

28TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CHARACTER AND LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

# WARRIOR ETHOS AS AIRMEN AND CITIZENS

FEBRUARY 25 – 26, 2021



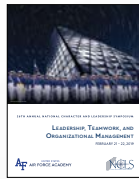
NATIONAL CHARACTER  
& LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

This year's National Character and Leadership Symposium (NCLS) builds on Air Force core values and leadership principles to focus on exploring Warrior Ethos as Airmen and Citizens. As leaders and members of the profession of arms, we must embody the warrior spirit. This includes tough mindedness, tireless motivation, an unceasing vigilance, a willingness to sacrifice one's life for the country, if necessary, and a commitment to be the world's premier air, space, and cyberspace force. We must examine our own Warrior Ethos and determine where we can focus our efforts to strengthen it. Through constructive engagement with others, which is enhanced by our NCLS experience, we are reminded that the warrior mindset is a multi-faceted component vital to all leaders of character.

## A LOOK BACK



2020  
Valuing Human  
Conditions, Cultures,  
and Societies



2019  
Leadership, Teamwork  
and Organizational  
Management



2018  
Ethics  
and Respect for  
Human Dignity



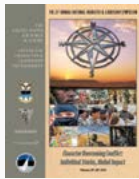
2017  
Warrior Ethos  
and the American  
Airman



2016  
Professionalism  
and the Profession  
of Arms



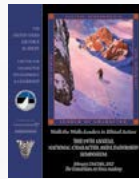
2015  
Serving Our Nation  
Our Calling, Core Values  
and Commitments



2014  
Character Overcoming Conflict:  
Individual Stories,  
Global Impact



2013  
The Silver Lining:  
Courage Through Adversity



2012  
Walk the Walk:  
Leaders in Ethical Action



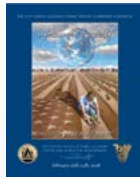
2011  
Strength Within,  
Leadership Throughout



2010  
Guardians of Trust:  
Leaders in the Modern Era



2009  
Answering the Nations Call:  
Our Legacy in the Making



2008  
Impassioned Citizenship:  
Can One Make a Difference?



2007  
All Created Equal-  
Human Dignity & Respect



2006  
Courage in the Face  
of Adversity



2005  
Leading Positive Change:  
Raising the Standard  
of Excellence



2004  
Teamwork: Working Together  
to Achieve Excellence



2003  
Moral Courage and  
Servant Leadership in  
Modern Times



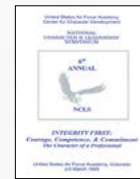
2002  
Undaunted Leadership:  
Unassailable Integrity,  
Increasing Service,  
Uncompromising Excellence



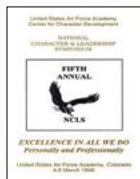
2001  
Integrity First:  
Recollection, Inspiration  
& Aspiration



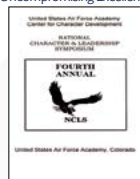
2000  
Service Before Self:  
Heroes, Hymns and Hardness



1999  
Integrity First:  
Courage, Competence,  
& Commitment



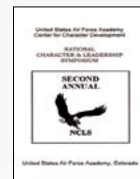
1998  
Excellence in All We Do:  
Personally and  
Professionally



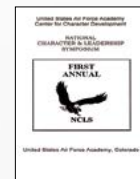
1997  
Service Before Self



1996  
Integrity in the  
Profession of Arms



1995  
Strength Through  
Diversity



1994  
Women in  
Leadership

# SPECIAL THANKS

The Superintendent, faculty, staff, and Cadet Wing of the US Air Force Academy would like to thank the following groups for their generous support:



USAF Academy Class of '93



USAF Academy Class of '74



USAF Academy Class of '77



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USAF Academy Class of '73



USAF Academy Class of '59



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USAF Academy Class of '73

The 28th Annual National Character & Leadership Symposium would not have been possible without the following organizations and individuals who graciously gave of their time and talents:

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USAFA Admissions  
Mitchell Hall and Staff  
Permanent Party and Cadet Speaker Escorts

USAFA Preparatory School  
USAFA Commandant of Cadets  
USAFA Airfield  
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This year's National Character and Leadership Symposium is unlike anything the Academy has ever taken on. The 2021 rendition of NCLS will be entirely virtual for the first time and sets precedence never witnessed before in the institution's history. Cadet 1st Class Sara Johnson sat down with the NCLS Cadet in Charge, Cadet 1st Class Michael Greisman, to find out what it took to supercharge NCLS during a global pandemic.

“We had to be super realistic in what we needed to get done in order to achieve the same level of success NCLS sees in a more typical year,” Greisman explained. “Many of the virtual experiences we’ve developed have prepared us to put on a great NCLS and that we hope to carry on into future years.”

Greisman and his team began developing the virtual event in August 2020. They started brainstorming new virtual conversations and looked at what cadet interaction and participation would look like this year. Greisman said they had to lay the groundwork early as so much of the planning would be new--never done before at the Academy. Some unique offerings this year included interactive breakout sessions to facilitate further discussion and virtual workout sessions to get people up and moving and highlight the importance of physical and mental wellness in Warrior Ethos.

“We carried out several ‘live’ dry runs of online capabilities including November Warrior Ethos events and several others in January,” he said. “The team put together three overall plans that took into account each phase of the installation’s COVID-19 response.”

Greisman said they met with representatives from the U.S. Naval Academy, the College of the Ozarks, and the Academy Assembly to discuss how they put together their virtual events. The team took away lessons learned for the NCLS staff. “Overall, we kept a good attitude and are encouraged by the team’s excitement and newfound opportunities brought on by NCLS 2021,” he said.



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# SENIOR LEADERS



## **Gen Charles Q. Brown, Jr., USAF**

22nd Chief of Staff of the Air Force

### **Cadet Wing Kickoff**

Cadets will hear from the Chief of Staff of the Air Force at the NCLS kickoff session designed to motivate, inspire, and challenge the cadet wing to make the most out of the following two days of the symposium, helping them to become leaders of character and strengthen their Warrior Ethos.

Gen. Brown was commissioned in 1984 as a distinguished graduate of the ROTC program at Texas Tech University. He has served in a variety of positions at the squadron and wing levels, including an assignment to the U.S. Air Force Weapons School as an F-16 Fighting Falcon Instructor. His notable staff tours include Aide-de-Camp to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force; Director, Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff Executive Action Group; and Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command. He also served as a National Defense Fellow at the Institute for Defense Analyses, Alexandria, Virginia.

Gen. Brown has commanded a fighter squadron, the U.S. Air Force Weapons School, two fighter wings and U.S. Air Forces Central Command. Prior to serving as the Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Brown was the commander of Pacific Air Forces, Air Component Commander for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. Gen. Brown is a command pilot with more than 2,900 flying hours, including 130 combat hours.



## **Gen John W. "Jay" Raymond, USSF**

1st Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force

### **Closing Ceremony**

The Chief of Space Operations will close out the symposium with a challenge to the audience to reflect and act upon the Warrior Ethos topics presented during the symposium.

Gen. John W. "Jay" Raymond is the Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force. As Chief, he serves as the senior uniformed Space Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of all organic and assigned space forces serving in the United States and overseas.

Gen. Raymond was commissioned through the ROTC program at Clemson University in 1984. He has commanded at squadron, group, wing, numbered air force, major command and combatant command levels. Notable staff assignments include serving in the Office of Force Transformation, Office of the Secretary of Defense; the Director of Plans, Programs and Analyses at Air Force Space Command; the Director of Plans and Policy (J5), U.S. Strategic Command; and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force.

Gen. Raymond deployed to Southwest Asia as Director of Space Forces in support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Prior to leading the establishment of the U.S. Space Force and serving as the first Chief of Space Operations, Gen. Raymond led the re-establishment of U.S. Space Command as the eleventh U.S. combatant command.

# SENIOR LEADERS



## **Lt Gen Richard M. Clark, USAF**

Superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy

### **Opening Ceremony**

The US Air Force Academy Superintendent opens the symposium with engaging remarks on Warrior Ethos and a charge to dive in to the deeper thought and conversation on tough topics.

Lt. Gen. Richard M. Clark is the Superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado. He directs a four-year regimen of military training, academics, athletic and character development programs leading to a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission as a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force or United States Space Force.

Lt Gen Clark graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1986. His commands include the 34th Bomb Squadron, Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota; 12th Flying Training Wing, Randolph AFB, Texas; 8th Air Force, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana and Joint Functional Component Commander for Global Strike, Offutt AFB, Nebraska. He has also served as a White House Fellow in Washington, D.C.; the Commandant of Cadets, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado; Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché, Cairo, Egypt and as the Commander, 3rd Air Force, Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

Prior to his current assignment, he served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia.



## **CMSAF Joanne S. Bass**

19th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

### **Lessons in Leadership and Warrior Ethos**

Hear from the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force as she shares how Warrior Ethos shaped her journey to the top enlisted position in the US Air Force.

Chief Bass represents the highest enlisted level of leadership, and as such, provides direction for the enlisted force and represents their interests, as appropriate, to the American public and to those in all levels of government. She serves as the personal adviser to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale, and proper utilization and progress of more than 600,000 Total Force Airmen. Chief Bass is the 19th chief master sergeant appointed to the highest noncommissioned officer position.

Chief Bass was raised as an Army dependent, living in several overseas and stateside locations, prior to entering the Air Force in 1993. Throughout her career, she has held a variety of leadership positions serving at the squadron, group, wing and major command levels. She has significant joint service and special operations experience and has participated in several operations and exercises as well as deployments in direct support of Operations SOUTHERN WATCH, ENDURING FREEDOM, and IRAQI FREEDOM.

Prior to this assignment, she served as the Command Chief Master Sergeant, Second Air Force, Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi.



# CLASS OF '59 LEADERSHIP LECTURE



**John Troxell**

SEAC (Ret)

## **Preparing Yourself for the Worst Day of Your Life**

The discussion will include the need to ready ourselves physically, mentally, emotionally, technically and tactically to be prepared for the conditions that arise during “the worst day of our lives”. He will discuss his personal story in combat and his worst day July 19, 2007. Additionally, SEAC (Ret) Troxell will further talk about the need to be a champion and not a victim during adverse times, and finally how leaders must lead by example and provide purpose, motivation, direction and inspiration to overcome adversity. He will also talk about his “Surrender or Die by entrenching tool” call out that he did to ISIS a couple of years ago that went viral, to bring some levity and humor.

Former Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with five combat tours to include Operation Just Cause in Panama, Operation Desert Shield/Storm, two tours during Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

John Wayne Troxell is a retired United States Army senior noncommissioned officer who served as the third Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In this capacity he served as the principal advisor to the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense on all matters related to the troops of the United States Armed Forces to include the lethality, readiness, fitness, welfare and deployability of the force, as well as joint force development and education. This position made Troxell the most senior enlisted member of the United States Armed Forces. He enlisted in September 1982 as an armored reconnaissance specialist and graduated from One Station Unit Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Troxell was sworn in as the SEAC on December 11, 2015. His official retirement date was March 31, 2020. During his time as the SEAC, Troxell campaigned for a distinctive rank insignia for the SEAC position much like each of the Service Senior Enlisted Advisors, and on December 8, 2019 the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the new rank and title, and pinned the new rank on Troxell at a ceremony in the Pentagon.

Troxell is married to the former Sandra Jimenez, his wife of over 36 years from El Paso, Texas. Since his military retirement, Troxell has opened his own consulting firm, PME Hard Consulting, LLC, and now serves as a Brand Ambassador for the US Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes Foundation, the Veterans Lending Group, and Eyewear Safety Systems (ESS); he serves as the Vice President for Strategic Planning for DFND USA, he also serves as a military consultant for Alpha Warrior 360 gyms, and Film 45 movie production company. His focus continues to be on assisting military members, veterans, and their families.

# THE FALCON FOUNDATION

## WILLIAM “BUD” BRECKNER LECTURE



### **GEN Stanley McChrystal, USA, Ret.**

Former commander of U.S. and International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Afghanistan and former commander of the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC).

### **Things That Matter**

Join General McChrystal as he captivates the audience and leads them to reflect and focus on the things that truly matter and how Warrior Ethos plays a role in more than just operational situations.

A transformational leader with a remarkable record of achievement, General Stanley A. McChrystal was called “one of America’s greatest warriors” by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. He is widely praised for launching a revolution in warfare by leading a comprehensive counter-terrorism organization that fused intelligence and operations, redefining the way military and government agencies interact.

A retired four-star general, he is the former commander of U.S. and International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Afghanistan and the former commander of the premier military counter-terrorism force, Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). His leadership of JSOC is credited with the 2003 capture of Saddam Hussein and the 2006 location and killing of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq.

Since retiring from the military, McChrystal has served on several corporate boards of directors that include Deutsche Bank America, JetBlue Airways, Navistar, Siemens Government Technologies, Fiscal Note, and Accent Technologies. A passionate advocate for national service, McChrystal is the Chair of the Board of Service Year Alliance, which envisions a future in which a service year is a cultural expectation and common opportunity for every young American. He is a senior fellow at Yale University’s Jackson Institute for Global Affairs, where he teaches a popular course on leadership. Additionally, he is the author of the bestselling leadership books, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir*, *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*, and *Leaders: Myth and Reality*.

# THE CLASS OF '73 JOHN AND LYN MUSE KEYNOTE LECTURE



## **Marillyn Hewson**

Executive Chairman of Lockheed Martin

### **Warrior Ethos: A CEO Perspective**

Join the Executive Chairman of Lockheed Martin as she is interviewed by three cadets who will explore how Warrior Ethos is an important part of civilian leadership.

One of TIME Magazine's "100 Most Influential People in the World," and twice listed as #1 on FORTUNE Magazine's list of "50 Most Powerful Women in Business".

Marillyn A. Hewson is Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Lockheed Martin Corporation. She previously held several increasingly responsible executive positions with the Corporation, including President and Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President of Lockheed Martin's Electronic Systems business area.

Ms. Hewson joined Lockheed Martin more than 35 years ago as an industrial engineer. During her career she has held several operational leadership positions, including President of Lockheed Martin Systems Integration; Executive Vice President of Global Sustainment for Lockheed Martin Aeronautics; and President and General Manager of Kelly Aviation Center, L.P. She has served in key corporate executive roles, including Senior Vice President of Corporate Shared Services; Vice President of Global Supply Chain Management; and Vice President of Corporate Internal Audit.

Ms. Hewson currently serves on the Board of Directors of Johnson & Johnson, the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, the Board of Governors of the USO, and as Chair of the Catalyst Board of Directors. She previously served on the boards of DuPont, DowDuPont and Carpenter Technology. She is a member of The University of Alabama's President's Cabinet and the Board of Visitors of the Culverhouse College of Business. Ms. Hewson has served on several U.S. government advisory bodies, including current appointments to the American Workforce Policy Advisory Board and the National Space Council's Users' Advisory Group.

In 2019, TIME magazine identified Ms. Hewson as one of the "100 Most Influential People in the World," and FORTUNE magazine ranked her No. 1 on its list of "50 Most Powerful Women in Business" for the second year in a row. In 2018, she was named the "CEO of the Year" by Chief Executive Magazine, a Top 10 "Businessperson of the Year" by FORTUNE magazine, and one of the "World's 100 Most Powerful Women" by Forbes.

# THE CLASS OF '77 MR. & MRS. ENIX HERITAGE KEYNOTE LECTURE



## **Marcus Luttrell, P01, USN, Ret.**

Decorated Navy SEAL and best-selling author of *"Lone Survivor"*

### **A Tribute to Courage, Honor and Patriotism**

In an unparalleled and inspiring program, Marcus Luttrell takes us from the rigors of SEAL training and what it takes to join the America's elite fighting force, to the battle on the mountain, into his family's experience of community support and generosity, and back to his own incredible story of survival and grace. He weaves a rich account of courage and sacrifice, honor and patriotism, community and destiny that audiences will find both wrenching and life-affirming. In his emotionally raw account, Marcus Luttrell honors the memories of all those who died, sharing with us the incredible bravery, courage, and honor of these extraordinary warriors. He holds their lives up as examples of this guiding philosophy of the SEALs:

"I will never quit. I persevere and thrive on adversity. My Nation expects me to be physically harder and mentally stronger than my enemies. If knocked down, I will get back up, every time. I will draw on every remaining ounce of strength to protect my teammates and accomplish our mission. I am never out of the fight."

Marcus Luttrell's #1 New York Times best-selling book, *Lone Survivor*, tells the harrowing story of four Navy SEALs who journeyed into the mountainous border of Afghanistan and Pakistan on Operation Redwing. The book is a moving tribute to the friends and teammates who did not make it off the mountain.

Operation Redwing's mission was to gather intelligence on a Taliban leader with ties to Osama bin Laden. Marcus and his teammates valiantly fought for hours, refusing to retreat from the fight despite being heavily outnumbered. After Marcus had watched all three friends die and had literally been blown to the mountain by an RPG, a rescue helicopter carrying 16 special operation forces was shot down, killing all on board. His face was shredded, nose broken, three vertebrae cracked, and his body was riddled with shrapnel. Unable to stand, Marcus began to crawl through the mountains in search of shelter. Locals brought Luttrell in, cleaned up his wounds and, honoring their tribe's custom, protected him from the Taliban at the risk of their own lives. Five nights after the nightmare began, Marcus was rescued.

Marcus joined the U.S. Navy in March 1999 and became a combat-trained SEAL in January 2002. After serving in Iraq for two years, he was deployed to Afghanistan in the spring of 2005. He also served as Platoon medic. After recuperating, he redeployed to Iraq for a second tour. In the spring of 2007, Petty Officer 1st Class Luttrell retired. He was awarded the Navy Cross for combat heroism in 2006 by President George W. Bush.

To honor his lost comrades from Operation Redwing, Marcus established the Lone Survivor Foundation in 2010, dedicated to honoring and remembering American warriors by providing unique educational, rehabilitation, recovery, and wellness opportunities to U.S. Armed Forces service members & families.



# SPEAKERS



## Stacy Allison

First American woman to summit Mount Everest

### Undaunted in Daunting Times; Lessons from Everest

Mt. Everest is one of the most unforgiving environments on Earth and decisions don't get much starker. That's why mountains, an ever present and inspirational backdrop to the Academy, are a rich source of insights for Cadets and Officers alike. More than just symbols of upward striving, mountains are high-altitude crucibles for leadership, vision, team dynamics, risk-taking, and mental perseverance. Even though you may not experience arctic temperatures, hurricane force winds, or seemingly bottomless crevasses, you do face an increasingly demanding, dynamic and sophisticated academic, athletic, military, and leadership training regimen. Your success is like climbing a mountain. Just like an expedition, you must forge an inspiring vision, build an accomplished team, overcome obstacles and stay focused, to consistently be your best and stay on top.

Stacy combines her business acumen and her spirit for adventure to show her audiences how to thrive in their endeavors through courage, leadership, vision, teamwork, risk taking, and personal accountability. Stacy's high content, personalized presentation will encourage and inspire you to take a visionary look at opportunities and move beyond your limits.

Stacy Allison brings a vast range of experiences and knowledge to her energetic and dynamic presentations. Stacy is best known as the First American woman to summit Mt. Everest. She is also president of Beyond the Limits Construction, a residential building company. She serves on the Board of Trustees of National University and is the Co-Chairperson for The American Lung Association's fundraiser, Climb for Clean Air. Remarkably, she is also a successful author and committed mother of two.

At the age of 21, Stacy began major alpine climbing in earnest and achieved rapid success. Within a year, Stacy reached the top of Alaska's Denali, the highest point in North America, and was part of the first successful women's ascent of Ama Dablam, the 22,495 foot peak known as Nepal's Matterhorn.

On her first attempt on Mt Everest, Stacy did not summit. She describes the challenge, "The worst storm in forty years trapped us in a snow cave at 23,500 feet for five days." Stacy reflects, "If you see yourself as trying to beat the mountain, eventually the mountain will win. You don't conquer mountains, you cooperate with them."

Stacy returned to Mt. Everest with the Northwest American Everest Expedition. On September 29, 1988, Stacy became the first American woman to reach the summit of Mt. Everest, the world's highest mountain at 29,028 feet.

Stacy's mission is to motivate people to move beyond limitations and reach for their dreams. She challenges her audiences to lay the foundation for risk taking by accepting full responsibility for their lives. She also emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing everyone's contribution as a team member in life's pursuit.

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# SPEAKERS

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**Col Michelle “Mo” Barrett USAF, Ret.**

Anecdotist

## **The Internal Combustion Engine of Decision and Action**

Mo parallels the chambers of an internal combustion engine to iterative decision-making and action-taking with closer inspection of the contributions we give and receive and how it affects others.

Regardless of how mundane or significant a decision might be, we can leverage the model to ensure we seek a variety of inputs, use the stages of experience to develop a course of action and use any feedback as a new input. And if you're not an engineer or rocket surgeon, don't fret, it won't be as boring as it might sound.

Mo Barrett launched her distinguished career as a successful failure at the Air Force Academy, persevering after becoming the first member of her pilot training class to receive a grade of “Unsatisfactory.” As an Air Force pilot, she flew the Alenia C-27A throughout Central and South America, then moved to Northern California to fly the Lockheed C-5 around the globe. After 9/11, Mo deployed with a small team to bare bases in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, converting them from austere fields to airlift hubs.

Mo has dealt with the shame, stigma, struggle and success of being a life-long non-conformist and lesbian in the military's structured environment. She retired as a Colonel after a 25-year Air Force career leveraging hard work and an ability to view the world through lenses of humor, optimism and perspective. She has survived and thrived as a multi-minority and now connects with audiences of all ages and walks of life as a DC tour guide, podcast co-host and storyteller. Mo entertains audiences with her unique presentation style and contagious energy as she charts a course for people who want to laugh, learn and think!

# SPEAKERS



## **CMSgt Thomas Case, USAF**

Two-time Silver Star recipient, Chief Enlisted Manager, 13th Air Support Operations Squadron

### **Knocked Down? Get Up!**

The testimony of CMSgt “TC” Case—16 through combat deployments, marital strife, single dad, 2 Silver Stars, and combat stress. Life continues on even when you’re deployed. Join us to hear about the good, the bad, the ugly and figuring out how to manage combat stress.

Chief Master Sergeant Thomas E. Case serves as the Chief Enlisted Manager (CEM), 13th Air Support Operations Squadron, Fort Carson, Colorado. He manages the daily administration and operations of 3 Brigades and Division staff of Airmen aligned with the 4th Infantry Division.

Chief Master Sergeant Case is from Albuquerque, New Mexico and enlisted in the Air Force in May of 1997. Upon completion of Basic Training and Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) Technical School and pipeline, Sergeant Case reported to his first assignment at Fort Carson, Colorado with the 13th Air Support Operations Squadron (ASOS); where he served as a Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) supporting 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division and 10th Special Forces Group.

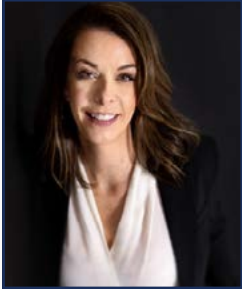
In 2001, he was selected for duty as a Special Operations TACP, where he was then assigned to the 17th Special Tactics Squadron (STS), Fort Benning, GA. While assigned to the 17th STS, CMSgt Case supported the 75th Ranger Regiment, Navy SEAL teams, Federal Government Agencies, and other army and navy Special Mission Units. He deployed over a dozen times in support of OIF and OEF, as well as other unspecified operational locations. Next, CMSGT Case was the Fire Support Noncommissioned Officer In Charge, Aviation Tactics Evaluation Group, Joint Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Then, he served as Operations Superintendent, 18th Air Support Operations Group, 604th ASOS Operations Superintendent, 25th ASOS Operations Superintendent and the 25th ASOS Senior Enlisted Manager (SEM).

CMSgt Case has been awarded the Silver Star with one Oak Leaf Cluster, becoming only one of three Airmen in USAF history to receive the nation’s third highest award twice for valor and gallantry in combat.

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# SPEAKERS

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**DeDe Halfhill, Col, USAF, Ret.**

Former Assistant for Public Affairs to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

**Leaders Connect: a real conversation about why we struggle and what gets in our way**

In the context of the loneliness that many are feeling in a global pandemic, rising suicide rates and increasing concerns over toxic leadership, the time has come for a candid discussion about the skills leaders need to possess to address such challenges. At the core of each of these challenges is connection. If we're to have any chance at reversing the trends, then it's time for an honest conversation about what is getting in our way as leaders from building authentic, meaningful connecting with our teams.

The shift rests in language. The language we use as leaders can have a powerful and positive impact. Use the right words and we are able to authentically connect, build trust and empower others in a meaningful way. Use the wrong words and the result is often disconnection, isolation and destruction of the trust we've spent so much time and energy to build despite our best intentions otherwise. It's time to get smart on what drives disconnection and more importantly get skilled on how to fuel sincere, genuine connection.

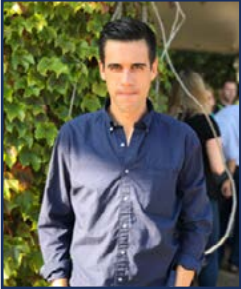
During her time with the Air Force, DeDe became a trusted advisor to some of our highest-ranking military leaders, including the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense. Deployed twice during the IRAQ War, DeDe has had first-hand experience as a leader and advisor when dealing with the most difficult circumstances, often when lives were at risk, and when there were no easy answers. She understands leadership, not just from studying it, but by actually living it.

DeDe realized that despite cultural norms taught and embraced by the military, traditional leadership lacked the skills to navigate the often-overlooked area of emotions, like empathy and shame, which prevented leaders from having the difficult conversations that promoted organizational connection versus severing it. Whether it's wholehearted discussions regarding mental health, racial injustice or gender inequality, DeDe believes these painful topics can be more effectively addressed by stepping into the arena of vulnerability, which is the path to true courage.

Col Halfhill was featured in Brené Brown's book *'Dare to Lead'* and on 60 Minutes for her candid approach to leadership. Join her for a thought-provoking conversation about how the words we choose and the empathy we convey not only saves lives, but deepens trust, increases resilience and inspires courage in the organizations we lead. You will leave this presentation with new skills to grow as a trusted leader, connect on purpose, and engage with humanity in the workplace.



# SPEAKERS



## Ryan Holiday

#1 New York Times Best-Selling Author and Media Strategist

### The Obstacle is the Way

Through lessons learned from history's greats, understand how embracing the impediments between you and your goal can become your path to success.

Few writers have done more to bring ancient, timeless wisdom and cutting-edge marketing strategies together than Ryan Holiday. By age 33, his philosophically-driven bestselling books have sold over two and a half million copies, and have included the #1 NY Times Bestseller, *Stillness is the Key*, *Obstacle is the Way*, and his latest, *Lives of the Stoics*. His works have directly influenced Super Bowl-winning teams like the New England Patriots, NBA Champions like the San Antonio Spurs, and Olympic Gold Medalists, as well as sitting Senators, military leaders and some of the biggest and most important companies in the world like Google, Twitter and Microsoft.

At the core of Ryan's teachings is Stoicism, a philosophy he has brought back from ancient Rome and into the workplace, entrepreneurship, politics, and sports. What is Stoicism? The idea that while we don't always control what happens to us in life, we always control how we respond. It's this message--a framework for overcoming obstacles, scaling new challenges and battling both the ups and downs and life, illustrated vividly with stories from the greats (and not-so-greats) of history--that has brought Ryan in front of some of the most influential audiences in the world. He's been profiled by the New York Times, Sports Illustrated and ESPN, and he counts among his clients and followers, some of the biggest names in business, tech, culture and professional athletics.

With a thirst for knowledge outside academic norms, after dropping out of college, Ryan's marketing career has been equally ground-breaking. Beginning at 21 as the Director of Marketing for American Apparel and through his creative agency, Brass Check, his clients consist of a who's who of hot brands and businesses. His book *Trust Me I'm Lying* was the first to reveal the massive vulnerabilities (and opportunities) in the global media system in 2012. His book *Growth Hacker Marketing* is a bible for startups and Fortune 500 companies alike. Both books are taught in colleges and design programs around the world and *Conspiracy* is being adapted into a major motion picture.

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# SPEAKERS

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## **Katherine Sharp Landdeck, PhD**

Women Airforce Service Pilots historian and author

### **The First Warriors in Blue: The Women Airforce Service Pilots**

Dr. Landdeck will talk about the legendary Women Airforce Service Pilots and their inspirational and ground-breaking work in World War II. These women flew every aircraft the USAAF had and proved that women could, as General H.H. Arnold declared, “fly wingtip-to-wingtip with their brothers.” The WASP displayed the true warrior ethos as they fought for the chance to serve their nation and, with help from their allies, pushed from being limited in light, trainer aircraft because of their gender into pursuit aircraft like the P-51 and P-38, and bombers like the B-17 and B-29.

Dr. Katherine Sharp Landdeck is an associate professor of history at Texas Woman’s University, the home of the WASP archives. A Guggenheim Fellow at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, a Normandy Scholar, and a graduate of the University of Tennessee, where she earned her PhD, Landdeck has received numerous awards for her more than two decades of work on the WASP and has appeared as an expert on NPR’s “Morning Edition,” PBS, and the History Channel. Her work has been published in The Washington Post, The Atlantic, and Time, as well as in numerous academic and aviation publications. In addition, Dr. Landdeck published her first book in 2020, titled “The Women with Silver Wings: The Inspiring True Story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II.” Landdeck is a licensed pilot who flies whenever she can.

# SPEAKERS



## **Regina Lewis, PhD**

Founder and CEO of Regina Speaking

### **Raising a Prince on Food Stamps**

During this riveting inspirational talk, you will learn how Dr. Regina Lewis went from poverty to Ph.D. by making a pact with her son Charles. Dr. Lewis will reignite your purpose and illuminate the pathway to your goals as she shares how she raised her son through insurmountable odds by demonstrating discipline, dedication, and determination.

Dr. Regina Lewis leads and has alliances with worldwide organizations, specializing in leadership development and organizational communication. With clients ranging from Fortune 500 companies through not-for-profit agencies to educational institutions, Dr. Lewis' proven specialty is leadership, professional excellence, culture inclusion, entrepreneurship, executive coaching, strategic development, and executive public speaking coaching.

Regina is a consulting partner, international speaker, virtual moderator and CEO of ReginaSpeaking, LLC. Through this company, she has worked with clientele executives, groups, and organizations in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Hong Kong, China, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Brazil, and the United States to name a few.

Dr. Lewis has presented and facilitated widely on topics of cultural competence, diversity, and inclusion, cross-cultural leveraging, strategic planning, executive speaking, interpersonal communication, entrepreneurship, media & public relations, social media, academic retention, and understanding and climbing out of poverty.

Currently Regina is the department chair and professor of Communication and the Special Assistant to the President for Academic Excellence and Inclusion at Pikes Peak Community College and an executive coach for the Center for Creative Leadership.

Regina holds a doctorate in Educational Leadership, Research and Policy, a Master of Arts in Communication, a Bachelor of Arts in Communication, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. Regina's work in the area of diversity and inclusion has become an award-winning program. Additionally, her publications are found in books, journals, and educational textbooks. She is also certified in an array of assessment tools.

# SPEAKERS



## Jannell MacAulay, PhD, Lt Col, USAF Ret.

Leadership, human performance expert and combat pilot veteran.

### The Warrior's Edge

As an elite operator, squadron commander, military spouse, and mother of two, Dr Jannell MacAulay struggled to accelerate her professional success without sacrificing her health and relationships along the way. After studying high-performing individuals who push the boundaries on human potential in alpha-competitive environments, she learned they all invest in one thing: Training their mind to be their best. Realizing there was a psychological performance gap within the military and other high-stress occupations, she collaborated with Coach Pete Carroll of the Seattle Seahawks and high-performance sports psychologist, Dr Michael Gervais, to create Warrior's Edge elite mindset training.

The program teaches performance-enhancing psychological skills as a proactive approach to mental health and well-being for individuals who operate in environments of consequence. In this session, Dr MacAulay will introduce you to the skills behind Warrior's Edge to help *you* unlock your inner warrior and learn to *train your mind* and *command your thoughts* under stress.

Dr. Jannell MacAulay is a combat veteran, TEDx speaker, and mother of two on a mission to help individuals excel in high stress environments. She served 20 years in the U.S. Air Force as a pilot, commander, special operations consultant, international diplomat, and professionalism instructor. Dr. MacAulay currently serves as a Leadership and Human Performance consultant within government and corporate sectors. Drawing on more than 3,000 hours of flying experience in the C-21, C-130 and KC-10 as well decades spent leading teams and implementing complex organizational change, she teaches people how to optimize the human weapon system.

Dr. MacAulay was the first leader to introduce mindfulness as a proactive performance strategy for the U.S. military. She also developed and co-founded Warrior's Edge, a high-performance mindset training program, with Seattle Seahawks coach, Pete Carroll, and high-performance sports psychologist, Dr. Michael Gervais. Dr. MacAulay is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, and holds a Ph.D. in Military Strategy with an emphasis on strategic health and human performance from Air University and a Masters Degree in Kinesiology from The Pennsylvania State University. She is also a certified wellness educator, yoga instructor, and holds a certificate in plant-based nutrition.



# SPEAKERS



## **MSgt Deondra Parks, USAF**

99th Airlift Squadron First Sergeant and Hate Crime Survivor

### **Healing Through Awareness**

MSgt Deondra Parks, who survived mortar attacks in Iraq, became a victim of a hate crime. She owes her very survival to rational thinking and a resilient spirit, but even those enviable traits did not save her from harm. She was shot, while studying in an entertainment store's cafe, in Texas. A survivor of an active shooting event, she talks about forgiveness, seeking support, dealing with PTSD, and moving on with grace.

Sergeant Parks was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. She initially enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 2004 as a Security Forces member and was assigned to various duty stations to include Taegu AB, South Korea; Aviano AB, Italy; Balad AB, Iraq; Osan AB, South Korea; and Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. As an Aerospace Medical Technician, MSgt Parks was assigned to Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio, Falls Church, VA and deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Prior to her current position MSgt Parks was the Superintendent, Health Informatics, Special Staff (JSS), Defense Health Agency (DHA); where she led a 49 member joint service Branch, responsible for a \$24.1 million operating budget supporting 205,000 Military Health System users. In addition, she directed and executed program sustainment activities supporting 51 MHS business/clinical systems valued at \$6 billion directly impacting 699 Tri-Service Military Treatment Facilities worldwide.

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# SPEAKERS

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## Shannon Huffman Polson

Author, Veteran, Founder and CEO of The Grit Institute

### Leading From Any Seat: Stories from the Cockpit & Lessons from the Grit Project

Tenacity, determination, grit and an innate ability to lead has defined Shannon Huffman Polson. An adventurous young woman, she summited Mount McKinley (now Denali) and, at the time, was the youngest woman to complete the attempt. From there, she was commissioned in the Army and was one of the first women to fly the Apache attack helicopter. Through her leadership and aviation skills she earned the right to lead two flight platoons and was the first woman to command an Apache flight company in the 2nd Infantry Division.

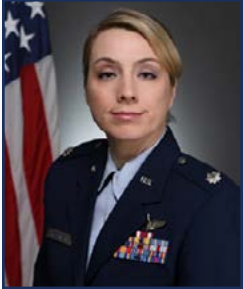
With real-world stories and insights from in and out of the cockpit, she offers tangible leadership lessons for audience members to seek out their own targets and, where passion and purpose intersect, incorporate them into their own professional lives. By examining everyday leadership and situational challenges, Shannon empowers others to effectively lead and thrive in any dynamic environment.

Shannon is a woman of many firsts. Among those high points: She is one of the first women to fly Apache combat helicopters in the U.S. Armed Forces, where she served on three continents and led two flight platoons and a line company. She is also the founder and CEO of The Grit Institute and the author of the memoir *North of Hope and The Grit Project*.

After nearly a decade as an Army officer and attack aviation leader, and later as a leader and manager in the corporate sector at Guidant and Microsoft, Shannon turned her attention to storytelling, in part through her Grit Project blog and in her newest book. In *The Grit Factor: Courage, Resilience and Leadership in the most Male Dominated Industry in the World* (2020), Shannon shares her own critical leadership lessons along with candid stories of remarkable female leaders and trailblazers.

Drawing on a distinguished military and corporate career, she reveals her lessons learned and leadership strategies to help you harness your own inner strength, move beyond resistance, and attain your goals. With an emphasis on grit – which she describes as “a dogged determination in the face of difficult circumstances” – she demonstrates how to tap into that passion and resolve so you can face your limitations, own your sense of purpose, and become a leader of greatness.

# SPEAKERS



## **Lt Col Jessica Ruttenber, USAF**

Advocate for Women in Removing Barriers to Employment, Accessions, Advancement, and Retention

### **David versus Goliath: Overcoming hidden barriers in gender diversity**

Despite her “vertical challenges,” Jessica shares how she overcame the odds to become a USAF pilot and how she spent most of her career as an advocate to remove unnecessary barriers which keep women and minorities out of aviation. Her writing and work on the Women’s Initiative Team prompted the DoD to design its first-ever maternity flight suit and changed the way the Air Force designs aircraft for Human Systems Integration. Jessica discusses how legacy policies and systematic engineering disqualifies 74% of black females and 72% of Hispanic females from becoming pilots and why that is a problem for national security.

Lieutenant Colonel Jessica N. Ruttenber is the lead Planner and Programmer for Intertheater Airlift and Air Refueling in the Mobility and Special Operations Panel, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia. She also volunteers on the Department of the Air Force Barrier Analysis Working Group Women’s Initiative Team as an influential and authoritative advocate on topics that influence women’s propensity to serve the Air Force mission.

Lieutenant Colonel Ruttenber received her commission into the Air Force from the ROTC program at the University of Oklahoma in 2001. She entered service as a communications officer and later cross-trained to become a mobility pilot. She has served in a variety of cyber, flying, and staff assignments. Lieutenant Colonel Ruttenber commanded air refueling in support of Operations NOBLE EAGLE, IRAQI FREEDOM, NEW DAWN, and ENDURING FREEDOM culminating in over 200 combat sorties and more than 1,049 combat hours. She is a senior pilot with over 3000 hours in the T-37B, T-1, KC-135R/T and C-21A.

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# SPEAKERS

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**Nick Scott**

Professional wheelchair bodybuilder and two-time World Powerlifting Champion

**Never Give Up**

Nick Scott shares his personal story with audiences so they understand he started with a dim glimmer of hope. What it really means to Never Give Up, the mindset, the motivation and to do whatever it takes to get the job done. As a professional bodybuilder, wheelchair ballroom dancer, entertainer and motivational speaker, Nick Scott approaches everything he does with enthusiasm and conviction. His vision is to use his life experiences and abilities to inspire others and give them hope. There are no excuses for quitting.

At the age of 16, Nick Scott was an ordinary teenager with an interest in athletics, when a near-fatal traffic accident changed life as he knew it... forever. After the accident, Nick became overweight and discouraged, but somehow found the determination, mindset and personal strength to transform his life from a debilitating tragedy into a personal triumph. Now he uses those hard-won insights to help others awaken the beast within themselves and achieve their personal goals.

- Professional Wheelchair Bodybuilder
- Professional Wheelchair Ballroom Dancer
- 2-Time World Powerlifting Champion
- Award-Winning Actor
- Published Author
- Real Estate Investor

What's the one thing you gain when you lose everything? Perspective. As a professional speaker, author, professional bodybuilder, wheelchair ballroom dancer, and Business Entrepreneur, Nick Scott uses his enthusiasm, vision, convictions, abilities, and life experience to reach out, to inspire and give hope to others, especially those unaware of the personal strength they can tap into if only they will believe and try. Nick's sheer strength of will has helped transform thousands of individuals – from professional athletes to senior executives. Nick inspires others to break through to new levels of peak performance and success.



# SPEAKERS



## **DJ Skelton, MAJ, USA, Ret.**

Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs

### **Base Jumping, Body Piercing, and the Battle of Fallujah**

DJ will take you on a journey of his unorthodox life, and how he discovered discipline, resilience and post-traumatic growth. He will take you on a rollercoaster from a small town in South Dakota, to the battlefields of Fallujah, Iraq and Panjwayi, Afghanistan, and through the halls of the Pentagon. He will intimately share his story of enlisting to commissioning, fighting one of the fiercest battles in Iraq, to surviving addiction and suicide, returning to command on the battlefield, and becoming one of the most influential advocates for veterans and post-traumatic growth.

DJ enlisted in the United States Army in 1996. He served as a Chinese interrogator before attending the United States Military Academy in West Point, NY. Upon graduation from West Point, in 2003, DJ commissioned as an Infantry Officer. In November of 2004, while leading a rifle infantry platoon in Charlie Company, 1-5 IN BN, 1st BDE of the 25th ID, in close combat in Fallujah, Iraq, DJ was severely wounded.

He wrote, *Our Hero Handbook*, a comprehensive guide to assist wounded service members and their families during recovery and rehabilitation. He has served as a Military Advisor to Deputy Secretaries of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and Gordon England, Echo Company Commander of the 229th MI BN and the Associate Dean for the Middle East School at DLIFLC, Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ADM Mike Mullen. During this assignment, DJ advised the CJCS on veteran transition issues, wounded warrior policy, and improving services to military families. DJ concurrently served as a Non-Resident Military Fellow at the Center for a New American Security, leading the “silent wounds” project on post-traumatic growth for the Center.

DJ is fluent in Chinese, one of the youngest graduates of Harvard’s Senior Executive Fellowship Program, a graduate of Stanford University’s GSB Ignite Program, United-Japan Leadership Fellow, former Council on Foreign Relations term member and the founder of the non-profit, Paradox Sports.

DJ recently retired from active duty. He is currently a Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs.

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# SPEAKERS

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**Freshta Tori Jan**

Founder of Sew True

**Beyond the Mountains: A Journey of Perseverance**

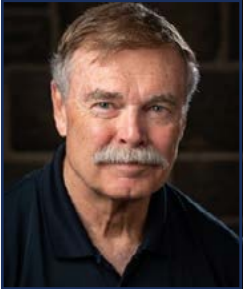
Freshta will provide a brief description about common misconceptions about Afghanistan. She will then share her personal experiences growing up in Afghanistan regarding the kidnappings and daily murder attempts her family faced and her friends being murdered and shot. She will speak about her school being shut down by the Taliban and her educational journey afterwards. Her presentation will cover events that shaped her into developing a resilient mindset and fierce motivation as well as how she has been able to persevere despite being a religious, ethnic, and gender minority in her country.

Freshta Tori Jan is a student at Calvin University, originally from Kabul, Afghanistan. Once a shepherdess in the Kabul hills, she is now a global human rights activist and serves as a public speaker at various organizations such as the Department of Civil Rights. Tori Jan's commitment to leadership from a young age enabled her to advocate for human rights and other social issues facing today's society.

As an ethnic, religious, and gender minority in Afghanistan, Tori Jan faced great persecution. Her family faced kidnappings and daily murder attempts as a result. Tori Jan's school was shut down by the Taliban, and many of her friends were murdered and shot. Tori Jan's journey through poverty, terrorism, and other forms of injustice have enabled her to be a voice for those who lack one. She believes in empowering youth to be agents of change.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Tori Jan also founded Sew True to help the homeless. Now Sew True continues to help the community by providing various necessities. After graduation, she will attend law school equipping herself to advocate for human rights around the globe.

# SPEAKERS



## **Lee Van Arsdale, COL, USA, Ret.**

Silver Star and Purple Heart Recipient & Former Delta Squadron Commander

### **Warrior Ethos Through the Eyes of a Commander on the Ground during Task Force Ranger (*Black Hawk Down*)**

Lee will focus on one aspect of the Army Warrior Ethos: “I will never leave a fallen comrade”. He will use his experience as a member of Task Force Ranger in Somalia in 1993 as a vehicle to highlight this aspect of being a warrior. It was TF Ranger’s actions that resulted in the book and movie ‘Black Hawk Down’. Audiences will come away understanding that part of our own Warrior Ethos must include prioritizing the greater good of the team and mission.

Lee A. Van Arsdale has served as a Soldier and business executive. As a Soldier his assignments were primarily in Special Forces, with 11 years spent in the First Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta (Airborne). In the course of his 25-year Army career, Lee served in three combat zones in leadership positions, and was decorated for valor with the Silver Star and with the Purple Heart for wounds received in combat. Additionally, he participated in numerous classified operations, on a global scale, while in a leadership capacity.

Following his military career, Lee was the Assistant General Manager for National Security Response at the Bechtel Nevada Corporation; he incorporated Unconventional Solutions, Inc., a private consulting firm; he was the founding Executive Director of the University of Nevada Las Vegas Institute for Security Studies; he was the Chief Executive Officer of Triple Canopy, Inc., an integrated security solutions company, and the Chief Executive Officer of Creative Radicals, a software company. He now serves on the boards of select companies and does volunteer work for veterans’ organizations. Service Military Treatment Facilities worldwide.

# SPEAKERS



## Samantha Weeks, PhD, Col, USAF, Ret.

First female solo pilot on the USAF Aerial Demonstration Squadron, the USAF Thunderbirds

### Throw Your Hat in the Ring

Samantha will share stories from her 23-year Air Force career to empower the audience to live boldly, believe in themselves, and tackle challenges head-on. From her entrance to the fighter community as the first female pilot in her F-15C squadron, to the Air Force Thunderbirds, and the triumphs and troubles of command she will encourage people to go for their dreams and never take no as the first answer. She'll highlight how life will lead you to a brick wall, but determination and drive can help you persevere. She'll tackle unconscious bias as part of the bricks and mortar that build those walls.

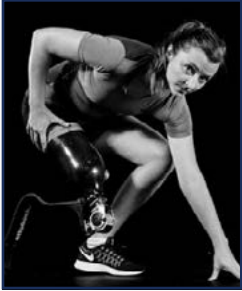
Dr. Samantha Weeks is a passionate leader with extensive knowledge and experience leading complex organizations and motivating individuals and teams to reach their full potential.

She retired as a Colonel in the United States Air Force and commanded at the Squadron, Group and Wing levels. Her final military assignment was the Commander, 14th Flying Training Wing, Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, where she led 3000 people and managed an operations & maintenance budget of \$115 million with capital assets exceeding \$2.3 billion.

Highlighting her career, she was the first female solo pilot on the United States Air Force Aerial Demonstration Squadron, the Thunderbirds. She served as an Air Force Fellow to the Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense and was chosen for the Lorenz Fellowship where she earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Military Strategy, focusing on leader and leadership development. She amassed 2,200 flying hours in the F-15C, F-16 and T-38, including 105 combat hours in support of Operations Northern and Southern Watch.

Dr. Weeks continues serving through consulting and public speaking to share her stories to empower people to believe in themselves, live life to its fullest and break down the walls in front of us.

# SPEAKERS



## **Maj Christy Wise, USAF**

First female Amputee in the US Air Force to Return to Flying Duty

### **Learning to Live with One Leg Up on Life**

On April 11, 2015 Major Christy Wise came within about 30 seconds of bleeding out in the water after she was struck by a hit and run boat propeller in Florida while she was paddle boarding. In a discussion about the resiliency journey she never really wanted, Christy will teach you how to make a tourniquet (hey, it may save your life someday), how she overcame losing her right leg above the knee and fought to stay in the Air Force and return to the cockpit.

Christy Wise was born in Reno, Nevada and grew up with a twin sister and younger brother, spending all their time skiing and playing sports. For college, Christy attended the United States Air Force Academy where she ski raced and played club softball. In 2009, she commissioned as an officer in the United States Air Force and in 2011, she received her pilot wings to fly the HC-130. She spent the next couple years stationed in Valdosta Georgia, and deployed to Afghanistan and Italy.

On April 11, 2015 Christy was visiting her friends for the weekend in Destin, Florida and she was on her paddleboard in a protected cove behind her friends' house when she was struck by a hit-and-run boat driver. Although Christy's life was miraculously saved, she lost her right leg above the knee in the incident.

Christy was determined not to let this change her life so she fought to stay in the Air Force and continue flying. In July 2016, she became the 6th Air Force pilot (and first female) to return to flying after an amputation. Along the way she won 11 medals in the DOD Warrior Games and competed in two international Invictus Games. Humbled by all the support she received since the first night in the hospital, Christy and her twin sister Jessica started a non-profit, One Leg Up On Life, that provides prosthetic limbs to patients in Haiti.

Christy's courage and determination to continue her Air Force career while also using her experience to help others exemplifies tremendous resiliency and strength of character.



# 12 OUTSTANDING AIRMEN OF THE YEAR, 2020

## Class of '93 Sponsored Panel

An Air Force selection board at the Air Force Personnel Center considered 36 nominees who represented major commands, direct reporting units, field operating agencies, and Headquarters Air Force. The board selected the final 12 Airmen based on superior leadership, job performance, and personal achievements. These top performers will share their stories and insights on how valuing human conditions, cultures, and societies has helped them in their service to our country.

**Moderated by:** CMSgt Sarah Sparks



**SRA ROXANNE Y. DARIEN**  
Public Health Technician 75th  
Operational Medical Readiness Squadron,  
Hill Air Force Base, UT



**SSGT PORTIA L. SHORT**  
Ceremonial Guardsman  
U.S. Air Force Honor Guard,  
Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling,  
Washington, D.C.



**TSGT NICOLE A. GANSERT**  
In-Flight Refueling Journeyman  
78th Air Refueling Squadron,  
Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, NJ



**TSGT MATTHEW M. O'NEILL**  
Airfield Weather Services Noncommissioned  
Officer in Charge 612th Air Base Squadron,  
Soto Cano Air Base, Republic of Honduras



**TSGT JEREMIAH C. CAMPER**  
Pacific Operations Recruiting Manager  
369th Recruiting Squadron, Encino, CA



**TSGT YVONNE N. FEBLES-ROSARIO**  
Physical Therapy Flight Chief 628th  
Operational Medical Readiness Squadron,  
Joint Base Charleston, SC



**MSGT DOUGLAS K. BROCK**  
Joint Terminal Attack Controller  
124th Air Support Operations  
Squadron, Boise, Idaho



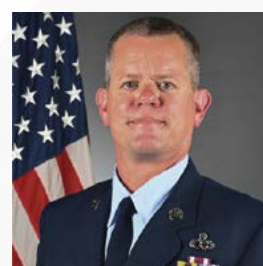
**SMSGT CHRISTOPHER M. RICKS**  
Security Forces Operations Superintendent  
Headquarters Pacific Air Forces A4,  
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI



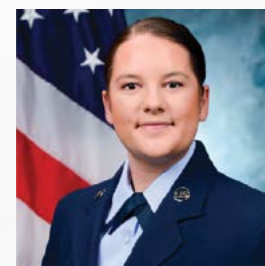
**SMSGT VERNA L. CANNON-GOLEMBOSKI**  
Manpower and Organization Division Superintendent  
and Functional Manager Headquarters Air Force  
Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field, FL



**SMSGT WILFRED A. MORGAN**  
Facility Systems Superintendent  
5th Civil Engineer Squadron,  
Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota



**SMSGT CHRISTOPHER A. HANEY**  
Assistant Squadron Superintendent  
1st Maintenance Squadron,  
Joint Base Langley-Eustis, VA



**SRA CASSIDY B. BASNEY**  
Space Intelligence Instructor  
United States Space Force,  
Peterson Air Force Base, CO

# INNOVATIVE BREAKOUT SESSIONS

## PROVIDING INTERACTION IN A VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

### **Warrior Workout**

Join MAJ (Ret.) DJ Skelton (NCLS 2021 speaker and wounded veteran) in a workout to get your blood flowing and your mindset ready to take on the tough topics of NCLS 2021's theme of "Warrior Ethos as Airmen and Citizens."

### **COL (Ret.) Van Arsdale's Blackhawk Down Q&A**

Go more in-depth with COL (Ret.) Van Arsdale, who will give us the ground commander perspective on the events surrounding the U.S. military mission and rescue effort in Mogadishu, Somalia in 1993. Learn how he and other leaders blended air and ground support to get their teams out of hostile enemy territory.

### **Dr. MacAulay Mindfulness Workshop**

Join Dr. MacAulay for a deeper dive into Warrior's Edge and experience first-hand how mindfulness plays an important role in Warrior Ethos.

### **Nick Scott/MSgtParks Panel & Round Table**

Take part in an intimate panel followed by a question and answer period with two of our speakers who have shown extreme grit and resiliency.

### **CCLD Grit and Resiliency Workshop**

Adversity is everywhere, but how can we be better at withstanding, learning, and growing from it? In this workshop we'll peel back the layers of grit and resiliency to understand the multi-step process we all go through when trying to overcome life's toughest challenges.

### **SEAC (Ret.) John Troxell Workshop**

Go in-depth in a small-group discussion with SEAC (Ret.) Troxell and learn strategies to overcome adversity by embracing a Warrior Ethos.

### **12 OAY Deep Dive**

Spend time with four of the 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. Come with your questions for our top-performing enlisted Airmen and learn how Warrior Ethos shaped their journey.

### **Dr. Regina Lewis Round Table**

Small group discussion with Dr. Lewis, CEO of Regina Speaking, LLC. Please come with questions for Dr. Lewis. Spots are limited to make this discussion interactive for all.

### Stacy Allison Round Table

This is your chance to go deeper into the Warrior Ethos aspects that Ms. Allison relied on to summit Mt. Everest. Please come with questions for Ms. Allison. Spots are limited to make this discussion interactive for all.

### Warrior Wellness

Join us to stretch and strengthen your mind, body, and Warrior Ethos with Col Matt Brancato and Lt Col Micaela Brancato, USAFA grads recognized by the Association of Graduates for the work they do with military survivors at their Holbrook Farms Retreat. They will guide us through a comprehensive Warrior Wellness session, including a recipe for a nutritious superfood smoothie, a 30-minute power stretch session, and a guided relaxation exercise to promote healthy sleep and recovery. (Smoothie ingredients to have on hand: almond milk or coconut water, 1 cup frozen spinach or greens, 1 cup frozen fruit blend of choice, honey, collagen or protein powder, flax seeds, peanut butter, or other nutritious add-ons.)

### Breaking Down Barriers Panel & Round Table

This session will feature military and civilian personnel who have overcome various types of adversity. Panelists will share stories about barriers as well as the skills they used to achieve success. The panel will also examine the role of leaders in building warrior ethos among members of their organizations and communities, and why that matters to accomplishing the mission.

### Freshta Tori Jan Round Table

Join a small group discussion with Ms. Tori Jan to learn more about how her Warrior Ethos shaped her inspiring journey. Please come with questions for Ms. Tori Jan. Spots are limited to make this discussion interactive for all.

### GEN (Ret.) McChrystal Reflection Room

Come together to discuss topics presented by GEN McChrystal during his speaker session. A great follow-on to his presentation to continue the conversation and reflect on Warrior Ethos. Note: GEN McChrystal will NOT be attending this session.

### Col (Ret.) Halfhill Leadership Workshop

Join Col (Ret.) Halfhill for lessons on leadership as discussed in the book "Dare to Lead". This book-club like discussion will take a more in-depth look at the topics presented in Dr. Brene Brown's best-selling book, in which Col Halfhill is featured.

### CCLD Mastering Habits Workshop

A Warrior Ethos requires a mastery of self and understanding of others. Patterns shape every aspect of our lives and transforming habits impact our personal, professional, and team performance. This session examines the role of habits in success and provides a simple way to master them.

### CCLD Emotional Intelligence Workshop

Emotional intelligence is a collection of learned skills and is key to effective leadership. In this workshop participants will familiarize themselves with an emotional intelligence framework as well as identify personal strengths and areas for improvements to enhance emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness.

### CCLD Leader of Character Workshop

This workshop introduces participants to the Leader of Character (LoC) Framework and provides specific tools and techniques for LoC development.

### **HIIT Workout**

Join us for a cadet-led high-intensity interval training (HIIT) workout to get your blood pumping and fat burning as we near the end of our two-day symposium.

### **Dr. Landdeck & Lt Col Ruttenber Round Table - The Role of Leaders and Policy in Building Warrior Ethos**

This session will offer participants a chance to dive deeper into the role of leaders in building Warrior Ethos among their teammates. Lt Col Jessica Ruttenber of the Air Force Women's Initiative Team and Dr. Kate Landdeck, a Women Airforce Service Pilots historian, will cover historical barriers faced by members of the Air Force and what leaders are doing to remove barriers for today's Airmen in order to build an Air Force that is capable of meeting the challenges of tomorrow.

### **Shannon Polson Round Table**

Continue the conversation on Ms. Polson's message of grit and determination and reflect on how you can apply this in your own life. Please come with questions for Ms. Polson. Spots are limited to make this discussion interactive for all.

### **12 OAY Reflection Room**

Join the USAFA Command Chief, CMSgt Sparks, as she guides a discussion with several 12 OAY and the audience. The 12 OAY will answer questions you may have about comments made in the earlier keynote panel, along with other questions specific to their careers and their Warrior Ethos.

### **Lone Survivor Reflection Room**

Continue the discussion after hearing Lone Survivor Marcus Luttrell's presentation. Challenge yourself and one another to reflect on important Warrior Ethos topics. NOTE: Mr. Luttrell will NOT be participating in this discussion.

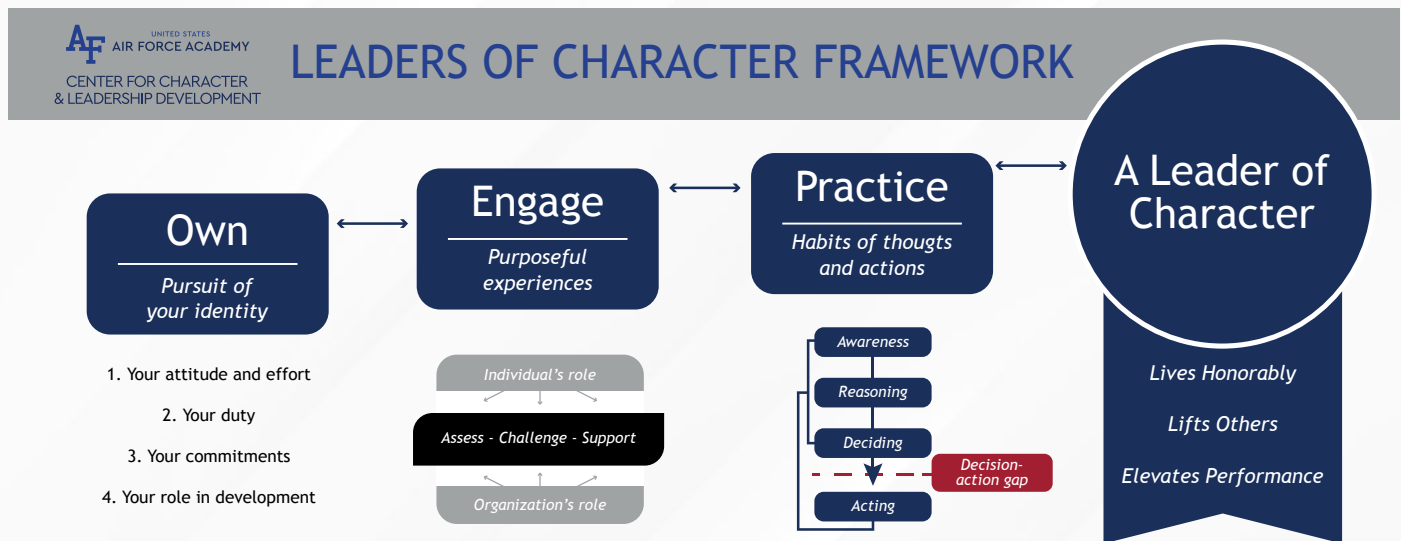
### **CCLD Science of Happiness Workshop**

Eudaimonia, thriving, wellness aka happiness affects our immune system, heart health, focus, relationships and so much more. Addressing adversity while practicing proven ways to increase happiness impacts both personal and professional success. This session allows participants to explore how happiness impacts our Warrior Ethos.

# MAKING THE MOST OF NCLS

## Developing Leaders of Character for the 21st Century at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA)

The mission of the United States Air Force Academy is to educate, train, and inspire men and women to become officers of character motivated to lead Airmen in service to our nation. The Leaders of Character Framework, is the means by which USAFA accomplished our mission. Our framework defines what it means to be a leader of character and how to go about doing development in this context.



### A “leader of character” is someone who:

1. Lives Honorably...by consistently practicing the virtues embodied in our Core Values of: Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do. These values and associated virtues, serve as a compass which points toward our “true north” and keeps us on a path expected of those who serve in the profession of arms.
2. Lifts Others...to their best possible selves. Each one of us has the capacity to pursue the best of who we are (or want to become), our “best possible selves.” Leaders help those around them develop into their best possible selves by caring about them while simultaneously recognizing, supporting, and “lifting” their strengths, passions, and commitments. In short, “lifting others” is about transformational leadership.
3. Elevates Performance...toward a common and noble purpose. A leader of character goes beyond the minimum standard of expected performance to find ways to transform how things are done in a way that extends beyond one’s own narrow self-interest and focuses instead on the common good (at the level of the squadron, Air/Space Force, or world). Always striving to be better, a leader of character continually seeks to find ways to improve the mission.

### How we develop as a “leader of character”:

Development is a process experienced by an individual, but never an end-state. Our organization seeks to do the work of development, by engaging leaders of character in purposeful experiences that assess, challenge, and support. In doing so, we influence their identity, and arm them with the competencies to better practice habits of thoughts and actions in the context of the leadership work to be accomplished for their current and future roles.



# WARRIOR ETHOS AS AIRMEN AND CITIZENS

Please use the space below to take notes on how the speakers' thoughts and insights relate to your life and your own Warrior Ethos.

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# NCLS STAFF

## Permanent Party Staff List

Mrs. Danielle Brines NCLS Program Director

Pat Bennett	Justin Stoddard	Capt David Lore
Kristina Book	James Stover	Capt Patrick Noyes
Irina Damy	Mike Wren	Capt Casey Rodriguez
Kimberly Dickman	Rich Wright	Capt Kevin Stoll
Leslie Forrester	Lt Col Michael Growden	Capt Karilyn Wise
Sarah Frazier	Lt Col David Huston	1Lt Laura Schaefer
Greg Gentry	Lt Col Jimmy Jeon	SMSgt Ecatarina Garcia
Jacqueline Hooper	Lt Col Harrel Morgan	MSgt Ben Stratton
Dr. Michelle Johnson	Lt Col Victoria Thomas	MSgt Andrew Blanco
Jennifer Jones	Maj Danielle Bales	MSgt Michael Cook
Christine Lane	Maj Matthew Connellan	MSgt Noelle Hallsted
Keith Lewis	Maj Raquel Dronenburg	MSgt Steveison Ivory
Trevor McConnell	Maj Nathaniel Dull	MSgt Nissi Scholl
Nicki Mench	Capt Noelle Bates	TSgt Casandra Muschong
Terry Pardue	Capt Garrett Ellis	TSgt Jarad Underwood
Melissa Parent	Capt Peter Forde	TSgt Lacie Chavis
John Rollence	Capt Olawale Lawal	TSgt Scott McDonald
Adam Silver		

# CADET EXECUTIVE STAFF

## Cadet-in-Charge

C1C Michael Greisman

C2C Conley Walters  
C2C Samuel Karlson  
C1C Winifred Chen  
C3C Lance Campbell  
C3C Jacob Garbrecht  
C3C Todd McGovern  
C3C Isabel Morgan  
C3C Kamryn Olkowski  
C3C Bradley Westhauser  
C1C Bryan Agustin  
C2C Kayla Steiner  
C3C Jacob Dennis  
C3C Jake Johnson  
C3C Carter Margolis  
C3C Desiree Reed  
C1C Annie Rutter  
C2C Logan Beck  
C1C Julia Rochester  
C2C Justin Yates

C2C Michaela Donahue  
C3C Ben Hepner  
C3C Anna Little  
C3C Marlene Lorber  
C3C Martay Mayfield  
C3C Arriane Nonan  
C3C Stephen Payne  
C3C Luke Poudel  
C1C Rhiannon Townsend  
C2C Andrew LaRocca  
C3C Paige Andrews  
C3C Ben Hepner  
C3C Caleb Delage  
C3C Jacob Dennis  
C3C Liam Dineen  
C3C Sarah Layne  
C3C Claire Melton  
C3C Kobe Thompson  
C2C Rita Nelson

C1C Derrick Dye  
C1C Callan Medeiros  
C3C Jacob Garbrecht  
C3C Alexander Kleitz  
C3C Claire Melton  
C3C Natalie Root  
C1C Sara Johnson  
C1C Justin Blasius  
C2C Shanna Hoven  
C2C Deanna Guzman  
C3C Grace Everts  
C3C Candace Henderson  
C3C Kayla Milford  
C3C Sophia Vaughn  
C1C Jacqueline Giardin  
C1C Tessa Barbosa  
C2C Alberto Moita  
C3C Trinity Abdulkhaik  
C1C Caleb Richardson



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

NCLS 2021 Schedule of Events												
Wednesday 24 Feb	1:00-1:30	Gadet Wing Kick-Off: Gen Brown										
Thursday 25 Feb	8:30-8:45	NCLS Opening Ceremony: Lt Gen Clark										
	9:00 - 9:45	Class of '59 Leadership Keynote Lecture: SEAC (Ret) Troxell										
	10:00 - 11:00	Col (Ret) Mo Barrett	Ms. Allison	Dr. Lewis								
	11:30 - 12:00	Opportunity for individual lunch break										
	12:45-1:30	Mr. Scott	COL (Ret) Van Arsdale	Dr. MacAulay								
	1:45-2:30	Warrior Workout (MAJ (Ret) Skelton)	COL (Ret) Van Arsdale Blackhawk Down O&A	Dr. MacAulay Mindfulness Workshop	Mr. Scott/MSgt Parks Panel & Round Table	Character Dev Workshop: Grit & Resiliency	SEAC (Ret) Troxell Workshop	4 of 12 OAY Deep Dive	4 of 12 OAY Deep Dive	4 of 12 OAY Deep Dive	Dr. Lewis Round Table	Ms. Allison Round Table
	3:30 - 4:45	Virtual Speaker Social										
	5:00 - 6:00	Class of '73 John and Lyn Muse Keynote Lecture: Ms. Hewson										
Friday 26 Feb	8:00 - 9:00	Falcon Foundation Bud Breckner Keynote Lecture: GEN (Ret) McChrystal	Col (Ret) Halfhill	Ms. Tori Jan								
	9:25 - 10:25	Breaking Down Barriers Panel	Warrior Wellness	Ms. Tori Jan Round Table	GEN (Ret) McChrystal Reflection Room (speaker not avail)	Col (Ret) Halfhill Leadership Workshop	Character Development Workshop: Mastering Habits	Character Development Workshop: Grit & Resiliency	Character Development Workshop: Emotional Intelligence	Character Development Workshop: Leaders of Character		
	10:50 - 11:50	Class of '77 Mr. & Mrs. Enix Heritage Keynote Lecture: Mr. Luttrell	MAJ (Ret) Skelton	Dr. Weeks	CMSgt Case							
	12:10 - 1:00	Opportunity for individual lunch break										
	1:00 - 2:00	Class of '93 Keynote Lecture: 12 OAY Panel	Ms. Polson	Maj Wise	Lt Col Ruttenber	Dr. Landdeck					Virtual Student Consortium (1:00-2:45)	
	2:15-3:15	Mr. Holiday	CMSAF Bass	Warrior Workout (HIT)	Dr. Landdeck & Lt Col Ruttenber Round Table	Ms. Polson Round Table	12 OAY Reflection Room led by USSEA Command Chief, CMSgt Sparks	Lone Survivor Reflection Room (speaker not avail)	Character Development Workshop: Science of Happiness	Character Development Workshop: Leaders of Character		
	3:30-4:00	Challenge Ceremony Class of '74 Wakin Award: Gen Raymond										



**NATIONAL CHARACTER  
& LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM**