

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am often asked, “Why does a federal service academy need private support?” My answer to that question is simple and always the same: **Because private support makes the United States Air Force Academy better.**

This response is predicated on two important assumptions. First, that for the sake of our nation, our Air Force Academy must be better than sufficient — it must be excellent. Second, that we as graduates, parents and friends believe that the Academy’s noble and enduring mission of “developing leaders of character for our nation” demands the very best from each of us.

And for each of you, I am confident this argument resonates because you have time and again stepped forward, to make certain the Academy and our cadets have everything they need to excel, to truly embody Excellence in All We Do.

For this reason, my message today is quite simple: **Thank you for your impact!**

Your generosity in supporting the United States Air Force Academy continues to make a significant difference. In 2021, you and other members of our donor community contributed more than \$38 million in private support that benefited the Academy’s mission. Additionally, through your philanthropy, you helped advance the strategic priorities of Defining Our Future, the most significant and transformative philanthropic campaign in our Academy’s history.

In the pages that follow, we are proud to share several examples of how your generous support, through the Air Force Academy Foundation, improved our Academy during this past year. I hope you enjoy the stories and appreciate what they represent: the power of each graduate, parent and friend to join in our goal to develop leaders of character for our Air Force, our Space Force and our nation.



MARK HILLE '97
President
*Air Force Academy Foundation
and Association of Graduates*



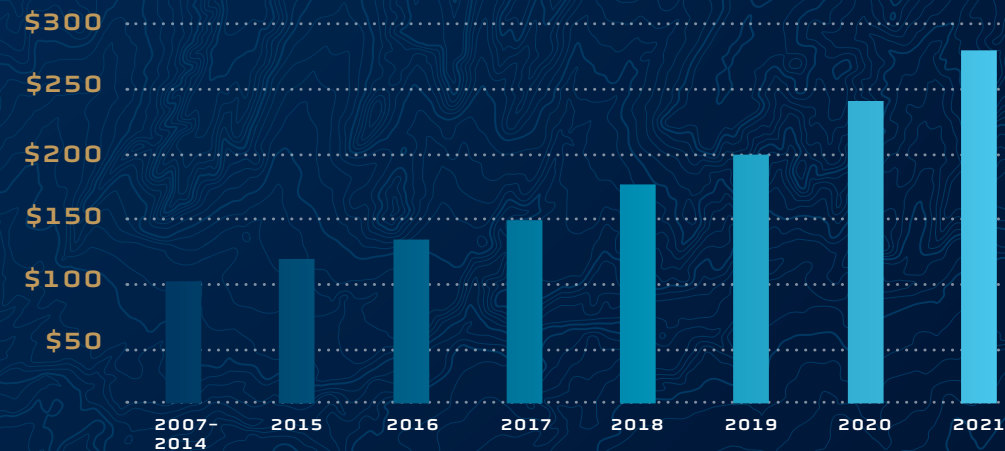
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

DEFINING OUR FUTURE

The assets and expenses information is derived from the Air Force Academy Foundation's unaudited financial statements as of December 31, 2021.



CUMULATIVE COMMITMENTS IN MILLIONS



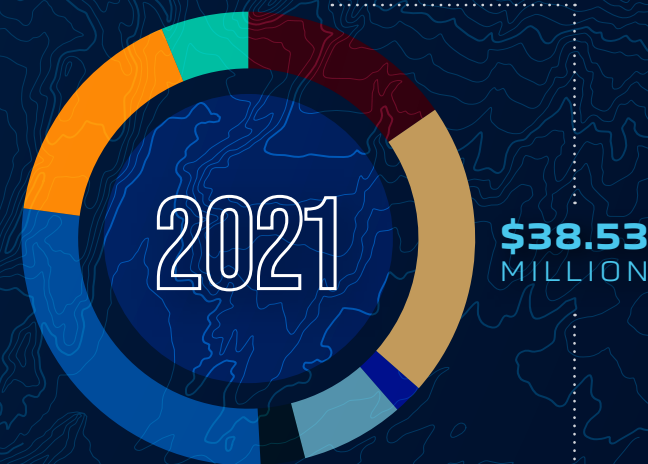
ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents.....	\$23,470,000
Investments.....	70,490,000
Pledges (promises to give).....	27,100,000
Other assets.....	610,000
Total assets.....	\$121,670,000

EXPENSES

Transfers to the Air Force Academy and AOG.....	\$11,560,000
Fundraising.....	2,080,000
General and administrative.....	2,200,000
Total expenses.....	\$15,840,000

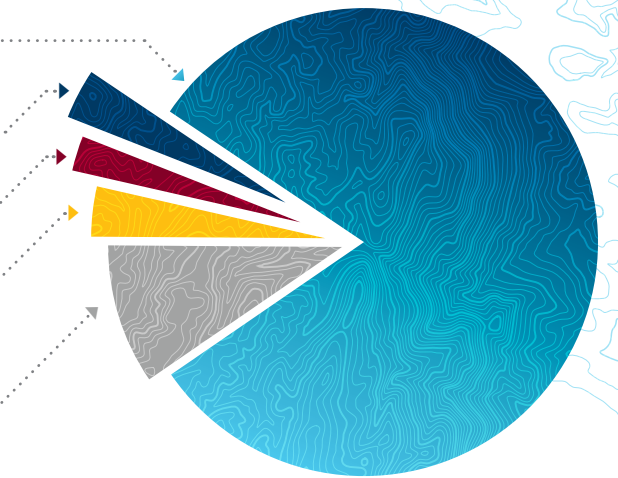
COMMITMENTS BY PURPOSE



Academic Support	\$5.93 MILLION
Athletic Support	\$8.12 MILLION
Cadet Activities	\$820,000
Character and Leadership Heritage	\$1.22 MILLION
Operational Support	\$10.79 MILLION
Other Institutional Support	\$6.41 MILLION
Unrestricted Support	\$2.4 MILLION

COMMITMENTS BY SOURCE

Graduates	\$31.21 MILLION
Parents	\$1.33 MILLION
Others	\$930,000
Corporations	\$1.33 MILLION
Foundations	\$3.73 MILLION

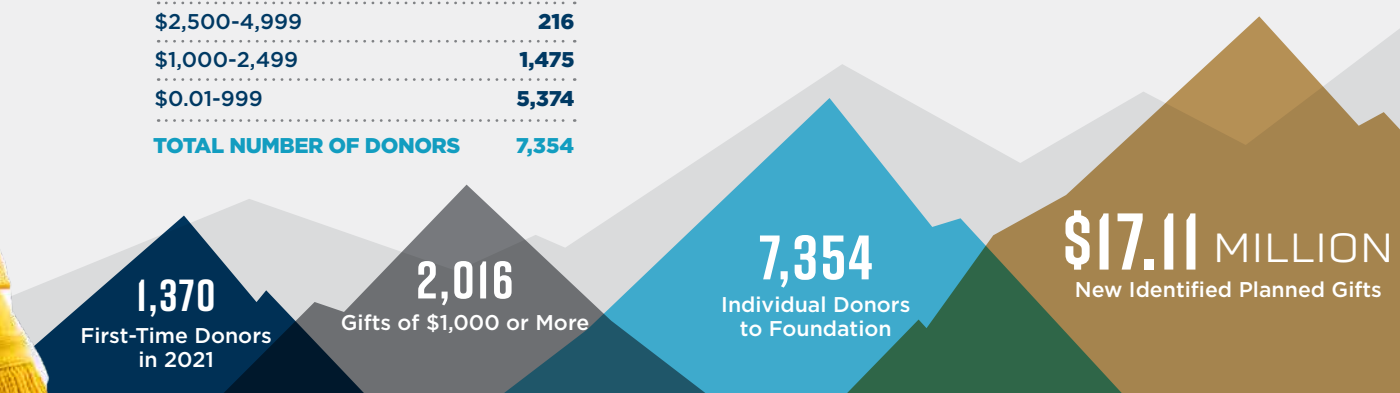
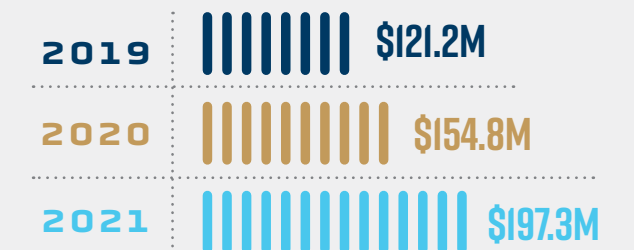


DONORS BY LEVEL

Does not include pledges

\$1,000,000-4,999,999	5
\$500,000-999,999	3
\$250,000-499,999	5
\$100,000-249,999	18
\$50,000-99,999	21
\$25,000-49,999	30
\$10,000-24,999	91
\$5,000-9,999	116
\$2,500-4,999	216
\$1,000-2,499	1,475
\$0.01-999	5,374
TOTAL NUMBER OF DONORS	7,354

CUMULATIVE CAMPAIGN COMMITMENTS



*Planned and pledged gifts are included in campaign donations depending upon donor age and variable valuation, following CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) reporting standards.

2021 MOMENTS OF IMPACT

2021 WAS A YEAR OF PROGRESS, OPPORTUNITY AND MOMENTUM.

FROM GROUNDBREAKINGS TO A BOWL GAME WIN, IT WAS A YEAR FILLED WITH CADETS, GRADUATES AND SUPPORTERS COMING TOGETHER IN SUPPORT OF THE ACADEMY. THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF IMPACT MOMENTS AT THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY IN 2021 FUELED BY DONORS AND THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY FOUNDATION.

DEFINING OUR
FUTURE

NATIONAL SECURITY

The first National Security Strategic Studies Partnership brought cadets and other Colorado college students to the Air Force Academy. Made possible by a gift from The Anschutz Foundation, attendees engaged in conversations surrounding strategic national security issues in the space domain.



BIG REUNION SEASON

The Association of Graduates hosted the largest USAFA reunion season in history. With 17 reunions held in the fall, classes were able to return to USAFA after a year off due to COVID-19.



CADET MORALE

The new Cadet Wing Leadership and Morale Fund has proven to be a worthy cause benefiting cadets. With a goal of providing the Cadet Wing with financial resources for morale-related events, quarterly events allowed cadets to let loose and have fun with their peers. With financial resources comes the responsibility to plan, organize and execute the events, giving cadets the power to choose what's best for the Wing.



SPACE FORCE DETACHMENT

Guardians at the Air Force Academy hiked to the top of Eagles Peak to celebrate the activation of a Space Force detachment on base. Space Force Delta 13, Detachment 1 is the first Space Force unit authorized at the school.



MULTI-DOMAIN LAB

Housed in Fairchild Hall, the new \$9.5 million multi-domain laboratory opened for business to cadets and faculty. The lab contains two flight bays filled with flight simulators, equipment and learning aids to simulate drone missions as well as air and ground battle scenarios.



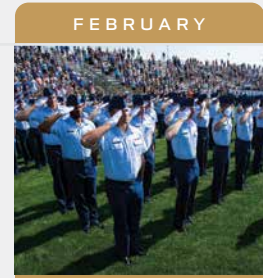
AWCM

The B-52 static display now has company near the north gate. The Air Warrior Combat Memorial, featuring a bronze statue of Robin Olds, a replica of an F-4 Phantom II fighter bomber, and walls commemorating the history of air combat, opened for all to enjoy.

2021



The Center for Character and Leadership Development introduced a new leadership program for cadet squadron officers. The voluntary coaching program for air officers commanding is designed to enhance their personal, professional and leadership skills.



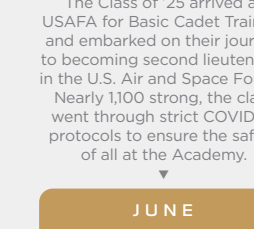
With five repeat champions and seven first-time winners, the Air Force boxing team shined at the 63rd-annual Wing Open Championships. CIC Maddie Lloyd and C2C Alan Long were named Boxers of the Meet.



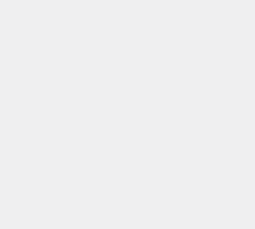
The inaugural Sabre Society Speaker Series featured retired Brig. Gen. Chris Inglis '76. He spoke via webinar to Sabre Society donors on defending the United States in cyberspace and against cyber attacks.



The Class of '25 arrived at USAFA for Basic Cadet Training and embarked on their journey to becoming second lieutenants in the U.S. Air and Space Forces. Nearly 1,100 strong, the class went through strict COVID-19 protocols to ensure the safety of all at the Academy.



The Class of 2020 became the second class to commission graduates into the U.S. Space Force. After 86 graduates were sworn in as Space Force second lieutenants in 2020, 114 became guardians in 2021.



The Air Force Academy and the Air Force Academy Foundation broke ground on the Madera Cyber Innovation Center. Located on the east end of the cadet area, the facility will provide space and technology for Academy cyber entities to come together in a workspace.



After a year of adapting to changes caused by COVID-19, the Cadet Summer Research Program is stronger than ever. Folding virtual opportunities into the program, CSRP accommodated nearly 430 cadets in 2021.



Graduates and friends of the Air Force Academy gathered in Washington, D.C., over Navy Weekend (Sept. 9-11) to mark the launch of the public phase of the Defining Our Future campaign.



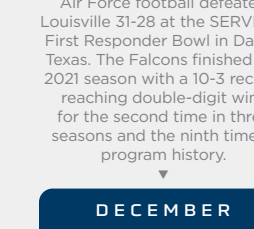
The \$71 million restoration of the USAFA Air Garden was dedicated after six years of planning. The donor-supported Air Garden was restored to its original design, with reflective pools, sunken planters and walkways amidst trees and plants.



Support for the Air Force Academy was on full display during GivingTuesday 2021. Donors contributed nearly \$286,000 to the Air Force Academy Foundation, making it the largest outpouring of support on GivingTuesday in two years.



Air Force football defeated Louisville 31-28 at the SERVPRO First Responder Bowl in Dallas, Texas. The Falcons finished the 2021 season with a 10-3 record, reaching double-digit wins for the second time in three seasons and the ninth time in program history.



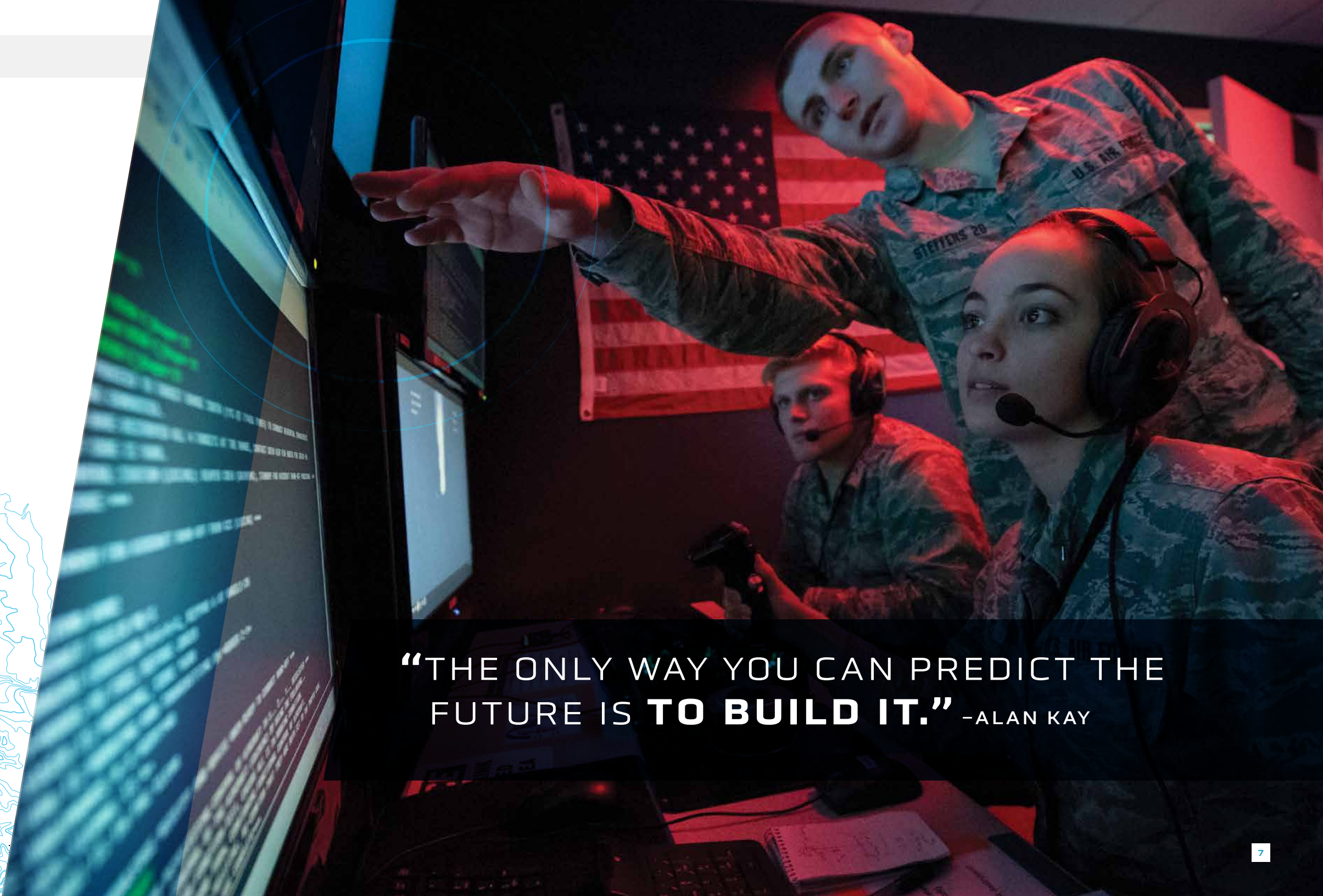
ENSURING THE NATION'S 21ST-CENTURY PREEMINENCE

The Air Force Academy has developed new initiatives focused on emerging technologies and their potential uses. Faculty, staff and cadets will integrate the study of these technologies to better anticipate, prepare for and drive change in the character of conflict.

Thanks to philanthropy, two major projects marked significant milestones in 2021. The superintendent, in March, named the first director of the Institute for Future Conflict (IFC), retired Lt. Gen. Bradford J. "B.J." Shwedo '87. Then, in August, the Academy broke ground on the Madera Cyber Innovation Center. Both the IFC and the Madera Cyber Innovation Center aim to heighten understanding of and increase research in current and potential uses of a wide range of technologies, including cyber, hypersonics and artificial intelligence, to defend the nation and ensure its preeminence.

The new cyber facility will help faculty, cadets and researchers understand how a connected world can operate and be defended. It will be an important partner, too, for the IFC, which will integrate current curriculum with research and the latest information about new and potential threats to the United States.

The focus on new technologies reached cadet clubs, as well. The new Cadet Rocketry Club and the growing Drone Racing Team benefited from donor gifts to assemble and outfit their groups. These clubs serve as both leadership experiences and training for future assignments in either the Air Force or Space Force. ■



"THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN PREDICT THE FUTURE IS TO BUILD IT." -ALAN KAY

READY FOR THE FIGHT

Retired Lt. Gen. Bradford Shwedo '87 calls it a “synergistic cocktail.” All available capabilities — air, land, sea, space, cyber — have to work closely together for the best possible outcome.

“We have to break down those cylinders and look at all things from a multi-domain perspective,” he said.

Cadets must be prepared for all types of future warfare, and that’s what the new Institute for Future Conflict (IFC) at the Air Force Academy strives to achieve.

The past year was one of progression for the IFC, established in 2019. The Academy named Shwedo as the IFC’s first director and hired post-doctoral fellows shortly after.

The USAFA graduate community has consistently played a role in the ongoing development of the IFC. The concept of the IFC was born from an initial paper written by Dr. Paul Kaminiski '64, a stealth technology pioneer. Kaminski and John Fox '63 saw the strategic necessity for the IFC, and both provided the initial funding for the Institute.

Retired Gen. Gregory “Speedy” Martin '70, senior advisor to the IFC, and others spent time reviewing the Institute’s curriculum and suggesting changes and additions.

Additional donor generosity from supporters like retired Lt. Col. David '74 and Diane Neumann allows the IFC the freedom to hire qualified staff and to create programming to support its mission.

USAFA leadership knows the urgency of teaching cadets innovative approaches to conflict, and Shwedo is pleased with the support and response he has received from them.

“The superintendent understands this situation better than anybody, and his support has been amazing,” Shwedo said. “[The commandant] has been personally involved in many actions associated with the IFC and, most significantly, the dean was already moving out on many of these initiatives, which laid an excellent foundation for the IFC.”

The ultimate goal of the IFC is to plant the seed throughout the Cadet Wing that the key to our nation’s future military success lies in joint and synergistic efforts.

“I want to open up the aperture so that throughout their career our graduates are looking at multiple ways to attack a problem that always increases dilemmas for the adversary,” he said, “and convinces them that any conflict with the United States is not in their vested interests.” ■



“I WANT TO OPEN UP THE APERTURE SO THAT THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER OUR GRADUATES ARE LOOKING AT MULTIPLE WAYS TO ATTACK A PROBLEM...”

—LT. GEN. (RET.) BRADFORD SHWEDO '87



A NEW TYPE OF FLIGHT

As a former fighter pilot, Paul Rossetti '70 has a passion for flying. While Rossetti made a career of being inside the plane, he has taken a new interest in aircraft that can be controlled from outside.

"I got kind of enamored with this little quadcopter, and that got me interested in this whole drone thing," Rossetti said. "It showed me what the capability is to get up there in the air and see things and get a perspective you don't get from the ground."

Through gifts to the Department of Computer and Electrical Engineering and the UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems) Center Fund, Rossetti and his wife, June, have supported the Academy's efforts to expose cadets to remotely piloted aircraft.

"That's what they're going to use in active duty," Rossetti said. "Those are the kind of vehicles that they're going to be working with. They should have a familiarity with the data packages available."

The Rossettis have also taken a leadership role in supporting the Institute for Future Conflict, the drone racing team and the Madera Cyber Innovation Center among other areas at the Academy. Paul also contributes through his service on the Air Force Academy Foundation board of directors.

Like many graduates, Rossetti is grateful for the values and skills he learned during his time as a cadet, and he wants to help ensure future cadets have the same — and more — opportunities.

"The Academy taught me a lot about life, about committing to a cause, about getting things done and being committed to the mission knowing that this is bigger than yourself," Rossetti said. "I feel like it's such a great institution and so important today that we're training tomorrow's leaders." ■



A GAME CHANGER ▶▶ FOR USAFA

Paul '78 and Joan Madera committed one of the largest individual gifts in Air Force Academy history, and they were able to witness its early impact when the Academy broke ground on the Madera Cyber Innovation Center in August.

During the ceremonial groundbreaking during Acceptance Day activities, Paul Madera spoke passionately about the need for cyber security and developing methods to better prepare for future conflict. "This institution's role is to produce the leaders of the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Space Force," Madera said. "We must be relentless in providing our young men and women the entire set of tools and capabilities to prepare them for this new set of conflicts."

The Madera Cyber Innovation Center, which will be located on the east end of the cadet area overlooking Stillman Parade Field, will provide room and technology for Academy cyber entities to come together in a common workspace. The facility is set to be finished in mid-2023. The Maderas provided the lead gift for the center, with 1,323 donors contributing more than \$30.5 million to the project.

"This facility is going to be a game changer for USAFA," said Lt. Gen. Richard Clark '86, USAFA superintendent, at the groundbreaking event. "An iconic, physical reminder that our Academy will lead the world in the cyber domain." ■



▲ RENDERING OF THE MADERA CYBER INNOVATION CENTER



PARTNERSHIP FUELS NEW CADET CLUB

The cadet-led rocketry club is gaining steam at the Academy.

The club's organization and early achievements were made possible by funding from United Launch Alliance (ULA).

“USAFA represents the foundational commissioning source for our Air Force and budding Space Force, and ULA is proud to inspire and aid in the development of these future Air and Space warriors,” said Tory Bruno, ULA president and CEO.

The club has been accepted into the NASA Student Launch Competition, which culminates in 2022. In preparation, club members conducted their first National Association of Rocketry certification launch in Pueblo, Colorado, in 2021. Cadets are also developing a hybrid rocket motor at the Academy to allow them to test various nozzle, material and propellant configurations.

Bruno said that USAFA's Department of Astronautics' motto of “learning space by doing space” inspired ULA's contribution and aligns well with the ULA mission to “save lives, explore the universe and connect the world.”

“ULA could think of no more perfect avenue of support then by contributing to the development and sustainment of USAFA's rocketry club both financially and through subject matter expertise and mentorship,” Bruno said. ■

DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

The shorthand version of the U.S. Air Force Academy mission is straightforward: developing leaders of character. Each mission element at the Academy – academics, athletics, military training – plays a role in offering leadership lessons and opportunities. From inprocessing day to graduation day, the goal is clear.

Working through the mission elements, the Center for Character and Leadership Development is instrumental in infusing leadership and character into the cadet experience. For example, the ropes course that served as a team-building and problem-solving exercise is being replaced by a state-of-the-art outdoor leadership complex (OLC) that will push cadets even further out of their comfort zone and into expansive opportunities for developing character-based leadership in high-stakes situations. The donor-supported project will serve cadets and the Academy for many years to come.

The long-running National Character and Leadership Symposium (NCLS) approaches leadership from two different lenses. First, cadets take the lead in planning and organizing the annual event, learning important lessons about project management, teamwork, and working with both military and civilian expert speakers. During the event, the rest of the Cadet Wing, as well as the broader community,

benefits from the presentations and reflections about the messages they hear. Donors continue to be a vital part of NCLS's success.

Donor-supported cadet awards annually recognize the talents, character and leadership of their recipients, whether the awards are based on academic, athletic or character achievements. ■

“IF YOU’RE AN HONORABLE LEADER AND YOU TRULY WANT TO LIFT OTHERS, THEN YOU’RE GOING TO LIVE A LIFE OF DIGNITY AND RESPECT, AND YOU’RE GOING TO EMBRACE THOSE QUALITIES IN EVERY INTERACTION THAT YOU HAVE WITH PEOPLE.”

– LT. GEN. RICHARD CLARK ’86,
SUPERINTENDENT OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY



LEADERSHIP ACTIVATED

It's the "ah-ha" moments. When terror turns into a learning experience. When focused teamwork is displayed dozens of feet in the air.

Those are the moments that Kristina Book lives for as manager of the USAFA Outdoor Leadership Complex (OLC).

"Having a cadet go through that moment where it clicks, they get it, they understand what they experienced, that light bulb moment makes everything better," she said. "And it lets us know that we are on the right path as well."

More moments like that are coming soon when the new donor-supported Leader Challenge Tower at the renovated OLC is complete. Construction began early last summer with the removal of the aging alpine tower first, followed by the climbing wall and rappel tower.

"It's a structure that's been around for 22 years here at the Academy, so to have it

come down is definitely a change in the skyline down there," Book said.

The new Leader Challenge Tower features 12 obstacles at 23 and 54 feet; two 76-foot climbing walls; multiple climbing lines; rappel stations; quick-drops from 54 feet; and increased daily capacity with space for multiple units. The enhanced tower will bring more challenging opportunities for cadets to develop grit, emotional intelligence and critical thinking skills.

"We're taking ourselves from a course that was built in the early 2000s, that was all made of telephone poles, and we're going to a tower that is one of a kind," Book said, touching on the power of philanthropy to create transformational impact at the Academy. "A tower like this does not exist anywhere else."

The OLC, which is part of the Center for Character Leadership and Development, incorporates all of its courses with the Leader of Character Framework at the center. While on the course, cadets emulate living honorably, lifting others and elevating performance.

"A by-product of everything we do is fun, but really what we are focused on as a facility and as facilitators of this experience on the course, is that it's transferable to their life as a cadet and as future airmen and guardians," Book said.

The Class of '63 provided \$1 million of the projected \$2.1 million for the complex. The Air Force Academy Foundation, with assistance from the Association of Graduates' Dorothy D. and Joseph A. Moller Foundation funds, will be providing additional funding.

The OLC is scheduled for completion by the beginning of June. ■



“HAVING A CADET GO THROUGH THAT MOMENT WHERE IT CLICKS, THEY GET IT, THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY EXPERIENCED, THAT LIGHT BULB MOMENT MAKES EVERYTHING BETTER.”

ROCHESTER HONORED BY SCHULTE AWARD

2nd Lt. Julia Rochester '21, the 2021 recipient of the 1st Lt. Roslyn L. Schulte Cadet Award, nearly had tears in her eyes as Schulte's story was shared with the audience during the Cadet Award and Recognition Ceremony.

"I was really honored, especially listening to her story — I was getting

killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan in 2009. She was the first female USAFA graduate to be killed in action in the global war on terrorism.

In Schulte's memory, her parents, Susan and Robert Schulte, and friends endowed the award through the Association of Graduates and Air Force Academy Foundation. It is presented

" I WORK WITH AMAZING PEOPLE IN THE DIFFERENT STUFF THAT I DO WITH NCLS AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT, SO ANY ONE OF US COULD HAVE BEEN THAT PERSON (WINNER); I'M JUST REALLY HONORED."

choked up," Rochester said. "I work with amazing people in the different stuff that I do with NCLS and character development, so any one of us could have been that person (winner); I'm just really honored."

The award, presented by the Center for Character and Leadership Development, is given in memory of Schulte, a 2006 Academy graduate who was

to a first-class cadet who embodies the values Schulte lived by: "impeccable character, unwavering leadership and spirit of service." ■



A LASTING LEGACY

Including support for the Air Force Academy in your will is an easy way to make a long-lasting impact on the future of the Air Force Academy. Roger Smith '73, Mark '76 and Laurie Nielsen and Jerry Roberts '65 have made the decision to extend their legacies with planned gifts in support of Center for Character and Leadership Development (CCLD) programs.

With a goal of developing leaders of character, and by following the superintendent's Leader of Character Framework guidance, the CCLD offers cadets opportunities to hone their own leadership skills while learning from some of the nation's greatest leaders.

Donor generosity allows USAFA to bring high-profile speakers to the Academy for the annual National Character and Leadership Symposium. The event joins distinguished scholars, military leaders, corporate executives and world-class athletes to inspire and equip cadets and other participants for honorable living and effective leadership.

Through donor support, the CCLD is able to publish the *Journal of Character and Leadership Development* (JCLD) three times a year. The publication brings together views on character and leadership of experts and scholars across multiple disciplines.

All editions are available online at www.usafa.edu/character/jclid. ■

BUILDING RESILIENCY & DIVERSITY

It's a fact every U.S. Air Force Academy graduate knows by the time they toss their hat in the air: The success of a military operation is influenced by not only strategy and strength, but also the ability to adapt and build a cohesive team. Cadets at the Academy work to develop skills in these critical areas to prepare them for future leadership positions in the Air Force, in the Space Force and beyond.

Another example is the power of scholarships to create access and open doors. With the help of donor-funded Falcon scholarships, qualified high school graduates who need more academic preparation are able to attend a preparatory school. This foundational experience helps cadet candidates of exemplary character and potential focus on being prepared for and ultimately earning admission to the Air Force Academy.

Additionally, cadets have access to academic support and international experiences, as well, thanks to generous donors. As they adapt to the rigors of the Academy's curriculum, cadets can learn better strategies for time management, writing and more, all carrying over into their lives as officers and leaders of others. And cross-cultural experiences help prepare them for the possibility of overseas assignments, partnerships with other countries' militaries and working with teams of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The Air Force Academy Fund offers another kind of opportunity to build resiliency for the

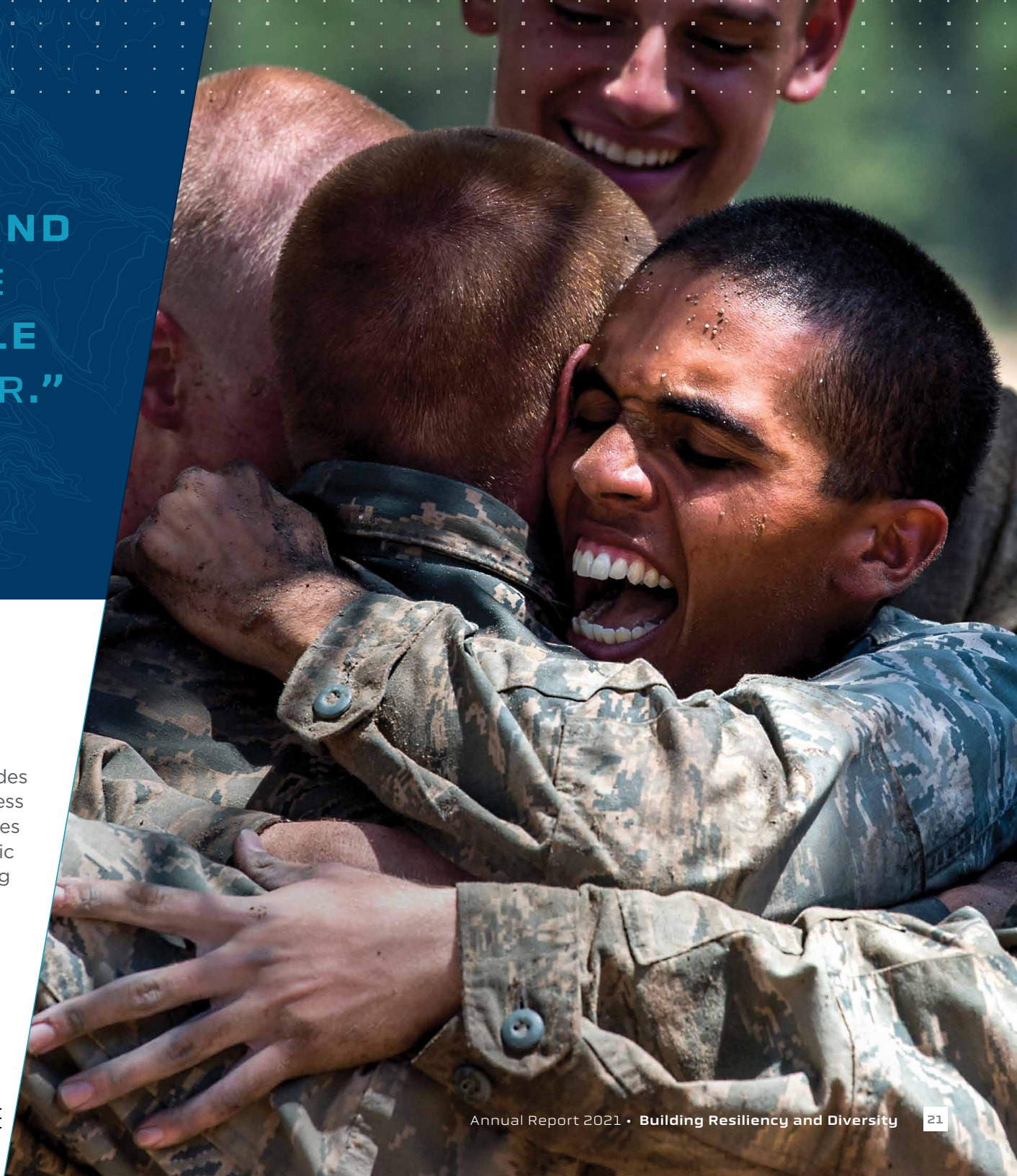
Donors are helping to build resiliency and diversity within the Cadet Wing through a range of projects and programs that may not otherwise be possible without private support. For example, the Academy plans to modernize Falcon Stadium, starting with the east side of the facility - a multiphase project and cornerstone of the Defining Our Future campaign. Athletics is an integral part of cadet training, with a focus on resiliency, toughness and teamwork. The modernized Falcon Stadium will create an even better environment for athletes and graduates to both experience the fields of friendly strife and celebrate hard-earned accomplishments.

“LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING ARE INDISPENSABLE TO EACH OTHER.”

-JOHN F. KENNEDY

Academy. This unrestricted fund provides flexibility to the superintendent to address immediate needs, such as morale activities for cadets during the COVID-19 pandemic and fees for motivational speakers during graduation week, among other uses.

USAFA Admissions continues to broaden its reach to attract a diverse class of cadets that represents the country they serve. Nearly 30% of the Class of 2025 are women, and 32% are ethnic minorities. ■



KUCERA GIFT SERVES AS INVESTMENT IN CADETS, INSPIRATION TO OTHERS

The Air Force Academy Foundation and Air Force Academy Athletic Corporation announced in 2021 a proposed modernization project for the 59-year-old Falcon Stadium. The organizations will raise about \$35 million to help pay for half of the immediate phase, which could begin construction after the 2022 football season.

Jack '78 and Vianne Kucera have committed the lead gift to help make this phase — the modernization of the east side of the stadium — a reality. The stadium modernization is a signature component of the Defining Our Future campaign.

The Kuceras' \$10 million commitment provides substantial progress toward the exciting, multi-phase vision for the stadium, among the most iconic and recognizable athletics venues in the country. They see their gift as not only helping to enhance the fan experience, but also, most important, supporting Air Force Academy cadets.

"I don't think there's a more powerful way to impact America's future than investing in cadets at the Air Force Academy — leaders of character for our nation," says Jack, a 2019 Distinguished Graduate. As a long-time board director, initially for the Association of Graduates and now as chairman of the board of the Air Force Academy Foundation, Jack

recalls learning years ago just how important athletics are to cadets' success.

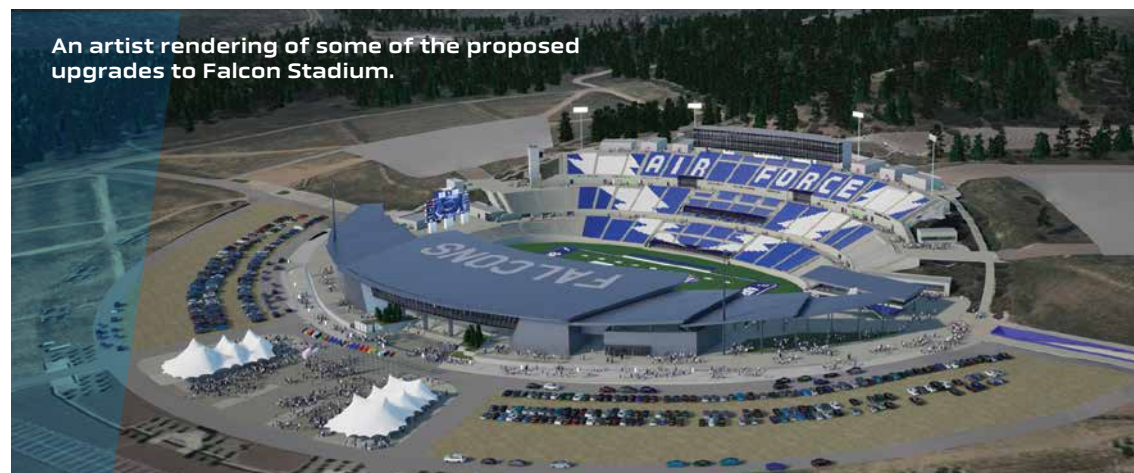
"There are lessons learned in team sports that I've not seen many strong alternatives to that teach us selflessness and what it means to be a team player.

"As an athlete, you make the choice to be part of something bigger than yourself," Jack says. "Reaching excellence in your chosen sport takes a deep commitment and in so doing, you learn many of the life-balance and time-management skills that are further instilled in us as cadets."

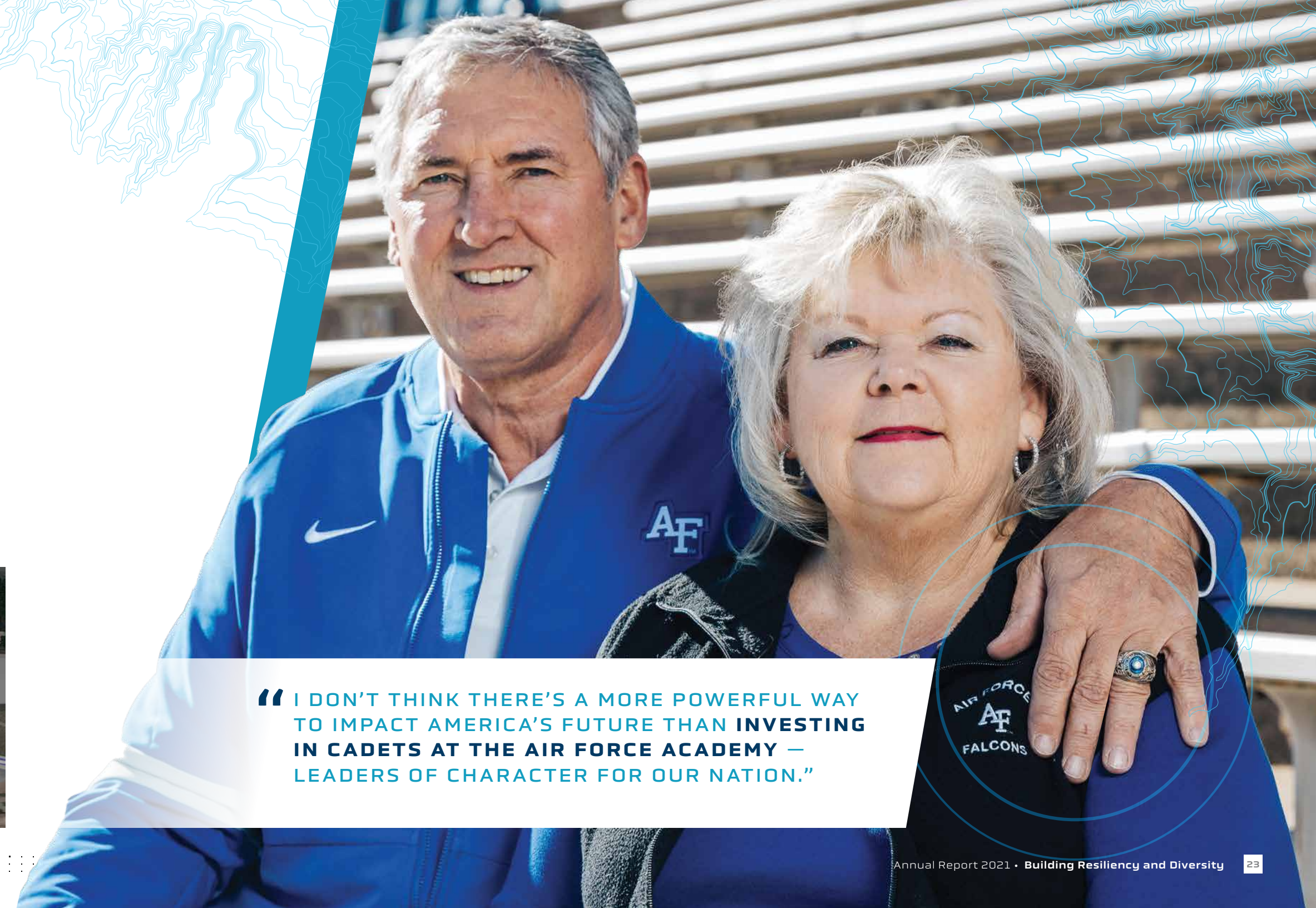
The Kuceras' leadership commitment is helping the Air Force Academy Foundation

and the Department of Athletics define the future for generations of cadets. They hope their commitment to supporting the Air Force Academy through the campaign will, as Jack says, "inspire others to step forward and contribute."

"The renovation of Falcon Stadium is critical to our future success at the Air Force Academy, and Jack and Vianne Kucera have helped make this vision a reality with their incredible commitment," says Nathan Pine, director of athletics at the Academy. "The positive impact of their gift will be felt at Falcon Stadium and throughout the Athletics Department for years to come." ■



An artist rendering of some of the proposed upgrades to Falcon Stadium.



"I DON'T THINK THERE'S A MORE POWERFUL WAY TO IMPACT AMERICA'S FUTURE THAN INVESTING IN CADETS AT THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY — LEADERS OF CHARACTER FOR OUR NATION."

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE FALCON SCHOLAR AT A TIME

Every year, the Falcon Foundation sends approximately 65 cadet-candidates to preparatory schools around the country with hopes that an extra year of training will pay off in the form of an appointment to the Air Force Academy.

Two of the five Air Force Academy graduates to serve as chief of staff of the United States Air Force were Falcon Scholars. Other scholars have led major United States Air Force commands; been Rhodes Scholars, CEOs and philanthropists; and served their country in countless ways.



"If you just look at the statistical data connected to what Falcon Scholars are able to accomplish, it basically begs for the fact that we should have more Falcon Scholars," Hugh Williamson '64 said.

Williamson, a 2020 Distinguished Graduate and emeritus director for the Air Force Academy Foundation board, is a devout supporter of the Falcon Foundation and has been instrumental in encouraging his fellow classmates and USAFA graduates to contribute to the cause.

The Falcon Foundation is a nonprofit that works closely with the Air Force Academy

Foundation in support of the Academy. The Falcon Scholarships funded by the organization are a priority of the Defining Our Future campaign.

"IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME BECAUSE IT'S IMPORTANT TO THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY, AND IT'S IMPORTANT TO THE AIR FORCE," HE SAID.



A year at a preparatory school gives cadet-candidates, who were deemed qualified for USAFA but not given an appointment, opportunities to further mature and sharpen their skills to potentially receive admission to the Academy.

Williamson says he looks at the metrics of what past Falcon Scholars have achieved and wants as many qualified individuals as possible to have an opportunity to develop at the Academy.

"I look at what kind of return you are getting on your dollar invested, and in the case of Falcon Scholars, it's unbelievably strong," Williamson said. ■

GIVING BACK AND MOVING FORWARD

Larry Romo '78 was a few poor grades away from being academically dismissed from the Air Force Academy.

But the first-generation college graduate was committed to making it through, and he credits his resiliency to the support he received from the Hispanic community at the Academy for making that happen.

"I really appreciated the support that I got," he says. "I would not have made it through the Air Force Academy if it were not for the love and nurturing from them. They laid the foundation."

Romo is a former national commander of the American GI Forum, and he is a current member of the Naming Commission, a U.S. government commission created by Congress to rename military assets that have names associated with the Confederate States of America.

Now 65, Romo is giving back to the community that gave him that difference-making support and inspiration as a cadet. Romo has committed \$110,000 to the Hispanic/Latino Club Endowment with hopes that cadets of all backgrounds can find the support and community he did while at USAFA.

"It's in memory of and to recognize the people that have helped me out and got me to where I am today," he says.

Romo is passionate about ensuring cadets understand and are exposed to all cultures.

"I appreciate the Air Force Academy showing what Hispanic culture is about, and this club is a good way not just for Hispanics to be involved, but for all cadets whatever their ethnicity is," he said. ■

SERVING GRADUATES & HONORING HERITAGE

Both the Air Force Academy Foundation and the Association of Graduates are committed to honoring the heritage of the U.S. Air Force Academy and its graduates.

They work with the Academy, graduates and families of cadets to make a significant impact on how Air Force and Air Force Academy heritage is celebrated on campus and throughout the Long Blue Line.

Some of that impact also is intertwined with increased services for graduates as part of the Association of Graduates' mission. It was a busy and productive 2021 for honoring heritage and serving graduates.

Two large-scale, long-awaited heritage projects were completed and dedicated. In the fall, graduates, Academy leaders and families gathered to dedicate the new Air Warrior Combat Memorial (AWCM) — spearheaded by the Class of '71 — and the Air Garden restoration on the terrazzo — funded in part through reunion projects

undertaken by the Classes of '72, '75 and '76. The AWCM honors 100 years of air combat, including the service of Air Force Academy graduates. The Air Garden, restored to its original Dan Kiley design, is part of the Cadet Area, which is a National Historic Landmark District.

The Academy celebrated graduates with Distinguished Graduate and Distinguished Service honors, with the renaming of a building to honor Frederick Gregory '64, and during 17 in-person reunions throughout the fall.

Additionally, the Class of 2024 chose their class exemplar, the late LeRoy W. Homer Jr. '87, honoring his heroism and sacrifice on September 11, 2001, as first officer of United Airlines Flight 93.

The Association of Graduates hosted several "Careers After the Uniform" panels, which offered insights to both graduates and cadets as they look forward to how their Air and Space Force careers may change.

"WHAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND IS NOT WHAT IS ENGRAVED IN STONE MONUMENTS, BUT WHAT IS WOVEN INTO THE LIVES OF OTHERS."

— PERICLES

Finally, the Association of Graduates board of directors unanimously approved offering membership to all graduates of the Academy at no cost to them — a historic new chapter for the AOG made possible through the contributions over several years from legacy and family members. The expanded membership program will be rolled out throughout 2022. ■



HONORING AIR WARRIORS

Service before self — an Academy and Air Force core value that never leaves a cadet, even when they graduate from the Academy or complete their military commitment.

And that mantra was on full display in the funding and creation of the Air Warrior Combat Memorial (AWCM), an intricately designed memorial honoring all U.S. air warriors who have flown in harm's way or supported those who have.

a vision for memorializing Academy graduates and all those who defended the nation through aerial combat.

“He would still be the centerpiece but surrounding him would be the stories about the shops and sections that made airpower such a potent force,” said Frank Morgan, Class of '71 gift chair. “The stories of his team and all of the teams across the Air Force and the decades that have made airpower what it is today.”

Class of '63 president and gift committee member Jim Diffendorfer, who was an air rescue pilot, said his class willingly stepped up for a memorial that was personal to them.

“We were one of those classes that got hit really hard with Vietnam,” he says. “We had a lot of guys who were over there and flew in all sorts of airplanes ... and we had several deaths in Vietnam. It certainly is in our class's interest to honor

the service that was given by the members of our class.”

Due to their willingness to help, the Classes of '63 and '69 have their class crests displayed alongside '71's on the donor wall. ■



A visitor reads one of the 14 aluminum plaques at the Air Warrior Combat Memorial that tell the story of the first 100 years of air combat.



“ [OLDS] WOULD STILL BE THE CENTERPIECE BUT SURROUNDING HIM WOULD BE THE STORIES ABOUT THE SHOPS AND SECTIONS THAT MADE AIRPOWER SUCH A POTENT FORCE.”

AOG EXPANDS MEMBERSHIP TO ALL GRADUATES

Thanks to the enduring support of generous members over the past six decades, the Association of Graduates is now able to extend membership to all graduates of the United States Air Force Academy — at no cost to them.

The AOG Board of Directors unanimously approved the shift to membership for all graduates in 2021. Beginning on January 3, 2022, graduates who were not previously members of the AOG had the opportunity to join at no cost. Within the first month, nearly 2,000 took advantage of this opportunity.

“I’M VERY EXCITED ABOUT THE NEW POLICY, AND I’M GRATEFUL FOR THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH ALLOWED THE SHIFT.”

— JAMES GRESHAM ’07

“Since its founding in 1968, the AOG has served upwards of 30,000 members with benefits spanning career services and reunion coordination to *Checkpoints* magazine and more,” said retired Lt. Gen. Mike Gould ’76, chief executive officer of the AOG and the Air Force Academy Foundation. “Now, we’re opening our ranks to everyone who threw their hat into the air and joined the Long Blue Line at graduation.”

A Defining Our Future campaign initiative, membership for all is a way to serve all graduates and honor our heritage. ■



MEMBERSHIP
— FOR ALL GRADUATES —



▲ AN AIR FORCE FAMILY GETS INTO THE FOOTBALL SPIRIT DURING THE ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES AND AIR FORCE ACADEMY FOUNDATION TAILGATE PRIOR TO THE COMMANDERS’ CLASSIC IN ARLINGTON, TEXAS, IN NOVEMBER.

INSPIRING A NEW GENERATION

Alex Granados ’04 always wanted to give back to the Air Force Academy.

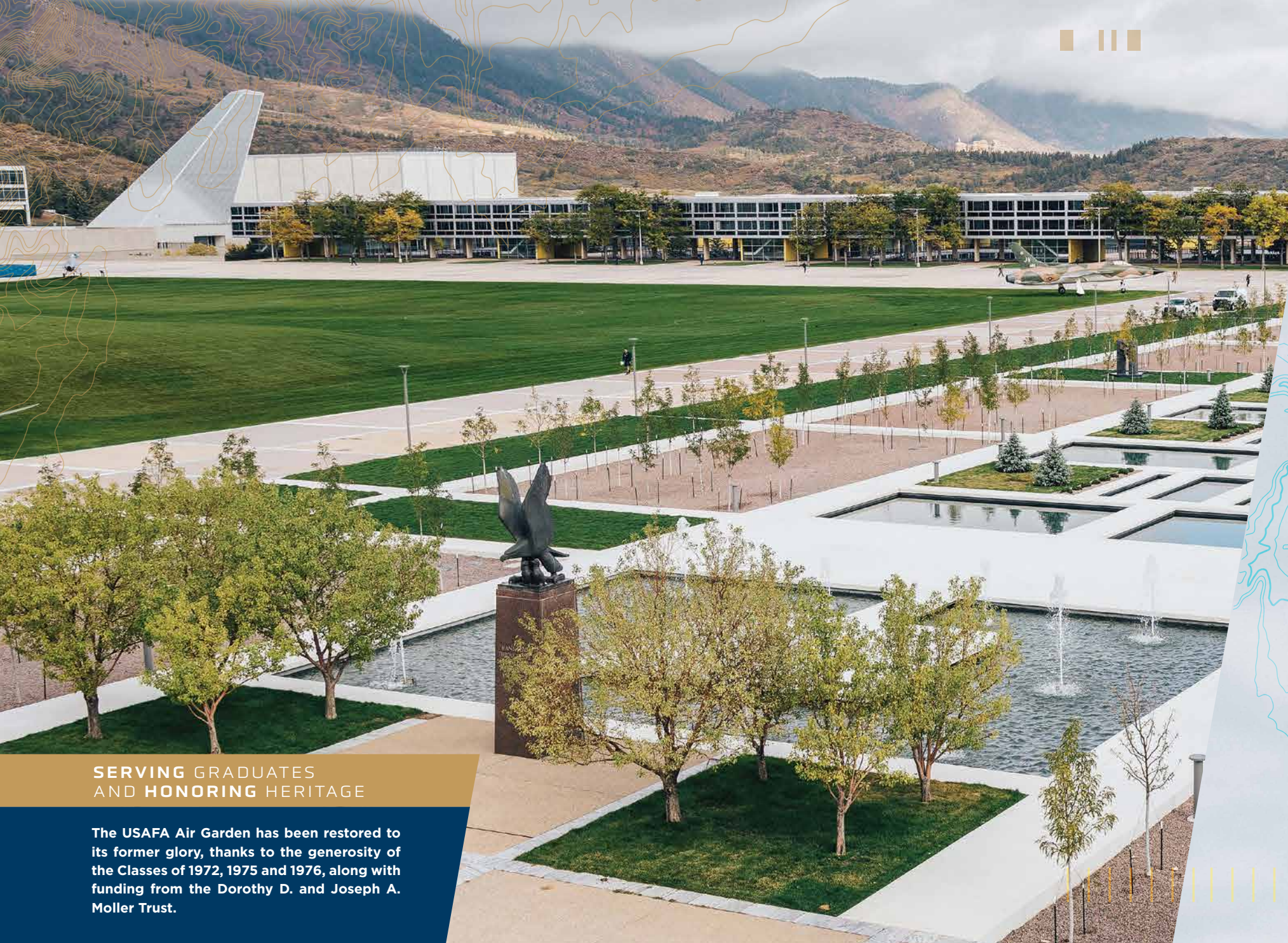
Whether through his time or philanthropy, he wanted to return the favor to a place he says helped him get to where he is today.

Granados, the owner and CEO of Prescient Edge, a counterintelligence and human intelligence company, is currently the youngest Air Force Academy Foundation board director. And at 43 years old, he hopes to raise awareness of the importance of philanthropy to the Academy’s mission and inspire younger members of the Long Blue Line to give back.

“I tell everybody out there, ‘Hey, we need to support our Academy,’” Granados said. “If we want to continue to evolve, we need money, and we need outside funds. I could go preach that forever, but actually doing it, I think, makes a big impact with individuals in my similar age group.”

With a passion for bringing fellow USAFA graduates together in support of the Air Force Academy, Granados, the president of the local Association of Graduates chapter in Washington, D.C., spearheads the planning of various area events. ■

“I WANT TO HELP THE FOUNDATION AND THE ACADEMY CONTINUE TO TELL THAT STORY IN A WAY THAT’S GOING TO RESONATE WITH EVERYBODY.” — ALEX GRANADOS ’04



CLASS GIVING PROJECTS HELP REVIVE AIR GARDEN

The long-awaited \$7.1 million restoration of the USAFA Air Garden was dedicated on Oct. 23, 2021.

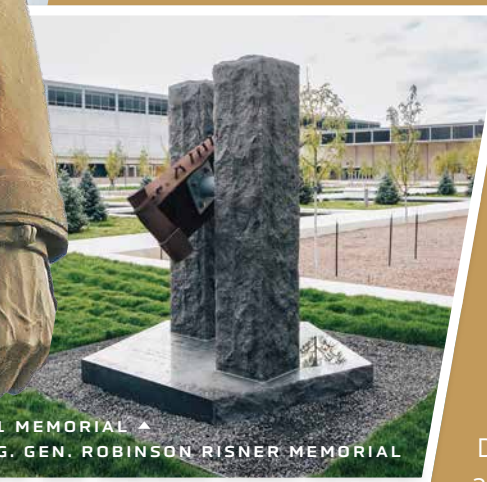
The Air Force Academy Foundation oversaw fundraising for the restoration, with the USAFA Classes of 1972, 1975 and 1976 contributing to the project. In addition, the Association of Graduates-managed Dorothy D. and Joseph A. Moller Trust provided major funding for the project.

“Our classes were looking for a gift that would have long-lasting significance and impact,” said retired Col. Larry Fariss '75, the Class of '75 gift committee chair. “It’s totally been worth it, and we’re just so excited for this day. It totally exceeds our expectations, but not our hopes.”

The three classes raised more than \$3 million to help accomplish the Air Garden restoration.

The Air Garden was restored to its original design, with reflective pools, sunken planters and walkways amidst trees and plants.

During the restoration, the Air Garden also was enhanced by the addition of the 9/11 Memorial.



9/11 MEMORIAL ▲
▲ BRIG. GEN. ROBINSON RISNER MEMORIAL

“TO HAVE THE AIR GARDEN FINISHED AND RESTORED IS REALLY IMPORTANT FOR OUR ACADEMY,” SAID LT. GEN. RICHARD CLARK '86, USAFA SUPERINTENDENT. “LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY, THIS IS THE CENTERPIECE FOR OUR ACADEMY.”

SERVING GRADUATES AND HONORING HERITAGE

The USAFA Air Garden has been restored to its former glory, thanks to the generosity of the Classes of 1972, 1975 and 1976, along with funding from the Dorothy D. and Joseph A. Moller Trust.

\$100,000+ DONORS

We are grateful for the generosity and foresight of these 160 individuals, foundations and corporations who have committed \$100,000 or more toward the Defining Our Future campaign in support of the U.S. Air Force Academy. Commitments include cash donations, pledges and qualifying estate gifts made between April 1, 2018, and December 31, 2021.

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DEFINING OUR FUTURE

