



October - November - December 2023  
The Edwards Air Force Base  
Civilian-Military Support Group  
**Newsletter**

**President's Corner**

*By Matthew C. Winheim*

*Greetings and Happy Holidays*



Dear Civ-Mil Members,

As we embark on a new year, I am honored to reflect on the remarkable journey of the Edwards Air Force Base Civilian-Military Support Group (Civ-Mil). For 34 years, our organization has stood strong in fulfilling its mission, fostering a benevolent association between civic leaders and military personnel at Edwards Air Force Base.

In 2023, through the unwavering support of our dedicated membership, the generous contributions from the Aerospace Valley community, and strategic grant funding, Civ-Mil achieved significant milestones, contributing approximately \$31,000 to support our active duty military personnel stationed at Edwards Air Force Base.

The impact of Civ-Mil's commitment was evident in the completion of renovations to the Ellington Airman Leadership School (ALS), the provision of funds for Aida O'Connor memorial scholarships, support for 1st Sgts Association Dorm Dinners, contributions to the 412TW Annual Awards, renovations to the First Term Airman's Course (FTAC), and the ongoing maintenance of flags at the flag park across from Building

In addition to these accomplishments, 2023 saw Civ-Mil successfully host the Spring Mixer, the annual Bob Slade Memorial BBQ, and the 2023 Banquet and Installation of Directors. We also took part in community events, bidding farewell to Brigadier General Higer and CMSgt. Ward-Swannigan while welcoming Col. Wickert and CMSgt. Stoltzfus to the Aerospace Valley.

The close of 2023 was marked by historic events at Edwards, including the first flight of the B-21 Raider from AF Plant 42 to the base and the delivery of the T-7A Red Hawk. As Edwards continues to pioneer flight test "firsts" in 2024, Civ-Mil stands ready to provide unwavering support to our community's active duty military personnel who are at the forefront of testing and proving the material that will safeguard our nation for years to come.

I extend a warm invitation to you to join us in 2024, participating in events like our upcoming Spring Mixer, where all proceeds will go toward scholarships for airmen and guardians stationed at Edwards. Stay connected with us on Facebook and Linked-In and follow along as we work tirelessly to support our community's active duty military personnel.

For those interested in learning more about Civ-Mil membership or getting more involved with our organization, please connect with a director or email us at [info@eafbcivmil.org](mailto:info@eafbcivmil.org). Your involvement is vital to our continued success.

As we begin this new chapter, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as the President of this esteemed organization. I look forward to seeing you at our events and working together to make 2024 another year of achievement and impact.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,  
Matthew C. Winheim  
President, The Edwards Air Force Base Civilian/Military Support Group



B-21 Raider

# Mission Statement

The purpose and general nature of the Edwards Air Force Base Civilian-Military Support Group is to establish a friendly, benevolent association of civic leaders and military personnel at Edwards Air Force Base, to act as a host group whenever needed and additionally, to consider an annual service project to benefit EAFB.



EAFB Civ-Mil Officers

From left to right: Matthew C. Winheim, Terry Norris, David Norris and Tom Weil



From left to right: Col. Jared Blecher, Col. Matt Caspers, Mr. Mark Maldonado, CMSgt. Justin Stoltzfus and EAFB Civ-Mil President Matthew C. Winheim



F-22A



Director Terry Norris Receiving the Unsung Hero Award at the 2023 Installation of Officers and Directors

## Installation of Directors for the Class of 2025

The EAFB Civ-Mil Annual Installation of Officers and Directors was held at the Embassy Suites in Palmdale on Thursday evening, October 26, 2023. The event was well attended by EAFB Civ-Mil members, Edwards AFB leaders, elected officials, special guests, spouses and friends.

EAFB Civ-Mil President Matt Winheim served as the Master of Ceremonies for the event. He was supported by outgoing Vice President and longtime supporter Al Hoffman.

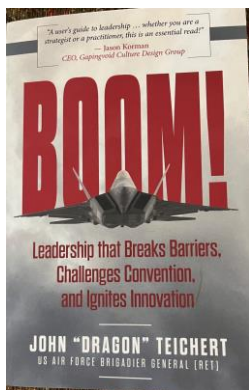
Following President Matt Winheim's remarks, Deputy Commander of Edwards AFB Colonel Matthew Caspars installed the incoming board members and Civ-Mil officers for 2025: Matt Winheim, President, Terry Norris Vice president, Tom Weil Secretary and David Norris, Treasurer. The directors installed by Colonel Caspars were: Bret Banks, Cam Martin, Rhonda Nelson Mays, David Norris, Michele Slade, Les Uhazy, and Matt Winheim.

Matt Winheim presented the 'Unsung Hero Award' to Terry Norris and Julie Swayze for their support of the organization. The 'Member of the Year' was awarded to Rhonda Nelson Mays for all of her hard work in support of the organization.

The evening ended with the audience singing a rousing version of the official Air Force song!



T-7A



From left to right: Terry Norris, CMSgt. Justin Stoltzfus, Matt Winheim, Al Hoffman, José Rios and Col. Douglas Wickert



CMSGT Roosevelt Jones, WW II Veteran Charles Rader and Brig. Gen. USAF (Ret) John "Dragon" Teichert

### Winterfest 2023

Once again, the EAFB Civ-Mil Support Group was on hand to support this year's Winterfest 2023. Our Civ-Mil team members once again handed out hot cocoa, with marshmallows and sprinkles, along with cookies, to Edwards Air Force Base personnel. This event helps our service members and families get into the spirit of the holidays!





Col. Douglas and Jodee Wichert hosted a Holiday Open House at the Headquarters 412th Test Wing. Several of our Civ/Mil Directors were in attendance. From left to right: Al Hoffman, Julie Swayze and her husband Steve Bowie, Les and Jane Uhazy and , Cam Martin and Lisa Moulton



Former Command Chief Master Sgt. Ian Eishen, 412th Test Wing Command Chief Master Sergeant, presents Edwards Air Force Base Civilian-Military Support Group Past-President Al Hoffman and the Late Civ-Mil Founder, Aida O'Connor with a commemorative sword in recognition of Civ-Mil's Thirty years of continuous support to Edwards Air Force Base. For her unstinting support of the U.S. Military, representing the U.S. Air Force, O'Connor was awarded the Distinguished Civilian Humanitarian Award. Photo by Danny Bazzell.

### The Aida O'Connor Scholarship

Every year, the Edwards AFB Civilian-Military Support Group awards enlisted personnel at the Flight Test Center with scholarships that will advance their career progress and service to the nation. For 2023, the following finalists were presented with scholarships. This year's applicants can pick up an application form starting in March of 2024 at the EAFB Department of Education office.

### Collin Gourd



I am no stranger to the world of aviation. When my parents divorced, I spent my fair share of time traveling across the U.S. This is where I received my first pair of wings, not from the Air Force but from a flight attendant comforting me at the age of 8 after leaving Dad's to head back home. That flight would spark the drive I have for the world of aviation. For me, a

flight of 4 hours felt like minutes as my mind surged with the inspiration sparked by that attendant showing an act of kindness. At 18 I enlisted in the Air Force chasing a new wing as a career enlisted aviator. I earned my second pair of wings as a Boom Operator on the KC-135. After learning the ropes at my home station and flying over 30 combat missions overseas, I set my eyes new wings. After spending so many hours on the road with pilots, I knew I wanted to join their ranks. I planned my path carefully, starting college to complete my Bachelor's degree. Within a year of starting college, I was given a rare opportunity to build an airframe from the ground up. I looked to challenge myself by switching platforms to the KC-46 and the experience I would further my pursuit of pilot wings.

### Staff Sergeant Jeremiah Guinto



My name is Jeremiah Guinto, and I am a Staff Sergeant in the U.S Air Force at Edwards AFB. I grew up six hours north from Edwards in Daly City, California. I am a Filipino American and was born in Daly City shortly after my parents immigrated from a city called Bacoor in the Philippines. I live on base

with my wife, dog, and we are expecting a baby girl. I am a tanker test boom operator working on the KC-135 and new systems for the KC-46 tanker. As a test boom operator, student and husband, I am driven by responsibility to deliver excellent performance in all I do for the United States Air Force, my fellow personnel and to provide for my family as we prepare for our new family member. My goal is to complete my bachelor's degree, become an instructor/evaluator as a test boom operator and to be a responsible father.

## Kollen Kunesh



When I attended school for the first time back in 2010, I didn't know what I wanted to do and struggled. I ended up taking a break from school and joined the U.S. Air Force in 2014 to try and answer the question. As an Avionics Technician on the F-22 Raptor, I didn't know

what was in store, but I was going to see where it took me. Fast forward 9 years, I am at Edwards Air Force Base pursuing a degree in Unmanned System Applications at Embry-Riddle and I could not be happier with how my Air Force journey turned out. I am proud of what I have accomplished in the Air Force from start to finish and will continue to do what I can to meet the USAF's goals, as well as my own.

## Senior Airman Stephen Campbell



Before joining the Air Force, I taught classes at a juvenile facility in Wimauma, Florida. I was tasked with educating at-risk youth between the ages of 14-18 years old. I saw first-hand how education can completely alter the trajectory of someone's life. I had students come into the program having not attended school for up to a year. For different reasons, they did not see education as a way out of their

environment. So, they dropped out of school. Throughout my tenure, I mentored, taught and sometimes acted as a therapist to those kids. After four years, I witnessed a major shift in some while there were others who continued down the wrong path. Regardless of which direction, I was able to empathize as I too grew up in a low-income environment. The only difference between where I am now and where some of the people I grew up with can be boiled down to one thing: Education. This is why I am in pursuit of a Master's Degree so I can continue to learn, grow and open more doors. This time, I want to emphasize the importance of education to my three children, like my mother did for me. I want them to see how education can change their lives.

## Senior Airman Tatiana Bleasdel



"If you fail to prepare, prepare to fail." That's a line I recall my father repeating to me throughout my adolescent years, and it has stuck with me. Born in Brooklyn, New York to a Jamaican mother and a Trinidadian-Grenadian father, I was taught early on the value of education, self-worth and growth. Having witnessed the negative effects a lack of

education can have on an individual, let alone a community, I made it my personal mission to improve myself and my situation. I am a first-generation born American whose immigrant parents, as well as grandparents, received no education past high school; and because of this, college has been unfamiliar territory for both me and my family. As a first-generation college student, as determined as I am to obtain a college education, I am aware I will require the best possible guidance and direction from professional leaders around to achieve my educational goals.

## Tech Sergeant Thomas Nugent



I was raised as an Air Force dependent, with my mother and two sisters. My father is a now a retired Lt. Colonel who while active, was an Aerospace Ground Equipment (AGE) technician for the first seven years of his 23-year career. My goals are to complete my bachelor's degree in computer science. I have always had a passion for working with

computers. I would like to earn the opportunity to Commission into the U.S. Air Force Officer Program. The skills I will develop throughout my degree plan will be applicable toward enhancing Air Force technology infrastructure. Technical expertise I will gain through a Computer Science degree can be beneficial to enhancing Air Force cyber security defense, software development, data analysis, and artificial intelligence.

## Retirement of Brig Gen Higer

Former Civ -Mil President Al Hoffman was in attendance at Club Muroc for an afternoon of sharing stories and recognition as members of the greater 412th Test Wing family offered a fond farewell to Brigadier General Higer and his family.



Thank you to all of our 2023 Sponsors!

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Lisa Moulton  
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Ellington Reflections - Steve Bowie  
Joyce Media  
Lancaster High School  
Hal and Rhonda Mays  
David Norris  
Slade Court Services

### Silver

Dennis Andersen  
Jill Furtado  
National Test Pilot School  
Les Uhazy



Former EAFB Civ-Mil President Al Hoffman alongside Col. Ahave 'AB' Brown



NASA X-59

## *Upcoming Events*

**EAFB Annual Holiday Meal Program** (Operation Warm Heart)  
*Ongoing*

**Angel Tree Program**  
*Ongoing*

**Civ-Mil Membership Renewal**  
*Ongoing through January 2024*  
*Contact Lisa Moulton*

**60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the F/16 and Open House for the USAF Thunderbirds:** January 25, 2024.

**Spring Mixer:** TBD

**EAFB Civ-Mil Bob Slade Memorial Barbecue:** TBD

## *New Members*

The following new members joined the Edwards AFB Civ-Mil Support Group in 2023

Bret and Suzanne Banks

John and Lani Currado

Andy Glatfelter

Kirk Hartley

Jeanie O'Laughlin

**Welcome to Civ-Mil!**

## *Board of Directors*

Matthew C. Winheim: President

Terry Norris: Vice President

Tom Weil: Secretary

David Norris: Treasurer

Past President: Lisa Moulton

### Directors

Dennis Anderson

Cam Martin

Bret Banks

Rhonda Nelson

Judy Cooperberg

Pan Patel

Scott Cummings

Michele Slade

Jill Furtado

Alexia Svejda

Allen Hoffman

Julie Swayze

Terry Landsiedel

Mark Troth

Robyn Lawhon

Dr. Les Uhazy

*Founding Member*

*Aida O'Connor*

## *Honorary Lifetime Members*

Clyde Bailey

Michael Belzil

Alis Clausen

Thomas Craft

George Fox

Aida O'Connor

Roger Persons

Andy Shillinglaw



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Printing: Bohn's Printing*

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*If you are enjoying reading this Newsletter, and you're not a member of Civ-Mil, but would like more information on the organization, please contact Lisa Moulton at (661) 618-2915.*

*You may also submit your request in writing to:  
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P.O. Box 812  
Lancaster, CA 93584-0812  
Attn: Membership Chairman*

<http://www.eafbcivmil.org>