



**PRESS RELEASE
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By Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton

Col. Steven deMilliano takes command of the 176th Wing

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Col. Steven deMilliano took command of the 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard during a change-of-command ceremony on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, July 12.

During the ceremony, outgoing commander Col. Blake Gettys, relinquished control to deMilliano after serving as the 176th Wing's commander since 2014.

"You are the right man for the job," said Gettys from the stage. "He believes in the mission, he believes in total force, and he has the established relationships to see this wing through the transitions that are coming up. You've got a good man there."

Presiding over the ceremony was Brig. Gen. Karen Mansfield, the assistant adjutant general and commander of the Alaska Air National Guard.

"The 176th Wing has one of the highest, if not the highest, operational tempos of all Air National Guard wings," she said. "Each command leaves a legacy, and Col. Gettys' focus on the wing's arctic engagement leaves us on the right track to continue to evolve our own tactical capability in our own backyard, increasing the value and capacity of the Department of Defense here in Alaska."

During the two years under Gettys' command, the 176th Wing's various units deployed to nine named operations, 44 named missions to four combatant commands, multiple international recognitions for combat search and rescue efforts, thousands of hours of alert and air defense, and many civilian rescue saves, explained Mansfield.

"Col. deMilliano steps in at an exciting time," she added. "Yes, there's change on the horizon, but when hasn't there been change on the horizon? We know he is uniquely suited to lead the wing through that change."

Most recently, deMilliano served as the vice director of operations at Headquarters North American Aerospace Defense Command, Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado.

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“I know his work there was rewarding,” said Mansfield, “but it’s not those successes that made him stand out among his peers when competing for this position as the wing commander. As we looked for somebody to replace Col. Gettys, we knew we needed a sharp mind that was able to handle the already herculean tasks you all accomplish every day, and someone with a proven ability to lead the mission transition. We knew we found that in [deMilliano].”

After being presented with the 176th Wing’s guidon, deMilliano addressed the crowd for the first time as the wing’s new commander by first welcoming home members of the 176th Wing that returned the previous week from a deployment to the Middle East.

“Thank you for the confidence and the opportunity to lead this fine organization,” deMilliano said. “You can count on my best effort.”

“To the men and women of the 176th Wing,” he continued, “know that on your behalf, I intend to earn it every single day. Thank you for your service to the nation, your service to the state, and your service to the local community. I am humbled, honored and incredibly excited to serve with you. Thank you.”

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PHOTOS:

1. Attached pdf includes story and a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.
2. DVIDS link includes story and selected full-resolution, free downloadable images. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is accessible from .mil computers.)

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/203895/col-steven-demilliano-takes-command-176th-wing>



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Command Chief Master Sgt. David Garganta, senior enlisted leader of the 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard, holds the unit guidon while Col. Blake Gettys and Col. Steven deMilliano sit during a change-of-command ceremony on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, July 12. Gettys, who served as the 176th Wing’s commander since 2014, relinquished control of the wing to deMilliano during the ceremony.

(U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton/released)

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160712-Z-MW427-014
Col. Steven deMilliano gives a speech during a change-of-command ceremony on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, July 12. Col. Blake Gettys, who served as the 176th Wing's commander since 2014, relinquished control of the wing to deMilliano during the ceremony.

(U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton/released)

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