



BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT ERIK J. GARZA

CMSgt Erik J. Garza is the Senior Enlisted Leader, 97th Security Forces Squadron, 97th Mission Support Group, 97th Air Mobility Wing, Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma. He leads a dynamic unit charged with providing security for the Air Force's sole C-17, KC-135 and KC-46 formal training units, as well as force protection for more than 10,000 community members. He is the key advisor to the commander on issues affecting training, readiness, professional development, quality of life, and utilization of 195 military, DAF Police Officers, and U.S. Civilians.

Chief Garza is from Wapato, WA and enlisted into the Air Force in November 2000. He has vast cross-functional experience in the Squadron, Group, Wing, and NAF to include advocating and writing Enlisted Policy at the HAF level. Also, he has experience in the joint environment serving in contingency operations with the U.S. Army, served on the United States Forces Japan (USFJ) Joint Staff, and is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Sergeants Major Course, Class 72, Fort Bliss, TX. Additionally, he is a graduate from the prestigious Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Academy, 269th Session, Quantico, VA. Chief Garza has led in various leadership positions to include Interim First Sergeant and Superintendent in numerous organizations. He has deployed multiple occasions in direct support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. Chief Garza and his wife Veronica have 4 children ages 22, 16, 11, and 8 years of age. Prior to his current position, he was the Senior Enlisted Leader, 422d Security Forces Squadron, RAF Croughton, United Kingdom.



EDUCATION

2004 Airman Leadership School, Malmstrom Air Force Base (AFB), Mont.
2005 Traffic Management and Collision Investigation Course, Lackland AFB, Texas
2011 Associates of Applied Science, Criminal Justice, Community College of the Air Force, Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Ala.
2011 Incident Command Course, Department of Defense Firefighter Training Academy, Goodfellow AFB, Texas
2013 Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA), Sheppard AFB, Texas
2013 Bachelor of Arts, Business Leadership, Summa Cum Laude, Ashford University, Clinton, Iowa
2017 Graduate Certificate, Management & Leadership, Liberty University, Lynchburg, Va.
2017 Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC), National Leadership Program, Washington D.C.
2017 Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), National Academy, 269th Session, Quantico, Va.
2017 Graduate Certificate, Criminal Justice Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.
2018 Enlisted Professional Military Education Instructor Course (EPMEIC), Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Ala.
2018 Master of Arts, Executive Leadership, Liberty University, Lynchburg, Va.
2019 Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy (SNCOA), Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Ala.
2019 Associates of Applied Science, Instructor of Technology and Military Science, CCAF, Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Ala.
2019 Professional Manager Certification (PMC), Community College of the Air Force, Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Ala.
2019 Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education II (E7-E9), Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Ala., by correspondence
2022 Undergraduate Certificate, Leadership, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Bliss, Texas

ASSIGNMENTS

1. November 2000–January 2001, Trainee, 323rd Basic Military Training Squadron, Lackland AFB, Texas
2. January 2001–April 2001, Student, Security Forces Academy, Lackland AFB, Texas
3. May 2001–May 2004, WS3 Alarm Operator, 568th Security Forces Squadron, Ramstein Air Base (AB), Germany
(November 2003–March 2004, Fire Team Leader, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Tallil AB, Iraq)
4. May 2004–July 2006, E911 Dispatcher, Patrolmen, 341st Security Forces Squadron, Malmstrom AFB, Mont.
5. July 2006–March 2014, Flight Chief, Unit Deployment Manager, 7th Security Forces Squadron, Dyess AFB, Texas
(September 2006–March 2007, Flight Chief, 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Ali AB, Iraq)
(March 2008–August 2008, Protective Security Officer, U.S. Central Command Forward, Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar)
(November 2011–May 2012, Flight Chief, 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Bagram AF, Afghanistan)
6. March 2014–June 2017, Logistics Superintendent, 374th Security Forces Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan
7. June 2017–July 2018, J023/A4 Superintendent, HQ U.S. Forces Japan & Fifth Air Force, Yokota AB, Japan
8. July 2018–July 2021, ALS Commandant, 374th Force Support Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan
(November 2020–January 2021, Senior Enlisted Leader, 374th Force Support Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan)
9. July 2021–July 2022, Student, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Sergeants Major Course, Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Operating Location Alpha, Fort Bliss, Texas
10. July 2022–August 2024, Senior Enlisted Leader, 422d Security Forces Squadron, RAF Croughton, UK
(December 2023–June 2024, duties as Acting Command Chief, 501st Combat Support Wing, RAF Fairford, UK)
(March 2024–April 2024, dual duties as Group Senior Enlisted Leader, 422d Air Base Group, RAF Croughton, UK)
11. August 2024–Present, Senior Enlisted Leader, 97th Security Forces Squadron, Altus AFB, Oklahoma

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS

1. March 2008–August 2008, Protective Security Officer, U.S. Central Command Forward, Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar
2. June 2017–July 2018, Joint Provost Marshal Office (J023), HQ U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ), Yokota AB, Japan
3. July 2021–July 2022, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Sergeants Major, Fort Bliss, Texas

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters
Air and Space Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters
Air and Space Achievement Medal
Army Achievement Medal
Department of State Meritorious Honor Award

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

2011 7th Bomb Wing, William H. Pitsenbarger Distinguished Scholar Award (CCAF)
2012 7th Mission Support Group, Lance P. Sijan Leadership Award Nominee (Junior Enlisted)
2014 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Outstanding Security Forces Staff-Level NCO of the Year
2017 Department of Defense, Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Meritorious Service Award
2017 Headquarters Fifth Air Force, A4 Directorate, SNCO of the Year
2019 374th Airlift Wing, SNCO of the Year
2019 Fifth Air Force, NAF-level, 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year (12 OAY) SNCO Nominee to Pacific Air Forces
2019 Pacific Air Forces, A1 Functional Awards, Special Duty SNCO of the Year
2019 Pacific Air Forces, Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME) Total Force SNCO of the Year
2019 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Outstanding Airman Leadership School of the Year
2020 Pacific Air Forces, Force Development Flight of the Year
2020 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Best Small Force Support Squadron of the Year, Eubank Award
2020 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Food Service Excellence, John L. Hennessy Award
2020 374th Mission Support Group, Lance P. Sijan Leadership Award Nominee (Senior Enlisted)
2022 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Best Small Security Forces Squadron of the Year
2023 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Best Small Security Forces Squadron of the Year

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Chief Master Sergeant September 1, 2023
(Current as of 1 October 2024)