

# THE CARGO COURIER

123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky.

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## Corbin named top aerial porter

By Master Sgt. Phil Speck  
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Senior Airman Cory Corbin was presented with the Chief Master Sgt. Tommy Downs Award for Excellence in Aerial Port Operations during a ceremony here Sept. 16, recognizing him as the top Air Transportation Journeyman in the Air National Guard for 2015.

Senior Master Sgt. Larry Burba, superintendent of the wing's aerial port, says Corbin is a highly motivated Airman and is always the first to volunteer for mission taskings.

"He's involved in all areas that a Guardsman could participate in," Burba said. "He's part of stateside operations and part of federal war-fight operations. He is the all-around Kentucky Guardsman, and a great example of what that would be — someone who is always first to raise their hand and volunteer."

Corbin has deployed several times, including a tour at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, where he led the movement of 23,700 tons of cargo and 36,000 passengers during 2,600 missions. He was also a key player in the "Kuwait 500," an immediate base-closing effort in which he helped redeploy 737 tons of rolling stock in 30 days.

Most recently, Corbin deployed with the 123rd Contingency Response Group to Dakar, Senegal, where the unit supported the U.S. military's response to the largest Ebola outbreak in history, supervising the movement of 469 passengers and 1,198 tons of cargo on 193 missions into affected areas.

He also eradicated over 445,000 marijuana plants as part of an elite Joint Service Operation within the state of Kentucky.

Read more online at [www.123aw.ang.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123466169](http://www.123aw.ang.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123466169)



Senior Airman Joshua Horton/Kentucky Air National Guard

Chief Master Sgt. Brian Pritt (left), air transportation manager for the 130th Logistics Readiness Squadron, presents the Chief Master Sgt. Tommy Downs Award to Senior Airman Cory Corbin, an air transportation journeyman in the 123rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, during a ceremony here Oct. 13.

## Vet awarded French Legion of Honor

The Consulate General of France bestowed the French Legion of Honor on a Louisville native and World War II veteran during a ceremony here Sept. 12. In front of more than 900 members of the Kentucky Air National Guard, U.S. Army Pfc. George J. Merz was presented with France's highest honor. Read more at [www.123aw.ang.af.mil](http://www.123aw.ang.af.mil)

## Security Forces enhance combat skills

Fire Team members from the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Security Forces Squadron conducted a field training exercise here Oct. 20 that was designed to enhance their ability to operate in a combat environment. See a photo gallery and read more at [www.123aw.ang.af.mil](http://www.123aw.ang.af.mil)

## Guard tests statewide comm capabilities

Kentucky Emergency Management, the Kentucky National Guard and multiple federal, state and local agencies participated in a week-long communications exercise recently to test their ability to communicate with each other during emergencies. Read more at [www.123aw.ang.af.mil](http://www.123aw.ang.af.mil)



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# Let's begin 2016 by rededicating ourselves to what's important — including each other

**T**hank you for a fantastic 2015. Once again, the 123rd excelled within the Air Guard and the Air Force — and that is simply because of 1,200 dedicated Kentucky Airmen.

This coming year will again bring challenges — those already planned, like EOD's scheduled deployment, numerous individual augmentee deployments and multiple exercises; and unplanned events like last year's CRG deployment to Senegal. Regardless of what 2016 brings, the 123rd will train and prepare for anything our state or nation needs.

Within the past five months, the wing has lost four members — Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Robinson, Staff Sgt. J.T. Smith, Maj. Latonia Trowell and Senior Airman Tyler Foster. The causes of death varied, but every member will be missed.

While each loss brings grieving, it also left me reflective and keenly aware of all I am grateful for. Each funeral reminded me that my time is short, and I will spend that time passionately.

The common theme of the eulogies was the fire each person had for life and the military — and in particular, for those with whom they worked with while serving in the Kentucky Air Guard.

It's a challenge for each of us. Time is too precious to waste. Train hard, learn constantly, dedicate yourself, master your craft, work vigorously, be passionate about life and share smiles with your peers.

This year will have a different start for me. I'm writing this column from the Cleveland Clinic, where I will have heart surgery in a few days. My mitral valve is leaking, so a repair is in order.

Knowing my heart will be stopped while the repair takes place is concerning and stressful to



**Col. Barry Gorter**  
Commander, 123rd Airlift Wing

me. Please take this as a reminder: We can never underestimate what those around us are dealing with. And we won't find out unless we invest.

Investing in those around us is like paying ourselves ahead. Investing in those around us makes our environment better. Investing in those around us can be the difference between a good day and a bad day, or more dramatically, it can help a troubled member make better choices.

Investing in those around us is good for all of us. Personally, I have found amazing comfort from wing members who have sent thoughtful notes, emails, texts, etc. Thanks to each of you!

Our wing represents four generations. A discussion at a recent conference concerned how senior leaders (old people) should find ways to communicate with Millennials.

Gen. Mark Welsh, chief of staff of the Air Force, said he sees it differently. He said that while each generation communicates in unique ways, he thinks senior leaders should communicate in the manner they are most comfortable, and the Millennials will adjust.

He also said that each generation thinks the upcoming generation can't sustain the mantra. But that wasn't true in the 1950s, and it's not true today.

Finally, a couple of quotes from the chief:

*"Complaining about something and doing nothing or not offering a solution is just immature."*

*"Sharing all the background and facts about each decision is impossible, so we need the trust of our Airmen."*

The 123rd's senior leaders will continue to strive to communicate in the most effective manner possible, even if it's out of our comfort zone — and I ask you to please adjust as well. When things don't seem right, ask questions. But instead of jumping to conclusions or complaining, please put trust in your leadership — both senior enlisted leaders and the command structure.

I will be missing the January UTA due to the medical procedure, and there is no February UTA. I look forward to seeing you in March (or around the wing outside of UTA weekend).

Thank you for all you do, and for your continued dedication.

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We welcome your feedback. Please contact the Public Affairs Office directly if you have suggestions for articles or photography. Our office is located in Room 1160 of the Wing Headquarters Building, 1101 Grade Lane, Louisville, KY 40213.

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