



PHOTO ACCESS FOR PARENTS -

The U.S. Air Force Academy Public Affairs office provides command information to the installation and the public. One of the ways we do this is through social media venues such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. All information provided is official, but there is also fun stuff on there too. Did you know you can download photos from our Facebook page for free?

- [Official USAFA Facebook site](#)
- [Official USAFA Twitter site](#)
- [Official USAFA Instagram site](#)
- [Official USAFA Flick'r site](#)

Prep School Access:

- <https://twitter.com/USAFAPrepSchool>
- www.facebook.com/AFPrepSchool
- <https://www.instagram.com/usafapreppofficial/>

We also want your Academy photos. Upload them to Instagram using #YourAcademy and #YourUSAFAPrep for the Prep School. You might see it on Facebook and Twitter. If you have any questions, please call the Public Affairs office at (719) 333-7731.

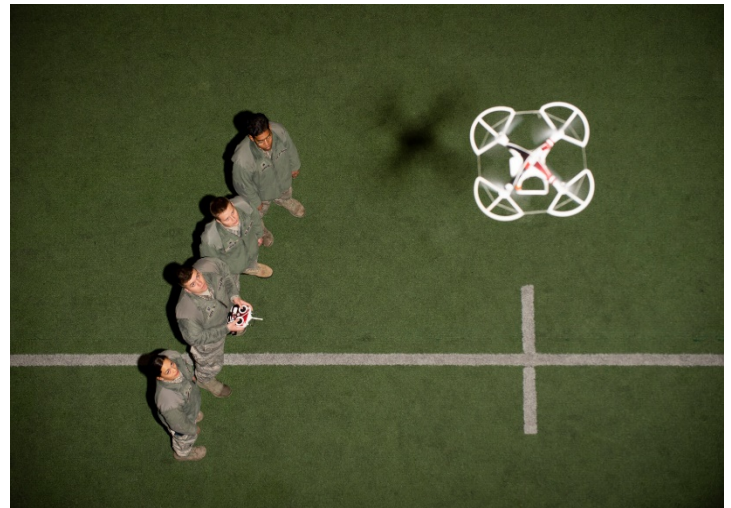
Cadet Class Statistics (as of 30 November 19)

Class Year	Men	Women	Total
2020	704	286	990
2021	768	297	1065
2022	807	280	1087
2023	799	313	1112
WING	3078	1176	4254

58 International Cadets are counted in the Cadet Wing Strength, but do not count in the Fiscal year Strength.

Academy UAS Center prepares cadets for future fight

Story by Jennifer Spradlin, Dec. 6, 2019



U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. – The Air Force Academy brought a cutting-edge, multi-drone light show to its campus last month to celebrate its storied rivalry with West Point.

As hundreds of drones moved in synchronization to delight the audience with messages like ‘Beat Army,’ the six-minute display showed how far unmanned aerial systems have come since Civil War-era balloons and what’s still possible.

“We are really in the Wright Brothers era of unmanned aerial systems,” said Col. Eduardo Defendini, director of the Air Force Academy UAS Center. “New and exciting aircraft shapes, sensor technology and even artificial technology capabilities are emerging from industry that will play a big role in how we execute future multi-domain operations.”

Defendini has flown manned and unmanned aircraft in his decades-long career. He said the role of UASs in providing a threat sight picture and putting effects into the battlespace is unparalleled. The new test will be how we employ UASs in contested environments as opposed to the anti-terrorism operations of the past 20 years, he said.

“I try not to shape the argument too much with my own opinion on where we should go [with UASs] because I know it’s the upcoming generation, like the cadets we have here, who will innovate and drive our response to the challenges different adversaries will pose to our defense,” he said.

Like other airmanship programs at the Academy, cadets in the remotely piloted aircraft squadron gain an understanding of what a career as a rated Air Force officer would entail from hands-on experience flying aircraft to mission planning and training junior cadets on complex tasks.

The UAS program is unique in part because of its air operations center immersion capstone and the horizontal integration of research programs underway in academic departments like computer engineering.

“We are exposing the cadets to these emerging technologies and challenging them to consider how they would be fielded in a dynamic setting,” he said.

Daniel Smith, a senior and the RPA squadron commander, is interested in flying C-17 Globemaster IIIs for the Air Force mobility mission but said exposure to the unmanned aerial mission has been invaluable to understanding what the ‘future fight’ might entail.

“I think as an Academy, and as cadets, really have to prepare ourselves for what’s coming next and follow along with those larger conversations about where the Air Force is headed,” he said. “The more we dive into these concepts – like artificial intelligence or unmanned systems – the better prepared we will be to meet those challenges going forward.”

Prep School Spotlight: LEAD Airmen share their stories

Story by Jennifer Spradlin, Dec. 10, 2019

Admission to Air Force Academy is highly competitive and each year more qualified candidates apply than are spots available. Of those who are not accepted, candidates with the most potential are offered positions at the Air Force Academy Preparatory School – including prior enlisted Airmen who are admitted through the Leaders Encouraging Airmen Development Program.

Each LEAD Airmen takes a different path to the Air Force Academy; however, all quickly find out the next ten months at the prep school will be unlike anything they have done in the Air Force thus far. Here are the stories of four LEAD Airmen.

Kendall Moore

Moore grew up in Portland, Oregon, in what she described as an unstable household. She enlisted in the Air Force in 2016 for the educational opportunities and the structure that had been missing in her life. Initially serving as a traffic management specialist, Moore soon became interested in aviation.

“There was an airfield where they did private pilot lessons pretty close to Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, and I paid for an introduction flight, which was really just the basics of flight, but after we took off the instructor let me take the controls briefly, and everything went slow-motion,” she said. “I will never forget the way it felt.”

She decided the Air Force Academy would be a good option to pursue her flying dream. While deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, in 2017, she spoke to as many pilots as possible and completed her first application to the Academy. It did not result in her admission, and after her deployment wrapped, she worked with a tutor for seven months. She took the ACT three times to improve her score and submitted a second application. In April, she was accepted.

“I have matured a lot since coming here and learned a lot about respect and leadership,” Moore said. “Time



management has been a big skill for me to pick up – it wasn't something that I really learned in high school, and to be here now, I sometimes feel like I'm doing the impossible.”

Moore said the prep school has helped her bridge her enlisted experience with the skills she will need at the Academy. At one point, her eyes watered as she described the progress she has made in her life.

“I am so grateful to the Air Force, and I see commissioning as a way to give back to other Airmen,” she said.

Izaak Dietz

Dietz is from York, Pennsylvania, and wasn't sure what he wanted to do after high school. He said he enlisted in the Air Force to create a strong foundation for his future and served as a geospatial intelligence specialist at Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam, Hawaii. His supervisor was looking into commissioning options and told Dietz about the LEAD Program.

“I have one really big goal, which is to become an astronaut,” he said. “When I thought about how I could best position myself toward that goal, it seemed like the Air Force Academy was the best option.”

Dietz, like many other prior enlisted Airmen at the prep school, had not been in formal classes for several years. His biggest adjustment has been to the academic workload and developing good study habits to be successful at the Air Force Academy.

“I definitely needed the time here to adjust; I was expecting it to be hard, but it took some adjustment and definitely the commitment to work one-on-one with some of the instructors on some of the harder courses – like trigonometry,” he said.

Dietz said the LEAD program is not for everyone and all applicants should do their research. He said applicants need to be self-driven and committed to be successful at the prep school.

“This is probably going to be the most challenging five years of my life, and I accept that, and try to stay focused on that light at the end of the tunnel,” he said.

Matthew Serrano

Serrano was attracted to the Air Force after growing up near the Jersey Shore. He wanted to travel and was given the opportunity right out of the gate. Serrano served as an F-16 Fighting Falcon jet mechanic at Aviano Air Base, Italy.

Serrano liked serving in the Air Force but wanted to work in a field related to his love of architecture.

“During my first deployment, I started to realize that I was getting older, and it had been a few years since I had been back to school, and the longer I waited the harder it would be,” he said. “I was also exposed to some really good leaders during that deployment, and it inspired me, to sort of think about commissioning and mimicking their leadership qualities to help other Airmen.”

Serrano said the first few months at the prep school saw him eating a bit of humble pie. Fresh off his deployment, he said he was overly confident in his skills as an Airman. He said he had to open himself up to learning new things not just from his enlisted peers but from the cadet candidates who were fresh out of high school.

“I still had a lot of room to grow, and what I like about being here is that it's hard – but it's still doable. If you put in the effort, you will not fail,” he said. “I have learned more here in a single day than I did in a month back at home.”

Serrano is focused on improving his STEM acumen at the prep school but would like to pursue civil engineering after graduating from the Academy.

Brandon Yan

Yan is a first generation American and the first in his family to serve. Unlike many of his cousins who went directly into college after high school, Yan knew he wasn't ready for that. He learned about opportunity in the Air Force's cyber program and enlisted.

After his initial assignment at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, he decided that there was room for him to learn more about computers and to be part of the cutting edge wave the Air Force was riding in computer sciences. He had a strong background in

STEM, but he struggled to meet the Academy's physical qualification.

"At first, I couldn't do any pullups or run a mile in under 8 minutes, so I started going to the gym five days a week and committed to improve my physical fitness," he said. "For those interested in [the Academy], I'd just say to keep pushing and don't give up."

His first application to the Academy was unsuccessful. He persevered and was admitted on his second attempt. Yan remains focused on his physical fitness at the prep school.

"The physical portion of service has always been my weakest area, but I think I use that to help other Airmen with similar struggles," he said.

Yan said he hopes to be Chief of Staff of the Air Force one day, although his nearest goal is to graduate the Academy and become a cyber warfare officer.

Editor's Note: The United States Air Force Academy and its Preparatory School offer magnificent opportunities for our sharpest enlisted personnel to obtain their college degree and enter the active duty commissioned ranks. Prior-enlisted cadets possess both military knowledge and proven reliability which make them the archetype cadet and commissioned officer to lead the best Air Force in the world.



Academy cadets help send international cadet home for holidays

Story by Jennifer Spradlin, Dec. 12, 2019

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. – The distance between Colorado and Cambodia is more than 8,000 miles – a lot farther than the average college student travels to get home for winter break.

When Cadet 4th Class Chanyuthea Nou earned a spot in the international cadet program at the Air Force Academy, he understood the exorbitant airfare likely meant he would be away from his family for four straight years.

"I had a passion to pursue – becoming a successful aeronautical engineer and an officer of good character," he said.

Nou arrived at the Academy earlier this summer with the rest of the Class of 2023. He quickly formed bonds with his U.S. counterparts during the basic training phase and the first academic semester.

"Cadet Nou is truly a down-to-earth individual who puts a smile on everyone's face," said Cadet 4th Class Zachary Olson. "We wanted to show him how much everyone in our squadron loves him so we decided to raise money to send him home for Christmas."

Several members of his squadron banded together and raised money for Nou's airfare. His friends raised more than \$4,500 in nine days with the aid of a crowdfunding app.

"It means a lot to me that my squad mates did this for me," Nou said. "I'm thankful for their kindness and their demonstration of service before self."

Nou said he has enjoyed his time at the Academy but looks forward to his mother's cooking and receiving his family's blessings. He will also spend time with his "best friend," his one-year-old dog.



AF Academy cadet wins big at cyber competition

U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet 1st Class Sears Schulz (middle) took first place in the President’s Cup, a Department of Homeland Security cyber competition Dec. 12, 2019. (Photo / Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency)

By Ray Bowden, Dec. 17, 2019

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — When the dust settled at a Department of Homeland Security cyber competition Dec. 12, a senior cadet at the Air Force Academy took first place in the event’s individual challenge.

Cadet 1st Class Sears Schulz fought fake global hackers targeting several federal departments to beat out second place. He said he was “surprised” to take the top slot.

“My goal was third place and I thought that was a stretch given the competition,” he said.

Schulz is the captain of the Academy’s Cyber Competition Team. He’s competed in cybersecurity competitions since his freshman year and plans to pursue a career as an Air Force cyber operator after completing a master’s degree. He chalks up his win to the quality of the Academy’s faculty and staff, “especially in the Computer Science Department.”

“It was essential to how I performed in the competition,” he said. “I’ve also had classes where I learned skills that I applied at the competition, including classes in the fairly new cyber science major.”

More than 1,000 people and 200 teams competed in the first President’s Cup Cybersecurity Competition. The event was designed to showcase the cybersecurity knowledge of service academy cadets, service members and government employees.

In the finals, hosted by the Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency in Arlington, Va., Schulz faced 10 challenges in eight hours. He successfully completed four and barely took the top slot.

“Cyber warfare, much different than other domains, is becoming increasingly relevant to the military and we must invest resources into recruiting technical leaders to ensure we maintain our dominance in cyberspace,” he said. “Cybersecurity competitions such as the President’s Cup are an excellent way to learn and practice cybersecurity skills that are applicable to the real world.”

Col. David Caswell, head of the Academy’s computer and cyber sciences department, said Schulz’s win indicates how seriously he views the cyber realm as a warfighting venue.

“I am incredibly proud of Cadet Schulz,” said. “His win is a testament to his dedication and knowledge of this important domain. It also represents the fulfillment of our mission to develop leaders of character prepared for future conflict, and Cadet Schulz certainly is that. I know he will go on to do great things for the Air Force.”

PREP SCHOOL INFORMATION

Below is the Point of Contact for questions for our Preparatory School Candidate parents.

Central Email for Prep School Questions: PrepInfo@usafa.edu, or phone (719) 333-2583

Website: <https://www.usafa.edu/prep-school/>

FACEBOOK:
<https://www.facebook.com/USAFAPrepSchool/>

Mail: HQ USAFA/PS
5229 Cedar Drive, Suite 117
USAF Academy, CO 80840-3100

Prep School 2019-2020 Academic Calendar:
https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/PL_2019-2020_Calendar.pdf

HELPFUL WEBSITES and POCs

Parent Information Link:
<https://www.usafa.edu/parents/>

Graduation Information Link:
<https://www.usafa.edu/about/traditions/graduation/>

AOG's Event Calendar Link:
www.usafa.org/Calendar/Events

Academic Calendars Link:
<https://www.usafa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/>

Cadet Curriculum Handbook:
(also outlines summer programs available for cadets in what year):
<https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/CHB.pdf>

Cadet Major listing:
<https://www.usafa.edu/academics/majors-minors/>

Cadet Clubs:
<https://www.usafa.edu/cadet-life/clubs/>

Cadet Survival Guide: Go to
www.usafasupport.com and click Arnold Hall

Cadet Media:
www.usafasupport.com/cadet-activities/cadet-media

Admissions:
(parents can help us recruit future cadets):
www.academyadmissions.com/

Sports Schedules:
www.goairforcefalcons.com/calendar/events/

Base Cadet Treats (Flower Shop):
(719) 472-8589
petalsnblooms.com

Gift Cards order phone numbers:
Cadet Store (Base Exchange) (719) 472-1953
10 FSS: (719) 472-7930

Hometown News Release (must have CAC card):
<https://jhns.release.dma.mil/public>

Life Touch photos:
POC: Sherri Peloso <http://lifetouch.com/>
1 (800) 426-9533 extension 128 or 241

UPCOMING DATES:

16 Dec 19 – 5 Jan 20	Cadet Winter Break; Return by 7:00pm on 5 Jan 20
14 Dec 19 – 2 Jan 20	Prep School Winter Break (Released at 11:00am); Return by 7:00pm on 2 Jan 20
20 Jan 20	Martin Luther King Holiday (no classes)
17 Feb 20	Presidents Day Holiday (no classes)
19 – 21 Feb 20	National Character and Leadership Symposium (NCLS)
12 – 14 Mar 20	2023 Recognition
20 – 29 Mar 20	Cadet Spring Break, released LMD, Return by 7:00pm on 29 Mar 20
21 – 29 Mar 20	Prep School Spring Break, Return by 7:00pm on 29 Mar 20
29 – 1 May 20	Prep School Finals
11 – 15 May 20	Cadet Finals
17 May 20	Prep School Baccalaureate
18 May 20	Prep School Graduation/Parade
22 May 20	2021 Ring Dance 6:00 – 10:00 pm (Mitchell Hall/Arnold Hall)
28 May 20	2020 Class Graduates https://www.usafa.edu/about/traditions/graduation/
30 May 20	1st Summer Session Begins
20 Jun 20	1st Summer Session Ends/ 2nd Summer Session Begins
25 Jun 20	2024 Class In-Processes
26 Jun 20	2024 Swearing In Ceremony (time TBD)
4 Jul 20	4 th of July Holiday (2024 BCT training continues)
31 Jul 20	2024 BCT Graduation (not for parents) Cadet Wing only
1 Aug 20	3 rd Summer Session Ends/BCT Ends/Cadet Wing Returns by 7:00pm
6 Aug 20	Cadets Classes Start
4 -7 Sep 20	2020 Parents Weekend https://www.usafa.edu/about/traditions/parents-weekend/
19 Sept 20	Football Game at Purdue
12 Oct 20	Columbus Day No Classes
11 Nov 20	Veterans Day No Classes
24 – 29 Nov 20	Cadets Thanksgiving Break Return by 7:00pm 29 Nov 20
5 -6 Dec 20	Deans Weekend
7 -11 Dec 20	Cadet Finals
14 Dec – 3 Jan 21	Cadet Winter Break Return by 7:00 pm on 3 Jan 21
18 Jan 21	Martin Luther King Holiday No Classes
15 Feb 21	Presidents Day No Classes
24 – 26 Feb 21	National Character & Leadership Symposium (NCLS)
11 – 13 Mar 21	2024 Recognition
19-28 Mar 21	Cadets Spring Break Return by 7:00 pm 28 Mar 21
8 – 9 May 21	Deans Weekend
10 – 14 May 20	Cadets Finals
26 May 21	2021 Graduation
31 May 21	Memorial Day Holiday
29 May 21	1st Summer Session Begins
19 Jun 21	1st Summer Session Ends/ 2nd Summer Session Begins
24 Jun 21	2025 Class In-Processes
4 Jul 21	4th of July Holiday (BCT continues)
10 Jul 21	2nd Summer Period ends/3rd Summer Period Begins
31 Jul 21	3 rd Summer Session Ends/BCT Ends/Cadet Wing Returns by 7:00pm

Parent Liaison Contact Info:

MARIE NIKOVITS

Parents' Liaison

Phone: (719) 333-3828,

Toll Free: (877) 268-3383

Fax: (719) 333-1433

E-mail: USAFA.ParentLiaison@usafa.edu

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Marie

ROSE MARIE NIKOVITS

Parents' Liaison

U.S. Air Force Academy, CO

(719) 333-3828 Toll Free 877-268-3383

Fax (719) 333-1433

e-mail: rose.nikovits@usafa.edu