

604 MEDICAL SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

604 Contingency Hospital constituted, 9 Sep 1994
Activated, 1 Oct 1994
Inactivated, 15 Jun 1995
Redesignated 604 Medical Squadron, 15 Apr 2003
Activated, 1 Jul 2003
Inactivated, 1 Dec 2007

STATIONS

Lackland AFB, TX, 1 Oct 1994-15 Jun 1995
Fairchild AFB, WA

ASSIGNMENTS

433 Medical Group, 1 Oct 1994-15 Jun 1995
604 Regional Support Group, 1 Jul 2003

COMMANDERS

Col Robert W. Feldtman
Col Olivia Y. Stringer
Col Karen Nagafuchi

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

11 USAF Contingency Hospital replaced by 604 Contingency Hospital On 1 Oct 1994. Reported Manning Turnover And Physician Shortage. Deployed Personnel To Guantanamo Bay, Cuba For Operation Sea Signal; Supported Operation Fuerte Caminos In Guatemala; Supported Caribe 94 In Antigua.

2007 The 604th Medical Squadron was inactivated at a ceremony conducted at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., Nov. 3. The 604th MDS was a geographically separated unit whose capabilities and skills have been vital to the Air Force Reserve since 1983. In that time, the squadron had gone through numerous name changes and even a prior inactivation. its family-like atmosphere and mission have remained the same throughout its 57-year history. Its wartime mission was to provide manpower support to the 349th Air Mobility Wing.

In doing so, the unit provided teams for emergency field surgery, air evacuation, combat medical support for forward-bases and special operations forces. The staff operated two field critical care units, five 25-bed medical surgical wards, provided biological agent identification, monitored food and water quality and disease vector control. During peacetime the unit's focus was on increasing leadership capabilities, readiness, and recruiting and retaining topnotch people.

A mission they performed well, according to Col. Robert Singler, 349th Medical Group commander. Maj. Frank Santos, 349th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, director of operations, and Chief Master Sgt. Michael McGillivray, 349th Logistics Readiness Flight, superintendent, are two 349th team members who started their Air Force Reserve careers with the squadron.

Both men joined the squadron, which was known at that time as the 12th Contingency Hospital, Detachment 4, right off of active-duty, and both men agree that the unit will be remembered more as a family. The tiny unit with a big heart has always served an important role in retaining and maintaining enthusiastic Reservists with vital life saving skills. Their commitment to their members accounts for very little turnover and extremely high morale, according to Chief McGillivray.

"Everything we did centered around family," said Chief McGillivray. "There were always kids and spouses at every event or function. We were up there all alone, the only Reserve presence on the entire eastern side of the state. So, we relied on each other and got to know each other. We had people driving in from all over--Idaho, Oregon--they came from everywhere and they stayed because it was such a great place to work." The unit was actually built by the members and grew

from a makeshift office in the hospital basement to an 8,000 square foot stand-alone squadron, with self-help tools and money.

“I spent 17 years there,” said Major Santos. “I love that unit. I had ambitions that were realized because of my time there and it is certainly difficult to watch its deactivation. The camaraderie there was, in my opinion, due to the size and location of the unit as well as the critical mission we performed. In a medical mission members have to trust and believe in one-another. We have to be willing to both take the lead and follow as needed and our ability to switch into action saves lives. Perhaps that’s why this unit is so tightly knit, because your friends are your heroes and your heroes are your friends.” “As an Airman, I am proud to call the 604th my first unit. The support and guidance I have received from members in this unit have benefited me not only in my military career but have guided me in my personal life and civilian career,” said Senior Airman Michael J. Gardner.

Some members have found new “homes” in other Reserve capacities and some have chosen to retire, but despite the furling of the unit flag, the spirit of the 604th is sure to remain strong within those who have served with and for this amazing organization. “This has been one of the best units that I have been assigned to. The Air Force has always been an extended family for me, but the 604th is in my heart. We are truly a family and I know that the members of the 604th will always be a part of my life.

The inactivation of this unit is an end to an era and a very sad day for me,” said Tech. Sgt. Cynthia A. James, a 604th administrative specialist. “The 604th MDS has been a vital part of the Air Force medical mission and a part of our Travis family from the beginning,” said Col. Paul Dwan, the 349th Medical Squadron commander. “They have contributed dozens of invaluable deployers to every recent Air Force operation. They were like a family and did a tough mission well, sometimes under difficult circumstances.

Their members have served with distinction and I know I share the thoughts of everyone at the 349th Medical Squadron and 349th Medical Group when I say they will be missed. I would like to thank every member of the 604th for their dedication and service and I wish them all the best.” Col. Karen A. Nagafuchi, 604th commander, summed it up by saying, “The 604th MDS has been the absolutely finest group of Air Force reservists. They are totally dedicated to the mission, their fellow members, and their country. They are patriots extraordinaire who are the heart and soul of the USAFR. It has been the epitome of my career to have been their commander.

USAF UNIT HISTORIES

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.