



## Commentary - Air University commander bids farewell

by Lt. Gen. Allen G. Peck

8/12/2011 - **MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.** -- At a ceremony this morning, I will relinquish my position as the 28th commander of the Air University, a position in which I've been privileged to serve for more than three years. Later today I will retire from active duty after just more than 36 years of service. Lynn and I are looking forward to turning to a new chapter in the book of life. These ceremonies will be opportunities to perform that important last duty of a leader: to say "thank you." I have been privileged to not only stand on the shoulders of the giants who came before, but to have enjoyed the fantastic support of a dedicated staff and faculty here at the Air University.

Air University is metaphorically a massive engine, annually converting more than 40,000 in-residence attendees into knowledgeable, critical-thinking, strategic-minded graduates from its myriad programs. These graduates include Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Department of Defense civilians and attendees from more than 70 different nations. Air University also produces critical research that benefits the Air Force and the nation, conducts commissioning training and education for 80 percent of the Air Force's newest officers, and oversees two major citizenship development programs. In addition, our military members and their families contribute countless volunteer hours to make the River Region community a better place to live and work. None of this would be possible if it weren't for the talent and dedication of the commanders, chiefs, supervisors, and all those assigned to the Air University organization. We've also benefitted immensely from the professionalism and diversity of our Total Force and joint mission partners. It has truly been a privilege to serve as commander.

Lynn and I want to thank the military family members for their continued support, without which none of AU's achievements would have been possible. Despite high operations tempo, frequent deployments, countless visitors and numerous exercises, our family members have maintained positive and supportive attitudes, and can always be counted on to support the military and civilian communities as volunteers in our schools, churches, sports teams, charitable organizations and other venues.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize the superb support of our River Region business and civic leaders. This strong bond dates back to the days of the Wright Brothers, who in 1910 established the world's first commercial flying school near the present location of Maxwell base operations; the strong bond continued through World War I and II, and led to the move of the Air Corps Tactical School to Maxwell in 1931. Today the relationship is stronger than ever.

As I prepare to hang up the uniform I have been so proud to wear, I encourage each of you to continue to live the Air Force core values of Integrity, Service and Excellence every day. Strive to leave every place you go better than you found it, and to leave as a better person than you arrived. It has been an honor and privilege to serve with you. Lynn and I will soon turn to a new chapter in the book of life, but we will always look back on our time at Air University as a true highlight of our lives. It's now time for us to pass the leadership baton to Team Fadok, and we wish Dave and Kat every success in the future.