

ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES ADDS TWO HONORARY MEMBERS

Two individuals who have significantly impacted the United States Air Force Academy mission and the graduate community were welcomed as honorary members of the Association of Graduates in recent months.

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) John W. Rosa, the 16th superintendent of the Academy, and Col. (Ret.) Dale Condit join 14 other living honorary members of the alumni organization.

Honorary membership is awarded to persons who have rendered outstanding and conspicuous service to the Air Force and/or the Academy. Honorary member candidates must be recommended by a member of the Association of Graduates board of directors and receive an 80% approval vote by directors. Honorary membership is restricted to just 25 living persons.

The first honorary membership was awarded in 1981 to Gail McComas, cadet hostess during the institution's early years. Since then, 41 people have received the honor, including such luminaries as Gen. Jimmy Doolittle, Fisher DeBerry, Sen. Barry Goldwater and Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Malham Wakin.

FORMER SUPERINTENDENT

Gen. Rosa was presented his honorary membership at the Charleston, South Carolina, AOG Chapter's Founders Day gathering on Jan. 14.

"It's a wonderful institution, and I know there are very few people who have had the honor of being named honorary members," Gen. Rosa says. "I'm just very humbled."

Gen. Rosa graduated from The Citadel in 1973 and was a command pilot with over 3,600 hours of flight time in the A-7, A-10, F-16, F-

117A, HH-60G, HC-130 and other aircraft.

He later commanded at the squadron, group and wing levels in South Korea and at bases in Idaho, South Carolina, New Mexico and Georgia. He then served as inspector general for Pacific Air Forces in Hawaii and as commandant of the Air Command and Staff College in Alabama.

In his final Air Force assignment, Gen. Rosa served as the USAFA superintendent from 2003 to 2005.

"I was there [at the Academy] at a very difficult time ... brought in under some difficult circumstances," he recalls. "But as we all do in the Air Force, when you're called, you go. I was there just under three years, and it was probably one of the most challenging times of my career, but also one of the most rewarding."

During his tenure at the Academy, Gen. Rosa implemented a wide range of reforms, including a stricter alcohol-abuse policy and sexual assault prevention training. He also helped develop the Officer Development System, which is still in place today.

Gen. Rosa says he was surrounded by many talented and dedicated professionals who supported him well through his tenure. He still keeps in touch with some of those former senior leaders.

"I learned a lot from a lot of wonderful people," he says.

After retiring from the Air Force in 2005, Gen. Rosa returned to his alma mater where he was president of The Citadel from 2006 to 2018. He says the lessons he learned while serving as the USAFA superintendent prepared him well for the dozen years he led The Citadel.



AOG President Mark Hille '97 (left) and Ted Legasey '67 (right) present Lt. Gen. (Ret.) John Rosa (center right) with his honorary membership. Rosa's spouse, Donna, is also pictured.



Brig. Gen. (Ret.) David Edmonds '79 (left) and Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Mike Gould '76 (right) present Col. (Ret.) Dale Condit with his honorary membership during a Feb. 16 ceremony.

Gen. Rosa holds a master's degree in public administration from Golden Gate University. He is also a graduate of the Air Force Command and Staff College, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. He studied at the John F. Kennedy School of Government and the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

LEADER OF LEADERS

Col. Condit was presented his honorary membership at Doolittle Hall on Feb. 16.

During the induction ceremony, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) David "Bob" Edmonds '79, a member of Condit's leadership development organization, the Council of Sabers, spoke on behalf of hundreds of cadets and graduates mentored by the honoree through the years.

"We're here today to celebrate and recognize the very successful life of one man," Gen. Edmonds said. "He's a man who has poured his life into the lives of so many of us ... to make us better people, better citizens, better leaders, better professionals and better officers."

Gen. Edmonds shared one of Col. Condit's typical closings on the regular correspondence he has with council members.

"Continue to provide positive leadership influence in all your endeavors," he said. "Excellence in all we do."

In accepting the honorary membership, Col. Condit told the crowd he didn't feel

worthy to be included among the past honorees.

"I am still rather stunned by the AOG's bestowing of this very special honor on me," he said. "With this, let me with profound gratitude express my thanks to God first, for instilling in me the desire not merely to just pursue wisdom but also the judgment to dispense it."

He also thanked the Air Force, the AOG and the Long Blue Line for providing him the opportunity to live a life of service to his nation.

Col. Condit served in uniform from 1961 to 1992, but he still serves USAFA to this day. Col. Condit attended The Ohio State University, where he commissioned through the ROTC in 1961. He later went on to earn his Ph.D.

From 1974 to 1978, he served as an engineering mechanics instructor at USAFA. Teaching at the Academy was a goal of his. He excelled and became the first winner of the William P. Clements Award for Excellence in Education, which recognizes the institution's top faculty member.

That award was not his only first at USAFA, as he became the first faculty member to become the primary air officer commanding (AOC) for a basic cadet squadron.

He was also the officer in charge of the Cadet Chorale, an associate AOC during the academic year, and the first faculty member to serve as a primary Basic Cadet Training AOC.

This started his almost 50-year association with USAFA — mentoring cadets and officers, providing leadership development and having a positive impact.

After departing USAFA, he continued to mentor both cadets and officers Air Force-wide and those assigned to his acquisition programs for the 14 remaining years of his active-duty career.

After retiring from the military in 1992, he returned to Colorado Springs and co-founded the Council of Sabers, a leadership development organization composed of members from every class of the Academy from 1977 to present. The council touts 146 current members.

For the past 42 years, Col. Condit has orchestrated the annual weekend meeting for leadership development — involving cadets, active-duty personnel, Air Force retirees and USAFA graduates who have transitioned out of the military.

For 51 semesters through December 2019 — stopping only due to the pandemic — Col. Condit has conducted a leadership development program, The Leadership Forum, in his home for nine to 12 cadet-volunteers. His program has impacted more than 510 cadets through the years.

Apart from the Class of 1987 — in which he mentored a West Point cadet — Col. Condit has mentored at least one USAFA cadet in each class since 1976, totaling more than 150 members of the Long Blue Line. 