

SEPTEMBER 20-21, 2025
GAYLORD NATIONAL RESORT & CONVENTION CENTER
NATIONAL HARBOR, MD



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Nelcome to AFA's 2025 National Convention	
Delegate Agenda & Optional Workshops	3
Business Sessions Agenda	4-5
2025 AFA Field and Education Awards	6
AFA Slate of Candidates for Open Board Positions and Bylaws Resolutions	11
Wings Society Donors	12
In Memoriam	16

1



Welcome to the Air & Space Forces Association's 2025 National Convention

Fellow Convention Attendees and Delegates,

Welcome to the 2025 AFA National Convention! Thank you for your continuing service to AFA. These are busy times, and discretionary time is precious. That you choose to spend yours in the service of our Association is very much appreciated.

The world in 2025 remains dangerous for our nation and for freedom-loving people everywhere. Our nation needs a strong Air Force and a strong Space Force, and the Airmen and Guardians who populate those Services need us. Because without us, America's Airmen, Guardians, and their Families would be more vulnerable in the complicated resource allocation process that is known as "politics."

Our Association was founded on the strength of volunteer leaders like you, and working alongside us is an outstanding professional staff equally committed to our mission. AFA could not function without them. So, I ask that as we gather at Convention to work, to renew old acquaintances, keep current ones fresh, please express thanks to our staff members who work so hard on our behalf every day.

I look forward to joining you.

Sincerely,

Bernie Skoch

Chair, AFA Board of Directors



Convention Agenda

Saturday, September 20, 2025

TIME	LOCATION	EVENT
7:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Cherry Blossom Ballroom	AFA Registration
8:00 a.m 12:00 p.m.	Potomac C Foyer	AFA Elections & Credentials Committee Help Desk
8:00 a.m 9:00 a.m.	Chesapeake 1, 2, F	Area Directors Meetings
9:30 a.m 10:45 a.m.	Chesapeake J	Delegate Workshop
10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Chesapeake 1, 2, F	Delegate Workshops
11:00 a.m 11:45 a.m.	Chesapeake 1, 2, F	Delegate Workshops
11:00 a.m 12:00 p.m.	Chesapeake J	Delegate Workshop
1:00 p.m 5:15 p.m.	Potomac C	AFA Convention Business Session
5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Chesapeake F	Catholic Mass
6:30 p.m 9:00 p.m.	Potomac A/B	AFA Field Awards Reception & Dinner
9:00 p.m.	Various Region Caucuses	

Sunday, September 21, 2025

7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Cherry Blossom Ballroom	AFA Registration
7:00 a.m 8:00 a.m.	Potomac C Foyer	AFA Elections & Credentials Committee Help Desk
8:00 a.m 2:30 p.m.	Potomac C	AFA Convention Business Session

National Convention Workshops

Saturday, September 20 | 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Advocacy Workshop

Room: Chesapeake 1

Speakers: Paul Hendricks and Bill Castle

Session Description: Review of AFA's Advocacy program, current priorities, and efforts.

Chapter Basics Workshop

Room: Chesapeake F

Speakers: Janelle Stafford and Chris Canada

Session Description: Discussion of the basics on Chapter mission, organization, processes, and resources available from AFA.

Chaplain 2.0 Workshop

Room: Chesapeake 2 Speaker: Steve Schaick

Session Description: Presentation on the recently expanded role of AFA National Chaplain and discussion of needs at the

Chapter and State levels.

Build an Aerospace Education Program

Room: Chesapeake J

Speakers: Mary Anne Thompson and AEC Council

Session Description: Interactive program to review options for and build a tailored plan for Chapter level Aerospace Education (AE) programs. The goal is for each Chapter representative to leave the workshop with an executable plan to use at their Chapter.

3



Business Sessions Agenda

Saturday, September 20, 2025 | Location: Potomac C | Dress: Business Casual

TIME EV	VENT (Speaker/NOTES)		
1:00 p.m 1:05 p.m.	Welcoming Remarks		
	Bernie Skoch, AFA Chair of the Board		
1:05 p.m 1:10 p.m.	Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance		
	Randy Kitchens, AFA Chaplain		
	Chris Canada, AFA Vice Chair of the Board, Field Operations		
1:10 p.m 1:15 p.m.	Elections & Credentials Committee Report		
	Ken Spencer, AFA Elections & Credentials Committee Chair		
1:15 p.m 1:20 p.m.	Approval of Convention Rules, Procedures, and Board Actions		
	Paul Hendricks, AFA National Secretary		
1:20 p.m 2:00 p.m.	AFA President & CEO Update		
1:20 p.m 1:50 p.m.	AFA Lines of Effort		
	Burt Field, AFA President & CEO		
1:50 p.m 1:55 p.m.	How the Field Integrates		
	Chris Canada, AFA Vice Chair of the Board, Field Operations		
1:55 p.m 2:00 p.m.	How the AEC Integrates		
	Gary Copsey, AFA Vice Chair of the Board, Education		
2:00 p.m 2:30 p.m.	Nominating & Governance Committee Update / Bylaws Resolutions Discussion		
	Gerald Murray, AFA Nominating & Governance Committee Chair		
2:30 p.m 2:45 p.m.	BREAK		
2:45 p.m 3:30 p.m.	Inspiring the Future Force - AIMS Panel		
2:45 p.m 3:30 p.m.	Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Nelson, Commander, Air Force Accessions Center; Commander,		
2:45 p.m 3:30 p.m.	Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Nelson, Commander, Air Force Accessions Center; Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service		
2:45 p.m 3:30 p.m.	Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Nelson, Commander, Air Force Accessions Center; Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service Bob Hill, AFA AIMS Committee		
2:45 p.m 3:30 p.m.	Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Nelson, Commander, Air Force Accessions Center; Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service Bob Hill, AFA AIMS Committee Vance Clarke, AFA AIMS Committee		
	Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Nelson, Commander, Air Force Accessions Center; Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service Bob Hill, AFA AIMS Committee Vance Clarke, AFA AIMS Committee Moderator: John Campbell, AFA AIMS Committee		
2:45 p.m 3:30 p.m. 3:30 p.m 4:00 p.m.	Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Nelson, Commander, Air Force Accessions Center; Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service Bob Hill, AFA AIMS Committee Vance Clarke, AFA AIMS Committee Moderator: John Campbell, AFA AIMS Committee CyberPatriot & StellarXplorers		
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3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Nelson, Commander, Air Force Accessions Center; Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service Bob Hill, AFA AIMS Committee Vance Clarke, AFA AIMS Committee Moderator: John Campbell, AFA AIMS Committee CyberPatriot & StellarXplorers Rachel Zimmerman, AFA Director of CyberPatriot Rebecca Dalton, AFA Director of StellarXplorers How Chapters Can Be Supportive of STEM Gary Copsey, AFA Vice Chair of the Board, Education Leadership Perspective #1 Panel Whit Peters, 19th Secretary of the Air Force		
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3:30 p.m 4:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m 4:15 p.m.	Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Nelson, Commander, Air Force Accessions Center; Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service Bob Hill, AFA AIMS Committee Vance Clarke, AFA AIMS Committee Moderator: John Campbell, AFA AIMS Committee CyberPatriot & StellarXplorers Rachel Zimmerman, AFA Director of CyberPatriot Rebecca Dalton, AFA Director of StellarXplorers How Chapters Can Be Supportive of STEM Gary Copsey, AFA Vice Chair of the Board, Education Leadership Perspective #1 Panel Whit Peters, 19th Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall, 26th Secretary of the Air Force Gen. Robin Rand, USAF (Ret.), former Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command		



Business Sessions Agenda

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TIME	EVENT (Speaker/NOTES)
8:00 a.m 8:05 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks
	Bernie Skoch, AFA Chair of the Board
8:05 a.m 8:10 a.m.	Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance
	Randy Kitchens, Chaplain
	Gary Copsey, Vice Chair of the Board, Education
8:10 a.m 8:25 a.m.	AFA Memorial Service
8:25 a.m 8:30 a.m.	Final Credentials Report
	Ken Spencer, Elections & Credentials Committee Chair
8:30 a.m 8:50 a.m.	Board Elections Results
	Paul Hendricks, AFA National Secretary
	Remarks from newly elected board members
8:50 a.m 9:05 a.m.	Heritage Committee: What's Gone Well/Have the Need to Be Better
	Mark Tarpley, AFA Heritage Committee Chair
9:05 a.m 9:30 a.m.	Heritage: Remembering Chuck Yeager
	Victoria Yeager
9:30 a.m 10:00 a.m.	Forging A Closer Partnership with Civil Air Patrol
	Maj. Gen. Regena Aye, National Commander/CEO, Civil Air Patrol
10:00 a.m 10:15 a.m.	BREAK
10:15 a.m 11:15 a.m.	Senior Leadership Perspective #2 Panel
	Gerald Murray, 14th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force
	Bill Castle, AFA Vice President of Legislative Affairs
	Moderator: Kathleen Ferguson, AFA National Director - Appointed
11:15 a.m 11:45 a.m.	AFA Financial Update
	Chuck Martin, AFA Treasurer
11:45 a.m 12:45 p.m.	LUNCH
12:45 p.m 1:10 p.m.	2025 Thompson-Mallett Teacher of the Year
	Ashlie Smith
1:10 p.m1:20 p.m.	AAS/SW Update
1:20 p.m 2:00 p.m.	Chapter Progress Through Successes and Failures
	Dave DeNofrio, AFA New England Region President
	Darian Padilla, AFA D.W. Steele, Sr. Memorial Chapter Vice President
	Michael Sumida, AFA Mel Harmon Chapter President
	Moderator: Chris Canada, AFA Vice Chair of the Board, Field Operations
2:00 p.m 2:20 p.m.	AFA Field Update
	Chris Canada, AFA Vice Chair of the Board, Field Operations
	Overview
	2025 - 2026 Emerging Leader Class
	Outgoing Region Presidents
2:20 p.m 2:30 p.m.	Closing Remarks
	Bernie Skoch, AFA Chair of the Board
2:30 p.m.	Convention Adjourns
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2025 AFA Field and Education Awards

AFA Field Awards Dinner | Saturday, September 20, 2025 | 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Donald W. Steele Sr. Memorial Award

(AFA Unit of the Year)

Paul Revere Chapter, Mass.

President Michael Harm

The Paul Revere Chapter proudly embodies the AFA mission. Following last year's multiple Field Award wins, they went on to set records in events, fundraising, scholarships, grants, and youth engagement. Their Veterans, AFROTC, and social events remain unmatched, with mainstay programs expanding and improving.

Over the last year, the chapter used funds from their Chief of Staff Scholarship Event, holiday gala, and golf tournaments to significantly expand STEM programs. Beyond scholarships, AFROTC partnerships, and Aerospace Education programs, the chapter has actively engaged corporate, academic, and military leaders to increase awareness of AFA's mission and impact.

The Paul Revere Chapter also maintains a strong partnership with Hanscom AFB, Mass., and remain deeply committed to Veterans programs,

including the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital in Bedford and the Veterans Community Care Center in Lowell. They have enhanced long-standing efforts while launching new initiatives to better serve those who have served.

Despite lingering COVID challenges, the chapter has doubled grants and scholarships through improved fundraising, added new initiatives, strengthened core programs, and built new capabilities in communications, partnerships, and legislative affairs. These efforts have strengthened today's Total Air Force and Space Force families while deepening public appreciation for Airmen, Guardians, and AFA.

AFA is proud to award this year's Donald W. Steele, Sr. Memorial Unit of the Year to the Paul Revere Chapter.

Outstanding State Organization

Colorado

President Linda Aldrich

The Colorado State Executive Board unites all state Chapters—Mile High, Lance P. Sijan, Mel Harmon, and Robert E. Huyser—leveraging each community's unique strengths. Mile High and Sijan, near U.S. Space Force Bases, have revitalized AFA's presence amid the growing Guardian mission. Mel Harmon supports USAF's Initial Flight Training through CAE/Doss Aviation, while Huyser excels with Civil Air Patrol, CyberPatriot, and StellarXplorers.

Membership growth varies by region, with Mile High surging through active outreach, Sijan rebuilding via base events, and Mel Harmon maintaining partners despite economic challenges. Communication emphasizes personal contact, from retiree events and professional development sessions to museum outreach and CAP engagement.

Quarterly State Meetings foster camaraderie, share best practices, and celebrate achievements, ensuring all Chapters benefit from shared expertise. United by patriotism and commitment to Advocate, Educate, and Support, Colorado's Chapters deliver impactful programs across the state. AFA is proud to award the AFA Outstanding State Organization to the state of Colorado.

Chair Award for Aerospace Education Achievement

Daniel P. Woodward

Woodward has had an exemplary impact on Aerospace Education. He led the Arnold Air Society-Silver Wings as Co-Executive Director for 10 years. His exceptional dedication and remarkable achievement led to the establishment of 315 flight and academic scholarships totaling more than \$800,000.

His heartfelt efforts and commitment to raising the nation's future leaders exemplify a profound dedication to excellence and innovation unmatched by any national

collegiate organization today. His distinguished career embodies this commitment and dedication to Aerospace Education as a retired Air Force Brigadier General, and presidentially appointed commissioner with the American Battle Monuments Commission.

AFA is proud to award the Chair Award for Aerospace Education Achievement to Daniel P. Woodward.







Outstanding Chapters by Size

Presented to chapters by size categories for accomplishments across multiple areas.

Small Chapter

Mel Harmon Chapter, Colo.

President Michael Sumida

Medium Chapter

No Chapter Selected

Large Chapter

Northeast Texas Chapter, Tex. Mel Harmon Chapter, Colo.

President Zachary Hill

Extra Large Chapter

Donald W. Steele, Sr. Memorial Chapter, Va.

President Darian Padilla

Aerospace Education Excellence Award

Presented to chapters by size category for excellence in aerospace education programming.

Small Chapter

Mel Harmon Chapter, CO

President Michael Sumida

Medium Chapter

No Chapter Selected

Large Chapter

Extra Large Chapter

Tucson Chapter, Ariz.

President Walter Saeger

Aerospace Education Achievement Award

Presented to chapters for outstanding achievement in aerospace education programming.

President Jennifer Deinhart

Albuquerque Chapter, N.M.

President Fred Harsany

Ak-Sar-Ben Chapter, Neb.

President Chris Canada

Charleston Chapter, S.C.

Cheyenne Cowboy Chapter, Wyo.

Chuck Yeager Chapter, W.Va.

President Peter Jones

David C. Jones Chapter, N.D.

President James Browman

President Darian Padilla

East Georgia Chapter, Ga.

Enid Chapter, Okla.

Ft. Meade Chapter, Md.

President Izeck Kohler

President Roman Hund

President Makenzie Guerra

Alamo Chapter, Texas

President Makenzie Guerra

President Scott Fox

Donald W. Steele, Sr. Memorial Chapter, Va.

President Laurie Orth

President Tony Weedn

Gen. E.W. Rawlings Chapter, Minn.

Greater Seattle Chapter, Wash.

President Gordon Broadbent

Charleston Chapter, S.C.

Hurlburt Chapter, Fla. President Dann Mattiza

Lance P. Sijan Chapter, Colo.

President Caty Rozema

Lincoln Chapter, Neb.

President Kenneth Brownell

Martin H. Harris Chapter, Fla.

President Sharon Branch

Mel Harmon Chapter, Colo.

President Michael Sumida

Mile High Chapter, Colo.

President Cliff Klein

Montgomery Chapter, Ala.

President Scott Key

Northeast Texas Chapter, Texas

President Zachary Hill

Paul Revere Chapter, Mass.

President Michael Harm

Robert E. Huyser Chapter, Colo.

President Michael Peterson

Sam Johnson Chapter, Texas

President Bob Gehbauer

Swamp Fox Chapter, S.C.

President David Hanson

Tucson Chapter, Ariz. President Walter Saeger

Arthur C. Storz Sr. Membership Award

Presented to the AFA Chapter that produces the highest number of new members during the 12-month period ending June 20, 2025, as a percentage of total chapter membership as of June 30, 2024.

Mount Clemens Chapter, MI

President Doug "Odie" Slocum

Unit Exceptional Service Awards

Presented to chapters for outstanding accomplishments in specific fields.

ESA AIMS - Small

President Michael Sumida

ESA AIMS - Medium

Not Awarded

ESA AIMS - Large

Not Awarded

ESA AIMS - Extra Large

Donald W. Steele, Sr. Memorial Chapter, Va.

President Darian Padilla

ESA Best Single Program Sam Johnson Chapter, Texas

President Bob Gehbauer

ESA Communications Donald W. Steele, Sr. Memorial

Chapter, Va. President Darian Padilla

ESA Community Relations

Hurlburt Chapter, Fla. President Dann Mattiza

ESA Community Partners - Small

Fairbanks Midnight Sun Chapter, Alaska President Jeff Putnam

ESA Community Partners - Medium

Enid Chapter, Okla. President Tony Weedn

ESA Community Partners - Large

Northeast Texas Chapter, Texas

President Zachary Hill

ESA Community Partners -Extra Large

Tennessee Valley Chapter, Ala.

President John Pennell

ESA Community Partners - Chapters Larger than 1,100

Central Oklahoma Gerrity Chapter, Okla.

President Tim Frisby

ESA Heritage Award

Mel Harmon Chapter, Colo. President Michael Sumida

ESA Overall Programming

Paul Revere Chapter, Mass. President Michael Harm

ESA Veterans Affairs

Paul Revere Chapter, Mass. President Michael Harm

ESA Unit/AAS/SW Integration

Donald W. Steele, Sr. Memorial Chapter, Va.

President Darian Padilla

ESA United Forces & Families

Mile High Chapter, Colo.

President Cliff Klein **Jack Gross Award**

Presented to the chapter in each size category with the highest number of new members as a

percentage of chapter size at the beginning of the membership year.

Small Chapter Spangdahlem Chapter, Germany

President Jason Eastman

Medium Chapter

MiG Alley Chapter, South Korea President Trenton Schreyer

Large Chapter

Northeast Texas Chapter, Texas President Zachary Hill

Extra Large Chapter

Chapters Larger than 1,100 Central Oklahoma

President Doua "Odie" Slocum

Mount Clemens Chapter, Mich.

Gerrity Chapter, Okla. President Tim Frisby

Community Partner Awards

GOLD AWARD

Presented to chapters whose Community Partners represent at least 6 percent of overall membership, with a minimum number of Community Partners.

Fairbanks Midnight Sun Chapter, Alaska

Northeast Texas Chapter, Texas **ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

Enid Chapter, Okla.

Presented to chapters whose Community Partners represent at least three percent of overall chapter membership.

> Meridian Chapter, Miss. Lincoln Chapter, Neb.

2025 AFA Field and Education Awards

Special Recognition Membership Awards

CHAPTER GROWTH

These chapters have realized a growth in total membership from June 2024 to June 2025.

Abilene Chapter, TX Alamo Chapter, TX Albany-Hudson Valley Chapter, NY Albuquerque Chapter, NM Altus Chapter, OK Ark-La-Tex Chapter, LA Austin Chapter, TX BG Frederick W. Castle Chapter, NJ B/G Harrison R. Thyng Chapter, NH Big Sky Chapter, MT Blue Ridge Chapter, NC Bob Newman Cape Fear Chapter, NC Brig. Gen. Bill Spruance Chapter, DE Capt Eddie Rickenbacker Memorial Chapter, OH Carl Vinson Memorial Chapter, GA Central Maryland Chapter, MD Central Oklahoma Gerrity Chapter, OK Charlemagne Chapter, AE Charleston Chapter, SC Cheyenne Cowboy Chapter, WY Col. Bud West Chapter, FL Columbia Gorge Chapter, OR Columbia Palmetto Chapter, SC Cochise Chapter, AZ Concho Chapter, TX David D. Terry Jr. Chapter, AR Del Rio Chapter, TX Delaware Galaxy Chapter, DE Dobbins Chapter, GA

Dolomiti Chapter, AE Donald W. Steele Sr. Memorial Chapter, VA East Georgia Chapter, GA Edward J. Monaghan Chapter, AK Eglin Chapter, FL Enid Chapter, OK Everett R. Cook Chapter, TN Fairbanks Midnight Sun Chapter, AK Falcon Chapter, FL Florida West Coast Chapter, FL Fort Meade Chapter, MD Frank Luke Chapter, AZ Gen. James R. McCarthy Chapter, FL Gen. Bernard A. Schriever LA Chapter, CA Gen. Bruce K. Holloway Chapter, TN Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Chapter, NY Gen. Charles L. Donnelly Jr. Chapter, TX Gen. Charles A. Gabriel Chapter, VA Gen. David C. Jones Chapter, ND Gen. Doolittle LA Area Chapter, CA Gen. H. H. Arnold Memorial Chapter, TN Gen. Robert F. Travis Chapter, CA Gen. Russell E. Dougherty, KY Gold Coast Chapter, FL Golden Gate Chapter, CA Golden Triangle Chapter, MS Harry S. Truman Chapter, MO Hawaii Chapter, HI Hurlburt Chapter, FL Inland Empire Chapter, WA

Joe-Walker-Mon Valley Chapter, PA Keystone Chapter, AP Lake Superior Northland Chapter, MI Lance P. Sijan Chapter, CO Langley Chapter, VA L. D. Bell Niagara Frontier Chapter, NY Llano Estacado Chapter, NM Lloyd R. Leavitt Jr. Chapter, MI Long Island Chapter, NY Ltc B.D. Buzz Wagner Chapter, PA Lt Erwin R Bleckley Chapter, KS Major General Oris B Johnson Chapter, LA Martin H Harris Chapter, FL McChord Field Chapter, WA Mel Harmon Chapter, CO Meridian Chapter, MS Miami-Homestead Chapter, FL MiG Alley Chapter, AP Mile High Chapter, CO Montgomery Chapter, AL Mount Clemens Chapter, MI Nation's Capital Chapter, DC Northern Utah Chapter, UT Ramstein Chapter, AE Red River Valley Chapter, ND Richard I. Bond Chapter, MN Richmond Chapter, VA Robert H. Goddard Chapter, CA Rushmore Chapter, SD Salt Lake City Chapter, UT

San Diego Chapter, CA San Jacinto Chapter, TX Sam Johnson Chapter, TX Scott Berkeley Chapter, NC Scott Memorial Chapter, IL Scott Van Cleef Chapter, VA Snake River Valley Chapter, ID South Alabama Chapter, AL South Georgia Chapter, GA Space Coast Chapter, FL Spangdahlem Chapter, AE Stan Hryn Monterey Bay Chapter, CA Steel Valley Chapter, OH Swamp Fox Chapter, SC Tennessee Ernie Ford Chapter, CA Tennessee Valley Chapter, AL The Red Tail Memorial Chapter, FL Thomas W. Anthony Chapter, MD Thunderbird Chapter, NV Tucson Chapter, AZ Tulsa Chapter, OK Tyndall Chapter, FL United Kingdom Chapter, AE Ute-Rocky Mountain Chapter, UT Waterman-Twining Chapter, FL White Sands Chapter, NM Whiteman Chapter, MO William J. "Pete" Knight Chapter, CA Wright Memorial Chapter, OH York-Lancaster Chapter, PA

> Utah Virginia Washington Wyoming

STATE GROWTH

These states have realized a growth in total membership from June 2024 to June 2025.

Alaska	District of Columbia	Louisiana	Nevada	Oklahoma
Alabama	Florida	Maryland	New Jersey	Oregon
Arizona	Georgia	Michigan	New Mexico	Pennsylvania
Arkansas	Hawaii	Mississippi	New York	South Carolina
Colorado	lowa	Missouri	North Carolina	Tennessee
Delaware	Idaho	Montana	North Dakota	Texas

REGION GROWTH

These regions have realized a growth in total membership from June 2024 to June 2025.

Central East RegionFlorida RegionNorth Central RegionPacific RegionSoutheast RegionEuropean RegionMidwest RegionNortheast RegionRocky Mountain RegionSouthwest RegionFar West RegionNew England RegionNorthwest RegionSouth Central RegionTexoma Region



AFA NATIONAL CONVENTION



READ AHEAD MATERIALS

To prepare to get the most out of this year's Convention, place your camera over the QR Code and have access to the National Convention Live Binder right at your fingertips!



Member of the Year

Gavin "Mac" MacAloon

A Life member of the Air & Space Forces Association since 1984, Mac has held numerous AFA leadership roles, including the longest serving, Vice Chair of the Board for Field Operations (four years). He currently serves as an AFA Board Emeritus member, and serves on the Nomination & Governance Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Field Council.

His dedication has been recognized with national honors such as the 2015 Chairman's Citation, 2011 Exceptional Award, and 2010 Medal of Merit, along with numerous state and chapter awards, including the 2013 Central East Region Special Achievement Award and 2012 Virginia AFA Member of the Year.

MacAloon's professional background spans over 35 years of leadership, management, and business development in USAF Command and Control, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), and acquisitions. A retired USAF Master Air Battle Manager with 2,800 flight hours (500+ in Combat Support), he served worldwide in peace and wartime, culminating on the Air Staff in the Pentagon.

Post-USAF, he was a Senior Acquisition Analyst managing a \$3 billion modernization budget, then joined Boeing's Washington, D.C. Government Operations office, where he played a critical role in keeping the C-17 production line open, securing congressional support for 34 additional aircraft. Twice honored with Boeing's Business Development Award, Mac is recognized for his deep ISR expertise, defense acquisition knowledge, and strong industry and government relationships.

AFA is proud to name Gavin "Mac" MacAloon the 2025 Member of the Year.



Buck Buckwalter Distinguished Sustained Aerospace Education Achievement Award

Stephen Gourley

This year, we recognize an individual whose more than a decade of extraordinary volunteer service has advanced AFA's mission, especially in aerospace and STEM education.

Gourley has served at every level of AFA volunteer leadership: chapter, state, region, and national, including as AFA's Vice Chair of the Board for Aerospace Education and as a National Director. He has led the growth of AFA's educational and advocacy programs, even through the challenges of COVID, ensuring they emerged stronger than ever.

As Program Director for the StellarXplorers STEM competition, Gourley grew the program from just 25 to more than 200 teams nationwide, securing sponsors, creating lasting procedures, and inspiring hundreds of students to pursue careers in STEM. His leadership has strengthened initiatives like the Thompson-Mallett Teacher of the Year program, Pitsenbarger scholarships, and new national writing and STEM camp programs.

AFA is proud to award the 2025 Buck Buckwalter Distinguished Sustained Aerospace Education Achievement Award to Stephen Gourley.

AFA Citation Award, Presented by the Chair, AFA Board of Directors

Richard Baldwin Frances Bradshaw Ross Lampert Marianne Tango Williams

Individual Awards by Region

Central East Medal of Merit

David Baylor Tyler Johnson Izeck Kohler James Merchant Karl Schrader Tim Tanbonliong

Jay Thompson
Derald Wentzien
Paul Willard

Exceptional Service Award

Bob Hill Lloyd Swede Adrian Zollinger

Far West Medal of Merit

Scott Beidleman Tony Della-Moretta Bill Harding Jim McFarlin Steve Pluntze

Florida Medal of Merit

Susan Ault-Davis Sharon Branch Thomas Carney Emily Farkas Deb Hutto

Great Lakes

Medal of Merit Brian Birchmeier

Randy Clark
Frank Merrill
Carl Shofner
Tamara Shoemaker

Exceptional Service Award

Dave Babcock Doug Slocum

Midwest

Medal of Merit Louis Campbell

James Giles Frank Kimball Bill Mavity

New England

Medal of Merit Talisa Bell

Exceptional Service Award

Michael Harm Michael Kearns

North Central

Medal of Merit

James Bowman Cole Kirby Donald Mikitta

Exceptional Service Award

George Masters Thomas Theis

Northeast

Medal of Merit

Meredith Camelletti Fred Di Fabio Bill Petzinger Janet Woods

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Laura Conn
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2025 AFA Field and Education Awards

2025 Thompson-Mallett Teacher of the Year

The Air & Space Forces Association, in partnership with Rolls-Royce, named Ashlie Smith, an 8th-grade physical science teacher at Cranbrook Kingswood Middle School for Girls in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., the 2025 Thompson-Mallett Teacher of the Year. With a 24-year career steeped in creativity and dedication, Smith is a leader in aerospace education, empowering young women through hands-on scientific exploration and global collaboration.

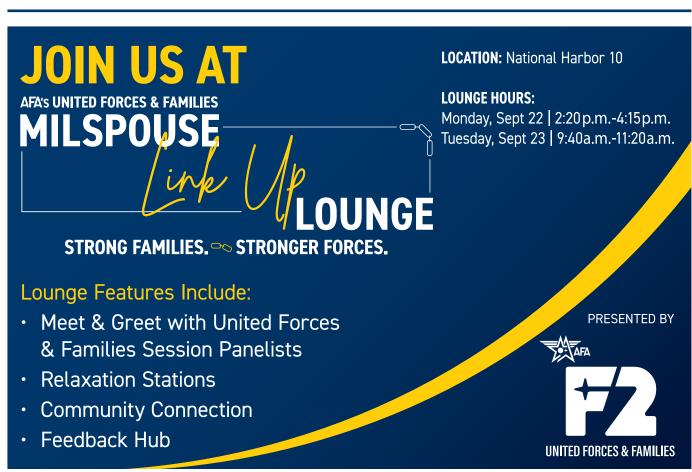


Smith's pioneering work includes leading student participation in the "Cubes in Space" and "Space for Teachers" programs, with over 40 student-designed experiments launched on sounding rockets and high-altitude balloons. Her students have even designed and flown propellant management devices and microgravity experiments aboard Zero-G flights.

In 2024, Smith co-led a STEM teacher workshop in Lagos, Nigeria, sparking a transcontinental classroom collaboration that connected students across cultures through shared science projects. Her leadership helped fly Nigerian student-designed toys in microgravity alongside American student experiments, showcasing the unifying power of STEM education.

Below: Ashlie Blackstone-Smith (far left) poses with fellow STEM educators and Lagos students and teachers during their 2024 workshop in Nigeria.





AFA Slate of Candidates for 2025-2026 Open Board Positions



Elections by authorized voters for these open Board positions will take place electronically 8:00 a.m. Saturday, September 20 through 8:00 a.m. Sunday, September 21.

AFA Chair of the Board

Kathleen Ferguson, Fairfax Station, Va., nominated for a first-year term as Chair of the Board, joined AFA in 2015 and is currently a Life Member. Ferguson served nearly 35 years as a civilian in the Air Force, retiring as the Principal Assistant Secretary for Installations, Energy, and Environment, overseeing infrastructure critical to mission success and quality of life. Now with The Roosevelt Group, she advocates for defense communities nationwide. Her experience in policy, mission support, and family advocacy uniquely positions her to advance AFA's mission of supporting Airmen, Guardians, and their Families. She has previously held a position as AFA National Director and has served as an AFA Board Member for the past three year.



A message from Kathleen Ferguson: The Air Force became my career by chance, not by choice. As I look back on the tremendous opportunities I was given in my Air Force career, the experiences I was provided, and the love I have for the institution, I think being the Chair of AFA would be a fitting way to give back. I could not imagine another career that would have been as rewarding. I understand the mission of the Air Force and AFA, I have managed large organizations throughout my Air Force career and worked Air Force budget for nearly 20 years. My "superpower" is being able to work well under pressure, and I was always the senior executive the SECAF sent to the Hill to answer the tough questions. I always treat people with kindness, work to fully understand the issues, and I'm not afraid to make a decision.

AFA National Director, Central Area



Janelle Stafford, Shawnee, Okla., an AFA member for over 20 years., has held numerous AFA positions, including, National Director; Region President; serving on the Strategic Planning, Membership, Advocacy and AIMS Steering Committees; roles as Chapter President, Vice President, and Secretary; and State President and Treasurer. AFA Awards encompass Chapter and State Community Partner of the Year (2017 to 2020); AFA Medal of Merit and Exceptional Service Awards; Chapter Officer of the Year; Chapter and State Person of the Year and National Member of the year (2024). Stafford has nearly 25 years in the aerospace and defense industry, with strong ties to Tinker

Air Force Base and Oklahoma's defense sector. She advocates for airpower and spacepower, supports STEM education through AFA's programs, and promotes family and quality-of-life issues vital to recruitment and retention. Stafford believes in honoring veterans and preserving our heritage to educate future generations.

A message from Janelle Stafford: I seek to further support AFA's mission through advocacy for airpower and spacepower, STEM education, and military family quality-of-life. With deep roots in the Oklahoma defense industry and active engagement in programs like CyberPatriot and StellarXplorers, I aim to strengthen workforce development and honor our service members' contributions. I bring deep organizational knowledge from experience at all levels of AFA. I'm committed to financial sustainability and unafraid to address tough challenges.

AFA National Director, At Large (2 open positions)

Dwyer Dennis, Indialantic, Fla., is an AFA Life Member and retired U.S. Air Force officer with 35+ years in Acquisition, overseeing cost, schedule, and performance of major weapon systems. Dennis served as Group and Wing Commander and twice as Program Executive Officer (Fighters & Bombers; C3I & Networks). He is currently EVP and advisor at DAI, offering strategic guidance to government and industry while mentoring future leaders. As a lifelong AFA member, he revitalized the Space Coast Chapter postretirement, serving as Chapter President, AFA Florida EVP, and now Florida State/Regional President—deeply committed to advancing AFA's mission through leadership, advocacy,



and community engagement. Dennis' military awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit (2 clusters).

A message from Dwyer Dennis: Initially hesitant due to limited AFA experience, I ran for an At-Large position in 2019 and was not elected. Since then, I've served in multiple field roles, gaining valuable insight into AFA's structure and mission. As I conclude my term as State/Regional President, I'm eager to bring my expanded knowledge, leadership experience, and strategic perspective to the national board to help further AFA's goals and impact. I bring strong leadership and management skills in strategic planning, organizational development, and innovation. I've led the creation of new organizations using "form follows function" principles and bring deep experience in financial oversight, including budgets, 401(k) management, and philanthropic initiatives.

Wesley Hallman, Washington, D.C., nominated for a second-year term, served 27 years in the U.S. Air Force before retiring as a colonel. His last assignment was as the Chief Air Force Liaison to the House of Representatives. Prior to Congress, he served in several flying and staff positions, including commanding a squadron and a fighter group. Hallman was a White House Fellow, serving as Special Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture, and his staff assignments included AFCENT Forward Chief of Staff and Joint Staff (J5).

He was formerly the Senior Vice President for Strategy & Policy at the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) and is now



a private sector Executive Vice President and Head of Washington Operations. Hallman has a bachelor's from the U.S. Air Force Academy and graduate degrees from The Ohio State University, the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, and the Eisenhower School. He also serves on the Falcon Foundation's Board of Trustees, the parent board of School Without Walls, and as a mentor for the White House Fellows program.

A message from Wesley Hallman: I seek a position on the board to help ensure AFA remains a powerful advocate for Airmen, Guardians, and the advancement of air and space power. As global threats rise, our strategic advantage must be preserved through stronger investment and support. AFA plays a vital role in this effort, and I am committed to strengthening its voice and impact.

2025 Air & Space Forces Association's Wings Society

The Wings Society plays a vital role in making AFA a powerful advocate for every member of our U.S. Air and Space Forces family. Support our Airmen, **Guardians, and their Families by joining the Wings Society today!**

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IN MEMORIAM
As of September 1, 2025

Sunday, September 21, 2025 | 8:10 a.m. - 8:25 a.m.

During the 2025 AFA National Convention, AFA members will gather much as they have every year for the last 77 years to recognize and remember those we have lost in the last year. We appreciate the life, service, and sacrifice of every person we honor today. The service will be conducted during the National Convention Business Session.



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