



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT ERIK J. GARZA

Chief Master Sgt. Erik J. Garza is the Command Chief Master Sergeant, 47th Flying Training Wing, Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas. He is the key advisor to the wing commander on issues affecting Team XL's training, readiness, professional development, quality of life, and utilization of 2,800 military personnel and U.S. Civilians spanning 17 units. The wing operates 160 T-6A & T-38C aircraft, executing more than 44,000 sorties yearly in support of the premier Undergraduate Pilot Training mission, successfully graduating 360 USAF and allied nations' pilots each year.

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, NAF, and combined joint headquarters to include advising and writing Enlisted Policy at the HAF level. Also, he has experience in the joint environment serving 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, Texas. Additionally, Chief Garza is a 2017 graduate from the prestigious Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Academy, 269th Session, Quantico, Virginia. He has deployed multiple occasions in direct support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. Chief Garza and his wife Veronica have 4 children: Christian, Austin, Zara, & Zayva. Prior to his current position, he was the Senior Enlisted Leader, 97th Security Forces Squadron, Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma.



EDUCATION

2004 Airman Leadership School, Malmstrom Air Force Base (AFB), Mont.
2011 Associates of Applied Science, Criminal Justice, Community College of the Air Force, Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Ala.
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 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 (SNAOA), 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. (correspondence)
2022 Undergraduate Certificate, Leadership & Workforce Development, Command & General Staff College (CGSC), Ft Bliss, Texas
2025 USAF Command Team Integration Course & Senior Enlisted Legal Orientation, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

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)





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4. May 2004–July 2006, E911 Dispatcher, Patrolman, 341st Security Forces Squadron, Malmstrom AFB, Mont.
5. July 2006–March 2014, Physical Security, 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 Services Detail, U.S. Central Command Forward, Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar)
(November 2011–May 2012, Flight Chief, Delta Sector, 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, Combined HQ U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) & Fifth Air Force, Yokota AB, Japan
8. July 2018–July 2021, Commandant, Airman Leadership School (ALS), 374th Force Support Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan
(November 2020–January 2021, Interim Squadron Superintendent, 374th Force Support Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan)
9. July 2021–July 2022, Student, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Sergeants Major Course, Fort Bliss, Texas
10. July 2022–August 2024, Senior Enlisted Leader, 422d Security Forces Squadron, Royal Air Force Croughton, England
11. August 2024–June 2025, Senior Enlisted Leader, 97th Security Forces Squadron, Altus AFB, Okla.
12. June 2025–Present, Command Chief Master Sergeant, 47th Flying Training Wing, Laughlin AFB, Texas

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Meritorious Service Medal with four 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

2014 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Outstanding Security Forces Staff NCO 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, MAJCOM-level Developmental Special Duty SNCO of the Year
2019 Pacific Air Forces, MAJCOM-level 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, MAJCOM-level Force Development Flight of the Year
2020 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Best Small Force Support Squadron of the Year, Eubank Award (374 FSS)
2020 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Food Service Excellence, John L. Hennessy Award (374 FSS)
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 (422 SFS)
2023 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Best Small Security Forces Squadron of the Year (422 SFS)
2024 U.S. Air Force, Air Force-level Best Medium Security Forces Squadron of the Year (97 SFS)

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Airman Basic November 28, 2000
Airman First Class January 12, 2001
Senior Airman May 12, 2003
Staff Sergeant April 1, 2005
Technical Sergeant March 1, 2011
Master Sergeant December 1, 2015
Senior Master Sergeant July 1, 2020
Chief Master Sergeant September 1, 2023

(Current as of January 2026)

