



TheBANK of Edwardsville's Kevin Welch selected to Honorary Commanders Program at Scott AFB

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE – If you live in the St. Louis metro area, you’ve likely seen a military jet or helicopter flying overhead. And more likely than not, that jet or helicopter was flying to or from Scott Air Force Base in St. Clair County.

As civilians, most of us rarely think about having an Air Force base in our backyard. But that's about to change for TheBANK of Edwardsville's Kevin Welch. Welch, a business banker in St. Clair County, was recently selected to a two-year term in the Scott AFB Honorary Commanders Program.

"It's a great honor to be recognized and chosen for this role," said Welch. "I grew up in Collinsville, and although we would randomly see a military plane and generally knew about the base, I really didn't realize or understand the great impact that it has on our lives and our local communities. So I'm excited to get a chance to learn all that I can about the base and its culture."

That is the exact reason that Scott AFB decided to start the program, to build a better understanding and connectivity between the base and the businesses and organizations in our local communities.

"Through this program, we will provide the Honorary Commanders with opportunities to learn about our strategic, global military role, as well as its impact on the St. Louis metropolitan area," said USAF Col. Leslie A. Maher, Commander, 375 AMW, Scott AFB, IL. "We will introduce them to the men and women in uniform whose dedication and hard work help secure our nation's freedoms. In the process, we want to get to know them and discover how we can forge stronger connections and build positive rapport between our military community and their organizations."

According to Welch, the economic impact alone that Scott AFB has locally is enormous.

"Scott AFB pumps \$4 billion into the St. Louis and Metro East economy each and every year," he said. "Without that contribution, our area simply doesn't exist the same as we see it today."

During his term, Welch will attend quarterly Honorary Commander Meetings and will be paired with a military senior leader and unit. He will be invited to unit tours, commander's calls, promotion/retirement/change of command ceremonies and other special events.

Welch will be paired with USAF Lt. Col. Nichole K.A. Scott, AMC 375 CES/CC. Scott, who joined the Air Force in 1998, leads a 358-person Squadron responsible for training and deploying Air Force civil engineers to open, establish and operate expeditionary air bases worldwide. Additionally, the squadron constructs, repairs, and maintains facilities and infrastructure worth \$3.3 billion to support the 375th Air Mobility Wing and 31 tenant units. Furthermore, the squadron provides housing, fire protection/crash rescue, emergency management, explosive ordnance disposal, and environmental stewardship to effectively perform and support Scott AFB missions on 3,600 acres.

Previously Scott, who is a licensed engineer, was Commander, 386 Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron in Ali Al Salem AB, Kuwait.

About TheBANK

TheBANK of Edwardsville has been a leading, locally-owned community bank established in 1868. The bank has been in the St. Louis metro area for 150 years with 20 locations in Illinois and Missouri.