAX terminal will not manifest you until they have documentation stamped from PERSCO. All personnel assigned to the 455th are required to complete the AOR Travel Authorization Memo for any type of TDY. Please direct questions to PERSCO, 431-4409/2070.

**COMBAT PUSH:** Combat Push hours have changed to Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Camp Cunningham Recreation Tent from 0900L-1000L and from 2230L-2330L. Services and PERSCO will be available to sign outprocessing checklists. Personnel must complete their out-processing checklist entirely, complete their Post Deployment Health Questionnaire online and pick up their medical records at Flight Medicine/Public Health before coming to Combat Push. For more information contact PERSCO at 431-4409.

**COMBAT O:** Combat Orientation is Thursday at 0930Z/1400L at the Enduring Freedom Chapel. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Air Field. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the first sergeants.

**NEWCOMERS INPROCESSING:** All Air Force members are required to inprocess with PERSCO. The

inprocessing will start your combat pay entitlements. If you have been in the AOR for at least 30 days and you are not receiving combat pay, please stop by Finance located in the tower on Camp Cunningham. If you know for a fact that you did not inprocess with PERSCO, please visit PERSCO located in the passenger terminal. Call PERSCO 431-2070/4409 with any questions.

**MEO CONTACT INFO:** The Camp Cunningham Military Equal Opportunity Office at Bldg. 726 can be reached by calling 481-6226 or call the Air Force Discrimination/Sexual Harrassment Hotline at 1-866-229-7074.

**A.C.E. MEETINGS:** Airmen Committed To Excellence meets Fridays at 1700L/1230Z at the Camp Cunningham recreation tent are open to all Airmen E-1 to E-4.

**JUNIOR NCOs:** The Bagram AF Route 5/6 meets Thursdays at 1800L/1330Z at the Camp Cunningham Wing Conference Room. Meetings are open to all Airmen in the rank of E-5 and E-6. For more information, call SSgt Keya Gipson at 431-3259.

**AFSA MEETINGS:** Air Force Sergeants Association Expeditionary Chapter 1657 holds meetings bi-weekly on Saturdays. The next meeting is Jan. 31 at 0800 at the Town Hall.

**EAGLE CASH:** All deployed personnel (military, civilian and contractors) utilizing Air Force finance office services within the USCENTCOM AOR are required to have an EagleCash Stored Value Card and highly encouraged to use it. Additionally, the Bagram Finance Office has set-up a full-service EagleCash Card Center at the Friday Bagram Bazaar for your use. Sign-up for your EagleCash Card today.

**IMMUNIZATIONS:** Are your immunizations up to date? Active duty members are required to stay current on all immunizations during their deployment. Report to your nearest medical treatment facility to check your status and get vaccinated. For questions, contact Task Force Medical Public Health.

**WELLNESS:** ABS workouts are held Monday through Saturday at the K-span fitness center beginning at 1215L. Personal Combative Self Defense classes are held Monday and Wednesday at the K-span fitness center beginning at 1800L.