
Sampson, Rosa Named Honorary AOG Members

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Orwyn "O" Sampson and Lt. Gen. (Ret.) John W. Rosa have been awarded honorary membership in the Association of Graduates of the United States Air Force Academy in recognition of their long-standing, continuous and dedicated service to the United States Air Force and the Air Force Academy.

To be recognized as honorary members, these individuals were recommended by a member of the AOG Board and received unanimous acceptance.

Honorary members are life members, will not pay dues and will be eligible for all the benefits of membership, but may not vote in elections. This honor is restricted to 25 living persons.

SAMPSON

Sampson received his honorary membership on Dec. 8, 2020, becoming one of 17 living honorary members of the United States Air Force Academy alumni association.

Over many decades, Sampson supported, mentored and educated USAFA cadets and graduates alike. Sampson could have entered the new Air Force Academy with the Class of 1959, but he chose instead to attend UCLA. While there, he was on the intercollegiate gymnastics team and was cadet commander of the ROTC unit.

Commissioned in 1959, Sampson took an educational delay to earn a master's degree in exercise physiology before serving as a personnel services officer at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada.

He then arrived at USAFA as an assistant gymnastics coach and physical education instructor from 1962 to 1964, then was selected for a Ph.D. program at the University of Oregon.



Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Orwyn "O" Sampson

From 1966 to 1971, Sampson again served as an assistant gymnastics coach, adding assistant professor of physical education to his role.

After a tour in Vietnam at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Sampson returned to USAFA, playing a major role in the development of the academic discipline of physiology/biology. Sampson later became the permanent professor and department head.

As the department head, Sampson was the driving force behind the expansion of the department into new teaching and laboratory facilities specifically designed for the discipline.

He took sabbatical assignments at the School of Aerospace Medicine at Brooks



Lt. Gen. (Ret.) John W. Rosa

Air Force Base in Texas and the Cal Tech/ Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. He served as the chair of the dean of faculty's Basic Sciences Division from 1986 until his retirement in 1992.

"O is an icon among many generations of graduates," says Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Mike Gould '76, chief executive officer of the Association of Graduates and the Air Force Academy Foundation. "While on active duty working in DF, he maintained close ties to many areas of cadet life, and for years he served as the faculty adviser to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He has always been out in front and willing to share his thoughts and feelings about free-



AOG President and Chief Operating Officer Marty Marcolongo '88 (left panel) conducts a virtual presentation as Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Orwyn Sampson (right) accepts the AOG honorary membership plaque from his wife, Diane.

dom, service to country and the privilege of being an American.”

In retirement, Sampson has used his life and his professional experience in a variety of ways to include teaching, research and in the creative area of inventing. To this day, Sampson and his wife of 60 years, Diane, are regulars at Falcon athletic events and they have sponsored cadets for many years.

In 2014, Sampson co-founded a men's group of Academy grads, which he still leads.

“The AOG Honorary Membership program allows the AOG to visibly and publicly honor non-graduates who support the AOG's mission to serve and support the United States of America, the United States Air Force, the United States Air Force Academy and the graduate community,” Gould notes. “Awarding Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Sampson honorary membership demonstrates that the AOG appreciates what he has done for the Academy.”

ROSA

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) John W. Rosa was named an AOG honorary member in August 2019. He served as the 16th superintendent of the U.S. Air Force Academy from July 2003 to October 2005.

Commissioned in the United States Air Force upon graduation from The Citadel, Rosa is a command-rated fighter pilot with more than 3,600 flying hours, including a tour as an exchange pilot with the Royal Air Force.

Rosa commanded at the squadron, group and wing levels in South Korea, Idaho,

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South Carolina, New Mexico and Georgia. He served as inspector general for Pacific Air Forces in Hawaii and as commandant of the Air Command and Staff College in Alabama.

As deputy director for operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, D.C., he led the National Military Command Center at the Pentagon, including during the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and served as spokesman for the Joint Chiefs as U.S. troops deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq.

After his stint as superintendent of the Air Force Academy, Rosa retired from active duty and returned to The Citadel to

serve as its 19th president.

His military awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Combat Readiness Medal with two oak leaf clusters. He has flown the A-7, A-10, Hunter, Jaguar, F-16, F-117A, HH-60G and HC-130 aircraft.

He is married to Donna Kangeter and they have two sons, Jonathan and Brad, and two grandchildren. 