



2024 National Award Winners

CAP's K-6th grade [Aerospace Connections in Education \(ACE\) program](#) began in 2007 as the Jr Cadet program. In 2008, the program name was changed to ACE and the sixth grade curriculum began being used in grades 6-8. Since the program's inception, over 638,000 students have been impacted. During the 2023-2024 AY alone, over 101K students were involved! Each year, those who are nominated for their stellar ACE work are considered for awards. Awards are included for the [ACE Plus Adopt program](#) as a component of the ACE program which connects CAP squadron as mentors for grades 5-8. The names found below are the award winners for 2024. Each award recipient will receive an award plaque and a grant award courtesy of the [Air & Space Forces Association Education Council](#).

Click on each blue award, below, for each winner's story!

[National ACE School of the Year: Grayhawk Elementary School](#)
[National ACE Coordinator of the Year: Grayhawk's Michelle Lindstrom](#)

~ Principal, Eli Hubbell, Scottsdale, AZ

Site of the 2024-2025 National ACE Liftoff Event on Oct 15, 2024!

[National ACE Teacher of the Year: Thomas Ellis, 5-8th Grade Science Teacher](#)
Palm Beach Day Academy, Palm Beach, FL

[National ACE Collaborative Teacher of the Year: Caitlin Hayes, STEM Teacher](#)
St. John the Apostle Catholic School, Virginia Beach, VA

[National ACE Resource Teacher of the Year: Kayla Kill](#)
LeMay Elementary School, Bellevue, NE

[TWO National ACE Students of the Year:](#)

[Mason Grinder, 6th Grade](#)

Macon County R-IV School, New Cambria, MO ~ Dawn Johnson, Teacher

[Kyle Adams, 6th Grade](#)

Palm Beach Day Academy, Palm Beach, FL ~ Thomas Ellis, Teacher

[National ACE Plus Adopt Collaborative Squadron and School Teams of the Year:](#)
[GLR-MI-059 Adrian Composite Squadron & Prairie Elementary School and](#)
[SER-FL-049 Ormond Beach Composite Squadron & Ormond Beach Middle School](#)
Adrian, Michigan, and Ormond Beach, Florida

How are ACE awards determined?

Nominations are accepted for the major ACE awards of National Teacher, School, and Student of the Year for the Aerospace Connections in Education (ACE) program.

For other ACE awards selected, to include the collaborative ACE Plus team award, the CAP National HQ ACE team in Montgomery, AL, identifies schools, teachers, and/or squadrons having gone above and beyond; uniquely standing out via their photos sent to the HQ team and their social media posts which tagged @CAPaerospace.

For all ACE participants for the upcoming 2024-2025 Academic Year, keep the ACE team informed of all being done with ACE students and remember to tag @CAPaerospace on any social media posts about your CAP work so that YOUR work will be noticed!

Points of Pride for 2023-2024

Exceeding the goal of 100,000 “faces of ACE” across the nation was the highest achievement of the year. Reaching 101, 384 students with 658 teachers from 548 schools in 48 states + Europe (DoD) was a significant milestone. (See ACE list by state [HERE.](#))

In addition to a variety of school types, there were Boys and Girls Clubs, Scout groups, Women in Aviation International (WAI) groups, after-school programs, museums, libraries, and summer camps all using the ACE program. Proudly, CAP had a large group of ACE Plus teams this year, as well.

- 98% educators view ACE as fitting well with standards; supporting STEM education; a valuable use of time; and a positive influence on behavior and learning.
- 78% of ACE schools are Title 1 Schools, therefore allowing CAP to reach a broad range of ethnicities and socio-economic demographics.

The new [ACE Plus: Squadron-Classroom Adopt program](#) expanded in its fourth year to have CAP squadrons connect with teachers to help teach the ACE lessons, share information about the CAP cadet program, coordinate field trips, and teach about a variety of STEM careers. Included in this year’s ACE Plus Adopt program was 8 Regions, 24 wings, 30 squadrons, 38 teachers, and 2,786 students. (See the outstanding ACE Plus award winners above.)

Through the Years

Since 2007 inception: over 638,000 ACE students in 50 states + DC & PR + Europe (DoD)

- ***The [Air & Space Forces Association](#) has been a steadfast partner, providing shirts and award grants. CAP appreciates their continued support.***
- To get a perspective of the overall ACE program and history, see the 16-year milestone and 2024 ACE awards story in CAP.NEWS, [HERE.](#) (July 2024)



2024 National ACE Student of the Year:
Kyle Adams, 6th Grade
Nominated by Teacher, Thomas Ellis
Palm Beach Day Academy, Palm Beach, FL

Kyle Adams, is being recognized by his teacher as an accomplished student of aerospace science, of strong mental agility, and of progressive thinking, which are just three terms that came to mind when thinking of Kyle Adams as a nominee for ACE Student of the Year by his teacher.

From Thomas Ellis:

“Having taught Kyle for three years now, I am thrilled to share that even as a fourth-grade student, he showed interest and promise in principles of engineering and design. Now in 6th grade, Kyle has developed into a student that is adept at not only the history behind aerospace science, but also the practical and engineering applications in so many of the topics we've studied. I have observed him leading and inspiring others in our classroom during group work. Outside of class. I have often observed him in our Maker's Space Laboratory, designing, developing and testing his latest inventions.

“In our 6th grade aeronautical engineering class this year, we decided to take on an extra project of assembling and painting a level 5 build of the Space Shuttle Endeavour. Few students had ever done any model building, so Kyle suggested we split into teams, with each team completing a different section of the shuttle. He led his team with poise and perseverance, completing the engine and tail section with precision. He then helped us research paint techniques to give the shuttle a weathered look as though it had just returned from space.

“As Kyle has progressed as a student, his interests have led him to explore several disciplines within aerospace science. A few of his endeavors this year are listed below.

- This winter, outside of school, Kyle attended The Virtual Youth STEM Conference hosted by Sci Tech Institute, a science-based organization in Arizona. Kyle was part of a team of students that connected virtually over three Saturdays to problem solve real world issues and design solutions to those issues. I attended these virtual sessions with Kyle.

- Presently, outside of his regular studies, Kyle is taking a 12-week online course titled: ‘A Beginner's Guide to Aeronautics, NASA Curriculum Course’ developed by NASA's Glenn Research Center; taught by Professor Mark Baraket.

- Kyle will be attending the Aerospace Engineering Camp at Duke University this summer through their pre-college continuing studies program.

- This summer, Kyle will attend Engineering Camp at The Greene School where he will build rockets, design mini cars, and collaborate to problem solve.

· Kyle is presently designing and 3D printing a replica of the Mars Rover with automatic foldable legs with remote control functionality and 90-degree steering.

“In conclusion, I wholeheartedly lend my full support to Kyle Adams as a nominee for ACE Student of the Year. Through awards like this one, we now have a process to identify, recognize, and develop academic talent to prepare the next generation of scientists, mathematicians, and engineers. This up-and-coming generation is here to help us solve the many problems and opportunities that lay before us on our own planet and beyond. Kyle will certainly be one of those engineers and awarding him as Aerospace Connections in Education Student of the Year would be an investment that you'll be proud of for years to come.”

***CONGRATULATIONS, KYLE ADAMS,
ONE OF TWO NATIONAL ACE STUDENTS OF THE YEAR!***

