



2016 National George Texido Legislative Officer of the Year

Lt. Col. James Matthews, Michigan Wing

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) volunteer Lt. Col. James Matthews re-joined CAP in 2005 as a member of Michigan Wing's Scott M. Burgess Composite Squadron and immediately took over as the deputy commander for cadets. While with the Scott M. Burgess Squadron, Matthews also served as the squadron's testing officer, aerospace education officer, and historian, before moving up to the wing level in 2007, as the assistant director of cadet programs. During his CAP career, Matthews has also served as a group cadet programs officer, group assistant inspector general, wing director of cadet programs, and instructor for cadet noncommissioned officers and region cadet leadership schools.

In August 2012, Matthews was appointed as the Michigan Wing government relations advisor, which had been vacant for almost six years. Over the course of a year and a half, Matthews met with over 80 percent of the Michigan state legislature and through a vigorous recruitment effort expanded the ranks of the legislative squadron from one member to 138. Matthews quickly worked with legislative members to increase their awareness of CAP and during these efforts, established legislation to provide CAP members with employment protection for those that respond to presidential or governor declared disasters, similar to the Reserve and National Guard. These efforts led to the passage of the 2016 Civil Air Patrol Employment Protection Act, signed by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder in July 2016.