



U.S. Air Force Col. Chris Alderdice, right, newly appointed commander of the 181st Intelligence Wing, salutes the Adjutant General of Indiana Maj. Gen. Courtney P. Carr, left, during an assumption of command ceremony, Feb. 4, 2017, at Hulman Field Air National Guard Base, Terre Haute, Ind. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Kevin D. Schulze)

New 181 IW Commander Takes the Lead

By Senior Airman Kevin D. Schulze, 181st Intelligence Wing/Public Affairs

HULMAN FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ind. – The 181st Intelligence Wing welcomes U.S. Air Force Col. Chris Alderdice as the new wing commander Feb. 4, 2017, at Hulman Field Air National Guard Base.

It is a blessing to lead the Airmen of the 181st Intelligence Wing and to command the unique missions associated with providing intelligence support around the globe, said Alderdice.

Alderdice, arriving from the 122nd Fighter Wing, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, has served in the armed forces for 37 years.

Alderdice began his career as an enlisted Airman before commissioning in 1985 as a weapons system officer. He was a weapons system officer in the F-4D and the F-4E. He received the aeronautical rating of pilot in 1990 and has flown aircraft such as the F-4E, F-15C and F-16C.

Alderdice's extensive experience commanding a fighter squadron, aircraft maintenance squadron, maintenance group and mission support group have given him a unique breadth of knowledge to lead the 181st IW.

"I'm enthusiastic about becoming commander and a Racer," said Alderdice. "It can't be a bigger honor to lead the men and women of the 181st Intelligence Wing."

Being Racer Ready is a major priority, said Alderdice. Family, personal, spiritual and physical readiness is key.

The assumption of command ceremony is rooted in military history dating back to the 18th century. At that time, organizational flags were uniquely developed for each unit. To this flag and its commander, the soldiers of the unit would dedicate their loyalty and trust.

When a change of command took place, the flag was passed to the individual assuming the command. This gesture was accomplished in front of the unit so that all could witness their new leader assuming his dutiful position.

Witnessed by 181st IW Airmen and guests, Maj. Gen. Courtney P. Carr, Adjutant General of the Indiana National Guard, presented Alderdice with the 181st IW flag.

Alderdice is taking the place of Brig. Gen. L. Kip Clark, now chief of staff of the Indiana Air National Guard.

With his 37 years of experience, Alderdice leads the Airmen of the 181st IW in the never-ending mission to remain Racer Ready!



U.S. Air Force Col. Chris Alderdice, commander 181st Intelligence Wing, addresses Airmen following an assumption of command ceremony, Feb. 4, 2017, at Hulman Field Air National Guard base, Terre Haute, Ind. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Kevin D. Schulze)



Family members of U.S. Air Force Col. Chris Alderdice receive flowers during an assumption of command ceremony Feb. 4, 2017, Hulman Field Air National Guard base, Terre Haute, Ind.. Col. Alderdice assumed command of the 181st Intelligence Wing. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Lonnie Wiram)





U.S. Airman assigned to the 181st Communications Flight, Indiana Air National Guard bikes during the 181st CF's winter biking challenge at Hulman Field, Jan. 9, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. John S. Chapman)



U.S. Airman assigned to the 181st Communications Flight, Indiana Air National Guard bikes during the 181st CF's winter biking challenge at Hulman Field, Jan. 5, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Kevin D. Schulze)

Winter Biking Challenge

By Senior Airman Kevin D. Schulze, 181st Intelligence Wing/Public Affairs

HULMAN FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ind. – U.S. Airmen with the 181st Intelligence Wing Communications Flight come together to keep a stationary bike continuously moving in their office for every duty hour in the month of January.

The challenge began as a means to perform low impact cardio during the winter months.

“January and February prove to be a challenge for physical training due to the weather,” said U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. James D. Brown, 181st CF Superintendent.

The first day’s goal was to bike a total of 140 miles, the distance across the state of Indiana. By the end of the duty day, the 181st CF had collectively biked 143 miles.

The next two days started to gain momentum with a cumulative mileage total of 444 miles for the first three days, and one Airman biking a total of 66 miles himself, said Brown. If the pace continues, the 181st CF could very well bike across the country in one month.

This determination and commitment to excellence are the qualities which keep the 181st Intelligence Wing and its Airmen prepared for anything, and the National Guard ‘Always Ready, Always there.’

Bear On Base!

By Senior Airman Kevin D. Schulze, 181st Intelligence Wing/Public Affairs

HULMAN FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ind.— A Bear has become a regular resident of the 181st Intelligence Wing since the fall of 2016; however, this creature holds no resemblance to the 600 pound mountain-dwelling mammal. This black, brown and white furry friend is a rescue dog, named Bear, from Adopt Me! Bluegrass Pet Rescue has joined the 181st IW Racer team as the wing’s very first therapy dog.

As part of the Pet Assisted Warrior Support program, Bear has been trained with the purpose of improving a warrior’s coping and resiliency, boost morale, build connections, and mitigate psychological health concerns and suicidal ideation. He is stationed at Hulman Field to support the daily operations of all units.

“Having a therapy dog is not an original idea of mine,” said Mary E. Walker, the 181st IW’s Director of Psychological Health, and Bear’s owner. “There have been a few other DPHs at other Air National Guard wings that have started this process.”

The PAWS program was started to protect and rehabilitate veterans from the daily impacts of combat operations. This program has been proven to provide emotional and mental relief to those in such environments.

According to Joint Base Langley-Eustis’ Occupational Health Study and Assessment survey, there is significant statistical evidence validating the positive impact a therapy dog can have on a military work place. Bear’s job is to bring a positive feeling to a stressful work place. Bear is available to everyone on base who may need something to brighten their day.

“I really want him to be adaptable with a lot of different people,” said Walker. “This is a full-time operation, but even the folks that are here on the weekends, it’s really stressful transitioning from your civilian job, coming here, not having a day off and mentally preparing to come to drill. Or carrying problems from home, maybe some things happening there, or it’s just difficult logistically. So there is a benefit even for drill status guardsmen.”

As one of only a few therapy dogs in the Air Force, Bear’s abilities go beyond maintaining positive morale when needed.

“Bear goes for runs. He likes to run and he will run very well with you. A lot of people have trouble getting started with PT, Bear could be the motivation somebody needs to get up and go,” said Walker. “When people have downtime, they might not go outside, but he can get them to go outside. If he’s there and he needs to go to the bathroom they will be like ‘Hey let’s take Bear outside.’ They can get some sunlight and they can get some activity.”

Apart from providing support at the 181st, Bear is also an asset to community programs associated with mental illnesses, addictions and recovery houses because of his specialized training, said Walker.

As part of his training, this 2-year-old pooch completed a six week program of 24/7 training at Luther Locket Correctional Facility in La Grange, Kentucky, called Paws Behind Bars. While being taught a variety of different skills, Bear’s training differed from that of service dogs.

“Service dogs are dedicated to a specific task and therapy dogs are for calming and relaxing those who may be suffering from PTSD or anxiety conditions,” said Maj. John Shepherd, a Public Health Officer with the 181st Medical Group. Shepherd works as



BEAR
Pet Assisted Warrior Support (PAWS)

a veterinarian in his civilian career, and acts as Bear’s medical care provider to ensure he remains healthy.

As an active member of the 181st IW, Bear is now at the head of a new and growing program.

The program has the potential to garner support within each unit as well as the community and grow to a larger size, said Shepherd.

With his current skills and potential, Bear has begun what could be a very long and beneficial career as a therapy dog that brings joy to the Airmen of the 181st IW and ensures everyone here remains ‘Racer Ready.’



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Major Changes to Benefit

By Capt. Barndy Fultz, 181st Intelligence Wing/Public Affairs

HULMAN FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ind. – One of the biggest changes to military pay and benefits goes into effect January 1, 2018. Will you be ready?

If you plan to leave following your current enlistment, and thus think the change does not impact you, you may be wrong.

In the words of 181st Intelligence Wing Vice Commander Matthew Brown, “This is a big deal.”

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal year 2016, as amended by the NDAA FY2017, established a modernized retirement plan for the Uniformed Services called the Blended Retirement System or BRS. The new system combines the legacy 20-year military defined benefit with a defined contribution plan similar to the civilian equivalent of a 401(k), utilizing the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).

Service Members who enter on or after January 1, 2018, will automatically be enrolled in BRS. Service members who enter service on or before December 31, 2017, are grandfathered in to the legacy system. Service members in an active component who have served fewer than 12 years, or service members in the National Guard or Reserves who have accrued fewer than 4, 320 retirement points as of December 31, 2017, and are in a paid status, will have the option of electing BRS or to remain in the legacy retirement system.

The BRS combines a defined benefit (pension) with a defined contribution (TSP). The BRS retains the traditional defined benefit annuity of the legacy retirement system, but the BRS uses a 2.0 percent multiplier rather than 2.5 percent multiplier in calculating military retired pay for the defined benefit portion.

In addition to the defined benefit (pension), BRS includes a defined contribution utilizing the TSP. Service members opting into the BRS will receive DoD automatic 1 percent contributions and up to 4 percent additional DoD matching contribution of their basic pay. Regardless of time in service, all opt-in service members are immediately vested in their contribution, government matching contributions, and earnings. Opt-in service members must have two years of service before they are vested in the government automatic 1 percent and any earnings on those contributions.

Those eligible to opt into BRS will have a year to make the opt-in decision. The opt-in or election period for BRS begins January 1, 2018, and concludes on December 31, 2018. Once an opt-in decision is made, it is irrevocable; therefore, ensure you take advantage of the numerous DoD training and information tools available to assist in making an informed decision on the financial implications specific to your retirement situation.

Both the legacy retirement system, often called the “High-3” system, and BRS may have advantages and disadvantages based on a service member’s particular circumstances. For some, staying under the legacy retirement system will make sense. For others, the BRS will be a preferable option.

Service members should make their decision after having completed the required training and taking advantage of all of the information and resources available. An available resource includes a personal financial counselor that will be available Sunday of May UTA, the first week of June annual training, and Sunday of August UTA. More information to follow.

Tools and resources:

- Comparison Calculator: DoD will provide service members an online comparison calculator. Service members will be able to enter information about their career path and future career goals into the calculator and use its results to aid in their decision about which system best meets their needs.
- 181st IW Personal Finance Counselor: Available Sunday May UTA, first week of June annual training, and Sunday August UTA.
- 181 IW Points of Contact: Force Support Squadron Chief Master Sgt. Tracie Newman, Tracie.L.Newman.mil@mail.mil and Airmen and Family Readiness Mrs. Margaret Amos Margaret.L.Amos6.civ@mail.mil
- Mandatory Training: Training is available, and required, via ADLS. Family members can also take the course at: www.militaryonesource.mil
- Official DoD BRS webpage: Includes a number of resources and frequently asked questions: <http://militarypay.defense.gov/BlendedRetirement>
- Military One Source: www.militaryonesource.mil



The Blended Retirement System combines servicemember’s traditional legacy retirement pension with distributions from the Thrift Savings Plan, creating a portable retirement option. The BRS will grandfather in servicemembers serving as of December 2017 under the legacy retirement system. No one currently serving will be automatically switched to the BRS, according to the DoD’s Military Compensation website. (U.S. Air Force illustration/Staff Sgt. Alexandre Montes)



Racer Pit Stop

* Combat Dining In: June UTA. See flyers for more information.

* Key Volunteer Meetings: Saturdays of UTA in the MSG/LRF Conference Room, Building 3

* INNG State Family Programs Child & Youth: Kids AT South Camp June 18-23; North Camp July 23-28.

* Life Skills: USO Wellness Classes offered on UTA Saturdays and the Wednesday before and after UTA in the Racer Resilience Center.



Honor Guard Member of the Year

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Anjuli Smith, assigned to the 181st Intelligence Wing base honor guard, receives the Honor Guard Member of the Year award during commander's call Feb. 4, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Lonnie Wiram)



Out with the Old, In with the New

U.S. Airmen assigned to the 181st Civil Engineering Squadron, Indiana Air National Guard use excavators to demolish a bridge at St. Mary of the Woods College, West Terre Haute, Ind. Jan. 8, 2017. The demolition of the bridge is part of a project to rebuild a pond. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Lonnie Wiram)



Airman receives Air Force commendation medal

U.S. Air Force Col. Christopher Alderdice, 181st Intelligence Wing commander, presents U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Shaun Runyon the Air Force Commendation medal March 3, 2017. The medal was present to Master Sgt. Runyon for his outstanding achievement. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Lonnie Wiram)



Town Hall Meeting

U.S. Air Force Command Chief Master Sgt. Robert Beasley, 181st Intelligence Wing Command Chief, addresses junior enlisted members of the 181st IW during a meeting March 4, 2017. The meeting allowed junior enlisted Airmen to give feedback and ask questions related to the guard. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Kevin D. Schulze)



Taking Charge

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Bryan Yates(right) assumes command of the 181st Operation Support Squadron from U.S. Air Force Col. Matthew Brown (left), 181st IW vice commander, March 3, 2017. Family members of Lt. Col. Yates and members of the 181st IW were in attendance at the assumption of command.(U.S. Air Nation Guard photo by Senior Airmen Lonnie Wiram)



Lowering the Colors

U.S. Airmen assigned to the 181st Intelligence Wing lower the flag during retreat March 4, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airmen Kevin D. Schulze)





U.S. Airmen assigned to the 181st Force Support Squadron serve up meals in the base dining facility.



181st Intelligence Wing member receives IG coin for excellent work.



A U.S. Airman assigned to the 181st Intelligence Wing receives a coin from a fellow Airman.



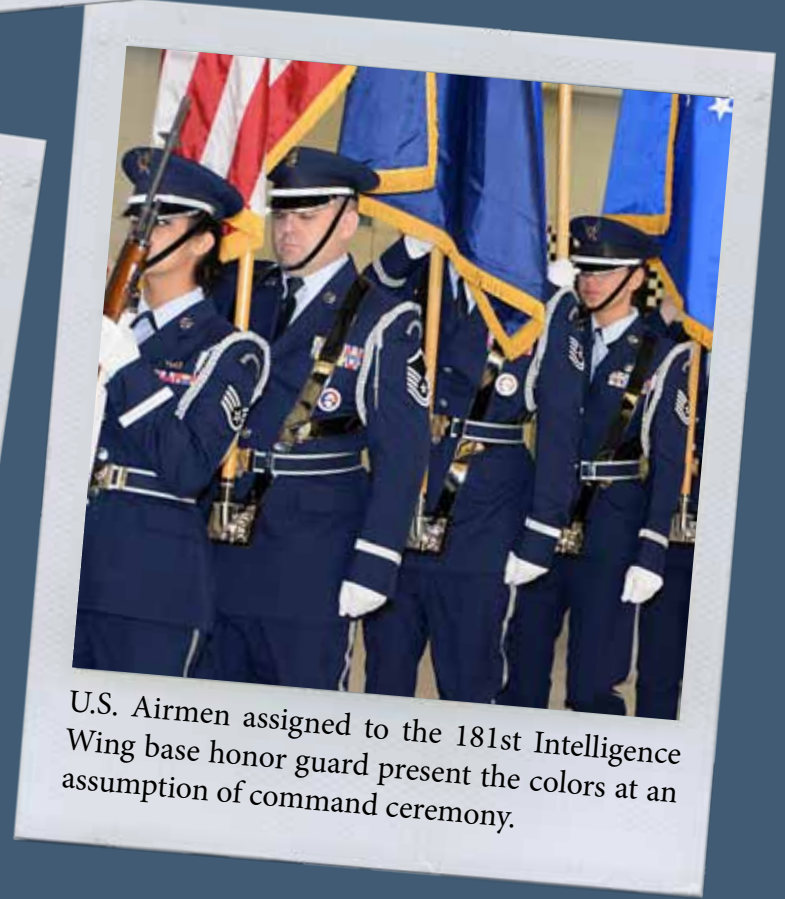
U.S. Airmen assigned to the 181st Intelligence Wing look over paperwork for deploying Airmen.



U.S. Airmen assigned to the 181st Intelligence Wing orderly room pose for a photo.



U.S. Airmen assigned to the 181st Intelligence Wing admire the craftsmanship of a shadow box during a retirement ceremony.



U.S. Airmen assigned to the 181st Intelligence Wing base honor guard present the colors at an assumption of command ceremony.

