

# Bagram News Express



START RIGHT, FINISH STRONG

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## 455th EMDG/TF MED-E changes command



U.S. Army Col. John Collins, commander, Task Force 62nd Medical Brigade, gives the guidon to U.S. Air Force Col. (Dr.) Christian Benjamin, 455th Expeditionary Medical Group/ Task Force Medical East, during a change of command ceremony at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, May 4, 2010. Dr. Benjamin is deployed from the 99th Medical Group, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Master Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

By: Staff Sgt. Richard Williams  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Members of the 455th Expeditionary Medical Group/Task Force Medical East welcomed their new commander during a formal change of command ceremony here,

May 4, 2010.

U.S. Air Force Col. (Dr.) Christian Benjamin, previously assigned as the commander of the 99th Medical Group, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., assumed command from U.S. Air Force Col. (Dr.) Joseph Chozinski.

“Task Force Med-East is in good hands. Chris, welcome to the team,” said U.S. Army Col. John

Collins, Task Force 62nd Medical Brigade commander and officiating officer. “We look forward to working with you as one team and we know you are going to do a great job. Remember that you have the privilege of leading an amazing

**See Change, Next**

## Change, Cont.

team of professionals. Please cherish that very special privilege.”

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, Combined Joint Task Force 82 commander, also welcomed Doctor Benjamin by saying, “Dr. Chris Benjamin, welcome to Afghanistan and Task Force Med. You have inherited a cohesive, confident and amazing team. Your challenge will be to continue to build on the accomplishments of those who have come before you and make it better.”

General Scaparrotti added, “Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines are counting on you to do so, and by the strength of their faith in this team, and they have great faith in this team, I know that you will.”

Doctor Chozinski advised Doctor Benjamin to embrace the learning experiences “both good and bad” because this will be an experience he may never have again. He added, “Remember, the generals, sergeants major and chiefs are strong, but the tasks shouldered by your youngest enlisted members are life saving.”

“When I found out I had the opportunity to come to Afghanistan I



**U.S. Army Col. John Collins, commander, Task Force 62nd Medical Brigade, accepts the guidon as U.S. Air Force Col. (Dr.) Joseph Chozinski, 455th Expeditionary Medical Group/ Task Force Medical East, relinquishes command. (U.S. Air Force photos by/ Master Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)**

was ecstatic,” said Doctor Benjamin.

“We join the military to serve and we come to this place to serve in probably the ultimate way,” said Doctor Benjamin.

“To the men and women of TF MED-E, we have a big job to do,” he added. “The battle space is always changing and we will have

new challenges, but in that same theme, we owe it to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines who are out there putting it on the line every day. We owe them nothing but our very best.”

Doctor Chozinski’s next assignment is the National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.



**U.S. Air Force Col. (Dr.) Christian Benjamin, commander, 455th Expeditionary Medical Group/ Task Force Medical East, receives his first salute from the troops during the change of command ceremony at the Craig Joint Theater Hospital. Dr. Benjamin is deployed from the 99th Medical Group, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.**

# Commentary: Finding the right Solution

By: MSgt Donovan Tauriello 455th EMDG/TF MED-E, first sergeant

As we continue to figure out how to accomplish our mission with diminishing resources, the challenges can become overwhelming if our problem solving techniques are not finely tuned. Every day we are faced with hundreds of decisions to handle everything from minor challenges to chaotic crises. Like all of you, I work to resolve issue after issue during a typical hectic week.

Despite the never ending flow of activity, I occasionally force myself to take time to stop and assess my problem solving techniques. By assessing these skills every now and then, I try to avoid falling into the trap of solving problems by simply finding the easiest solution in order to remove it from my plate.

Instead, I would prefer to look at solutions that would have the best long-term impact. If you've never analyzed your own decision making process, here are a few questions that may help you as you ponder solutions to complex or nagging issues.

Are the decisions I am making based on doing what is right or are they based on taking the road that focuses on guessing what will please my boss? In other words, do I try to come up with solutions I think my boss would come up with?

This may seem like a viable technique since the boss may need to approve the proposal, but in the end, excessive resources can be spent assessing the likes and dislikes of the boss and not of finding the best solution.

Many times I hear proposed solu-

tions to problems based on guessing what I would like to hear. People sometimes become hesitant to even consider a solution if they fear their boss may not like it... even if it is the perfect solution! Fear of failure? Possibly, but it may be closer to the emperor's new clothes syndrome.

Rarely have I seen a boss that appreciates "yes-men" when trying to brainstorm an important issue. Once a decision is made however, everyone needs to get on board with the common focus, but not before, not if creative proposals are desired. When this issue is resolved, does it really matter who gets the credit?

As silly as this may sound, I find that this is also a critical point when developing courses of action, especially if a solution is complex or takes a significant amount of time.

The answer is most likely not simply a yes or no. Of course everyone would like to get credit for a job well done but, this is a major influence when resolving the problem. You may be blind to more effective solutions in the long run and crafting a solution based on personal gain.

If you have ever rejected tackling a problem because you would redeploy before it could be brought to conclusion, then you may have experienced this effect. Is more time spent talking about the problem or the solution? I know several people that have spent years talking about nagging problems but never spent ten minutes trying to come

up with a viable solution. I think these people may get pleasure from this activity but anytime I find myself complaining or talking about a problem more than once, I force myself to come up with a solution or convince myself it is either unsolvable or not worth my time. Either way, I can stop the whining. It doesn't mean I have the time or resources to implement all these solutions but it changes empty complaining to the more productive activity of proposing effective solutions.

Is "the box" causing limitations to my creativity when pondering solutions? Are you truly opening your mind to creative solutions? You know "the box," that ill-defined contraption that everyone claims freedom of when problem solving. If you don't force yourself to practice lateral thinking everyday, it is easy to fall into a rut and allow it to limit your creativity.

There are often hundreds of solutions to problems even though only a few may be within resources. If you are having trouble coming up with more to consider, look at the problem from various perspectives. As an example, there are six eggs in a basket. Six different people take one egg each. How can it be that there is still one egg in the basket? Don't forget, when a solution is considered, think of the long-term impacts. Imagine the possibilities if we all could improve our problem solving skills.

About the egg, the last person took the basket with the egg still inside.



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# Afghanistan future already exists in Panjshir

By: 2nd Lt. Jason Smith  
Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs

PANJSHIR PROVINCE, Afghanistan (May 1, 2010) – The mineral water-bottling plant, kabob restaurants along the river and construction site of the Massoud Tomb Complex don't necessarily reflect images of a war-torn nation; nor does the permissiveness that allows American military and civilian members of Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir to move relatively freely throughout this area of Afghanistan.

In his August 2009 International Security Assistance Force Commander's Counterinsurgency Guidance, Gen. Stanley McChrystal writes, "Earn the support of the people and the war is won, regardless of how many militants are killed or captured."

Based on that guidance, the "war is won" in the Panjshir Province, the people of Panjshir support their PRT, says Rohullah Yousufi, Panjshir Province Director of Culture and Information.

"They support them because of what the PRT has done for the people," said Yousufi. "The people didn't expect to support them, but they saw what they did, and now the expectations are too high."

Panjshir, the newest of the 34 provinces in Afghanistan, is the story of a successful, Afghan-led province with good governance, said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Curtis Velasquez, PRT Panjshir commander and Abilene, Kan., native.

"We are the model province for what security and good governance can do to win the war through counterinsurgency operations," said Velasquez. "Our province is unlike any other in Afghanistan. You can look around and quickly see how the people here look at us as guests in their country and partners in their reconstruction effort."

Yousufi's recommendation to other provinces looking to build a



**Afghan National Army Col. Rajab Khan, commander, Panjshir Operations Coordination Center (Provincial), greets Sgt. Maj. Scott Doyon, Task Force Wolverine Panjshir OCC-P Embedded Training Team. A group of military and civilian members from Panjshir PRT had lunch together on a mountain at Darban Pass April 29. They talked about the future of Afghanistan and how they can continue their strong partnership. (Photo by U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Jason Smith, Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir Public Affairs)**

Panjshir-style model is cooperation with the PRTs, but more importantly cooperation between the people and government. He says

**See PRT, Next**

## PRT, Cont.

trust for the government is earned when reconstruction efforts meet the legitimate needs of the people.

“Unity, security and people supporting the government; these are the positive things about Panjshir that makes it different than the rest of Afghanistan,” said Yousufi. “The government should try to keep the people united by showing it is with them.”

The history and ethnic population of Panjshir also contribute to its success, according to Khalid Siddiqi, PRT Panjshir political advisor. Siddiqi said when U.S. Soldiers initially came to Panjshir, they came to help Ahmad Shah Massoud fight the Taliban.

“(Americans) raised their hands first for friendship; to fight the enemy for both of us,” said Siddiqi. “Most support for the Taliban comes from the south because their leadership is coming from the Pashtun Tribe.

“When the Taliban came into Panjshir, Parwan and Kapisa, they had no rights for other tribes,” continued Saddiqi, an ethnic Tajik. “They said only one tribe could be in control,” added Saddiqi. “That’s why we resisted.”

The future of the other provinces depends on the politics of Kandahar, according to Siddiqi. He said traditionally that the Afghan people follow proven leaders, just like they followed Massoud.

The Panjshiris are not strangers to Taliban activity either. Afghan National Army Col. Rajab Khan, commander of the Panjshir Operations Coordination Center (Provincial), or OCC-P, fought the Russians and Taliban. Now he works with the PRT because he says he wants to stop the Taliban from becoming the whole world’s problem.

“We know about the Taliban and al Qaeda because we were their victims,” said Rajab. “They are creating problems for the whole world, and if we don’t stop them now, then it will become a much bigger problem.”



**Scott Davis (front), a construction representative for the Army Corps of Engineers attached to Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir and an Omaha, Neb., native, and 2nd Lt. Jason Adams (back, right), PRT Panjshir civil engineer and Glendale, Ariz., native, walk with an interpreter and local mujahedeen guard. The PRT has more than 30 ongoing reconstruction projects in the valley, and the engineers inspect many of them each week. (Photo by U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Jason Smith, Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir Public Affairs)**

Rajab says the Taliban originally claimed to be fighting because they had no power in the government.

“Now they are fighting for opium,” said Rajab. “Now it’s more about business than it is political. They’re claiming they grow narcotics because they say no one helps them with agricul-

ture. No one helped (Panjshiris). We’re not selling narcotics. It’s just an excuse.”

There are many factors involved in the equation of Afghanistan. For those hoping to rid the country of the Taliban and other extremists, the vision of what the rest of Afghanistan could look like exists today in Panjshir.

# 455TH AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING WARRIORS OF THE WEEK

Senior Airman Danielle Acosta, 455th Expeditionary Medical Group/Task Force Medical East



Senior Airman Danielle Acosta is this week's 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Warrior of the Week. She is an aerospace medicine technician deployed from the 349th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, Travis Air Force Base, Calif. and is a Tracy, Calif. native.

Airman Acosta works for the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility located at the Craig Joint Theater Hospital. She provides support and continuity of medical care for patient movement. Airman Acosta also provides patient reception and treatment while they are at the CASF. She also directs mission launch and recovery of patients to and from a variety of coalition aircraft.

Airman Acosta was surprised she had even been nominated for the wing honor. "We do our job to do it, not for

the recognition."

She also explained the importance of her job saying, if it was not for the work completed by her and her team members at the CASF, critically wounded patients may have a more difficult time getting to life saving medical care.

Her supervision highlighted some of her accomplishments here by noting, Airman Acosta has performed exemplary as the Mission NCO ("Bulldog") for Aeromedical Evacuation (AE) missions for the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility. Her facility serves as the hub for all patient movement within the entire Afghanistan AOR and evacuation to locations outside of the theater of operations. This week, she spearheaded the team that launched and recovered 17 AE mis-

sions (three ISAF missions), involving 117 patients to include 19 critically injured and this rotation's first ever K-9 "working-dog" patient. She was chosen to be the distinguished visitor briefer for the CASF, briefing two distinguished visitor tours, including the new 455 AEW Commander.

Highly self motivated, she took it upon herself to reorganize the CASF's storage container to capitalize on the storage space available for over 7,000 pounds of patient baggage, medical supplies and donated items to make room for additional items to support the surge. Her "can-do," "will-do" attitude has been a force multiplier in the successful movement of over 2200 patients since January 2010 which is a 250% increase from the same time period in 2009.

# SARC FAQs

## QUESTION:

*How do I prevent Sexual Assault?*

## ANSWER:

*Education and training are the keys to prevention. By creating a common training definition of sexual assault, sexual harassment and other sex-related offenses, each service member will have a greater understanding of which actions constitute which offense. By defining a situation and diminishing the gray areas surrounding these offenses, a service member's roles and responsibilities to prevent such incidences should become clearer. The mandatory training tasks pertaining to sexual assault prevention and response for initial entry training, professional military education training, unit training and command training will introduce and continue to emphasize a culture that rejects sexual assault.*

## Always take a Wingman

If you are interested in becoming a  
Victim Advocate, contact  
Capt. Jose Milan  
DSN: 318-431-4060  
455aew.sarc@bgab.afcent.af.mil

STORY IDEAS  
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Contact your  
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Protect  
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Do not throw out personal information that  
could lead the enemy to your loved ones.  
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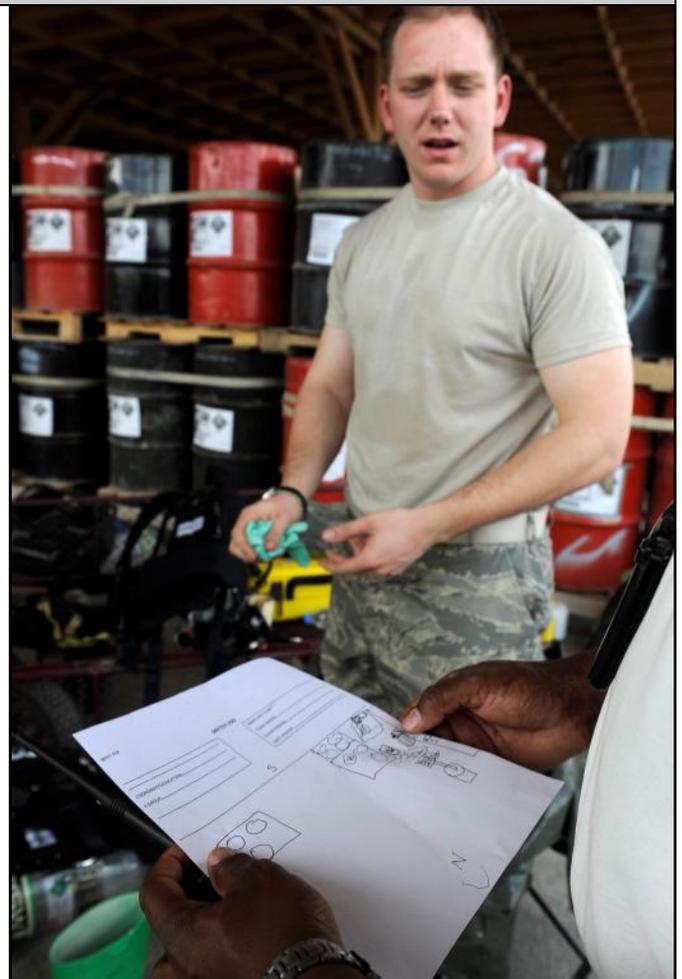
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# Hazmat training in Afghanistan

Photo story by: Master Sgt. Jeremy K. Cross



(top left) U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Michael Gilbert, 455th Expeditionary Medical Operations Squadron, puts on a chemical protection mask during a hazardous materials exercise at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, April 29, 2010. Airman Gilbert is deployed from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., and is from Exeter, Calif. (top right) Airmen from the 455th EMOS and 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron walk to the exercise spill location in their chemical protection suits. (bottom left) Airman Gilbert (right), Staff Sgt. Gabriel Karnav, 455th ECES, examine the spill site and prepare a clean up plan. Sergeant Karnav is deployed from the Minnesota National Guard, and is from Ironwood, Mich. (bottom right) Airman Gilbert describes the chemical spill location to an exercise evaluator after the simulated spill had been contained.



# NEWS BRIEFS

**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, 431-4426.

**NEWCOMERS INPROCESSING:** All Air Force members are required to in-process with PERSCO. The in-processing will start your combat pay entitlements. If you have been in the area of responsibility for at least 30 days and you are not receiving combat pay, visit Finance in the crow's nest tower on Camp Cunningham. If you know for a fact that you did not in process with PERSCO, visit PERSCO located in Bldg. 700 near the passenger terminal. Call 431-2070/4409 for more information.

**COMBAT O:** Combat Orientation is every Friday at 1245Z/0515L at the MWR Clamshell. Uniform is Air Force PT uniform for fitness assessment. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Airfield. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the first sergeants.

## **NEW BAF MAIL ZIP CODE:**

BAF residents, ensure individuals sending mail have your most current contact information. May 5, 2010 Camp Cunningham was issued a new zip code Ensuring proper postal codes are used alleviates any delays in receiving your mail. Below is the contact information required for individuals to receive mail.

**NAME - (Eg. Jane Doe; no rank)**

**UNIT - (Eg. 455 ECS/SCXK)**

**Bagram Airfield or BAF**

**APO AE 09352**

## **CITIZENSHIP FOR MILITARY MEMBERS:**

If you are a deployed member of the U.S. Armed Forces and interested in becoming a U.S. citizen, you may be eligible to apply for citizenship under a special provision in the Immigration and Nationality Act. The Combined Joint Task Force 82 legal client service office can assist and conduct naturalization ceremonies on Bagram Airfield in May and November of each year. For

## **455th AEW Safety tip of the week**

### **SPEED LIMITS**

Eight (8) kilometers per hour (kph)/five (5) miles per hour (mph) when approaching or passing troop formations, in parking lots and troop areas, to include billeting areas, and when driving on Disney Road during physical training (PT) hours with a pass. Twenty-five (25) kph/fifteen (15) mph unless otherwise posted. If you have questions, please contact the Safety Office at 431-4743

## **455th AEW Financial Tip of the Week**

**DTS orders:** will be filed in the DTS system and processed by your home station finance

**Non-DTS orders:** log in to virtual MPF, click on the Accrual Travel Voucher link, fill out the form and submit. Once submitted, your home station finance will receive the accrual voucher for processing and you will receive an email notification showing you what you have claimed for your records.

**Purpose of Accrual Voucher:** to pay off what you owe on your Government Travel Card. If you paid for travel expenses out of pocket, it will also reimburse you in your personal bank account. An accrual is just an advance on your final travel voucher, so make sure you claim everything when you get home as if you never filed an accrual. Keep your receipts!

## **455th AEW Policies and Procedures**

**Flightline Photography** — Personnel on Bagram Airfield are not authorized to take still photography or video imagery on the airfield flightline unless authorized by the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs office and 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron. Images must be used for official use only. Violators of this policy will be detained and possibly taken into custody. Call 455th AEW/PA at 431-2371 for more information.



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<b>Lunch-Time Classes 1200-1315 M/T/W/TH</b>							
MATH 103	College Mathematics	Butts	31-May	22-Jul	52714	96396	UMUC Gen Ed/CCAF
EDCP 103	Fund of Writing and Grammar	Holladay	31-May	22-Jul	52712	96390	WRTG 101 PreReq
<b>Dinner-Time Classes 1630-1745 M/T/Th/Su</b>							
IFSM 201	Intro to Computer-Based Systems	Butts	31-May	25-Jul	52716	96393	Gen Ed
<b>1700-1815 M/T/W/Th</b>							
WRTG 101*	Introduction to Writing	Holladay	31-May	22-Jul	52709	96399	Gen Ed
<b>Evening Classes 1830-2130</b>							
<b>Tuesdays/Thursdays</b>							
MATH 103	College Mathematics	Butts	1-Jun	22-Jul	52715	96395	UMUC Gen Ed
ENGL 103	Greek and Roman Mythology	Holladay	1-Jun	22-Jul	52713	96392	Hum/Elective
<b>Fridays/Sundays</b>							
IFSM 300**	Info Systems in Organizations	Butts	4-Jun	25-Jul	52719	96394	Maj Req/Upper Level
SPCH 101	Intro to Public Speaking	Holladay	4-Jun	25-Jul	52711	96398	Gen-Ed/CCAF
<b>Evening Classes 1900-2045 MON/WED/SAT</b>							
ECON 201	Principles of Macroeconomics	Butts	31-May	24-Jul	52718	96389	Maj Req/Soc Sc
ENGL 102***	Composition and Literature	Holladay	31-May	24-Jul	52710	96391	Gen Ed

\* Pre-requisite: Passing score on Placement Test or EDCP 103

\*\* Pre-requisite: IFSM 201--if taken at another school, must provide documentation

\*\*\* Pre-requisite: WRTG 101--if taken at another school, must provide documentation

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If you are taking UMUC classes as transfer credit, please ALWAYS check with your home school for transferability

Sophie Grandmont at DSN 431-3104, [bagm@ed.umuc.edu](mailto:bagm@ed.umuc.edu) or stop by the BAF Ed Center

Registration Center E963

[www.ed.umuc.edu](http://www.ed.umuc.edu)

# Looking for something to do?

## Break the Cycle:

# Volunteer

Hospital

Honor Guard

Base Clean Up

Security Forces

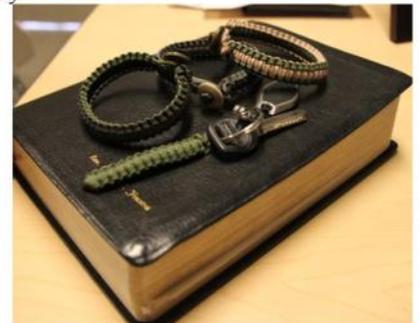
Fire Department

Contact your First Sergeant for more details.

## Bible and a Bracelet

### An Informal Bible Study

- Come learn the Word of God
- Fellowship and learn how to make Combat Bracelets
- Led by: Chaplain Youstra
- Camp Cunningham, Vulture's Nest



Thursday at 1930

Class is open to everyone!

For information contact: Ch Youstra or TSgt Beach at 481-6677 or 079-872-5048 or stop by the Air Force Chapel Offices located across from the Rock Gym