

2018

NORAD & USNORTHCOM Missile Warning and Defender *of the Year*

June 1, 2018

Colorado Springs, Colorado



SEQUENCE OF EVENTS
NORAD & USNORTHCOM
MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER *of the* YEAR
AWARD CEREMONY

Call to Order

Posting of the Colors

National Anthem

Invocation

Welcoming Remarks

Dinner

Remarks

Presentation of Awards

Remarks by Mr. Riki Ellison

Closing Remarks

Retiring of the Colors

Reception

AWARD HISTORY



NORAD & USNORTHCOM Missile Warning & Defender *of the Year*

On May 12, 1958 NORAD was established for the defense of Canada and the United States. The inaugural NORAD & USNORTHCOM Missile Warning & Defender of the Year award ceremony took place on May 3, 2013. The event recognizes and honors members of the U.S. and Canadian military and civilians who reflect the utmost commitment to excellence in their mission to defend the North American continent. They are a true inspiration to their subordinates, peers, and superiors. They have demonstrated leadership that goes above and beyond for the good of their countries.

The purpose of the NORAD & USNORTHCOM Missile Warning & Defender of the Year event is to recognize exceptional individuals in missile warning and missile defense in their role as defenders of the homeland and citizens of Canada and the United States. Furthermore, we recognize those leaders to help educate both the Canadian and American public on their vital role in the preservation of peace.

We want to thank all those who have supported MDAA for over a decade to fulfill its mission to educate the American public on the need for our nation to develop and deploy missile defense.

ABOUT MDAA



The Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance

MDAA's mission is to make the world safer by advocating for the development and deployment of missile defense systems to defend the United States, its armed forces, and its allies against missile threats.

MDAA is the only organization in existence whose primary mission is to educate the American public about missile defense issues and to recruit, organize, and mobilize citizens to advocate for the critical need of missile defense. We are a non-profit organization that does not advocate on behalf of any specific system, technology, architecture, or entity.

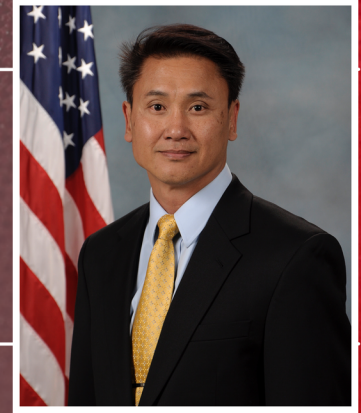
MDAA was founded by Riki Ellison in 2002 to generate public support through education for the continued testing, development, and deployment of missile defense systems.

U.S. Northern Command





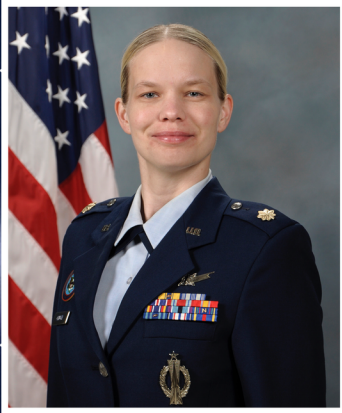
MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Mr. Anhtuan Wilson

USNORTHCOM Civilian Missile Defender of the Year Awardee

Mr. Wilson is a Current Operations Ballistic Missile Defense Specialist within USNORTHCOM J31. For the past eight years, he has led the Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) Asset Management Community in planning and scheduling world-wide BMD system maintenance, upgrades, and tests. He is also the most qualified civilian Missile Defense Officer (MDO) within USNORTHCOM and serves as a MDO Evaluator certifying MDOs for watch qualification within the NORAD USNORTHCOM Command Center. He has been critical to all facets of BMD operations by ensuring successful system upgrades, ground test, flight test, continuous Homeland Defense Protection Capability, and timely notification and communication of missile threats to national level leadership. Prior to his employment with USNORTHCOM, Mr. Wilson served in the U.S. Navy for over 20 years. He retired in August of 2009. Mr. Wilson was an engineering officer, electronic maintenance officer, and combat systems officer within the Surface Warfare Community. He also served as an officer in the Navy's Informational Professional community. During his career, Mr. Wilson served the Navy in various locations to include Charleston, South Carolina; Norfolk, Virginia; Yokosuka, Japan; and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He has also served in several joint billets supporting the Joint Staff National Military Command Center watch teams, Pacific Command, Strategic Command, and NORAD. Mr. Wilson's education includes a Bachelor's degree from the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado where he received an NROTC commission in 1989. He earned a Master's Degree from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, California. He is married to his lovely wife Chau and has two children, Andy who is currently attending college at Colorado State University and Cindy who attends high school at Rampart H.S. here in Colorado.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



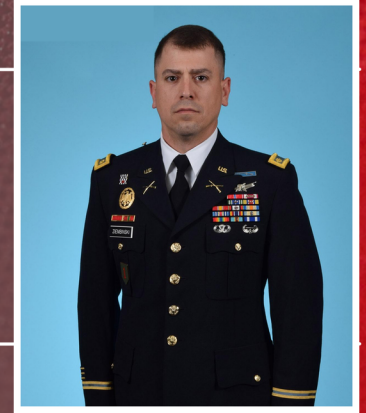
Major Michelle Olinger

USNORTHCOM Military Missile Defender of the Year Nominee

Maj. Olinger is assigned as the BMD Education and Operations Support (BEOS) Deputy Branch Chief, Ballistic Missile Defense Division, Directorate of Operations, United States Northern Command at Peterson AFB, Colorado. She was a native mid-westerner, born and raised in Madison, South Dakota. A 2006 graduate of the South Dakota State University with a degree in Journalism. She commissioned and began her military career as an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) Operator in Minot, North Dakota. Her subsequent military assignment was as an ICBM instructor, training the best operators to provide nuclear deterrence for the U.S. In May 2016, Maj. Olinger joined the Northern Command staff as the BEOS Deputy Branch Chief and Missile Defense Officer (MDO) Senior Evaluator within the NC J31 BMD Division. Since her arrival at Northern Command, Maj. Olinger has been dedicated to sharing her excitement for the BMD mission across the command and has endeavored to enhance MDO and BMD leadership's understanding, management, and operation of the Ground Based Midcourse Defense system in defense of the homeland. Maj. Olinger is married to Maj. Sean McClain of Chino, California who is currently serving in the Space Superiority Division at HQ AFSPC. Her awards and decorations include Meritorious Service Medal and AF Commendation Medal (2 devices).



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Major Edward Ziembinski USNORTHCOM Military Missile Defender of the Year Nominee

MAJ Ziembinski has distinguished himself as a Joint Missile Defense Officer, United States Northern Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado. On multiple occasions, MAJ Ziembinski briefed the Secretary of Defense and executives from up to 81 agencies during several first-of-their-kind North Korean ballistic missile launches, including an over-fly of Japan. Following these events, MAJ Ziembinski was lauded for his provision of expert, real-time interpretation of flight, and impact parameters. He routinely responded effectively to missile events, engaged in National Event dialogues, provided timely threat assessments and analysis, effectively managed ballistic missile defense assets, and competently resolved ground-based midcourse ballistic missile defense maintenance and employment issues. The distinctive accomplishments of MAJ Ziembinski reflect credit upon himself, the United States Northern Command, and the United States Army. MAJ Ziembinski was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on 28 February 1978. MAJ Ziembinski attended Baker University, graduating in June 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in International Business. MAJ Ziembinski subsequently enlisted in the U.S. Army. He attended Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia, commissioning as a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry in February 2004. In August 2007, MAJ Ziembinski joined the Kansas Army National Guard. In April 2009, MAJ Ziembinski deployed to Afghanistan where he worked as a G3 Mentor to the 205th Corps of the Afghan National Army and later to the 404th Maiwand Regional Afghan National Police, while serving in the 4th Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division. During his deployment, MAJ Ziembinski completed his Master of Arts Degree in International Business from Baker University. In 2011, he returned to active duty. Concurrent to this active duty assignment, MAJ Ziembinski also served as the Space Operations Officer from 2012-2015 at the 35th Infantry Division headquarters as a reserve soldier. In August 2015, he deployed to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, as an embedded liaison officer for the U.S. Army Center for Lessons Learned. As such, he traveled throughout Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, and Kazakhstan.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR

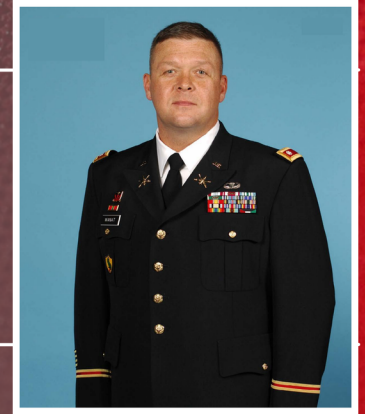


Lieutenant Colonel Michael Tobey USNORTHCOM Career Achievement Awardee

LTC Tobey is a planner in Northern Command Ballistic Missile Defense Division. The Division is responsible for planning and, if required, executing passive and active defense of the United States from long-range missile attack. Northern Command partners to develop, deploy, and employ the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system. LTC Tobey entered the U.S. Army in 1995 through the United States Military Academy at West Point. He completed Air Assault and Airborne schools during and after his time at West Point. He has served in a variety of positions as an Army Air Defender at the Patriot Battery and Battalion levels at Ft Lewis, Washington and Ft. Bliss, Texas. In 1996 he deployed with 4/7 ADA BN to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Lightning to enforce the no-fly zone. He completed his active duty obligation in 2000 and re-entered active service with the 100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD) in 2003. Subsequent assignments include Strategic Command Joint Forces Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense and Northern Command. LTC Tobey deployed with the 25th Infantry Division 2006-2007 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as the Division's Counter-IED / IED Defeat officer in charge. LTC Tobey is married to his wife Geneen and they have two children, Alison (18) and Matthew (17). His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Joint Service Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal, and Army Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Colonel John Wanat USNORTHCOM Career Achievement Awardee

COL Wanat is a native of Buffalo, New York. He is a 1990 ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate from Canisius College in Buffalo, New York. COL Wanat started his military career as a Platoon Leader in Giessen, Germany and Saudi Arabia while assigned to 4-43 ADA (Patriot). COL Wanat was then assigned as an Assistant Professor of Military Science at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. He was then an Assistant Operations Officer in 69th ADA Brigade in Giebelstadt, Germany. COL Wanat was then stationed in Ansbach, Germany as the Commander of Delta 6-52 ADA (Patriot) where he deployed the battery to Incirlik, Turkey on a no notice Patriot deployment in support of Operation Northern Watch. Following command, he was the battalion logistics officer then once again deployed to Turkey as the Executive Officer for the Chief of Staff of Operation Northern Watch. Following Resident CGSC he was assigned to the 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment (BCD) at Ramstein where he deployed to Al Udeid, Qatar in support of OIF and OEF. COL Wanat then returned to Ansbach, Germany as the Operations Officer for 6-52 ADA (Patriot), where he was responsible for moving the battalion from Germany to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. COL Wanat then relocated to Ft. Bliss, Texas where he was assigned as the Deputy Commanding Officer (DCO) of 31st ADA Brigade. COL Wanat was then assigned to Central Command as the Branch Chief for Theater Air and Missile Defense and also served as the Central Command's LNO to USF-I in Baghdad, Iraq. He then took Command of 1-56 ADA Battalion at Ft. Sill, which was responsible for all Air Defense Officer Education. After two years in command he was again assigned to Germany as the G3 for the 10th AAMDC. Where he planned and executed Juniper Cobra 12 and immediately following was the lead for U.S. Army Europe for receiving 3-2 ADA in Turkey in support of NATO Operation Active Fence. COL Wanat then moved to Wiesbaden as the senior Air and Missile Defense officer in U.S. Army Europe. Where he engaged with NATO partners on all issues in regard to Air and Missile Defense, with an emphasis on the Baltics and Poland. COL Wanat is the current Division Chief for the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system at Northern Command which is responsible for the missile defense of the Homeland.

North American Aerospace Defense Command





MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Technical Sergeant Michael A. Benson

NORAD NCOMissile Warning Professional of the Year Nominee

TSgt Benson is a Space System Operator assigned to the NORAD and NORTHCOM Command Center as the Senior Missile and Space domain Non-commissioned Evaluator at Peterson AFB, Colorado. He is 34 years old. TSgt Benson was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on 19 February 1984. He attended Hanover High School, graduating in June 2002. After graduating from high school, TSgt Benson entered the Air Force Basic Training in August 2002. After completion of basic training, he entered Enlisted Prerequisite Training followed by Perimeter Acquisition Attack Characterization System training at Vandenberg AFB, California. After completion, he reported to his 1st duty station the 10 Space Warning Squadron at Cavalier AFS, North Dakota. Over the next 15 years, TSgt Benson served as a Flight Chief, Operations Flight 1st Space Operations Squadron, Section Chief twice, and an NCOIC four times. His military awards include three Air Force Commendation Medals, Air Force Achievement Medal, and a Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal. TSgt Benson earned his Associate Degree in Space Technology from the community college of the Air Force. He is married to Tricia Benson and has two children, Westley and Makayla.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Technical Sergeant Jeremiah Grenfell NORAD NCO Missile Warning Professional of the Year Nominee

TSgt Grenfell enlisted in the Air Force on 15 June 2004 after graduating from high school. He completed tactical aircraft maintenance technical training for the F-16 in January 2005. As a fighter Crew Chief, he completed multiple assignments covering the globe including South Korea, Utah, England, and a deployment to Afghanistan. In 2012, Sergeant Grenfell cross-trained into the space systems operations career field. His first space assignment was to the 2nd Space Warning Squadron at Buckley AFB, Colorado, where he served as a mission Crew Chief on the Defense Support Program and Space-Based Infrared Systems, conducting missile warning and battlespace awareness operations. After two years, he was selected as the lead Flight Chief where he worked closely with the Assistant Director of operations ensuring flawless operations for the 100-member crew force. During his final year at Buckley, TSgt Grenfell filled a critical manning shortfall in the systems Crew Chief position. As a systems Crew Chief, he oversaw satellite operations and ground architecture for a \$17.6B weapon system and 23 personnel. In September 2016, TSgt Grenfell was assigned to NORAD/USNORTHCOM and certified as a Missile and Space Domain Noncommissioned Officer. He was assigned to the Cheyenne Mountain Operations Branch where he supervised the \$4M renovation of the Commander's battlecab and earned the NORAD Warrior award. As of December 2017, he has been assigned to the NORAD/USNORTHCOM Command Center on crew as a Missile and Space Domain Noncommissioned Officer where he processed more than 76 missile events, providing flawless missile threat data to National leaders and mission partners. He holds three Associates of Science Degrees, two from the Community College of the Air Force in Aviation Maintenance Technology and Air & Space Operations Technology and a third in Aviation Maintenance from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. He is married and has two children, a daughter, Savannah (11) and son, Brett (6).



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Master Sergeant Clint Gust

NORAD NCO Missile Warning Professional of the Year Nominee

MSgt Gust is currently serving as the Branch Superintendent for Integrated Tactical Warning and Attack Assessment Functional Management at the NORAD Joint Operations Directorate, providing Configuration Management, Change Control, Policy and Subject Matter Expert guidance to the NORAD Missile and Space Domain operations. Hailing from Panama City, Florida, MSgt Gust enlisted and attended the Space Systems Operations Course. While serving his initial tour in Satellite Control Operations, he volunteered three years to the High Frontier Honor Guard. Following this tour, he was selectively chosen to mentor as a Military Training Leader at Sheppard AFB, Texas where he eventually fleeted up to the Wing level, earning his Bachelor's Degree in the process. Upon returning to Air Force Space Command, he was again recognized with placement into Weapons and Tactics, Support to Missile Defense European Command Headquarters Planning Cell, and hand-picked for his current NORAD FMO position. His duties have included Ground and Satellite Systems Operator, Instructor, Evaluator, Honor Guardsman, Military Training Leader, Wing Master of Drill and Ceremonies, Weapons and Tactics NCOIC, HQ Planning and Exercises NCOIC, and NORAD J36I Superintendent. MSgt Gust enjoys spending time with his wife and two young boys, taking advantage of winter sports, camping, biking, and competing in local triathlons.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Major Justin Jones

NORAD Officer Missile Warning Professional of the Year Nominee

Maj. Jones was commissioned in the U.S. Air Force in 2008 after graduating from the United States Air Force Academy. His first space assignment was to the 10th Space Warning Squadron at Cavalier AFS, North Dakota where he served as a Missile Warning Operations Commander, conducting missile warning and space surveillance operations. As a 1st Lieutenant, he served as the Chief of Standardization and Evaluation. In 2012, he was assigned to the 1st Range Operations Squadron at Cape Canaveral AFS, Florida, where he was promoted to the rank of Captain. Here, he served as a Range Operations Commander and as an operational Flight Commander. He commanded seven space launch operations including NASA's Orion capsule test. He then served as the 45th Operations Group Executive Officer where he supported the Commander's management of five squadrons and three detachments. In 2015, Maj. Jones was assigned to the Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick AFB, Florida. He deployed twice to the Pacific Command area of responsibility as a Mission Commander aboard the COBRA KING radar collection ship. He also served as the Chief of Operations Training and Standardization and Evaluation for the Mission Support Directorate and as the squadron operations officer for the Technical Applications Squadron. As of February of 2017, Maj. Jones has been assigned to the NORAD/NORTHCOM Command Center as a Missile and Space Domain Deputy. He promoted to the rank of Major on 1 January 2018. Maj. Jones holds a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Biology from the U.S. Air Force Academy and a Master's of Science Degree in Space Studies from the American Military University. He is married and has two sons, Luke (3) and Logan (1).



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Lieutenant Colonel John Ferko

NORAD Officer Missile Warning Professional of the Year Nominee

Lt. Col. Ferko is the Chief, Standardization and Evaluations assigned to the NORAD and NORTHCOM Command Center, HQ NORAD, Peterson AFB, Colorado. He is 53 years old. Lt. Col. Ferko was born at Keesler AFB, Biloxi, Mississippi on 24 October 1964. He attended Ft. Walton Beach High School, Ft. Walton Beach, Florida and later the University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida graduating in December 1990 with a Bachelor's Degree in Astronomy. He entered active duty in the Air Force in February 1992 as an enlisted Aircraft Control and Warning Radar Technician. He moved swiftly up in enlisted rank and in May 1995 was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Air Force as a Transportation Officer at Minot AFB, North Dakota. In January 2000, he cross-trained into the Space Operations career field and completed his first space assignment at the 12th Space Warning Squadron, Thule AB, Greenland. Lt. Col. Ferko has served in a variety of positions in missile operations, missile defense, and missile warning at Minot AFB, Cheyenne Mountain AFS, and is currently on his second tour at Headquarters, NORAD and NORTHCOM. His military awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal with an Oak Leaf Cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Joint Service Achievement medal with an Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Air Force Achievement medal. Lt. Col. Ferko has three adult children: John, Jr; Katrina; and James, who is a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Lieutenant Colonel Mark Payton

NORAD Officer Missile Warning Professional of the Year Nominee

Lt. Col. Payton is the Missile and Space Domain Lead Instructor, Qualification Training Division, Training and Exercise Directorate, North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado. He is responsible for training watch standers for the NORAD and NORTHCOM Current Operations Center (N2C2) how to assess and characterize missile launches worldwide for the President, Prime Minister, Secretary of Defense, Minister of National Defence, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Combatant Commanders, and other national and civil agencies. When on shift in the N2C2 as a Missile and Space Domain Chief, Lt. Col. Payton leads a domain that characterizes missile events in support of Commander, NORAD and USNORTHCOM missile attack assessments. Additionally, he monitors the system integrity of the strategic and theater missile warning systems, assuring continuous warning coverage and notification to national and military senior leaders. Lt. Col. Payton was commissioned into the Air Force in 1999 as a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics. He has held various assignments in missile and space operations as a Crew Commander, Instructor, Evaluator, Operations Flight Commander, Program Manager and Staff Officer. He had a career broadening assignment with the Air Force Research Laboratory managing the acquisition of a communication payload that flew aboard an experimental satellite. After that, Lt. Col. Payton was a branch chief in the Requirements Directorate, Headquarters Air Force Space Command, where he managed the Space Science and Technology portfolio. Prior to his current position, he was the Deputy Director of Operations of the Concept Exploration Directorate, Missile Defense Agency, Pentagon, Washington D.C.

460th Operations Group





MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Senior Airman Jacquelynne Kidd 460th Operations Group Awardee

SrA Kidd is a Mission Crew Chief, Foxtrot Flight, 11th Space Warning Squadron, Buckley AFB, Colorado. In this job, she provides decisive first assessment for worldwide missile launches to six combatant commanders, national leaders, and allies by providing persistent global infrared surveillance with theater and strategic missile warning. SrA Kidd contributes to an active duty, reserve, and multi-national personnel mission cell, executing global infrared operations on a Space Based Infrared System. In this position, SrA Kidd identified and resolved a significant system deficiency that affected 260 operators and could have delayed the missile event reporting to the Secretary of Defense. She is a Line Instructor as well as a Line Evaluator and has completed over 1,200 hours of training. As an instructor, SrA Kidd created a prototype on-the-job training course for operators, where she crafted 36 tasks, validated 35 objectives, and instructed 17 crew members. Her efforts allowed the 460th Operations Support Squadron to cut 110 training hours and increase the operations training pipeline by 25%. SrA Kidd has also been instrumental to the development of the SBIRS weapon system by stress testing system vulnerabilities to validate 11 software upgrades and ensuring the smooth delivery of a \$2M software update that improved system efficiency by 80%. SrA Kidd was born in Lenoir, North Carolina on February 6th, 1992 but grew up in Tampa, Florida. She graduated from Chamberlain High School in 2010. She entered the Air Force in September 2014. Her awards and decorations include USSTRATCOM Omaha Trophy 'Global Ops' Award 2016, USSTRATCOM Omaha Trophy 'Global Ops' Award 2017, General Seth McKee Award, Air Force Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Senior Airman Julianne Loli 460th Operations Group Awardee

SrA Loli is a Weapons and Tactics Ground Systems Subject Matter Expert assigned to the 460 Operation Support Squadron, Buckley AFB, Colorado. After graduating from high school, SrA Loli completed two years of college prior to enlisting in 2013. Upon graduation of Mission Qualification Training, she received an assignment to the 2d Space Warning Squadron, Buckley AFB, Colorado, arriving in January 2014. Since arriving at Buckley AFB, she has served in a variety of positions including Satellite Systems Operator and Ground Systems Operator. As an instructor, SrA Loli taught 85 tasks to 15 personnel for over 200 hours, ensuring the proper configuration of our global ground architecture and enabling uninterrupted mission data delivery to the Mission Control Station. Additionally, SrA Loli was selected to train and certify 41 operators as line instructors, increasing the Group's mission-ready training cadre by 28%. As a GSO, she orchestrated a 2-hour anomaly response and made over 25 ground configuration changes, allowing the identification and resolution of a critical system flaw. SrA Loli also led three Development, Testing and Evaluation events where she identified and responded to three critical equipment faults, avoiding a delay in the delivery of a \$239M DoD system milestone. She also received Airman of the Year for the 2d Space Warning Squadron in 2017. In the future, SrA Loli intends to graduate with her Bachelors of Science in Computer Science from Regis University in May 2019. She also looks forward to the opportunity to continue serving her country in the United States Air Force. Her awards and decorations include National Defense Service Medal and Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Senior Airman Roy McDavide 460th Operations Group Awardee

SrA McDavide is an Intelligence Mission Supervisor for the 460th Operations Support Squadron Intelligence, Buckley AFB, Colorado. The 460th Operations Support Squadron Intelligence maximizes operations by providing accurate and timely intelligence to wing leadership, Space-Based Infrared System (SBIRS) operational crews, and Force Protection personnel enabling Missile Warning, Missile Defense, Battlespace Awareness, and Technical Intelligence. He led a team of six Airmen to author a 57-page annual missile review, delivering a strategic forecast vital to the mission planning for 24,000 infrared events and drafted a missile warning threats report to support mission planning of 250 space operators. Also, SrA McDavide represented the Wing in a Strategic Command exercise, where he managed 54 intelligence requirements for seven organizations and led to the validation of the first-ever SBIRS counterspace mitigation tactic. He also crafted the Combined Air and Space Operations Center's missile intercept plans for 24 threats, elevating Central Command's missile warning intelligence support. SrA McDavide is from Amherst, Ohio and entered the Air Force in 2015 as an All-Source Intelligence Analyst (1NO). SrA McDavide has been certified to provide global intelligence and situational awareness to the SBIRS Mission Control Station watch floor. Buckley AFB is his first assignment in his career and has quickly gained the trust and respect of both his leadership and his peers. His awards and decorations include AF Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Staff Sergeant Diego Rojas 460th Operations Group Awardee

SSgt Rojas currently serves as an Overhead Persistent Infrared (OPIR) Battlespace Awareness Center Crew Chief and Regional Messaging Operator, 2nd Space Warning Squadron, 460th Operations Group, 460th Space Wing at Buckley AFB, Colorado. He is responsible for a Battlespace Awareness & Technical Intelligence system ensuring sensor coverage on a Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS) in support of Joint Force Space Component Command's mission objectives and priorities. Additionally, SSgt Rojas performs event tipping and queueing, while providing post-event analysis production for the OPIR Intelligence Community's 566th Intelligence Squadron and fusing space system information into post-analysis intelligence products for six Combatant Commands world-wide. He also created briefing products for nine national-level agencies and distributed 275 technical updates in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. SSgt Rojas enlisted in the United States Air Force in August 2011. He completed Basic Military Training at Lackland AFB, Texas followed by the Space Systems Operations Technical Training course at Vandenberg AFB, California, graduating in February 2012. Prior to assuming this current position, he served as a Payload System Operator for the SBIRS Highly Elliptical Orbit sensor at Schriever AFB, Colorado in 2012. His awards and decorations include Air Force Achievement Medal, Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, and Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Technical Sergeant Bradley Bahley 460th Operations Group Awardee

TSgt Bahley, Flight Chief, 11th Space Warning Squadron, Buckley AFB, Colorado. He is currently responsible for the command and control of satellite systems for the Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS) and a crew of 35 members. As a Flight Chief, he led and coordinated over 5,000 training and evaluation hours, ensuring the readiness of 32 personnel to execute missile warning operations for six geographic combatant commands. Sgt Bahley ensured the SBIRS constellation state of health by leading 993 command plans and identifying and correcting 20 system faults. He ensured continuous operations of the SBIRS weapon system by liaising and coordinating system engineer and operator responses with three agencies during the delivery of a \$232M software and hardware upgrade and preparing contingency plans and directing ten personnel in the correction of 51 deficiencies. TSgt Bahley enlisted in the United States Air Force in August 2006, completed Basic Military Training at Lackland AFB, Texas followed by 2A3X1C Technical Training at Keesler AFB, Mississippi for Electronics Principles. He then proceeded to Sheppard AFB, Texas for F-15 aircraft-specific training. Instead of maintaining F-15 Eagles, he was sent to maintain the Air Force's premier fighter jet, the F-22 Raptor. He later became a member of the F-22 Demonstration team from January 2010 to December 2011. In August 2012, he retrained into the 1C6X1 career field. His first assignment as a 1C6X1 was at the 16th Space Control Squadron, Peterson AFB, Colorado. There he operated the Rapid Attack Identification Detection and Reporting System (RAIDRS) and Standardized Process for Interference Recognition and Interference Targeting (SPIRIT) system. He became NCOIC of Training and then deployed out to Operation Silent Sentry in support of the Defense Space Control mission area and Operation Inherent Resolve. Prior to his current position, TSgt Bahley was Flight Chief, 16th Space Control Squadron, Peterson AFB, Colorado.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Master Sergeant Jonathon Lubuguin 460th Operations Group Awardee

MSgt Lubuguin currently serves as the Operations Superintendent, 2d Space Warning Squadron, 460th Operations Group, 460th Space Wing at Buckley AFB, Colorado. He leads 180+ active, reserve, and civilian personnel, as well 16 Australian, United Kingdom, and Canadian Foreign Mission Partners. He also conducts operations of the Space Based Infrared Systems, executing Missile Warning and Overhead Persistent Infrared missions. He is the senior enlisted advisor on operations, personnel programs, career progression, promotions, quality of life, and readiness issues. Lastly, he oversees a \$2M security contract for a Priority Level 1 asset, ensuring integrity of a sensitive compartmented info facility. MSgt Lubuguin enlisted in the Air Force in December 1997. He graduated from the Supply Management course at Lackland AFB, Texas in April 1998 and later on he cross-trained into the Space Operations career field in March 2002. His background includes various duties in Logistics and the Space Operations career field. He has been stationed at locations in Nebraska, California, Japan, and Colorado. His experience spans several mission areas that includes satellite command and control and mission planning, space combat operations, joint operations, and lastly theater and strategic missile warning. MSgt Lubuguin has served at the squadron, joint air and space operations center, sub-unified command, and Numbered Air Force levels. Prior to assuming his current position, he served as the Senior Flight Chief and Systems Crew Chief for the 2d Space Warning Squadron, Buckley AFB, Colorado, where he safeguarded a \$2.4B on-orbit asset by crafting and then leading his crew in the successful execution of a 72-hour recovery command plan. Additionally, MSgt Lubuguin led a technical team in reviewing over 1,000 lines of code, identifying four major reforms and bridging five functionality gaps to increase SBIRS capabilities. He directed a 67-day satellite operational check-out, coordinating testing between two operations centers and accomplishing 113 tasks, thereby solidifying the readiness of a \$1.4B asset to be launched into orbit to support the SBIRS mission. His awards and decorations include Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Commendation Medal, and Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



First Lieutenant Marques Stevenson 460th Operations Group Awardee

1st Lt. Stevenson is the Mission Commander and Officer in Charge, Mission Operations, 11th Space Warning Squadron, 460th Operations Group, 460th Space Wing, Buckley AFB, Colorado. He has led a 12-member team in over 1,000 operational hours that is responsible for first-line missile warning message dissemination to national leaders, deployed warfighters, allied nations, and the intelligence community. He is also a certified instructor responsible for the initial and continuation training of a 198-member crew force ensuring seamless 24/7 missile warning operations. As an instructor, he led the on-the-job training of three new Mission Crew Chiefs, which saved 924 training hours, increased operational manpower availability by 21%, and reduced critical errors by 83%. Lt. Stevenson also provided battle damage and technical intelligence data from a high-visibility strike in the Central Command area of responsibility. 1st Lt. Stevenson earned his commission in 2015 from the United States Air Force Academy with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management. He has served in a variety of positions during his career, including Commander's Support Staff, Mission Commander, and Instructor.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



First Lieutenant John Bierman 460th Operations Group Awardee

1st Lt. Bierman is a Mission Commander in the 11th Space Warning Squadron as a part of the 460th Operations Group, 460th Space Wing, Buckley AFB, Colorado. In this capacity, 1st Lt. Bierman oversees the processing of SBIRS mission data to provide theater and strategic missile warning, battlespace awareness, and technical intelligence for combatant commanders and national leadership. He has the distinction of being the most experienced space operator in the 460th Operations Group. His leadership and experience were critical to the successful execution of operations across two flights, delivering accurate reporting of 37 missiles and culminating in his crew being named the squadron's 2017 Crew of the Year. 1st Lt. Bierman commissioned in 2014 from the United States Air Force Academy. His career started as a part of the Commander's Action Group at the 460th Space Wing. He then attended the final Legacy SBIRS Initial Qualification Training at Vandenberg, California before returning to Buckley for Mission Qualification Training. He has filled the role of Mission Commander since 2015, spanning five different crews over two iterations of the SBIRS weapon system. 1st Lt. Bierman currently has orders to Thule AB for the end of the summer. His awards and decorations include Air Force Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster, National Defense Service Medal with device, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Captain Nathan Beckler 460th Operations Group Awardee

Capt. Beckler currently serves as the 460th Operations Group Executive Officer, 460th Operations Group, 460th Space Wing at Buckley AFB, Colorado. Prior to this position, he served as the Alpha “A-Team” Flight Commander, where he led his crew of 37 active, reserve, & multinational foreign mission personnel to Team of the Quarter and Year of 2017. There he and his crew supported a NATO exercise, liaised with four agencies, providing OPIR support for five events, and validated a new Naval Ballistic Missile Defense capability. Additionally, he directed his crew in the detection and reporting of a high-interest foreign event, which initiated combat search and rescue actions and saved two aircraft personnel. Capt. Beckler’s leadership enabled Pacific Command’s threat response by expediting detection and reporting of a new threat to the region and ensuring the defense of 230 million people in the region. Capt. Beckler conducted operations on the Space Based Infrared Systems (SBIRS), executing Missile Warning and global infrared surveillance and reporting. In addition, he delivered decisive assessment and validation of worldwide infrared events to the Commander at Strategic Command, national leaders, and allied nations. Lastly, he now serves as the 460th Operations Group Executive Officer for seven units through task priorities supporting global missile warning and defense. Capt. Beckler commissioned into the Air Force through the ROTC program in 2013. He graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a bachelor’s degree in Microbiology. He was then assigned to the 2d Space Warning Squadron in Buckley AFB, Colorado where he first served as a Systems Commander on the Legacy SBIRS. He then progressed to become a Space Operations Center Commander on the new Block 10 SBIRS weapon system where he coordinated the integration of multiple satellite sensors processing global infrared data through one location.



MISSILE WARNING & DEFENDER of the YEAR



Captain Mark Conque 460th Operations Group Awardee

Capt. Conque is the Deputy Chief of Weapons and Tactics for the 2nd Space Warning Squadron at Buckley AFB, Colorado. Throughout his career at Buckley AFB, Capt. Conque has maintained his certification on the Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS) Constellation in various crew positions, providing Strategic Missile Warning for the country and its allies. He and his team ensured all pre-test modeling and simulation accurately reflected SBIRS performance and guaranteed warfighter and weapon system readiness for every event. Capt. Conque coordinated with other Ballistic Missile Defense System nodes and sensors to plan and execute successful multi-million dollar testing of the architecture crucial to national defense and the defense of our allies. Capt. Conque entered the Air Force in 2013. Upon graduation from the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), Capt. Conque was assigned a Policy Analyst at the United States Air Force Institute for National Security Studies at USAFA. After Officer Undergraduate Space Training at Vandenberg AFB, Capt. Conque was assigned as a Crew Commander at the 2d Space Warning Squadron at Buckley AFB, Colorado. Prior to his current assignment, Capt. Conque was Chief of Missile Defense Integration at the 460th Operation Support Squadron at Buckley AFB, Colorado. His awards and decorations include Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award with one oak leaf cluster, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal.

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU

To the North American Aerospace Command, the United States Northern Command, and the 460th Operations Group



www.missiledefenseadvocacy.org