



HQ INDIVIDUAL RESERVIST

READINESS & INTEGRATION ORGANIZATION

The Readiness Report

Be there for yourself and your wingman

By Staff Sgt. Ashley Nolan,
IMA at the ARPC Casualty Office

I survived two suicides. In 2015, the person I was seeing ended his own life. A few weeks later I tried to do the same. I am telling you this because I feel that transparency is the best way for me to help others who are going through what I experienced. I've learned a lot through my healing process, most importantly, we must be there for ourselves and for each other.

Before we can be a good wingman, we first have to learn to manage our own emotional and mental well-being. There's a concept I've been working with called BURNOUT. It's an acronym that stands for:

B	Be real with how you feel
U	Understand your stressors and de-stressors
R	Resolve to find balance
N	Never forgo your own needs
O	Order your priorities
U	Use other's strengths when yours are weak
T	Take time to honor your needs

In a nutshell, this concept helps me to understand what my emotional thresholds are when it comes to all aspects of my life, how I can de-stress and make time for finding balance, and it speaks to the importance of asking for help from friends, family or professionals when I can't handle something on my own.

Once I identified my own boundaries, I was better prepared to support my wingmen. When an individual is hurting and struggling with thoughts of suicide, they need someone there for them. They need a person to trust, who cares enough to listen without judgment and ridicule, and is gentle and sensitive to what they are going through and feeling. Listening to, and then following up with your wingman are the two most important things you can do to help someone who is wrestling with thoughts of suicide. I know from experience, when someone is considering suicide, they already feel like a burden, unimportant and alone. So, when they connect and share with someone who doesn't follow up, it is devastating.

For those of you who are hurting right now, please know there is hope and you are not alone. The road isn't easy but you are worth the fight. For me, after I decided to fight for my life, things tasted different, the colors in the sky became so radiant that I would tear up, I rediscovered my sense of purpose. I often say that having to learn to fight for my life when I no longer wanted to live it, was the hardest thing I've had to overcome.

(Continued on page 4)

AIR RESERVE PERSONNEL CENTER JOIN THE AIR RESERVE

HOME NEWS ABOUT SERVICE CENTER CONTACT

Home > HQRIO > Resources

Home Resources IMA Travel IMA Pay Detachments

Training Vacancies Force Development Awards & Boards Entitlements & Benefits

Note: If accessing this page from a .mil computer, you may need to refresh the browser cache to see the latest content; On Windows OS, use Ctrl+F5

Resources

PERSONNEL RESOURCES

- Guides
- Memos
- Forms
- Templates
- Personnel websites
- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
- Uniform Replacement Request

QUICK LINKS

- HQ RIO DIRECTORY
- ABOUT HQ RIO
- IMA DEPLOYMENTS
- NEWCOMERS
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
- AROWS-R | ORDERS
- UTAPSWEB | IDT
- DEFENSE TRAVEL SYSTEM
- MYPERS
- AIR FORCE PORTAL

RIO NEWS

- Marijuana and the military
- Reservist aims to change national veteran narrative
- Reservist awardee MAJCOM earns quarterly FGO award
- Reserve component blended retirement

In an effort to make it easier for Individual Reservists to locate and access career information and resources, Headquarters RIO released a redesigned version of their website earlier this month. The new site is available at www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/hqrio.aspx.

Website redesign streamlines resources for Individual Reservists

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

In an effort to better serve the unique needs of the Individual Reserve population, HQ RIO has redesigned their public website.

The site also has a new, shorter URL: www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/hqrio.aspx.

The HQ RIO website is managed specifically for the more than 7,200 Individual Reservists around the world and contains news, information and resources they need to navigate their careers.

The redesigned site is built around a large panel of navigation buttons at the top of each page. These buttons break the information into common categories, such as force development, entitlements and benefits, and training. The website also contains information about reserve pay and travel, IMA vacancies, and organizational contact information.

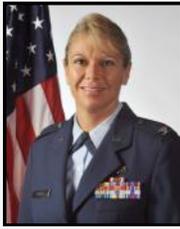
One new tool built into the website is the Detachment Finder, which can be accessed by selecting the "Detachments" button. This tool helps IMAs identify which HQ RIO Detachment they are assigned to based on their MAJCOM or career field, and then directs them to their detachment's unique webpage. The Detachment pages contain, at a minimum, contact information for each of their locations.

While the link for the HQ RIO website has changed, the majority of pages from the old website are set up to automatically redirect to their new location. Pages that do not do this will redirect visitors to the new HQ RIO home page. IRs are encouraged to review the site and update any bookmarks they may have. HQ RIO is also in the process of updating the Guide for Individual Reservists, which will reflect any link changes.

The HQ RIO webpage is a sub-section of the Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center website. HQ RIO is located within the HQ ARPC building at Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado.



HQ RIO Leadership



Col. Carolyn A. Stickell
Commander



CMSgt. Dolores Colella
Superintendent



MSgt. Wendy Barraza
First Sergeant

[Enlisted leader biographies](#)

HQ RIO Quick Links

- [HQ RIO Website](#)
- [Detachment Directory](#)
- [The Guide for IRs](#)
- [Travel Companion for IRs](#)
- [Wingman Toolkit](#)
- [MyPers](#)
- [AROWS-R](#)
- [Defense Travel System](#)

Connect with HQ RIO

Email | arpc.det1.rio@us.af.mil
www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/hqrio.aspx



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www.youtube.com/HeadquartersRIO

News briefs

Reserve blended retirement system options

The Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act created a new military retirement system that blends the traditional legacy retirement pension with a defined contribution to Service members' Thrift Savings Plan account. The new Blended Retirement System (BRS) goes into effect on January 1, 2018.

All members serving as of December 31, 2017, are grandfathered under the legacy retirement system. No one currently-serving will be automatically switched to the BRS.

Though they are grandfathered under the legacy retirement system, Active Component Service members who entered the military after December 31, 2005, and Reserve Component Service members who have accrued fewer than 4,320 retirement points prior to January 1, 2018, will have the option to opt into the BRS or remaining in the legacy retirement system. The opt-in/election period for the BRS begins January 1, 2018, and concludes on December 31, 2018.

All Service members who enter the military on or after January 1, 2018, will automatically be enrolled in BRS.

Here is the DOD-BRS Reserve Component fact sheet:

<http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/Portals/87/documents/DOD-BRS-Reserve-Component.pdf>

Submit orders requests for October by Sept. 22

IMAs requiring orders in the month of October must submit their requests in AROWS-R no later than close of business on Thursday, Sept. 22.

Submitting requests by this deadline will ensure there is adequate time to generate the order prior to the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30. Beginning Oct. 1, the finance systems used in the process of generating orders will be unavailable for several weeks; HQ RIO will be unable to generate any new orders during that outage.

IMAs who have urgent, last-minute requests for support from their active-duty unit during October must contact their servicing HQ RIO detachment to request Verbal Orders of the Commander (VOCO). IMAs should never proceed to duty without either a certified order or a VOCO in hand. A VOCO is written authorization from a member's HQ RIO Detachment commander authorizing them to travel when time or circumstance prevents the publication of written orders in advance. For more information on VOCO orders, refer to [The Guide for Individual Reservists](#).

Airmen required to update AFPAAS annually

All Airmen are required to verify their contact information in the Air Force Personnel Accountability and Assessment System (AFPAAS) annually.

To do this, go to <https://AFPAAS.af.mil>. Select "Click Here" under the "Airmen/Civilian" heading and then log-in using your CAC card. Once logged in, select the "My Info" tab and then "Contact Information." Review your data, edit as needed, and then select "Verify Info as Current." This must also be done for each dependent in the "Family Member Info" section. Members should also address any discrepancies by updating their information in DEERS, via the MilConnect Portal (<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>).

AFPAAS standardizes the method for the Air Force to account, assess, manage, and monitor the recovery and reconstitution process for personnel and their families affected and/or scattered by a wide-spread catastrophic event.

In the event of an exercise or real world event, AFRC personnel and family members may be required to report their status in AFPAAS. Additionally, family members may account for themselves by accessing AFPAAS, changing the log-in option to "Personal Information" and using their sponsor's SSN, date of birth and last name to log in. All personnel should remain cognizant of their AFPAAS reporting requirements, listed in AFI 36-3803, Personnel Accountability in Conjunction with Natural Disasters or National Emergencies, Section 2.8 (http://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/af_a1/publication/afi36-3803/afi36-3803.pdf).

Did you know? | Tips for the Individual Reservist

Did you know you can earn college credit towards an undergraduate degree by taking short, self-paced, computer-based courses on the Doctrine Networked Education and Training (DOCNET) website?

Courses cover the topics of personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, planning, communications and historical collection. Credits are issued through either American Military University or American Public University. In order to receive undergraduate college credit, you must complete a DOCNET course, and successfully pass the examination at the end of the course. Once you have passed the examination, you will have the opportunity to print a Certificate of Completion that you will use to apply for credit through either APU or AMU.

To learn more about this opportunity, visit <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/docnet/index.htm>.



IMA selected as ROA annual award winner

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

Capt. Paula Moore received the Reserve Officers Association's 2015 U.S. Air Force Reserve Junior Officer of the Year award, Sept. 12.

The award was presented on day two of the Annual ROA National Convention, at the Silver Legacy Resort, in Reno, Nevada.

Moore was recognized for her work as the Individual Mobilization Augmentee officer-in-charge of the 28th Contracting Squadron at Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota. As a Reservist, she oversees the 16-member team of military and civilian personnel responsible for providing contracting support to the Air Force Finance Center, the 28th Bomb Wing and its 27 B-1B Lancers, and the 89th Attack Squadron and its MQ-9 Reapers.

While Moore has served in the Ellsworth AFB contracting office as a civilian since 2011, she has only been an Airman for two years. Prior to crossing into the blue, she spent 14 years in the Army National Guard, first as an enlisted person, working as a wheeled vehicle mechanic, and then, after commissioning, as a contracting officer. When her Guard unit started to do away with contracting, Moore said she began investigating her options with the Air Force, where she was already a full-time civilian.

Following a deployment to Afghanistan in 2012, Moore, who is a single mother, decided to become an Air Force IMA because it offered her the most flexible way to serve.

"The IMA program allowed me to stay in contracting, allowed me to be at home more, and it offered the best way to support the mission and my family," she said.



Capt. Paula Moore, IMA officer-in-charge of the 28th Contracting Squadron, Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota, is presented with the Reserve Officer Association's Air Force Reserve Junior Officer of the Year Award by Colonel (Ret.) Margaret A. Cope, ROA National Air Force vice-president, Sept. 12. (Courtesy photo)

Steven Gustaf, the contracting services flight chief, said that when Moore joined his team as a civilian in 2011, she was already a highly qualified contracting officer, with a level two qualification. Now as an Air Force officer, she is a level three qualified contracting officer, the highest rating possible, and is an integral part of the leadership team as both an Airman and civilian.

Even though she had already received several awards for her civilian work, including quarterly awards and the Civilian Meritorious Service Medal, Gustaf said Moore was overdue for recognition as a military member of his team. That's why he nominated her for the ROA award.

While she is primarily the focal point for any communications-related purchases, Gustaf said Moore is also a lead negotiator and is well-versed on every contract his office has. According to her award citation, Moore was instrumental in managing a \$126 million portfolio, took 132 contract actions, awarded 45 contracts, negotiated a \$3.8 million price reduction, and worked with the South Dakota Ellsworth Development Authority to operate a \$40 million wastewater treatment facility supporting Ellsworth and the surrounding communities.

"She's really a super asset and we couldn't be happier with her," said Gustaf.

IMAs are assigned to active-component units and support both the peacetime and wartime missions. Their primary role is to provide backfill support for their units when needed but can also volunteer their service to support exercises, contingencies, deployments and other needs throughout the Air Force and Department of Defense.

The Reserve Officers Association is a membership association dedicated to providing a voice for Reserve Component Service Members and Non-Commissioned Officers (E-4 through E-9) of all the uniformed services.

Chartered by Congress and founded in 1922, ROA advises and educates Congress, the President, and the American people on national security, with unique expertise on issues that affect the 1.2 million men and women now serving in America's Reserve Components. Visit www.ROA.org to learn more.

Doctor keeps Yellow Ribbon in his handbag

By Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr., 944th Fighter Wing

Lt. Col. Charles Powell was twice as old as some of his classmates when he went to officer's training at age 49. He has had a busy career as an Air Force Reserve flight doctor in the ensuing seven years and recently returned from his third deployment.

"I'll always look back on this period of my life and say, I got to serve my country, I was blessed with the opportunity, and I will never have any regrets," said Powell, a member of the 931st Air Refueling Wing at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, and a physician as a civilian.

Powell and his wife, Angeli, attended Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program training Aug 26-28 in Southern California. Yellow Ribbon promotes the well-being of reservists and their loved ones by connecting them with resources before and after deployments.

The Powells have been to previous Yellow Ribbon events and found them helpful. After the doctor completed his second deployment, he and his wife realized they were having reintegration issues and learned how to deal with them through Yellow Ribbon, which began in 2008 following a congressional mandate for the Department of Defense to assist reservists and National Guard members in maintaining resiliency as they transition between their military and civilian roles.

"Adjusting to our schedule as a couple, as opposed to just worrying about my schedule, was a challenge we had to deal with," he said. "I thought I possessed all the tools anyone would ever need to reintegrate perfectly."

The couple said they recommend that anyone who is eligible to attend Yellow Ribbon should do so before and after deployments to learn about resources available to them.

At the August training, the Powells said they appreciated the advice from the event's keynote speaker, Air Force Deputy Chief of Chaplains Brig. Gen. Steven A. Schaick, who encouraged attendees to "be generous, be positive and be satisfied."

Powell first looked into joining the military when he was in his late 30s but assumed he was too old based on information he read about age requirements. More than a decade later, he met an Air Force recruiter at In His Image Family Residency medical training facility in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where Powell is the associate residency director. The GI informed him that exceptions were made for qualified physicians. Powell applied and was accepted.

The doctor said his passion for helping others drove him to pursue a career in medicine and an officer's commission. He said becoming a reservist is one of the best decisions he ever made.

"I have this opportunity to serve my country," he said. "Not everyone gets [that]."





Marijuana and the military

By Bo Joyner

As state recreational and medical marijuana laws change throughout the country, Air Force Reserve Command officials remind reservists that any marijuana use or possession by uniformed service members is still illegal under federal law. And the consequences for breaking this law could be career ending.

Air Force Reservists, like their active-duty counterparts, serve under Title 10 of the United States Code and are subject to the provisions of the Controlled Substance Act, which considers marijuana use or possession to be a crime, regardless of state laws.

“Even if a state has legalized medicinal marijuana, it is still illegal to use or possess it under the Controlled Substance Act, 21 U.S.C. 802,” said Lt. Col. Michael Roderick of AFRC’s staff judge advocate’s office at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. “According to the CSA, Schedule 1 drugs, substances or chemicals are defined as drugs with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.”

Currently, recreational marijuana use is legal in four states -- Washington, Oregon, Colorado and Alaska -- and the District of Columbia. Limited medical marijuana use is now legal in 24 states. A number of states have recreational or medical legalization on the ballot this November.

The Department of Defense’s position on drug use within the services, as stated on the Military OneSource website, is clear: “Drug abuse and dependence are incompatible with readiness, the maintenance of high standards of performance and military discipline. As a result of this position, each of the services conducts a drug testing urinalysis program to deter and detect drug misuse among service members and to permit commanders to use the results to separate service members from the military.”

Under AFRC’s drug testing program, more reservists test positive for marijuana than all other illegal drugs combined.

“Marijuana continues to be the drug of choice for Air Force Reservists

who test positive during routine urinalysis,” said Dr. Don Jenrette, the command’s Drug Demand Reduction Program manager. “In fact, for AFRC over the past 18 fiscal years, two-thirds of the positive drug test results are for THC, the active ingredient in marijuana.”

Jenrette said all reservists know that marijuana use is illegal while they are in military status, but some may wrongly believe that the laws in their state make marijuana use acceptable when they are not on duty. Reservists who use marijuana while they are away from their military job can still test positive if selected for a drug urinalysis test while performing annual training.

Some reservists also believe that having a prescription for medical marijuana protects them if they should test positive.

“Whether or not they have a valid prescription, marijuana use is still illegal for military members,” Jenrette said. “Most conditions that would require a prescription for marijuana would be disqualifying for a reservist anyway, but if a reservist is prescribed marijuana by his physician, he or she should refuse it and ask for an alternative.”

Reservists should also be careful if their spouse or other family members use marijuana, even if they use it legally either recreationally or for medicinal purposes. There have been reported cases among other services where the spouse of a service member placed medically prescribed

marijuana in their vehicle, only to have it discovered by security forces members on base.

“Even if marijuana possession and limited use has been legalized in your state, military installations are considered federal property,” according to Military OneSource. “If you or a family member is found on an installation in possession of or using marijuana, you will be subject to the federal laws related to marijuana, not the state laws.”

Military OneSource goes on to warn military members against accidental ingestion or exposure.

“If limited possession and use is legal in the state in which you live, the availability of the drug can lead to accidental exposure or ingestion that could cause trouble for your military career,” according to the website. “You can minimize your risk by being aware of your surroundings, being cautious about eating foods in homes where marijuana is present and knowing whether establishments in the community allow recreational use. By remaining vigilant and avoiding establishments permitting recreational use of marijuana, service members can help to ensure they do not jeopardize their careers.”



Be there, continued from page 1

But I wasn’t alone in my fight, and you aren’t either. Please seek out someone you trust and let them help you. The people and resources are there, you are not alone.

Editor’s note: If you are struggling with thoughts of suicide or depression, seek help immediately. Talk to your wingman, chaplain or mental health professional. Confidential help is also available by contacting the Military Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255, Opt. 1, or www.MilitaryCrisisLine.net.

“Asking for help when you need it takes courage and strength.”

—Former Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel

Reserve marathon team member winning with life balance

By Ann Skarban, 302nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Colorado native, Dr. (Lt. Col.) Audrey Hall is one of 10 Air Force Reservists who has been selected to be a member of the Air Force Reserve Command's Challenge Team in this year's U.S. Air Force Marathon.

Hall, an Individual Mobilization Augmentee and staff pediatrician assigned to the 21st Medical Group, has been an avid runner throughout her life.

"I have run recreationally most of my life. I run more for exercise and to keep within Air Force standards. It's always something I've enjoyed and done as part of my life to stay fit," she said.

The Citizen Airman, part-time civilian pediatrician and mother of three is set to run the Air Force Marathon's half-marathon course of 13.1 miles during the September 17, 2016, race at Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio.

Overall balance in her life's roles, along with consistent training, have been essential to Hall's daily and running successes. She credits staying connected with other local moms who are runners, her AFRC Challenge team members, as well as participating in local running events and races as the staples in her Air Force Marathon preparations.

"I've stepped up my base line running. I've been in a lot of races and running groups in Colorado Springs, it's a really robust running community."

One of Hall's recent races was the Pikes Peak Ascent, which took place Aug. 20, 2016. The Ascent is a 13.32-mile run from Manitou Springs to the 14,114-foot summit of Pikes Peak. The run includes 7,815 feet of vertical gain and is considered one of the most difficult marathon courses in the world.

"We have been emailing and trading training, diet and lifestyle tips," said Hall of her AFRC team mates, who are spread out across the country and will represent the 70,000 Air Force Reservists when they meet at the starting line of the Air Force Marathon.

Life balance, which serving as an IMA in the Air Force Reserve allows, is another key factor for Hall. "I work to maintain a good balance in life to include running, taking care of myself and eating well. And, my kids motivate me, they are active in sports."

Hall, who served 14 years in the active duty Air Force before transitioning to the Air Force Reserve, said, "I feel a sense of patriotism. It's [being an IMA] a great way to maintain a balance and continue to serve your country and do what you are trained to do."

Of her civilian career, Hall is thankful for the support of her employer who "Has been wonderful. It's been a good balance and I've been able to maintain everything working together."

While Hall was part of her cross country team in high school, she said

she has never run competitively. This will be Hall's first competition as part of the AFRC team, which will compete against the 11 other U.S. Air Force major command Challenge teams.

"I'm honored to be chosen [for the AFRC Challenge Team], I'm hoping to get my personal best time for this half marathon. I'm excited to go to Dayton and run closer to sea level," she said.



Dr. (Lt. Col.) Audrey Hall, staff pediatrician and Air Force Reserve Command Individual Mobilization Augmentee assigned to Peterson Air Force Base's 21st Medical Group, completed the Pikes Peak Ascent race near Colorado Springs, Colorado, this past August in preparation for this year's U. S. Air Force Marathon. Hall is an avid runner who has found the right balance between her Reserve career, civilian career, family and fitness. (Courtesy photo)



Air Force Voting Assistance Program

Do you want to vote in the upcoming November elections but are deployed or serving on active duty away from your home state? Under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act you and your family are eligible to vote by absentee ballot.

To learn about this program, contact your unit's voting officer or PERSCO team. The Federal Voting Assistance Program website also provides specific, state-by-state information, as well as the forms needed to request a ballot. Visit the FVAP website at www.fvap.gov. The Air Force Voting Assistance website is also available at www.afpc.af.mil/Air-Force-Voting.