104th Fighter Wing Airmen receive German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency
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104FW Airmen Pay Tribute to 9/11

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Monday - Thursday........................................................0600-2345
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Did you know?

The 104th Fighter Wing welcomes new members, celebrates milestones, and honors achievements. Check out the latest news, events, and updates on the Air Force Connect Mobile App.
Five Airmen from the 104th Fighter Wing competed alongside 55 other Massachusetts National Guard Airmen and Soldiers in the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency competition Sept. 10-12 at Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts. Depending on their scores, competitors earn the privilege of wearing the gold, silver or bronze GAFPB, one of the few foreign awards that U.S. service members are authorized to wear on their uniforms.

“The GAFPB provides our Airmen with a unique and special opportunity to demonstrate to our coalition partners our preparedness and proficiency in basic combat knowledge, skills and abilities further strengthening our alliances,” said Chief Brett Barbee, 104FW Command Chief.

Lt. Col. John Desarro, 104FW Inspector General, Maj. Sean Cahill, Communications Squadron commander, Tech. Sgt. Andrew Lawrence, Command Post, Senior Airman Sara Kolinski, Public Affairs specialist, and Airman 1st Class Ivan Villavicencio, Security Forces defender, represented the 104FW. The team had mentors including Chief Brett Barbee and Tech. Sgt. Shane Coakley, 104FSFS defender, who helped them prepare for the competition and coached them during the competition.

“All five members earned a badge and dominated every event the GAFPB threw at each Airman,” said Coakley. “It is a credit to their ‘service before self’ and ‘excellence in all we do’ mindset. It was an honor and pleasure to watch these warfighters compete for three days,” he said.

All five Airmen from the 104FW completed all of the required events and received their GAFPB. Cahill and Villavicencio received gold, Desarro and Kolinski received silver, and Lawrence received bronze. Kolinski also had the record this year for both females and males on the chin-up test and only needed one more shot on the pistol qualification to qualify for gold.

“I could not be more proud of our five Airmen who competed for the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge,” said Col. Tom ‘Sling’ Bladen, 104FW Commander. “Coming together as a team from differing units, they represented exactly what it means to be a Barnestormer...team effort, goal oriented, Battlefield Airman mindset, and taking care of one another.”

The Airmen trained together during training sessions lead by their mentors and at home on their own. Section supervisors allowed the Airmen flexibility in their schedules to train while still getting the mission done.

Story Cont. on pg 3
“Multiple training sessions were held to familiarize competitors with the events that they would be taking part in during the competition,” said Cahill. “Mentors were assigned to the team and they shared their experience from when they competed in previous years. Administrative and logistical preparation was excellent with orders, lodging, DTS, etc. Overall, 104 FW support for the competitors was excellent!”

The competition included an 11 x 10-meter sprint test, chin-up test, 1000-meter run, 100-meter swim in uniform, first aid test, Nuclear Biological and Chemical Mission Oriented Protective Posture test, pistol qualification, and a road march wearing a weighted ruck sack.

“My favorite part of the event was the swim and ruck for two reasons,” said Lawrence. “One being the 104th competitors where able to complete those two events together as a group and two they were the more challenging events to compete in which made completing them that much more rewarding.”

The GAFPB is only one of the competitions that Massachusetts National Guardsmen have the opportunity to challenge themselves. The Best Warrior competition is another annual opportunity for Soldiers and Airmen to compete.

“I competed in the Best Warrior competition last year,” said Villavicencio. “As challenging and rewarding as that was, I wanted to compete in the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge this year and continue to challenge myself.”

Competitors can return multiple years to earn multiple badges and try to push themselves from one level of badge up to the next.

“I think any Airmen with the opportunity to compete in the GAFPB should do it,” said Kolinski. “It’s an amazing opportunity to see what you can do and really push yourself in a series of events that you wouldn’t otherwise be doing. I received the silver badge, but I am hoping to have the opportunity to go back again to get gold,” she said.

The 104FW competitors thanked their mentors, leadership, their sections and families, Col. Bladen and Chief Barbee for supporting them while training for and competing in the GAFPB.

“Our Barnestormer GAFPB Team demonstrated through action the very attributes we value as a Wing,” said Barbee. “The initiative, courage and perseverance they displayed throughout GAFPB testing models the example by which we all strive to achieve daily.”
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Articles and photos from higher headquarters and external publications

- Gen. Brown readies the Air Force,
- Lt. Gen. Loh Takes Over as ANG Director
- Chief Bass becomes 19th CMSAF
- New commander takes the reins of ACC
- ANG 1st non-pilot, 1st woman deputy
- Chief Williams, new ANG Command Chief
Welcome, Farewells, Promotions and Wellness Center POCs
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Wellness Center Points of Contact

Did you know that we have a wellness center full of professionals who can help you with a wide array of items?

Capt. Tra’Vorus Weaver, Chaplain, tra_vorus.weaver@us.af.mil
Lisa Potito, Airman & Family Readiness Program Manager, lisa.potito@us.af.mil
Amanda Winslow, Airman & Family Readiness Specialist, amanda.winslow@us.af.mil
Michelle Pennington, Director of Psychological Health, michelle.pennington.1@us.af.mil
Mary Keeler, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, mary.keeler.2@us.af.mil

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Promotions

Airman Basic Isaiah Rosario, FW
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