



# BIOGRAPHY



## UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

### CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT JAMES R. TONGATE

Chief Master Sergeant James R. Tongate currently serves as the tenth State Command Chief Master Sergeant for the Kentucky Air National Guard, Joint Force Headquarters, Frankfort, Kentucky. Chief Tongate advises The Adjutant General and his staff on all matters influencing mission readiness, training, promotion, retention, professional development, utilization, health, morale, welfare, and assignment policy affecting the entire state's enlisted airmen and their families.

Chief Master Sergeant Tongate entered active duty military service in June 1986, graduated October 1986 from the Aircrew Life Support Apprentice Technical School, and was assigned to the 18<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron, Eielson Air Force Base (AFB), Alaska. Chief Tongate's follow-on assignment was to Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota as the Aircrew Life Support NCOIC. In 1991 as the Gulf War was ending, Chief Tongate chose to leave active military service. In February 1997, CMSgt Tongate joined the Kentucky Army National Guard as a "96 Bravo" Military Intelligence Specialist, where he analyzed and evaluated Army intelligence to determine changes in enemy capabilities, vulnerabilities, and probable courses of actions. Working closely with the ANG he found an opportunity to return to the Aircrew Life Support career field at the 123 Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard.

CMSgt Tongate deployed supporting numerous missions as the Assistant NCOIC for Aircrew Life Support. While deployed to the CENTCOM AOR, and supporting OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, the Chief earned numerous accolades. In August 2003, CMSgt Tongate cross-trained into the C-130 Tactical Loadmaster career field and in the 165<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron flew over 1760 hours (274 combat) supporting missions to include: Hurricane Ivan, Ike, Katrina and Sandy Relief, Presidential Support, Haiti Earthquake Relief, AFSOC and United States Army Paratrooper airdrops, United Nation (Bosnia/Kosovo), and 3 combat tours to Afghanistan in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM. Prior to his current position, the Chief was the Wing Human Resource Advisor, the additional duty First Sergeant and an active member of the Inspector General's Wing Inspection Team, 123 AW, KYANG, Louisville, Ky.



#### EDUCATION

- 1986 Aircrew Life Support Apprentice Technical School, Chanute Air Force Base (AFB), ILL.
- 1989 Noncommissioned Officer Preparatory Course, Eielson AFB, Alaska
- 1988 United States Air Force Arctic Survival School, Eielson AFB, Alaska
- 1988 United States Air Force Water Survival School, Homestead AFB, Fla.
- 2000 Aircrew Life Support Craftsman Technical School, Sheppard AFB, Texas
- 2001 United States Air Force Basic Land Survival School, Fairchild AFB, Wash.
- 2003 C-130H Loadmaster Apprentice Technical School, Little Rock AFB, Ark.
- 2004 Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky., by correspondence
- 2010 Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky., by correspondence
- 2013 Associate of Applied Science, Aviation Operations, Community College of the Air Force, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2015 Human Resource Advisor Orientation Course (HRAOC), Andrews AFB, Md.
- 2018 United States Air Force Chief Master Sergeant Leadership Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2019 Air National Guard Chief Master Sergeant Orientation Course, Joint Base Andrews AFB, Md.
- 2020 Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education, Joint Force Staff College, Norfolk, Va. by correspondence
- 2021 Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sergeant Training Course, Joint Base San Antonio, Texas

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

1. June 1986-August 1986, Basic Military Training, Lackland Air Force Base (AFB), Texas
2. October 1986-October 1989, Aircrew Life Support Specialist, 18<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron, Eielson AFB, Alaska
3. October 1989-March 1991, Aircrew Life Support Quality NCOIC, 28<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing, Ellsworth AFB, S.D.
4. February 1997-December 1997, Military Intelligence Specialist, 149<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade HQ, Kentucky Army National Guard, Louisville, Ky.
5. December 1997-February 2004, Aircrew Life Support Technician, 165<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron, Kentucky Air National Guard (KYANG), Louisville, Ky.
6. February 2004-May 2015, C-130H Tactical Loadmaster, 165<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron, KYANG, Louisville, Ky.
7. May 2015- May 2021, Wing Human Resource Advisor, 123<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing, KYANG, Louisville, Ky.
8. May 2021-Present, State Command Chief Master Sergeant, Joint Force Headquarters KYANG, Frankfort. Ky.

## **FLIGHT INFORMATION**

Rating: Senior Enlisted Aircrew  
Flight Hours: More than 1,760 hours  
Combat Flight Hours: 274 hours  
Aircraft Flown: C130E and C130H

## **MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS**

Meritorious Service Medal  
Air Medal  
Air Force Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters  
Air Force Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster  
Meritorious Unit Award with two oak leaf clusters  
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with two silver oak leaf clusters  
Combat Readiness Medal with three oak leaf clusters  
Air Force Good Conduct Medal with oak leaf cluster  
Kosovo Campaign Medal with bronze campaign star  
Afghanistan Campaign Medal with bronze campaign star  
Armed Forces Service Medal  
Humanitarian Service Medal with bronze campaign star  
Air Force Overseas Ribbon Long  
Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with gold border and oak leaf cluster  
Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M device and gold hour glass  
NATO Medal with bronze campaign star

## **STATE AWARDS AND DECORATIONS**

Kentucky Distinguished Service Medal  
Kentucky State Active Duty Ribbon with oak leaf cluster

## **OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

2014 - Top 25 Louisville Veteran Business Leaders Award – Louisville Business First

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS**

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) - Member  
Veterans of Foreign Wars - Post 1170  
American Legion – Post 295  
USA Cares (501c3) – Military Protocol Advisor & Volunteer  
Kentucky Education & Employment Partnership for Veterans (KEEP VETS) – Board Member  
Eastern Kentucky University Veterans Studies Advisory Council – Board Member  
Civilian Ready® Alliance Team – Board Member

## **EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION**

Staff Sergeant Sept. 1, 2000  
Technical Sergeant Sept. 1, 2002  
Master Sergeant Oct. 21, 2006  
Senior Master Sergeant Sept. 12, 2015  
Chief Master Sergeant June 1, 2018

(Current as of May 2022)