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512th Airlift Wing, Dover Air Force Base, Del.



Reservists, assigned to the 46th Aerial Port Squadron, process through a mobility line here Thursday in preparation for a six-month deployment to the Kyrgyz Republic. The

46th APS air transportation specialists will augment the airlift mission at the Transit Center at Manas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Photo by Adrian Rowan)

Aerial porters deploy downrange

Master Sgt. Veronica Aceveda
512th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

A group of 512th Airlift Wing reservists deployed Saturday to the Kyrgyz Republic in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The team of aerial porters, from the 46th Aerial Port Squadron, will serve a six-month rotation at the Transit Center at Manas, a transportation and logistics hub, which provides around-the-clock missions, including airlift of supplies and equipment and movement of coalition personnel.

"Rapid global mobility is a core function of the United States Air Force," said Col. Raymond A. Kozak, 512th Airlift Wing commander. "And, these aerial porters provide a critical

link for that function."

The deployment process began Wednesday, when reservists, from seven different states, reported to the base to out process.

Staff Sgt. Jacob Hildreth, an air transportation specialist, traveled nine hours to get here from Oxford, Mass. While Hildreth will be serving overseas, his wife is expected to deliver their first child in March.

"Since we knew we couldn't be together for the delivery, we wanted to share as many moments together as possible at the doctors' appointments, including finding out what we're having - a son."

This is the hardest part of my job, being apart from my wife; but, being in the military, it's one

of those things you sign-on to do. The job itself is not difficult, because we continuously train, learning it so well that we're able to step right in."

This will be the second deployment for Hildreth, who has deployed to Iraq before; but, this will be the first time for Senior Airman Ashley Nolan, who's been a member of the 512th AW for about two years.

"I'm nervous; I have butterflies in my stomach, but I'm incredibly excited too," she said. "I never thought I would have joined the military, but I'm so glad I did. I have no regrets what so ever."

The 24-year-old Maryland resident, who's also an air transportation specialist, enlisted into the Air Force Reserve after her brother was killed in action in 2009. He was a Marine serving in Afghanistan.

"For me, I thought it was an honorable thing to do since my brother gave the ultimate sacrifice," she said. "I know he didn't die in vain, and I wanted to do my part in protecting the freedoms of our nation."

Like Nolan, most of the deployers volunteered for this mobilization, which will last through several major holidays and the presidential election.

During a mobility line Thursday, Airmen received a briefing about voting, and various wing representatives verified medical and administrative requirements, such as wills and finances.

The team has since arrived in country, joining the forces actively engaged in worldwide missions.

Money matters: The U.S. House and U.S. Senate have passed a continuing resolution to allow prudent continued government operations through March 27. For the latest updates regarding new fiscal year funding, be sure to read the Liberty Press Weekly. (Courtesy 512th Financial Management Office)

Just a click away

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