

THE CARGO COURIER

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MXU educates maintainers from four states

By Lt. Col. Allison Stephens
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

SAVANNAH, Ga. — More than 270 Air National Guardsmen from multiple states completed four days of intensive training here May 19 to 22, honing their aircraft maintenance skills on everything from propulsion systems and avionics to hydraulics and ground equipment.

The annual event, known as Maintenance University, was sponsored by the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing and provided training to Airmen from Kentucky, the Texas Air Guard's 136th Airlift Wing, the Missouri Air Guard's 139th Airlift Wing and the Georgia Air Guard's 165th Airlift Wing.

"This type of course is a tremendous value to each Guard unit and the National Guard Bureau because of the large amount of specialized training we can provide to so many Airmen in such a short period of time," said Lt. Col. Chris Bishop, commander of Kentucky's 123rd Aircraft Maintenance squadron and the course detachment commander.

The school, held at the Savannah Combat Readiness Training Center, emphasized hands-on training for a variety of C-130 Hercules aircraft systems, using subject matter experts to teach small groups of Airmen who rotated through the various courses.

As important as the training was, Maintenance University offered another equally important benefit: building relationships with other C-130 units in the Air National Guard.

"The hands-on training with counterparts in other units is fundamental to this experience, especially for the more junior Airmen," said Chief Master Sgt. Hollis Sellman, 136th maintenance operations flight chief.



Lt. Col. Allison Stephens/KyANG

Airman 1st Class Matthew Dunlap, a crew chief in the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing, secures an aircraft jack in preparation for a class on how to change tires on C-130 Hercules aircraft at Maintenance University in Savannah, Ga., May 18.

Sellman was so pleased with the experience of her 55 Airmen, she said the unit will be back next year.

Many junior airmen agreed that the course work is both valuable and interesting.

"This is my first TDY, and it's great to mesh with other units," said Senior Airman Josiah Hatcher, a crew chief from the 123rd Airlift Wing. "Plus the hands-on style training enabled instructors to teach tasks that can't always get accomplished during drill weekend, including how to do a generator swap, and I need to know that as a crew chief."

Students also spent time learning how to write performance reports, navigate the Defense Travel System website and attend to their physical fitness with classes on health and well-being.

"This is a wonderful venue, without the

distractions of other events during drill weekend," said Lynn Edwards, Kentucky's director of psychological health.

She taught a class titled "Sleep, Stress and Shots," and many walked away saying they wanted to change their alcohol consumption and sleeping habits.

"This is the first year I've taught Airmen outside our unit, and the feedback was that they really enjoyed the class," Edwards said.

Also new this year, the Air National Guard sent a mobile instruction team to teach the Maintenance Supervision and Production course to 28 senior maintainers from seven wings. This six-day course teaches 19 lessons and is accredited by the Community College of the Air Force.

To view more photos, visit www.123aw.ang.af.mil/News

Blankenship named top NCO for ANG Region 3

By Lt. Col. Dale Greer
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Danielle Blankenship, a logistics plans journeyman for the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, has been named Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year for Air National Guard Region 3.

Blankenship had previously been named the Kentucky National Guard's 2019 NCO of the Year.

Chief Master Sgt. Ronald C. Anderson Jr., the command chief master sergeant for the Air National Guard, said Blankenship "exhibited superior performance your primary duties and emulated qualities that we, as Airmen, pride ourselves on."

"Your recognition as the Outstanding Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year for 2019 is a reflection of your dedication and commitment to your community and your nation," Anderson continued. "You represent the best of the Air National Guard."

Blankenship has deployed in support of operations Freedom's Sentinel and Inherent Resolve. While mobilized last year, the NCO was hand-selected as the top enlisted member of an expeditionary Readiness Action Team that redeployed 4,500 troops with zero errors. She also single-handedly created a new format for the management of force deployment data, reducing rejection rates 15 percent below the average for units across U.S. Air Forces Central Command.

Blankenship also is engaged in her community, serving as a youth group leader at her church and organizing a breast cancer walk/run that raised \$400,000.



Master Sgt. Vicky Spesard/KyANG

Col. David J. Mounkes, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, presents the 2019 Air National Guard Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year Region 3 Award to Staff Sgt. Danielle Blankenship during a ceremony here May 19.

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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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