

## **AFA Silver and Bronze Medals Available for Outstanding Cadets**

The Air Force Association takes great pride in recognizing the outstanding achievements of Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and AFJROTC cadets each year. Commanders are invited to submit requests in December or January by letter or e-mail to Lynette Cross (lcross@afa.org), Manager, National Aerospace Awards.

CAP Squadron commanders select one outstanding cadet of the year to receive the AFA Silver Medal, Ribbon and inscribed certificate. The AFA Medal will be shipped free of charge directly to the requesting CAP Squadron Commander.

AFJROTC Unit commanders are also eligible to select one outstanding cadet of the year to be the recipient of the AFA Bronze Medal, Ribbon and inscribed certificate. The AFA Medal will be shipped free of charge directly to the requesting AFJROTC Unit Commander.

Upon receipt of the package, Commanders should contact the President of the AFA Chapter in his or her local area and provide time, date and location where the AFA Medal presentation will take place. The AFA Chapter President and/or his or her designated representative will be in attendance to make the presentation.

## **AFA Visions of Exploration Is Linked! – Free Lessons**

Debby Dodge of *USA Today* announced a new program for educators. They can go to the *USA Today* education website ([www.education.usatoday.com](http://www.education.usatoday.com)) and scroll to the AFA Logo on the right side of the page. That link will take educators to the AFA Visions of Exploration microsite produced for the program. Teachers can also access the site using the left side of the homepage. Visions of Exploration, a listed topic, will link them directly to the Visions site. Dodge explained that they have now placed a direct link to AFA.org on the Visions page so teachers can learn more information about AFA's education programs. Dodge related to Sandy Schlitt, Vice Chairman of the Board for Aerospace Education, that she receives many requests for the Visions program. She attempts to match requests to local chapters, and in some cases, has been able to match schools. However, some AFA Chapters are at their capacity for sponsoring classrooms. Dodge responds to every request and explains that she no longer has any Visions grants available because the grants are filled on a first come, first served basis. She lets the requestor know that they are encouraged to visit the Visions of Exploration site and access lessons that are available for FREE. Dodge will then place those schools on a holding list and try to accommodate them through the vacation donation funding program. That program allows home delivery customers to donate their vacation weeks to

needy schools. This concept allows more students and classrooms into the program at no additional funding cost to Chapters. ESSENTIALLY THE VISIONS PROGRAM CURRICULLUM IS PROVIDED (less the Newspapers) AT NO COST TO THE TEACHER OR AFA.

### **Foundation Recognizes Outstanding Educators**

The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) Foundation announced the winners of the 2008 AIAA Foundation Educator Achievement Award. The AIAA Foundation presents the Educator Achievement Award every two years to precollege educators who have demonstrated exemplary efforts in exciting K-12 students about the study of mathematics, science, and related technical studies and preparing them to use and contribute to tomorrow's technologies. The winners are Richard Crawford, Middleton High School, Tampa, Florida, Kenneth Huff, Mill Middle School, Williamsville, New York, Susan Jukosky, Indian River School, Canaan, New Hampshire, Lynn Marie Kollar, North Ridge Elementary School, Moreno Valley, California, Rachael Lee Manzer, Suffield Public Schools, Suffield, Connecticut, Jeri Ann Martin, Thomas L. Sims Middle School, Pace, Florida, and Jessica Van Son, Cascade Middle School, Longview, Washington. The winners will receive a trip to Washington, D.C., where they will be honored at the AIAA Aerospace Spotlight Awards Gala on May 13, 2009. The Air Force Association is also co-sponsor of the AIAA Inside Aerospace event held the same week as the presentation dinner

AIAA President George Muellner stated, "AIAA is pleased to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of our seven award winners. They are inspiring people, both to their students and to all who witness their dedication, creativity, and enthusiasm for teaching. Their passion, felt by thousands of students, is a key ingredient in creating the next generation of aerospace professionals."

Noteworthy is AFA's relationship with AIAA. George Mueller is an AFA member and a seated member on AFA's Aerospace Education Council. Two of the 2008 AIAA Educator Achievement Award winners, Kenneth Huff and Jeri Ann Martin, are AFA National Teacher of the Year (TOY) finalists. Huff represented New York State as TOY and Chapter TOY. Martin represented Florida as State TOY and Chapter TOY.

### **Engineers Week Scheduled for 15 – 21 February 2009**

K-12 educators will find information about Engineers Week at [www.eweek.org](http://www.eweek.org). This site contains the nuts and bolts of how to organize and run a local Engineers Week program. Some of the STEM activities that educators will find are: (1) [Cyberchase](#) - a wildly popular action-packed math adventure for young children (ages 6 – 11) produced by WNET-NY (PBS). Engineers Week partners receive specially-produced resource kits to "join the *Cyberchase*" and make the engineering connection with young children. (2) [Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day](#) (February 19, 2009) – Each year "Girl Day" allows thousands of women engineers, with support from their male counterparts, to directly mentor more

than one million girls and young women in K-12 with firsthand experiences in engineering and (3) [Engineer Your Life](#) – EYL is the second phase of the Extraordinary Women Engineers Project, supported by a large and broad coalition. The National Engineers Week Foundation serves as the Secretariat for this spectacular project, with a message to academically prepared high school girls to “Engineer Your Life: Dream Big, Love What You Do.

### **Worcester Chapter 171 Plans Engineers Week Competition**

Cheryl Kristant, President of the Worcester Chapter, announced plans to host a Paper Airplane Contest in the latter part of February during Engineer’s Week. Cadets from Arnold Air Society will plan out the competition rules, teach basic aeronautics to the JROTC units at Burncoat and South High Schools and the Worcester Civil Air Patrol Squadron will hold the competition. Prizes will be awarded to the winners.

### **Space Day 1 May 2009**

Lockheed Martin Space Day uses space-related activities to inspire and excite youth about careers in science, math, engineering and technology (STEM). Celebrated on the first Friday of each May, Space Day is the culmination of a year-round educational program. K-12 educators will find information at: <http://www.spaceday.com/>. Information at this site includes helpful suggestions on planning events as well as simple hands-on activities for large groups and events, Student Signatures in Space, NASA Design Challenge, and NASA Publication Highlights 50th Anniversary.

### **Dr. Neal Gallagher Highlights Awards Luncheon**

The Central Florida Chapter Awards and Installation Luncheon was held this past September. A highlight of the event was the poignant comments by Dr. Neal Gallagher, Dean of Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Central Florida. He spoke about the continuing decline in the number of United States students pursuing degrees in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. He began by noting that after World War II, the GI Bill produced the largest educated middle class population the world had ever seen. In many ways, this was the foundation for the United States becoming the world leader in technology. That edge is quickly slipping. Currently, China, for example, graduates 50% of their college students with engineering degrees. China’s 11-person ruling committee, which sets national policy, has for several years been composed entirely of engineering graduates. The US, by contrast, only graduates 4% of our students with engineering degrees. It takes no research to determine how many of the senior US policy makers are engineers. Dr. Gallagher pointed out many schools, from K-university levels, have programs, often in conjunction with industry partners, emphasizing STEM and encouraging students to pursue these careers. The results are there continues to be a decline in students seeking STEM careers. Dr. Gallagher felt it can probably be attributed to cultural attitudes which do not promote nor positively portray STEM careers by adult role models.

### **Applicant Call for 2009 Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award**

The Space Foundation and the Astronauts Memorial Foundation (AMF) are accepting applications for the 2009 Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award until January 16, 2009. The AMF, Space Foundation, and NASA, annually present the Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award in a continuing effort to recognize outstanding contributions by K-12 educators and district level personnel in the field of educational technology. The award is named after Alan Shepard, one of the nation's original seven Mercury astronauts, the first American to fly in space, one of only 12 humans who have walked on the moon, and a former AMF board member.

Alan Shepard award recipients demonstrate excellence in the development and delivery of technology programs, which focus on aerospace and/or aeronautics. Applicants must explain how their programs ultimately benefit the students in their school or district. All K-12 school and district level educators from across the nation are eligible.

The Alan Shepard award will next be presented during opening ceremony of the 25th National Space Symposium on March 30 in Colorado Springs. The award recipient will receive travel and lodging to Colorado Springs for the presentation of the commemorative trophy and monetary award. Additionally, the recipient will be recognized at a special dinner following the opening ceremony and the winner's name will be placed on a plaque honoring past recipients that is housed in the Center for Space Education at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

### ***CyberPatriot at Orlando***

The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Air Warfare Symposium has a great lineup this year (virtually all the USAF four-stars will be there). The technology exhibition promises to be bigger than last year and the traditional CFC events of the Wednesday Golf Tournament and Friday Gala are always popular. But this year there is an additional attraction! The first-ever *CyberPatriot* National High School Cyber Defense competition will be held on Thursday and Friday in Rooms Gatlin A-3 & 4, with an awards ceremony scheduled for 4:30-5:30pm on Friday, 27 February in Gatlin A-2. Eight High School teams of AFJROTC and CAP students will be defending their networks, two at a time, in competition periods at 8:30-11:30am and 12:30-3:30pm each day. Register for the Air Warfare Symposium at <http://registration.afa.org/events/level1.aspx> , and while you're in Orlando, stop by the *CyberPatriot* Information Desk to learn what the excitement's all about.

### **The *AE Newsletter* still needs You !!!**

*AE Newsletter* is back from the holiday break, and need fresh inputs. Please send your stories, accomplishments, and great ideas to share with your fellow AFAers out there in the field! Submit an input today to [AENewsletter@afa.org](mailto:AENewsletter@afa.org).