

Base to hold Hispanic Heritage Lunch

The Charleston AFB Hispanic Heritage Committee is sponsoring a luncheon at the Charleston Club, Monday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

A buffet will be served and includes chicken fajitas, Spanish rice, black beans, bunuelos and Sangria. The cost is \$8 for club members and \$10 for nonmembers.

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Joe Parsons will be the guest speaker. Parsons is a member of the South Carolina Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs. He was raised in Puerto Rico and joined the Air Force at age 17.

Parsons served two tours in the Republic of Vietnam. He was awarded the Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with palm and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Parsons retired from the Air Force in April 1994 with more than 28 years of service.

For more information, call Lt. Col. David Rodriguez at 963-2922 or Master Sgt. Edison Velez at 963-2904. To RSVP for the event, call the appropriate representative: Logistics group-**Senior Airman David Guevara** at 963-2326, medical group-**Master Sgt. Frank Lisenbee** at 963-6846, operations group-**Joyce Anchors** at 963-2158, support group-**Master Sgt. Hector Mojica** at 963-4295 and wing-**Staff Sgt. Leda Feaster** at 963-3690.

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also served as a go-between for the air traffic control tower and the TALCE as Air Force One arrived.

"Anything that had to do with interacting with the locals, I was there," he explained.

Although Udoaka didn't get the chance to meet the president, he did get to see him at a meeting with American and Nigerian business leaders held at the Sheraton Hotel. He also got the chance to interact with officials at the U.S. Embassy.

Working with the Nigerians was a "thrill," Udoaka said. "It was an opportunity to go home, so working with them was very easy. I still speak the major languages and I also took some of my traditional clothes, so it was easy to blend in and interact with people."

Udoaka received a warm welcome from the Nigerians.

"It was a big deal because, to them, I was on the president's team, and they really regard the president highly," he said. "To be associated with this visit was very significant to the Nigerian people."

Although he wasn't allowed to leave the capital city of Abuja, Udoaka got the opportunity to spend time with his parents, who flew in from Lagos to visit him. They hadn't seen each other in a year. They annually meet in London to visit.

It was Udoaka's first visit to Nigeria in four years. He said that much had changed for the better. "Abuja is a beautiful city, and we were impressed," he said.

The initial intelligence the group received had cautioned them on a

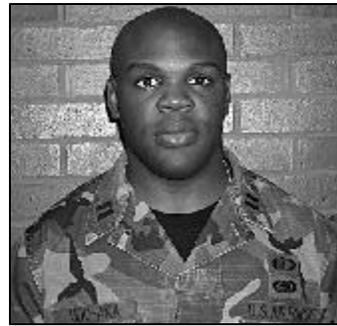


Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe
Capt. Udoaka

number of things, including crime, security and the threat of diseases, such as malaria and AIDS. However, the group encountered no problems during the visit.

"The Nigerians are a very proud people and welcomed us warmly," he said.

"For me, this was the TDY of a lifetime," he said. "First of all, from a professional standpoint, it was great to work with a TALCE and understand what role they play in the Air Force. It was also great to actually be there and play a significant role and really contribute to the success of the mission. You don't get many opportunities like that."

"I've always enjoyed working in the diplomatic arena," he added. "My previous assignment was as a logistics manager for five European Air Forces and their F-16s, so this experience was another feather in my diplomatic hat."

Udoaka said he enjoyed the TDY and would jump at the chance to do it again.

"I learned a lot about presidential

travel and the airlift involved," he said, noting that C-17s flew approximately 90 percent of the missions.

Udoaka was born in Sacramento, Calif., but his parents moved back to their native country of Nigeria when he was one. He attended a Lebanese primary school and was enrolled in a Nigerian Air Force military school when he was 10 years old.

He graduated from the military school at 15 and hoped to attend the Defense Academy, but was told he was too young. He attended college for two years and applied for the U.S. Air Force Academy as a foreign national. However, he wasn't accepted because he was technically a U.S. citizen.

"So, my parents bought me a plane ticket to the States," he recalled. He was awarded a Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship from North Carolina A&T. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering and received his commission in 1993. He was granted an educational delay waiver while he finished his master's degree in chemical engineering. After graduating, his first active-duty assignment was at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, from 1995-99. He was assigned to the Plans office at Charleston AFB in July 1999.

"It's a great environment," Udoaka said. "I've always wanted to be at an operational base."

"Having the opportunity to lead people and doing something that contributes to the Air Force mission directly is something I've always wanted. The experience here at Charleston has been great thus far. I'm looking forward to what the future holds."



Charleston AFB enlisted, active and reserve, personnel are encouraged to attend an Enlisted Dining-Out, Saturday, 6 p.m. at the Charleston Club.

The guest speaker will be Chief Master Sergeant Charles Whalum, commander

of the Senior NCO Academy.

Each attendee will also receive a commemorative coin.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Tracy Brewster at 963-3071 or Master Sgt. James Scanlan at 963-2798.

Rules of the Grog

Infractions warranting a trip to the grog bowl may be noted at any time by the president, vice president or any member of the mess. Members bring infractions to the attention of the president by raising a point of order. If the validity of the charge is questioned, members vote by tapping their spoons on the table. When the president directs a violator to the grog bowl, the individual proceeds to the bowl promptly. Upon arriving at the grog bowl, the violator performs the following:

- Does an about face and salutes the president
- Turns to the bowl and fills the cup
- Does another about face and toasts the mess
- Drains the contents of the cup without removing it from the lips, then places it inverted on his head signifying it is empty
- Replaces the cup, salutes the president and returns to his seat

With the exception of the toast, "To the Mess," the violator is not permitted to speak during this process.

CE airman claims Levitow Award

Senior Airman Joseph Wyen, 437th Civil Engineer Squadron, earned the Sgt. John Levitow award and the Leadership Award during Airman Leadership School class 00-E. The awards were presented at the class's graduation dinner on Aug. 31 at the Charleston Club.

Senior Airman Jacqueline Dent, 437th Contracting Squadron, received the Aca-

demic Achievement Award and the Distinguished Graduate Award.

Senior Airman Charles McCollum II, 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron, and Senior Airman Kyle McCracken, 437th Maintenance Squadron, also earned Distinguished Graduate Awards.

Graduates from the five-week course also include the following senior airmen:

17th Airlift Squadron: Forrest Aspinwall

437th Aerial Port Squadron: Hajji Tayag, David Smith, Gregory Steffers, Robert Rothenberger

437th Operations Support Squadron: Greg Adams, Wayne Joy
Office of Special Investigations, Detachment 301: Millisa Jewart

315th Aircraft Generation Squadron: Paul Snoddy

437th Aircraft Generation Squadron: Anthony Steele, Johathan Lehn, Jacob Gibson, Michael King, Jack Geigle, Jason Creech, Todd Dimock, Lauren Presnell

437th Maintenance Squadron: Robert Lewis, Travis Brantley, Andrew Salazar

437th Supply Squadron: Joseph Gudmestad, Edmond Brunache

437th Transportation Squadron: Steve Merideth

437th Medical Group: Celia Gilbert, William Fitzpatrick

437th Communications Squadron: Timothy Losh, Patterson Collins

437th Civil Engineer Squadron: Andrew Willey

437th Comptroller Squadron: Robert Florio

437th Airlift Wing: Brian Hobson

437th Services Squadron: Stacia Luoma

Detachment 301, Headquarters Air Force Security Forces Center: Yon Dugger

(Submitted by the 437th Mission Support Squadron.)