

NEW SPOUSE ORIENTATION

OCTOBER 2023

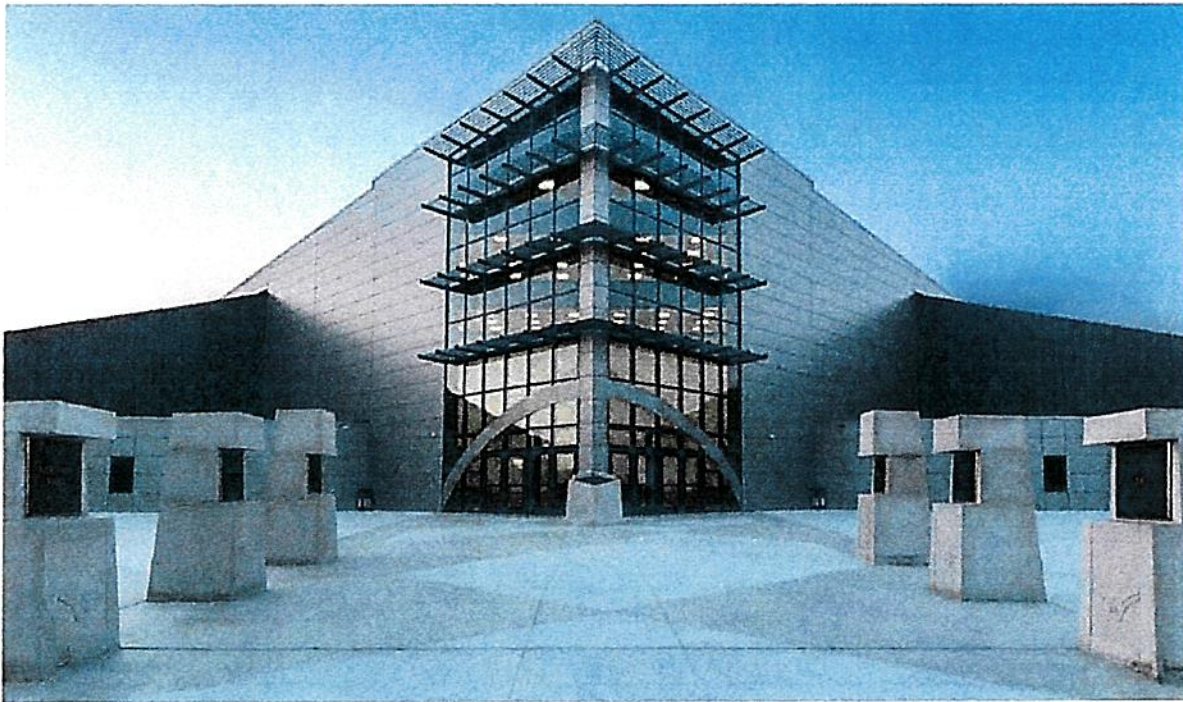
BRIEFING SUMMARY

New Spouse Orientation



**PREPARED AND PRESENTED
BY HALEY WALKER & MEGAN HARRELL
PROGRAM LEADS**

ABOUT THE NEW SPOUSE ORIENTATION



OUR VISION AND INTRODUCTION

Our vision is to provide vital resource information to new Air Force and Space Force Spouses.

In 2015 a team effort led by Mrs. Edwards (former 737th TRG command Spouse) wanted to find a way to welcome new Air Force Spouses in a more personal way. The Orientation was developed as a place where new spouses could ask questions and have them answered by military Spouses. Currently the New Spouse Orientation is offered every Wednesday morning before the Coin and Retreat Ceremony by an all volunteer staff of military spouses, the Military and Family Readiness Center and Military One Source.

HISTORY AND GENERAL INFORMATION

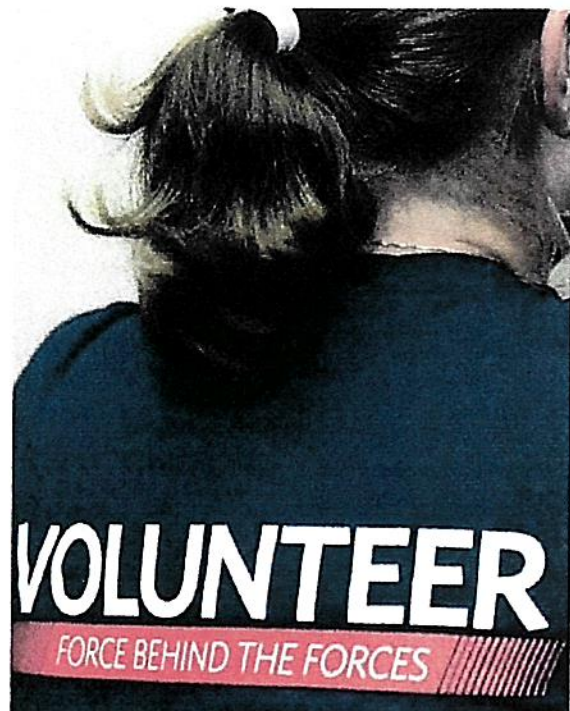
While the 737th TRG had a spouse's orientation for years prior, due to the time slot, there was light attendance. This was due to the orientation being after spouses were reunited with their Airman. The current format was set up in 2015 by Mrs. Edwards (former 737th TRG Command Spouse). Mrs. Edwards wanted to shift to a more personal touch and recruited various Key Spouses who would come and help welcome the spouses each week. As the orientation grew each week, so did the volunteers. It became less about Key Spouses and more about empowering current Air Force spouses to share their

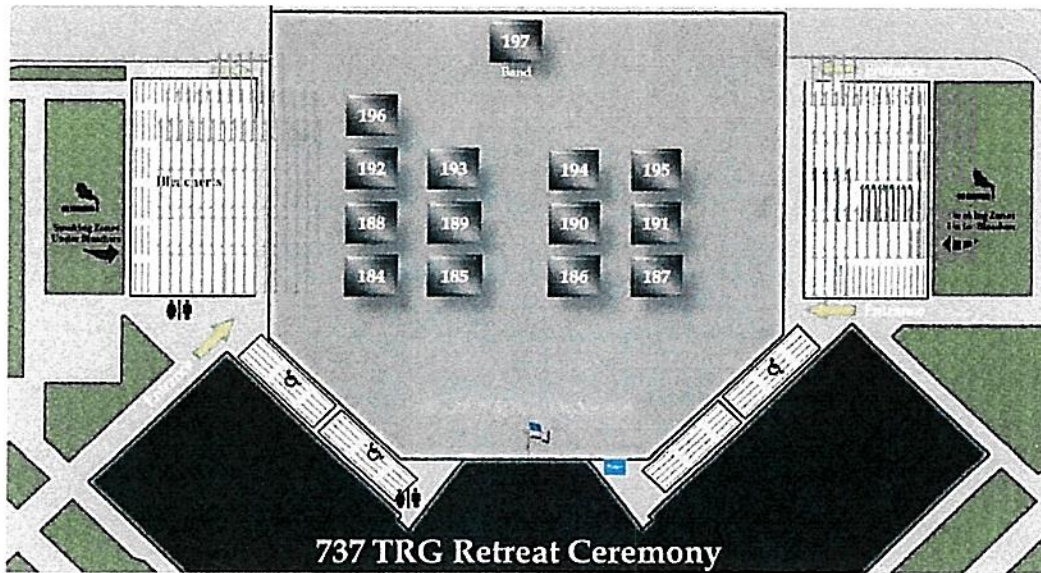
stories and be a place to answer the questions or be able to direct the new spouses to the proper resource. The goal is and has been to make new spouses feel welcomed, appreciated and connected. The New Spouse Orientation (NSO) is NOT a mini Heartlink, it is designed to encourage spouses to ask questions and know where to go to find needed resources.

Most weeks we have 4-7 volunteers including the two Program Leads. The MTIs at the Pfingsten Reception Center (PRC) are a vital support to making the NSO run each week.

CURRENT PROGRAM

As of now, BMT is the sole owner of the NSO and is tasked under the 737th TRSS. Currently the NSO is held in the Chief's Room of the PRC every Wednesday at 0845. We still welcome all new spouses but we now include the Military and Family Readiness Center and Military One Source to give a 3-6 minute briefing. We cover Tech school, housing, moving, the chain of command along with other resources. We also have a First Sergeant come and speak. We reserve 5-10 minutes at the end for questions before dismissing spouses to follow a volunteer to reserved seating.

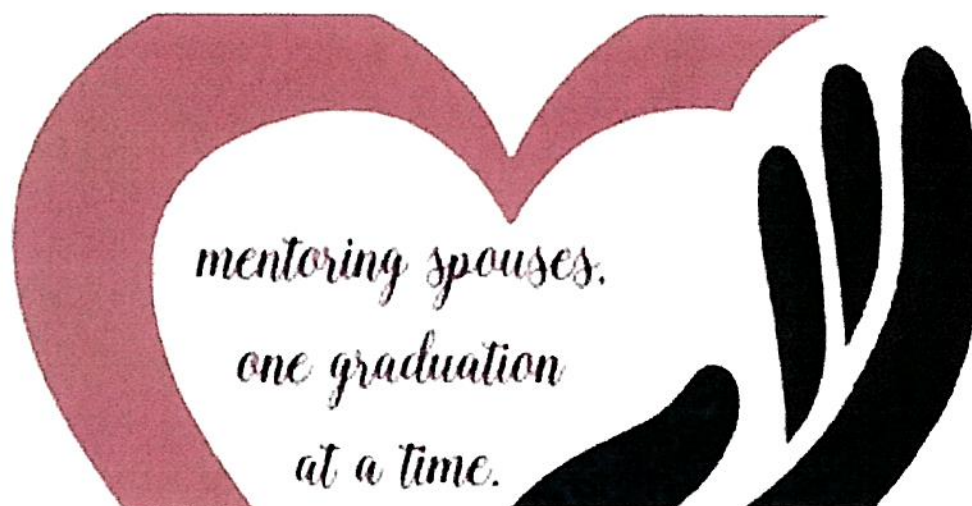




AGENDA

THIS SECTION INCLUDES THE BASIC TIMELINE OF THE NEW SPOUSE ORIENTATION EVERY WEDNESDAY

TASK	START TIME	END TIME
SET UP ARRIVAL AND SET UP OF ROOM, EQUIPMENT AND RESERVED SEATING	0600	0715
ORIENTATION PROCEDURES RETRIEVE SPOUSES BRIEFING	0800 0845	0840 0920
DISMISSAL & BREAKDOWN TAKE SPOUSES TO TESERVED SEATING AND CLEAR CHIEF'S ROOM	0930	1000



NEW SPOUSE ORIENTATION TIMELINE

PROGRAM LEADS ARRIVE 0600

RESERVED SEATING SIGNS
OUTSIDE PAMPHLETS ON ALL
CHAIRS
TECH SCHOOL SIGNS OUT

SET UP PROJECTOR/ SLIDE SHOW
TEST MIC
TROUBLESHOOT

VOLUNTEERS ARRIVE 0730-0800

SET UP TABLES
REPLENISH RESOURCE
MATERIALS LAST MINUTE CHECK
OF ROOM

SET UP COLORING
BOOKS PREPARE FOR
SPOUSE ARRIVAL

BRIEFING AND BREAKDOWN 0845-1000

HOUSEKEEPING
MFRC
MILITARY ONE SOURCE
TECH SCHOOL
RED CROSS

MOVING (AKA PCS)
HOUSING/AIRMAN'S ATTIC
CHAIN OF COMMAND
FIRST SERGEANT
Q&A
DISMISSAL

ABOUT OUR VOLUNTEERS

OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE AN AMAZING GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO SPEND ON AVERAGE 2-5 HOURS EVERY WEDNESDAY TO HELP NEW SPOUSES!



All volunteers wear a shirt with the NSO logo on it and a badge. This ensures that we have a uniform look and people can easily identify one of the spouses if they need to. While volunteers will show up at different times, all volunteers arrive by 0800 so that we can all be ready to welcome spouses at 0830. At this time the volunteers seat spouses and help the MFRC pass out marriage resources. All of our spouses are currently Air Force spouses with the majority being BMT spouses. Outside of the MFRC and Military One Source portions, the briefing is given by these volunteer spouses. At the end of the orientation all of the spouse go to the front of the room for the Q&A and dismissal. Without this wonderful team we would not be able to continue to educate spouses on what resources are available and who to go to for help should they need it.

AT THIS TIME WE HAVE
HELPED OVER 7,000
SPOUSES!

COMMON QUESTIONS

- Do kids need passports?
- Are costs related to service animals paid by the military or the service member?
- Will having a passport from another country or not being a US citizen affect orders?
- Will having a green card affect orders?
- How to get an ID card/ enroll in Tricare?
- How does moving work with a roommate/ stuff in storage/ separate houses?
- How do orders change if married in Tech School?
- What if I am having a baby while in Tech School/ spouse is deployed?
- Can they go home for holidays?
- How does a DITTY move work?
- How would my custody agreement work?
- What are orders?
- How long is the notice of moving?
- How do I find housing information?
- How do we set up our move?
- Can I visit during Tech School?
- When do they get orders to the first duty station?
- Do we have to be legally married for orders/ moving/ living together?
- Are there pet restrictions?

FEEDBACK

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. We have spouses tell us that they are thankful for the information. That they have learned a lot and that it was very helpful. Spouses have been recommending the New Spouse Orientation to other spouses via the various Facebook groups that are out there regarding EMT. The biggest positive impact that we have seen is the Air Force Academy and a few of the Tech Schools wanting to use this orientation as a guide to help spouses from those locations.

CHALLENGES

- All of the volunteer shirts are made by one of the Program Leads on her own time.
- The program is 100% run by volunteers which means that support is inconsistent each week.
- Many of the volunteers are stay at home parents and spouses of MTIs which their unconventional work hours can make it hard for some of the volunteers since we do not have viable childcare options
- The Air Force Aid Society eliminated the volunteer child care program
- While it makes new spouses feel more comfortable bringing their own children to the NSO, not having viable childcare options makes volunteering for the NSO difficult at times as having to bring small children (especially at 6 am) distracting to the volunteers.
- We do not have funding to provide children's activities. All of those are provided by the volunteers.
- JBSA does not currently have space available the CDC/FCC to offer child care for volunteers.