

# THE CARGO COURIER

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## Wentworth named top porter in ANG

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

Staff Sgt. Kaleb Wentworth, an aerial porter with the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, has been recognizing as the top Air Transportation Journeyman in the Air National Guard.

Wentworth, who received the Chief Master Sgt. Tommy Downs Award for Excellence in Aerial Port Operations for 2016, was selected from more than 1,700 Aerial Porters across the country.

Wentworth's supervisor, Senior Master Sgt. Larry Burba, said the Airman is a highly motivated troop with a great attitude who is always first to volunteer for mission taskings.

"Kaleb always has a smile on his face, and is a great role model for the younger troops, because he constantly has a positive attitude with everything he does," said Burba, superintendent of the 123rd LRS. "At all times, he is leading and mentoring the younger Airmen, and is excited to come to the Port and work every day"

Wentworth has supported numerous contingencies and deployments. During the award period, for example, he led a joint inspection team in the Virgin Islands to support 63rd Theater Aviation Brigade operations, moving 35 short tons of equipment and 60 passengers.

He also worked as the load-team chief for multiple home-station airlifts consisting of more than 155 short tons of cargo on various airframes including the C-5, C-17, KC-10 and C-130.

Wentworth additionally was part of the elite Kentucky Joint Service Operation, during which he helped eradicate 513,740 marijuana plants, preventing the use and sale of over \$1.2 billion of illegal narcotics in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

In Europe, he coordinated the movement of 1,551 passengers, 491 short tons of cargo



Master Sgt. Phil Speck/KyANG

**Staff Sgt. Kaleb Wentworth, an aerial port specialist with the 123rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, was selected from among more than 1,700 aerial porters as the top transportation journeyman in the Air National Guard for 2016.**

and 67 successful sortie operations as part of Sabre Junction, a training exercise that included 5,000 participants from 18 allied partner nations.

Wentworth also is devoted to his community, where he supports homeless shelters, prepares and serves meals to the needy, and provides lawn-care services for the elderly.

"It was an honor and very humbling to be selected among my peers to receive this award," Wentworth said.

The award is named in honor of former 123rd Airlift Wing Command Chief Master Sgt. Thomas Downs, who was an aerial port superintendent before passing away in 2009 after more than three decades of service. The award has been bestowed annually since 2012.

"Command Chief Master Sgt. Tommy Downs was a true hero who cared for nothing more than the Airmen around

him," said Chief Master Sgt. Brian Pritt, air transportation manager for the West Virginia Air Guard's 130th Logistics Readiness Squadron, who presented the award to Wentworth.

"It didn't matter what rank, unit, branch or state they were from, he made sure they had the tools necessary to accomplish the mission and they felt his true compassion and love for the 'Port Dawg.'

"He immediately made you feel that you were a part of the family for which we are known. He defined the true meaning of our core values as far as integrity, service before self, and excellence — and everyone who came in contact with him knew that those words were much more than a phrase to him. It was a way of life.

"This award is to symbol our core values...Not just a phrase we say, but know it, understand it and live it."

# Team essential to wing's flight safety

By Tech. Sgt. Vicky Spesard  
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

From the bottom of the pack to the top of the canopy, line by line, inch by inch, touching every seam, stitch and grommet, Tech. Sgt. Christopher Brawner, painstakingly examines a parachute for anything that might make the life-saving equipment not function properly.

Brawner, an aircrew flight equipment journeyman with the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Operations Support Squadron here, knows what is at stake if the parachute doesn't work — the life of a pilot.

That pilot — and all the other aircrew members in the Kentucky Air Guard — depend on Brawner and the aircrew flight equipment team to support them from behind the scenes. Their mission is to inspect and repair on-board equipment to be used in the event of a bailout or crash landing.

"Our job in this shop is to maintain the integrity of every piece of safety and survival equipment that goes on the aircraft here," explained Brawner, who has worked on parachutes and other related survival gear for many years. "All of us here understand that if an aircrew member has to use our equipment, they are already having a bad day; we don't want to add to that by giving them equipment that doesn't deploy properly."

The equipment that the team manages is extensive. From rubber rafts, life preservers and helmets, all the way down to the band-aids in the survival kit and the glint tape applied to aircrew uniforms, there are more than 22,000 items that the 15 aircrew flight equipment personnel must be knowledgeable about and adept at repairing.

This includes the ability to sew with a machine, darn by hand, patch various materials using specialized adhesives, clean and maintain optical equipment, clean and repair chemical suits, test locator beacons, radios and batteries, and even wash each aircrew members' oxygen equipment by hand.

"Every single item that we are responsible for has a mandated life-cycle, inspection and maintenance schedule," said Senior Master Sgt. Michael Hilbert, superintendent of the aircrew flight equipment team. "But in our shop, we go beyond what is required by the Air Force, and we inspect equipment that we place on the aircraft much more often."

"Our job is to provide the aircrew with the equipment that will get them out of the aircraft safely, survive in whatever the environment on the ground is and return home," he continued. "We know these guys — all of the aircrew members here. Everything we do, down to the smallest detail, is with the mindset to have our equipment ready when they need it the most."

This attention to detail and the team's dedication to the mission is what instills trust within the aircrews, according to Lt. Col. David



Tech. Sgt. Vicky Spesard/KyANG

**Master Sgt. David Clark (left), an aircrew flight equipment journeyman, and Airman 1st Class Cheyenne Underwood, an aircrew flight equipment apprentice, pack a rubber raft after a routine inspection of its integrity June 9.**

Flynn, commander of the 165th Airlift Squadron here.

"If we have an in-flight emergency, our aircrews' lives depend on the proper functionality of all emergency equipment on board the aircraft," Flynn said. "The personnel from aircrew flight equipment are our life-line in an emergency situation in the aircraft. They are an extremely dedicated group of people and we, as aircrew, know we can trust them with our lives. They do an incredible job."

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