PROGRAM GUIDE

CIVIL AIR PATROL

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

LOEWS KANSAS CITY
AUGUST 28-29, 2026



2026

Cessna | Beechcraft

BY TEXTRON AVIATION
SPECIAL MISSIONS

FROM CADET TO COCKPIT

In the heartland of America, Civil Air Patrol cadets discover what is possible. Training in a world-class fleet of Cessna® piston aircraft and advanced Garmin® G1000® NXi cockpits, they prepare for a future where the skies have no limits.

Textron Aviation Special Missions is proud to stand with you, shaping the next generation of aviation excellence.

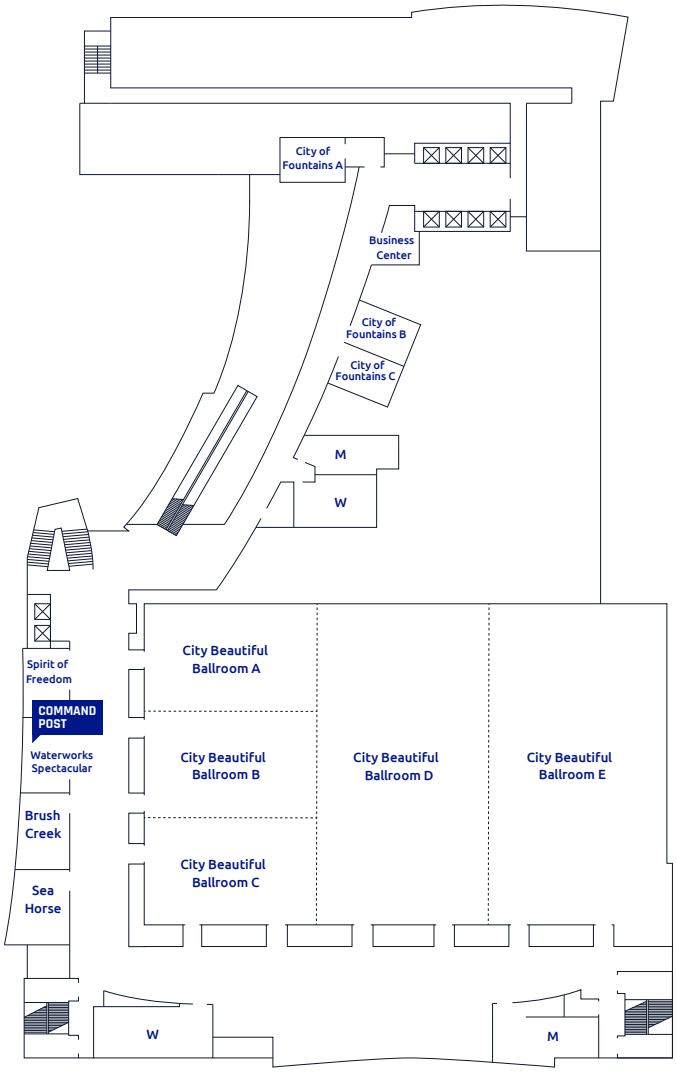


© 2026 Textron Aviation Inc. All rights reserved. Cessna® is a trademark or service mark of Textron Aviation Inc. or an affiliate and may be registered in the United States or other jurisdictions. Garmin® and G1000® are trademarks and/or service marks of their respective owners. The sale, export, and re-export of some configurations of Textron Aviation Special Mission aircraft, as well as the associated maintenance support, and unique technical data require U.S. Govt. export license approval under the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR: Title 22 C.F.R. Parts 120-130) and/or the U.S. Export Administration Regulations (EAR: Title 15 C.F.R. Parts 730 - 774).

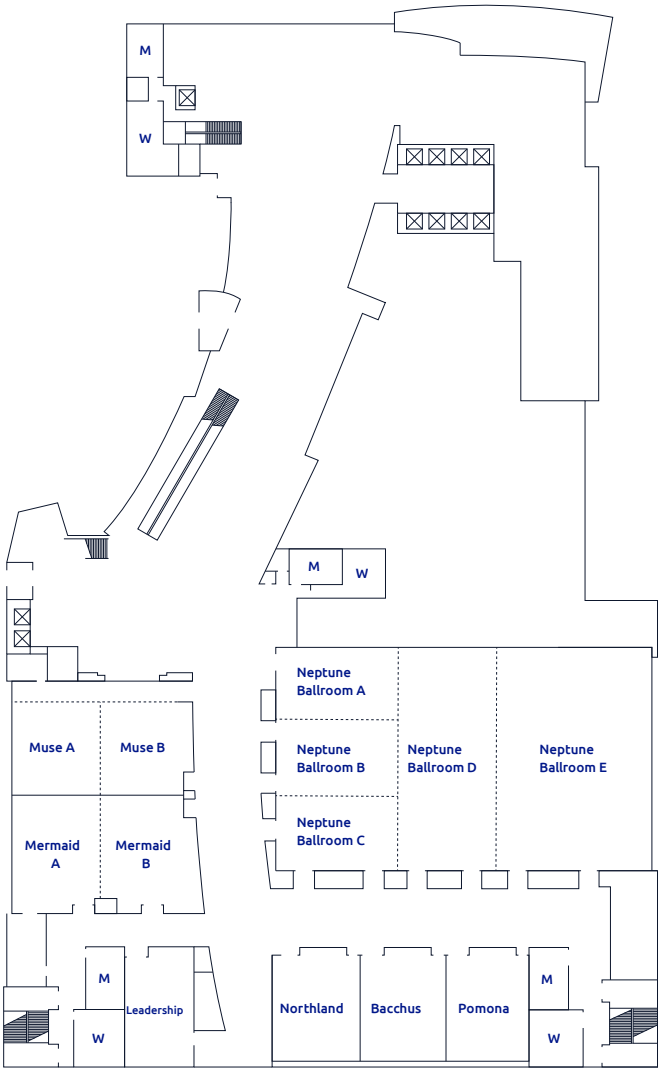
SECTIONS

HOTEL MAP.....3
HANGAR MAP.....5
WELCOME LETTERS.....6-7
MASTER SCHEDULE.....8-9
CAP LEADERSHIP.....10-11
IN REMEMBRANCE.....14
2026 AWARD WINNERS.....18-32
2026 MISSION AWARDS.....33
CAP HALL OF HONOR.....34

CIVIL AIR PATROL
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
2026 Kansas City



Ballroom Level



Junior Ballroom Level

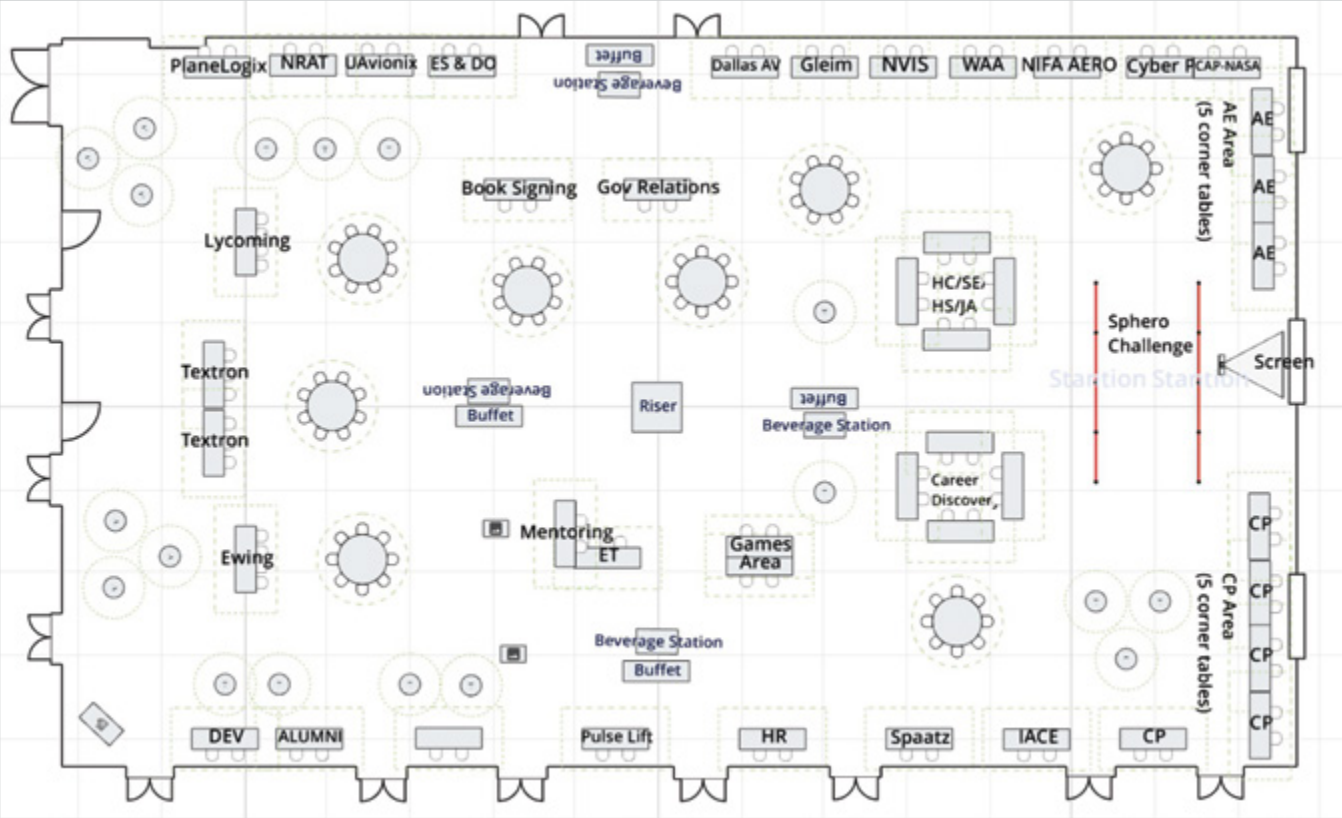


AMERICA'S
AIRCRAFT ENGINES, Inc.

FAA Approved Continental and Lycoming Engines

COMPLETE ENGINE OVERHAUL CAPABILITIES

info@overhaul.com • 888.371.1371 • 918.371.3000
2505 W. BROADWAY • COLLINSVILLE, OK 74021



Technisonic
TDFM 9000 series with MCP
TiL



- MCP allows connection to 2 external comm sources
- Cross band repeat, relay & simulcast
- P25FM includes: 136-174, 380-520 & 7/800 MHz
- Supports 3000 channels/200 zones

800-527-2581
dallasavionics.com
ISO 9001:2015/AS9100 REV D
DALLAS AVIONICS, INC.

PLANELOGIX™
PROTECT YOUR AIRCRAFT VALUE

TURN-KEY
MAINTENANCE RECORD
DIGITIZATION

The easiest way to protect and increase the value of your aircraft.

- **Protect your logbooks** from damage or loss
- **Find anything in seconds** 337s, 8130s, STCs — fully searchable
- **Track Maintenance** ADs, FARs, SBs, ICAs, and more
- **Increase resale value** decrease due diligence time
- **Catch and prevent errors** from mechanics and shops
- **Share records easily** banks, insurance, and more

SCAN FOR A QUOTE
JOIN US TODAY!
PLANELOGIX.COM

SECURE SHIPPING · FULLY SEARCHABLE · FAA COMPLIANT · AI TOOLS · SOC 2 TYPE 2

KANSAS CITY

QUINTON D. LUCAS
Mayor

July 6, 2026

Dear Civil Air Patrol Members and Guests:

I am pleased to welcome you as you all gather for your 2026 National Conference. The City of Kansas City is honored to host the dedicated volunteers, cadets, military partners, and the community leaders who make up the Civil Air Patrol.

For more than 80 years, the Civil Air Patrol has provided invaluable service to our nation through cadet programs, leadership development, aerospace education, and supporting communities in need. Your commitment to service and excellence continues to make meaningful differences across the country and inspire a future generation of leaders.

Thank you for your service and dedication. I hope you have an enjoyable visit to Kansas City and a wonderful conference.

Sincerely,



Quinton D. Lucas

City Hall, 414 East 12th St., Kansas City, MO 64106
(816) 513-3500
MayorQ@KCMO.org

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
CIVIL AIR PATROL
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA 36112-5937

Dear fellow CAP Members, Staff, and Guests-

Welcome to the 2026 CAP National Conference here at the wonderful Loews Kansas City Hotel and North Central Region! It's fitting that, during CAP's 85th year, we highlight our Cadet Programs mission in the region where the Cadet Program was born.

We are delighted that you have come to connect with your fellow CAP airmen, to collaborate among yourselves and with CAP's exceptional staff, sponsors, and supporters, and to celebrate the accomplishments of our people and of our units.

We have designed a fast-paced, learning-packed, and entertaining conference experience for you. Whether you are a leader in the Cadet Program, a member administering the program directly through your duties, or a member whose duties or activities touch cadets (and all members do), know that this conference will strengthen those connections and stimulate your commitment to our youth. No matter your specialty or job, this conference will explore the connections you have with our cadets.

To our cadets joining us this year, we are giving you your own experiences with dedicated activities and learning sessions created to build on what you are receiving at home.

We applaud your decision to attend this year's conference. Take full advantage of our learning sessions and our keynote events. Say hello to our partners when visiting the Hangar and take a moment to introduce yourselves to our staff. Congratulations to our annual award winners. Take what you learn at the conference home and share with your fellow members and friends.

Finally, we encourage you to explore Kansas City, home to many outstanding restaurants, museums, and other activities. It's not a visit to KC without eating barbeque!



Semper Vigilans!

Regena M. Aye

Maj. Gen. Regena M. Aye
CAP National Commander/CEO

MASTER SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28	ROOM
6:15-6:45AM I NATIONAL COMMANDER'S CALL TO PRAYER	CITY BEAUTIFUL C
6:45-7:45AM I BREAKFAST	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
7:30AM-5:00PM I VANGUARD OUTLET	CITY BEAUTIFUL A
8:00-9:00AM I OPENING- COMMANDER'S ADDRESS	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
9:00-9:30AM I AWARDS CEREMONY 1	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
9:45-10:30AM I LEARNING SESSION BLOCK 1	SEE POCKET SCHEDULE
9:45-11:30AM I CADET CAREER CONNECTIONS	CITY BEAUTIFUL B & PREFUNCTION
10:00AM-4:00PM I OPERATION PULSE LIFT BLOOD DRIVE	MERMAID A
10:30-11:30AM I HANGAR TIME & BEVERAGE BREAK	NEPTUNE BALLROOM
11:30AM-12:15PM I LEARNING SESSION BLOCK 2	SEE POCKET SCHEDULE
12:15-1:45PM I LUNCH	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
1:45-2:45PM I KEYNOTE: MAJ. TAYLOR HIESTER	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
2:45-3:15PM I AWARDS CEREMONY 2	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
3:15-4:00 I CAP-NASA MEET N' GREET	POMONA
3:15-4:15 I HANGAR TIME & BEVERAGE BREAK	NEPTUNE BALLROOM
4:15-5:00PM I LEARNING SESSION BLOCK 3	SEE POCKET SCHEDULE
5:00-6:00PM I CADET PROGRAMS ADULT RECEPTION	MERMAID B
6:00-7:00PM I JEWISH SHABBAT EDUCATIONAL SERVICE (OPEN TO ALL)	POMONA
7:00-8:00PM I JEWISH SHABBAT SEUDAH (MEAL) (REGISTRATION REQUIRED)	POMONA
7:00-8:30PM I CADET MYSTERY NIGHT ACTIVITY	TBA
HOURS POSTED ONSITE I OFFICIAL PHOTOS	CITY OF FOUNTAINS B

Please see Cadet or Senior Member pocket guides for learning session schedule and descriptions.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29	ROOM
5:45-6:45AM I FUN RUN	LOBBY
6:45-7:45AM I BREAKFAST	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
7:30-3:00PM I VANGUARD OUTLET	CITY BEAUTIFUL A
8:00-9:00AM I KEYNOTE: JOSEPH ACABA	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
9:00-9:30AM I AWARDS CEREMONY 3	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
9:45-10:30AM I LEARNING SESSION BLOCK 4	SEE POCKET SCHEDULE
9:45-10:30AM I SPAATZ GROUP PHOTO	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
10:30-11:30AM I HANGAR TIME AND BEVERAGE BREAK	NEPTUNE BALLROOM
11:30AM-12:15PM I LEARNING SESSION BLOCK 5	SEE POCKET SCHEDULE
12:15-1:45PM I LUNCH	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
1:45-2:30PM I DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES	SEE POCKET SCHEDULE
2:30-3:00PM I DEPARTMENT OFFICE HOURS	SEE POCKET SCHEDULE
3:00-4:00PM I HANGAR TIME AND BEVERAGE BREAK	NEPTUNE BALLROOM
4:00-4:30PM I HALL OF HONOR	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
4:30-4:55PM I CLOSING	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
5:00-5:30PM I CATHOLIC MASS	LEADERSHIP
5:00-5:30PM I PROTESTANT SERVICE	BACCHUS
6:00-7:00PM I VIP RECEPTION (INVITATION ONLY)	CITY BEAUTIFUL C
7:00-8:30PM I NATIONAL COMMANDER'S RECEPTION (OPTIONAL PURCHASE)	CITY BEAUTIFUL DE
7:00-8:30PM I CADET LOUNGE	MERMAID AB
HOURS POSTED ONSITE I OFFICIAL PHOTOS	CITY OF FOUNTAINS B

Please see Cadet or Senior Member pocket guides for learning session schedule and descriptions.

CIVIL AIR PATROL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

(As of Feb. 27, 2026)

AIR FORCE-SELECTED MEMBERS

Chair: Lt. Gen. Kirk Pierce, USAF (Ret.)

Brig. Gen. Matthew French, USAF

Brig. Gen. Christopher S. Walker, USAF (Ret.)

Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost, USAF (Ret.)

CIVIL AIR PATROL-SELECTED MEMBERS

Vice Chair: Col.. Rajesh Kothari, CAP

Col. Ross E. Veta, CAP

Lt. Col. Andrew J. Oppmann, CAP

Chief Master Sgt. Robert Dandridge, USAF (Ret.)

INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT & EDUCATION — JOINTLY APPOINTED MEMBERS

Dr. Sharon DeVivo
President, Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology

Capt. Mary Ann Schaffer
United Airlines

Brig. Gen. Bernie Skoch, USAF (Ret.)
Air & Space Forces Association

ADVISERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Maj. Gen. Regena M. Aye, CAP

Chief Executive Officer and National Commander of Civil Air Patrol

Col. Aaron Reid, USAF
CAP-USAF Commander

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Mr. Christopher Plamp
Chief Operating Officer of Civil Air Patrol

CIVIL AIR PATROL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

(As of Feb. 9, 2026)

Chair: Col. Rajesh Kothari, CAP
Managing Director, Cascade Partners

Vice Chair: Brig. Gen. Leon Johnson, USAF (Ret.)
Past President, Tuskegee Airmen Inc.

Mr. Tripp Adams
Defense Council, Truman National Security Project

Maj. Gen. Amy Courter, CAP
Implementer, EOS Worldwide

Capt. Clifton W. Curtis, Jr.
Retired, United Airlines

Dr. Sharon DeVivo
President, Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology

Capt. Deborah Hecker
American Airlines

Brig. Gen. Bernie Skoch, USAF (Ret.)
Air & Space Forces Association

Maj. Gen. Mark Smith, CAP
Past National Commander of Civil Air Patrol

Brig. Gen. Christopher Walker, USAF (Ret.)
Independent Consultant

Mr. Carlos Zendejas
Vice President, Horizon Air

GREAT LAKES REGION

Region Commander
Col. Curtis Boehmer

Illinois
Col. Alfredo Reynoso

Indiana
Col. Jamie Griffith

Kentucky
Col. Jaimie Henson

Michigan
Col. Eric Scott

Ohio
Col. David Dlugiewicz

Wisconsin
Col. Jeffrey Thomas

MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Region Commander
Col. Dennis Bissell

National Capitol Wing
Col. William Eliason

Delaware
Col. Kay Rudo

Maryland
Col. Brenda Reed

North Carolina
Col. Brendan Kearns

South Carolina
Col. James Brogan

Virginia
Col. Patrick Fulgham

West Virginia
Col. Deborah Butler-Case

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Region Commander
Col. Thomas Theis

Iowa
Col. Michael McClanahan

Kansas
Col. Eric Davis

Minnesota
Col. Jason Suby

Missouri
Col. Michael Toedebusch

North Dakota
Col. Roy Barden

Nebraska
Col. David Plum

South Dakota
Col. Kevin Pegelow

NORTHEAST REGION

Region Commander
Col. James Ridley

Connecticut
Col. Ashley LaPlante

Massachusetts
Col. Carleton Jones

Maine
Col. Mark Hyland

New Hampshire
Col. Dominic Goupil

New Jersey
Col. Amy Myzie

New York
Col. Michael Woolfolk

Pennsylvania
Col. Leslie Herr

Rhode Island
Col. Warren Weiss

Vermont
Col. Brian Benedict

PACIFIC REGION

Region Commander
Col. Brett Dolnick

Alaska
Col. Derk MacPherson

California
Col. Craig Newton

Hawaii
Col. Dana McLaughlin

Nevada
Col. Peter Goertzen

Oregon
Col. Scott Maguire

Washington
Col. James Wiggs

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

Region Commander
Col. John Rhoades

Colorado
Col. Michael Fay

Idaho
Col. Kirk Dehn

Montana
Col. Matthew Bolin

Utah
Col. Andreas Wesemann

Wyoming
Col. Rodney Burnett

SOUTHEAST REGION

Region Commander
Col. Jeffrey Garrett

Alabama
Col. Kim Miller

Florida
Col. David Panzera

Georgia
Col. Michael Willis

Mississippi
Col. Gary Hornosky

Puerto Rico
Col. Ruben Hernandez

Tennessee
Col. Tracy Scantland

SOUTHWEST REGION

Region Commander
Col. David Roberts

Arkansas
Col. Charles Rine

Arizona
Col. Linda Yaeger

Louisiana
Col. Todd Scioneaux

New Mexico
Col. John Orton

Oklahoma
Col. David McCollum

Texas
Col. Donald Gulliksen

NATIONAL CONFERENCE SPONSORS

TITLE SPONSOR

Cessna | Beechcraft
BY TEXTRON AVIATION
SPECIAL MISSIONS

GOLD SPONSORS

AMERICA'S AIRCRAFT ENGINES, Inc.

LYCOMING

EWING ENGINEERED SOLUTIONS

BRONZE SPONSORS

AC Supply

MTSU I AM trueBLUE

NVIS Communications

Gleim AVIATION

REMEMBER ME WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

uAvionix

PLANELOGIX

DALLAS AVIONICS, INC.

PATRON SPONSORS

Gallagher
Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting

Integrated Fiduciary Advisory Services
Supports Civil Air Patrol

Skydio

IN-KIND SPONSORS

WELLS PRINTING • PROMOTIONAL • MAILING

davis direct
On Target. On Time.

LIGHTSPEED

PARTNER

Vanguard
"OUR NATION'S INSIGNIA"



Ewing is proud to support your mission.

We are grateful for the dedication and service of Civil Air Patrol.

MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS
Platinum Channel Partner





Civil Air Patrol Ground Team Radio Kit

Visit Us in The Hangar

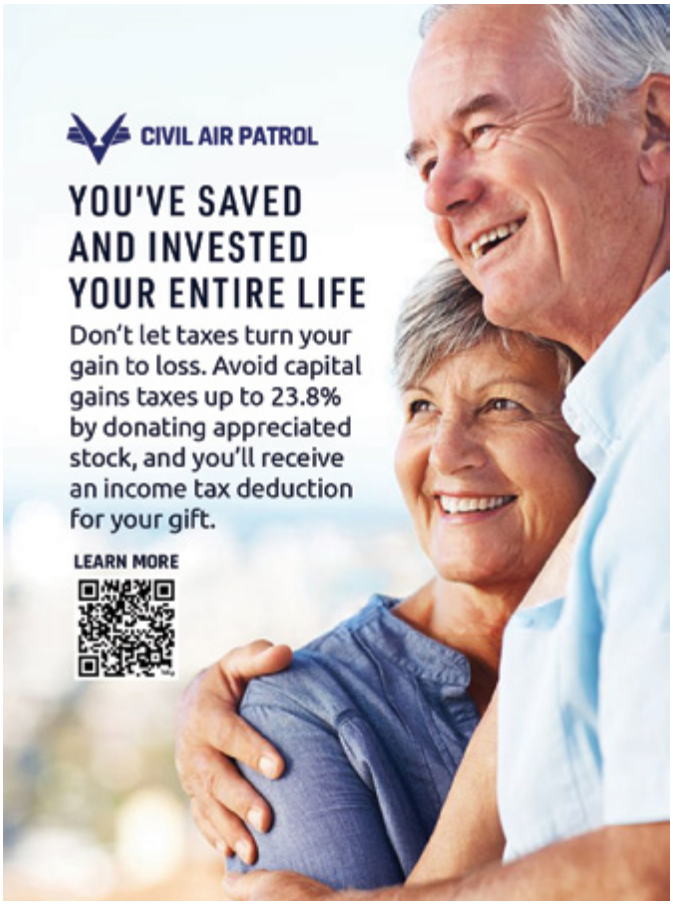
Contact us today:
ewinges.com | (800) 394-6496

MOTOROLA, MOTO, MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS, and the Stylized M Logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Motorola Trademark Holdings, and are used under license. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. © 2026 Motorola Solutions, Inc. All rights reserved.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF FELLOW MEMBERS

FOR THE PERIOD OF AUGUST 16 2025- JULY 5, 2026

Lt. Col. Elizabeth A. Altzman | Pennsylvania Wing
Maj. Steven E. Bailey | Arkansas Wing
1st Lt. Jason M. Barnes | Arizona Wing
Maj. Terry H. Bass | New Mexico Wing
Lt. Col. Carol A. Baumgartner | Rocky Mountain Region
Lt. Col. Robert B. Becker | Illinois Wing
Sgt. Craig A. Beins | Michigan Wing
Col. Mary D. Berkowitz | Louisiana Wing
Lt. Col. Donald E. Blumenfeld Jr. | Northeast Region
Lt. Col. Michael P. Boehme | Oregon Wing
Maj. Donald E. Brewer Jr. | New Jersey Wing
Lt. Col. Larry Brown | Maine Wing
Maj. Robert B. Byrne | Arkansas Wing
Maj. Greg Carpenter | Washington Wing
Col. Kenneth E. Chapman | Northeast Region
Maj. Kestra Lynn Childers | Alabama Wing
Maj. Lucius Ross Clement | Alaska Wing
C/SrA Kathryn Cole | Oklahoma Wing
Capt. Frank Conti | New York Wing
SM James E. Cornwell | New York Wing
Maj. Donald R. Cuva | Tennessee Wing
Lt. Col. Warren B. Davis | Washington Wing
SM Shaffer T. Day III | New York Wing
Lt. Col. Edmund J. Donovan | New York Wing
Capt. Ernest J. Drew | South Carolina Wing
Maj. Bryan E. Durant | Nevada Wing
Lt. Col. Andrew J. Feldman | New York Wing
Lt. Col. John W. Fletcher | Great Lakes Region
Capt. Ann Marie Franzen | Florida Wing
Maj. Robert L. Frayser | Kansas Wing
Capt. Maria H. Giles | Florida Wing
Capt. Laurence B. Gilliam | Colorado Wing
2nd Lt. Joseph J. Gmitter | Minnesota Wing
Maj. William T. Graham | North Carolina Wing
Lt. Col. Richard A. Hagmann | Washington Wing
Capt. Pauline A. Heisner | Florida Wing
2nd Lt. Yoichiro Hibino | Washington Wing
Maj. Ray Hischke | Texas Wing
Lt. Col. Keith G. Hodgin Jr. | North Carolina Wing
Lt. Col. James M. Howell Jr. | Oregon Wing
1st Lt. Harley J. Huntemann | National Capital Wing
Lt. Col. Charles A. James | Tennessee Wing
Lt. Col. Joel Katz | Puerto Rico Wing
Lt. Col. Jerry L. Keesee | Washington Wing
Maj. Barry D. Knight | Virginia Wing
Maj. Teri H. Knowles | Maryland Wing
2nd Lt. Douglas M. Kulik | Minnesota Wing
Maj. Mark A. Kunkowski | National Headquarters
Lt. Col. James H. Lacey Jr. | National Capital Wing
Maj. Jacqueline E. Lambert | New Hampshire
Col. Bill G. Lane | Tennessee Wing
Capt. William A. Lindner | South Carolina Wing
Lt. Col. James L. Lowther | National Capital Wing
SM Alice Ludlow | Utah Wing
Col. Dennis Manzanares | Southwest Region
2nd Lt. Richard Millais | California Wing
Lt. Col. Charlotte M. Miller | Minnesota Wing
Lt. Col. George C. Minnich | Washington Wing
1st Lt. Antony D. Mitchell | Hawaii Wing
Lt. Col. Gary K. Moore | Missouri Wing
SM Kristen E. Morris | Minnesota Wing
Lt. Col. Klaus E. Mueller | Missouri Wing
Capt. Melanie Niedfeldt | Rocky Mountain Region
Capt. Charles B. Nosil | Georgia Wing
1st Lt. Joseph F. Orawczyk | Tennessee Wing
2nd Lt. Jon H. Orr | Alaska Wing
Capt. John H. Peake | Maryland Wing
Lt. Col. James A. Pierce | West Virginia Wing
1st Lt. Leta L. Piper | Michigan Wing
Maj. Robert A. Poggioli | New York Wing
Lt. Col. Linda S. Poland | Ohio Wing
Col. Richard A. Probst | Vermont Wing
Col. Ronald A. Quander | Mid-Atlantic Region
Capt. Fredrick H. Rainear | Pennsylvania Wing
1st Lt. Charlotte M. Redman | Maryland Wing
Lt. Col. Kevin W. Redman | Maryland Wing
Maj. Kyle L. Rossi | Arizona Wing
Maj. Tom R. Sanders | Texas Wing
Lt. Col. Leonard S. Schindler | Northeast Region
Lt. Col. Brett A. Slagle | Southeast Region
Lt. Col. Earl E. Sleeper | Texas Wing
Lt. Col. Derek V. Stacker | Illinois Wing
Maj. Anthony Stewart III | South Carolina Wing
1st Lt. Natee Sumethasorn | Texas Wing
C/Amn Aiden Sumpter | Ohio Wing
Lt. Col. Manuel F. Vega | National Capital Wing
Maj. Marsha J. Williams | Missouri Wing
C/SrA Brayden William Wilson | Georgia Wing
2nd Lt. Chester Wojnicki | Illinois Wing
Lt. Col. Arthur E. Woodgate | Southwest Region
Maj. Charles D. Young | Florida Wing
Lt. Col. Roland J. Zavada | New York Wing


CIVIL AIR PATROL
YOU'VE SAVED AND INVESTED YOUR ENTIRE LIFE
Don't let taxes turn your gain to loss. Avoid capital gains taxes up to 23.8% by donating appreciated stock, and you'll receive an income tax deduction for your gift.
LEARN MORE


CIVIL AIR PATROL
tab
donate
shift
DOUBLE THE DONATION!
Did you know that many companies match employee donations and provide grants for volunteer hours? Visit GoCivilairPatrol.com/match to see if your employer participates.
LEARN MORE


CIVIL AIR PATROL
LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY
Become a member of the Semper Vigilans Society by including Civil Air Patrol in your estate plans. Your gift doesn't cost you anything today and leaves a legacy for tomorrow.
LEARN MORE

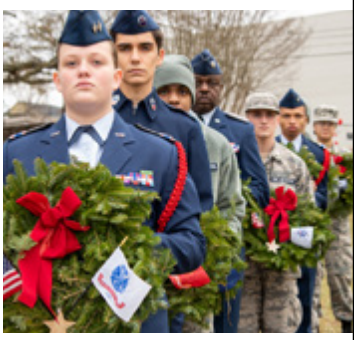

CODAN COMMUNICATIONS
NVIS Communications
CODAN COMMUNICATION
SENTRY-H 6120-BM
BE HEARD
ON THE FRONT LINE
TACTICAL SOLUTIONS
JOHN ROSICA | JOHN@NVISCOM.COM
ASHBURN, VA 703-729-1068 X105
LOS ANGELES, CA 408-782-8002 X105





National Wreaths Across America Day:
Saturday, December 19, 2026

JOIN THE MISSION TO REMEMBER, HONOR, TEACH

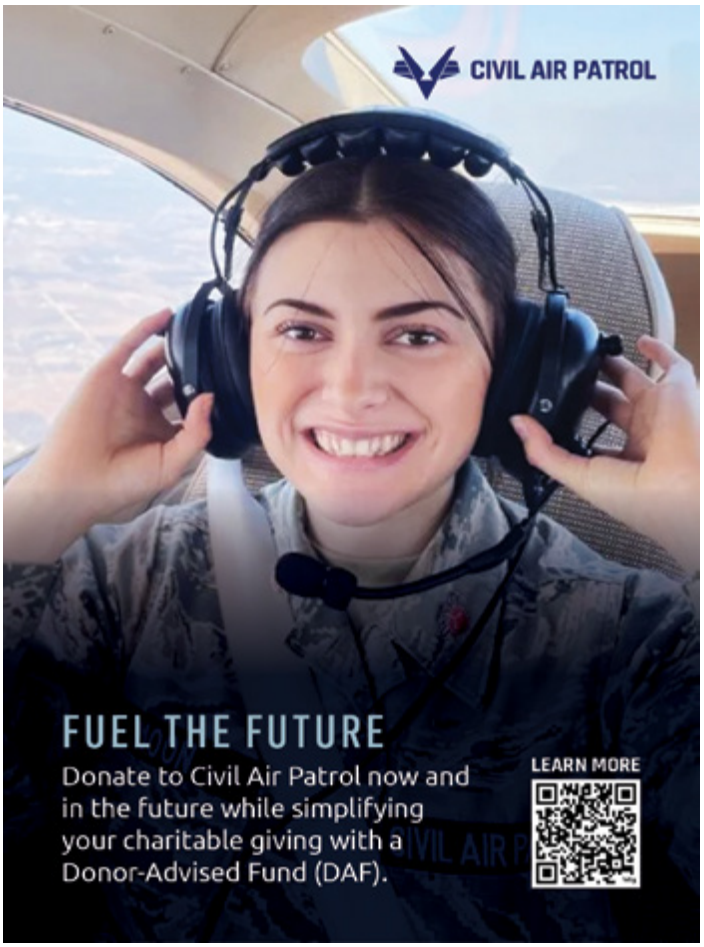


The **Civil Air Patrol** has been one of the largest national partners of Wreaths Across America since the organization was formed in 2007. Through the Wreaths Across America Group Sponsorship Program, cadets have the opportunity to again honor the veterans laid to rest in their community and, in the process, help raise funds for their squadron. With each $17 wreath sponsored through your group, you will receive $5 back for your own programs.

REMEMBER ME
WREATHS across AMERICA
Honoring 250 Years of American Heroes

To learn more about how to get your Squadron involved, visit **www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/fundraising**





AC Supply

CAP BONUS! Get 5% off of Estes Items!
Use coupon code CAP5 at checkout.

Rockets shown fulfill Saturn requirements in the Civil Air Patrol Model Rocketry Publication.



COMPARE & SAVE!

ALL YOUR MODEL ROCKETRY AND STEM NEEDS
EVERYDAY LOW PRICES
FAST TURNAROUND, KNOWLEDGABLE STAFF

www.acsupplyco.com

1746 Winding Glen Dr - PO Box 1523 - St Charles, Mo. - 63302
1.800.536.0238 1.800.842.7859 fax 1.800.466.4354
email: store@acsupplyco.com www.acsupplyco.com

Cross-country Navigation



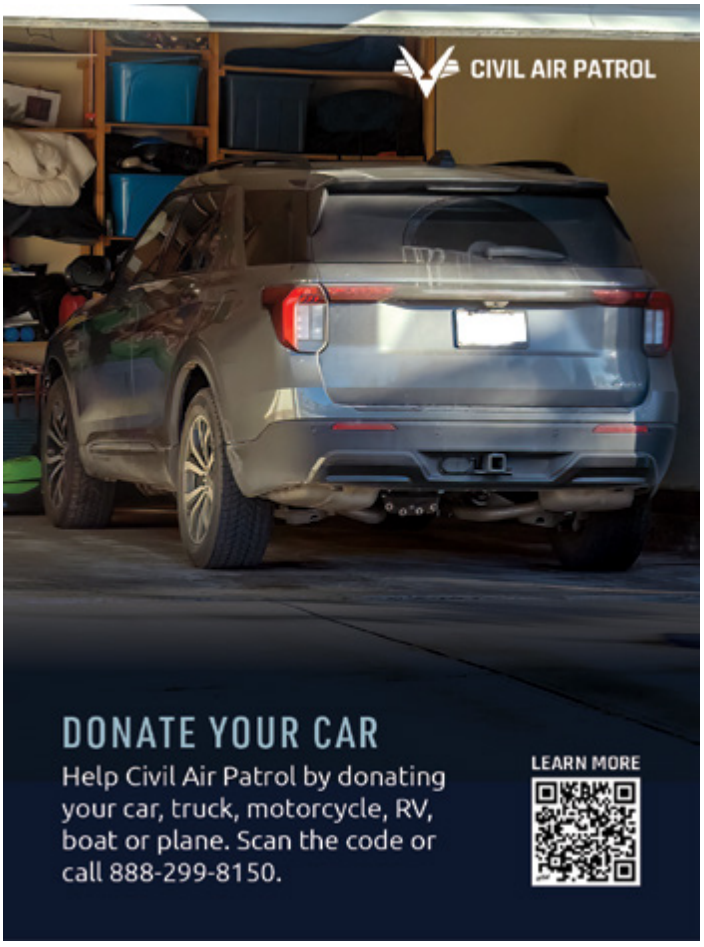
Gleim AVIATION

Take Flight with Confidence.

Inspire the next generation of pilots with our Cross Country Navigation STEM Kit—an immersive, hands-on experience that teaches real-world flight planning, navigation, and aeronautical decision-making.

To receive your kit, apply to the Civil Air Patrol STEM Kit Program.

GleimAviation.com | 800.874.5346





CADET OF THE YEAR

Cadet Col. Benjamin Howard Clayton

TEXAS WING

Cadet Lt. Col. Benjamin Clayton has distinguished himself through exceptional leadership, achievement and service during a Civil Air Patrol career marked by rapid advancement and sustained excellence. Since joining CAP in 2022, he has become one of Texas Wing's most accomplished cadet leaders, earning recognition at the squadron, wing, region and national levels.

As cadet commander of the Thunderbird Composite Squadron, Cadet Lt. Col. Clayton led one of the wing's fastest-growing squadrons, increasing membership from 47 to 70 cadets while strengthening training and leadership development. His efforts helped the unit earn its third consecutive Quality Cadet Unit Award. He also served in key leadership roles at Texas Wing encampments, NCO School and leadership academies, culminating in his selection as cadet commander for the 2025 Texas Wing Winter Encampment.

Beyond command, Cadet Lt. Col. Clayton made lasting contributions to cadet education and doctrine. He helped modernize the Cadet Command Staff College curriculum, authored and co-authored Maj. training publications, and developed instructional materials that continue to shape leadership training across Texas Wing. His competitive achievements include victories at the wing, region and national levels, most recently leading his squadron team to the 2025 Texas Wing Cadet Competition championship.

A graduate of National Blue Beret, he also excels academically, maintaining strong university and ROTC performance while serving in multiple Army ROTC leadership positions. Through his integrity, humility, mentorship and commitment to servant leadership, Cadet Lt. Col. Clayton exemplifies the highest ideals of Civil Air Patrol.



SENIOR MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Col. John M. Knowles

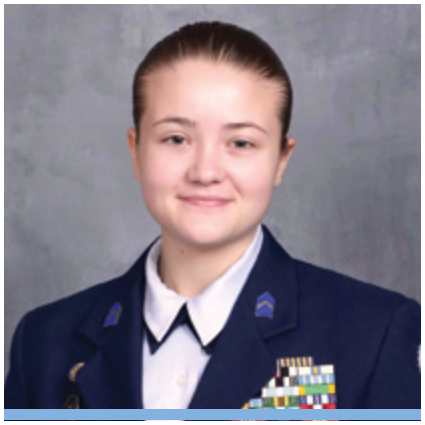
MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Col. John Knowles has devoted more than 50 years of distinguished service to Civil Air Patrol, demonstrating sustained excellence in leadership, emergency services, cadet development, professional development and legislative advocacy. A former cadet who earned the Gen. Ira C. Eaker Award, he has served in positions of increasing responsibility from squadron staff officer to wing, region and national leader, influencing CAP programs and operations nationwide.

As commander of Maryland Wing and later Middle East Region, now Mid-Atlantic Region, Col. Knowles expanded membership, strengthened operational readiness, modernized command processes and secured resources that continue to benefit members. His leadership supported major disaster responses, enhanced CAP-U.S. Air Force partnerships and earned recognition for mission success and organizational growth.

A nationally recognized emergency services leader, Col. Knowles helped establish CAP's partnership with FEMA as an original liaison to the National Response Coordination Center. He supported numerous federally significant disaster responses, including hurricanes, floods and COVID-19 operations, helping position CAP as a trusted interagency partner.

He also made lasting contributions to cadet programs and member wellness, helping develop national cadet initiatives, directing training activities, supporting flight scholarships and leading creation of CAP's Five Pillars of Wellness and Wingman Support Day. Through decades of mentorship, innovation and service, he strengthened Civil Air Patrol and inspired generations of members.



AIR FORCE SERGEANTS ASSOCIATION CADET NCO OF THE YEAR

Cadet 2nd Lt. Kassi N. Hirt

KENTUCKY WING

Before earning her cadet officer rank, Cadet 2d Lt. Kassi Hirt distinguished herself as an exceptional cadet NCO through outstanding leadership, scholarship and service. She built a reputation as a servant-leader whose commitment to excellence strengthened her squadron and inspired her peers.

As Cadet Leadership Education NCO, Cadet Hirt mentored more than 20 cadets in leadership, drill, customs and courtesies, fostering discipline, teamwork and esprit de corps. Serving as Squadron Cadet Advisory Council assistant, she represented cadet interests and contributed to wing-level initiatives. During Wilderness First Aid training, she voluntarily organized study groups for struggling classmates, helping achieve a 100% success rate and demonstrating her dedication to the success of others.

Cadet Hirt earned distinction as Tennessee Wing Encampment Honor Graduate, ranking among more than 120 cadets through superior professionalism, leadership and achievement. She also excelled as a cadet Maj. and vice corps commander in Air Force JROTC, serving as second-in-command of a 100-member corps while participating in the Kitty Hawk Air Society, Drill Team, Marksmanship Team and Academic Bowl Team.

Passionate about aviation and mentorship, Cadet Hirt has logged flight hours toward FAA certification, participates in Young Eagles ground school and actively recruits and develops new cadets. Selected for the prestigious Four-Star Leadership Program with Gen. Tommy Franks, she exemplifies leadership rooted in accountability and service.



AEROSPACE EDUCATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Capt. Krystal N. Swain

LOUISIANA WING

Capt. Krystal Swain demonstrated exceptional achievement in aerospace education through innovation, leadership and dedication to student success at Dutchtown Middle School in Geismar, La. Her passion for STEM was reflected in a dynamic, hands-on curriculum that inspired strong student engagement and interest in aviation and aerospace careers.

Recognized for her leadership, Swain was selected by her district to develop a comprehensive STEM program for middle school educators in her parish. She established a premier Aviation STEM Lab featuring Civil Air Patrol flight simulators and remote-controlled aircraft kits, providing immersive, real-world aerospace experiences. Her curriculum integrated CAP resources, the Aerospace Connections in Education program, and NASA and Jet Propulsion Laboratory materials aligned with Louisiana state and Next Generation Science Standards. Students engaged in research, engineering design, rocket launches, drone operations and studies of aircraft and space vehicles, including projects examining aircraft interiors, operating costs and airline ticket pricing.

Swain extended her impact by mentoring students into the Ascension Parish Composite Squadron, sponsoring a 55-student after-school STEM program and supporting the Women in STEM Club at Dutchtown High School. She also contributed to statewide science leadership, standards development and assessment design.

SQUADRON OF DISTINCTION AND BRIG. GEN. F. WARD REILLY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Dothan Composite Squadron

ALABAMA WING

The Dothan Composite Squadron distinguished itself through exceptional performance, professionalism and dedication to Civil Air Patrol. Demonstrating excellence across all mission areas, the squadron achieved 113 cadet promotions, including one Spaatz Award, one Eaker Award, one Earhart Award, two Billy Mitchell Awards, eight Wright Brothers Awards and 21 Curry Awards. Cadets captured first place in the 2025 Alabama Wing Cadet Competition and third place in the Fall 2024 CyberPatriot competition. The squadron also organized Alabama Wing's first NRA Marksman Weekend, with 21 cadets earning marksmanship recognition. Aerospace education efforts included aviation experiences at Cairns Army Airfield and support for Experimental Aircraft Association youth programs. Two cadets earned CAP flight scholarships and completed private pilot certificates.

In emergency services, the squadron logged 277.9 flight hours while maintaining a 95.6% mission-capable rate. Members supported search and rescue exercises, Homeland Security and Department of Defense missions, Operation American Shield and fire patrol support for Florida Wing. Squadron members also served in wing, region and national leadership positions, including encampment, honor guard and cadet leadership assignments. For the fourth consecutive year, Dothan earned a perfect 10 of 10 Quality Unit Award score, placing it among a select group of units nationwide to achieve that milestone.

Squadron Commander, Maj. Joseph R. Smallen, is the recipient of the Brig. Gen. F. Ward Reilly Leadership Award in recognition for his leadership and dedication to the squadron.



MAJ. GEN. JEANNE M. HOLM AEROSPACE EDUCATION OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Capt. David D. Wells

TENNESSEE WING

Capt. David Wells distinguished himself as an exceptional leader in aerospace education through innovative programming, dynamic instruction and community outreach. A Spaatz cadet (No. 704) who rejoined Civil Air Patrol in 2022, he quickly became aerospace education officer for the Sunsphere Cadet Squadron in Tennessee, where he began transforming STEM engagement for cadets and the public.

In 2024, he conceived and led the Space, Telescopes, Astronomy and Rocket Exercises (STAR EX), a symposium uniting CAP cadets and nonmember students. Expanded in 2025, STAR EX II featured presenters from academia, NASA and the Vatican Observatory, including a live appearance by Axiom-2 astronaut John Shoffner. Participants engaged in hands-on STEM experiences, including solar observation and model rocketry, increasing interest in aerospace careers.

Wells broadened CAP's impact by organizing a winter lecture series in partnership with the Smoky Mountain Astronomy Society and local libraries. He presented at the 2025 CAP National Aerospace Education Officers School, providing instruction on telescope use and astrophotography, and led a popular stargazing event.

He directed a week-long Aerospace Career Exploration Academy, developed high school aerospace curriculum and conducted more than 10 outreach programs as a NASA Solar System Ambassador, reaching more than 400 individuals and increasing public awareness. In recognition of his contributions, Wells was selected as the 2026 CAP-NASA Aviation Skywatch Mission director, reflecting his outstanding leadership and national impact.



LT. COL. T. KEITH RIDDLE AIRCREW MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Maj. Timothy W. Maynard

OREGON WING

Capt. Timothy Maynard demonstrated extraordinary aviation skill and professionalism as a Civil Air Patrol mission pilot, earning distinction as Aircrew Member of the Year. Widely respected for his commitment to safety and excellence, he holds extensive FAA certifications, including CFI, CFII, MEI, AGI, IGI and A&P/IA, as well as numerous CAP qualifications, including mission pilot, instructor pilot, transport pilot, check pilot examiner and mission check pilot examiner.

In Oregon Wing, Maynard provided nearly 200 flight hours supporting pilot training, onboarding, orientation flights and emergency services missions. In 2025, he flew nearly 10 percent of the wing's A- and B-mission hours, ranking second overall. His instruction directly contributed to the qualification of six new pilots during the past five years through squadron ground school and flight check preparation.

He routinely supports national-level missions, including a 2025 deployment to Kauai, Hawaii, where he assisted CAP and the U.S. Navy by flying operational sorties and serving as senior flight release officer. He also served as a CAP volunteer flight instructor for the U.S. Air Force Rated Preparatory Program, providing comprehensive ground, simulator and flight instruction to active-duty airmen.

A pilot for more than 50 years and a certified flight instructor for more than 40 years, Maynard has taught in diverse environments, including mountain, float and ski flying. In April 2025, he received the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award, recognizing a lifetime of safe aviation excellence.



FRANK G. BREWER MEMORIAL AEROSPACE AWARD CADET CATEGORY

Cadet Lt. Col. Mark D. McManaman

NORTH CAROLINA WING

Cadet Lt. Col. Mark McManaman distinguished himself through exceptional leadership, innovation and mentorship in aerospace education. Serving as cadet commander and cadet aerospace education officer for the Raleigh-Wake Composite Squadron, he transformed the unit's aerospace education program by developing and teaching original lessons on orbital mechanics, unmanned aircraft systems, aerodynamics and aviation weather. His efforts led to numerous cadet achievements, including aircraft ground handling, Wing Runner, model rocketry and FAA TRUST certifications.

A passionate advocate for hands-on learning, McManaman designed aerospace challenges, created a custom drone obstacle course and organized an educational visit to a local glider port, introducing cadets to unique aviation experiences. He also served as captain of his squadron's StellarXplorers team, leading it to the national semifinals while mentoring junior members in space operations concepts.

His impact extended well beyond Civil Air Patrol through community outreach that introduced more than 12,000 North Carolinians to aerospace education. Through STEM demonstrations, school programs, aviation events and science festivals, he inspired young people to explore aviation and space-related careers. At the regional and national levels, he served as cadet commander of the Air Force Civil Engineer Academy National Cadet Special Activity and as a Mid-Atlantic Region Leadership Exploration Advancement Program intern, helping develop STEM resources and educational opportunities for cadets across the region.



FRANK G. BREWER MEMORIAL AWARD SENIOR MEMBER CATEGORY

1st Lt. Jason M. Repak

SOUTH CAROLINA WING

1st Lt. Jason Repak advanced aerospace education within the Grand Strand Composite Squadron and the surrounding community through innovation, initiative, and leadership in 2025, he developed and implemented a hands-on aerospace curriculum that significantly increased cadet engagement, achievement and interest in STEM and aviation.

Through a comprehensive model rocketry program featuring classroom instruction, supervised construction and flight operations, 1st Lt. Repak guided 13 cadets in earning Model Rocketry Badges. He further expanded STEM education through circuitry and renewable energy activities, resulting in four cadets earning STEM Badges. His commitment to aviation education also strengthened the squadron's orientation flight program, helping achieve an 85% first-flight participation rate.

Beyond the squadron, 1st Lt. Repak represented Civil Air Patrol at career days, STEM events, open houses and trade shows, while promoting CAP's missions through local radio interviews. He also organized aerospace experiences for cadets, including visits to the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, participation in the Wings Over Wayne Air Show STEM program and interactions with military aviation professionals. As leader of the squadron's NASA Aviation Weather Mission, he integrated national-level aerospace curriculum into local training. His efforts resulted in expanded outreach, increased cadet retention and the most productive year of aerospace achievement in the squadron's recent history.

FRANK G. BREWER MEMORIAL AEROSPACE AWARD ORGANIZATION CATEGORY

Joint Base Cape Cod

MASSACHUSETTS

Joint Base Cape Cod has been an exceptional and enduring partner to Civil Air Patrol, supporting aerospace education and cadet development at the squadron, wing, region and national levels for decades. Home to major U.S. Air Force, Army National Guard, Coast Guard and Space Force units, JBCC provides unparalleled access to military expertise, facilities and real-world mission environments that enrich CAP programs and inspire future aerospace leaders.

Since 2018, Coastal Patrol 18 Squadron has operated from a dedicated facility within the Massachusetts Air National Guard complex provided at no cost by JBCC. The facility includes classrooms, offices, drill space and advanced training resources, including flight simulators, that enable hands-on aerospace education and immersive learning experiences for cadets and senior members.

JBCC leadership has fostered a strong partnership with CAP by integrating members into the broader installation community and facilitating regular engagement with military units. At the wing and national levels, JBCC has hosted the Massachusetts Wing Summer Encampment annually since 2017, providing housing, dining facilities, classrooms and training areas that support cadet leadership development and aerospace education. Cadets benefit directly from mentorship by service members and firsthand exposure to active aerospace, defense and emergency response operations.

Through its sustained commitment, shared resources and active mentorship, Joint Base Cape Cod has significantly advanced Civil Air Patrol's aerospace education mission, strengthened military-community partnerships and positively influenced thousands of cadets while exemplifying the highest standards of partnership and service.



FRANK G. BREWER MEMORIAL AWARDS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT CATEGORY

Lt. Col. Rodney A. DeWeese

SOUTH DAKOTA WING

Lt. Col. Rodney "Buck" DeWeese is recognized for a lifetime of exceptional contributions to Civil Air Patrol Aerospace Education and youth development. Since joining CAP in 1998, he has served as the driving force behind aerospace education in the South Dakota Wing, providing more than 25 years of continuous leadership as a squadron and wing aerospace education officer and mentor. His vision transformed aerospace education from isolated activities into a sustainable, wing-wide program that continues to inspire cadets, educators and senior members.

In 2016, DeWeese established the South Dakota Wing Aerospace Education Weekend, an annual hands-on program featuring orientation flights, rocketry, drones, flight simulators and STEM activities. He also secured grant funding that enabled 35 cadets and 15 senior members to attend EAA AirVenture, exposing participants to world-class aerospace opportunities and inspiring future aviation careers. As a mission pilot, orientation pilot, glider tow pilot and instructor, he logged more than 1,000 CAP flight hours, flew more than 100 orientation rides and supported more than 100 additional glider sorties. Even after retiring from active flying, he continued preparing cadets through simulator instruction, flight briefings and mentorship. His outreach efforts included classroom visits, teacher orientation flights and support to local educators across South Dakota. Through decades of innovation, leadership and service, DeWeese has strengthened CAP Aerospace Education and positively influenced generations of cadets.



JOHN V. "JACK" SORENSON CADET PROGRAMS OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Lt. Col. Jason W. Quick

TEXAS WING

Lt. Col. Jason Quick's service as a cadet programs officer, squadron commander, group commander and director of the Medical Orientation and Training School National Cadet Special Activity, has focused on consistently advancing cadet development and creating expanded opportunities for future leaders.

A dedicated mentor, Lt. Col. Quick has fostered an environment where cadets thrive academically, physically and emotionally. Through personalized guidance and leadership development, he has helped numerous cadets advance in rank, assume leadership positions and earn significant recognition. His focus on mentorship has empowered cadets to achieve their goals while inspiring others to excel.

Lt. Col. Quick has also enhanced the cadet experience through innovative programming, introducing flight training opportunities, leadership challenges, community service projects and career exploration initiatives in medical and emergency management fields. His efforts increased participation, strengthened morale and broadened cadets' understanding of professional pathways aligned with CAP's missions.

As director of the Medical Orientation and Training School, he expanded access to emergency management and medical education, helping introduce thousands of participants to career fields that led to nationally recognized certifications. His leadership, vision and commitment to excellence have strengthened CAP programs at every level.



CHAPLAIN (MAJ. GEN.) ROBERT P. TAYLOR CHAPLAIN OF THE YEAR

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Lawrence R. Burns

NEW MEXICO WING

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Lawrence R. Burns demonstrated outstanding leadership, mentorship, and ministry support to the New Mexico Wing. He successfully mentored three Chaplains to higher ratings, onboarded a new Chaplain, and provided worship services at wing encampment. He coordinated a Chaplain Support Team for the 2026 encampment operations and coached chaplain support for the Cadet Leadership Academy.

Chaplain Burns delivered invocations at the wing conference, counseled commanders and members on challenging issues, and processed multiple religious accommodation requests in accordance with established procedures. He conducted Character Development and Wingman courses across multiple units, strengthening CAP's core values-based programming.

He supported the National Virtual Incident Command Post, produced quarterly Chaplain Corps newsletters, and developed a "Next Steps" guide for Chaplains and CDIs adopted at the regional level. He maintained strong engagement through Wing meetings, Commander's Calls, and unit visits statewide, despite residing outside of the wing.

A Master-rated Character Development Instructor, Chaplain Burns consistently demonstrated compassion, integrity, and professionalism. His tireless service, mentorship, and dedication significantly enhanced the spiritual readiness, resilience, and support structure of New Mexico Wing members.



CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Lt. Col. Uei I. Lei

COLORADO WING

Lt. Col. Uei I. Lei demonstrated exceptional moral courage and leadership as Colorado Wing Character Development Instructor, directly strengthening ethical decision-making, resiliency, and trust across the wing and the Rocky Mountain Region. He delivered more than 10 high-quality Character Development and Wingman courses, reaching hundreds of cadets and senior members with engaging, values-based instruction aligned to CAP Core Values, including integrity, humility, gratitude, and excellence. His effectiveness earned him a special invitation to present for Virginia Wing, demonstrating the credibility and impact of his instruction beyond his home wing.

Lt. Col. Lei expanded long-term capacity by mentoring four instructors through specialty track progression while earning his own Master Rating, increasing the number of qualified facilitators and improving program consistency. During encampments and high-tempo operations, he provided calm, compassionate leadership in crisis situations, ensuring full compliance with reporting requirements while reinforcing accountability, trust, and psychological safety.

At the organizational level, he represented Colorado Wing at command and Chaplain Corps forums, supported multiple encampment Chaplain Support Teams, and contributed to curriculum development meeting national standards. Through community outreach and interfaith engagement, he strengthened partnerships and reinforced CAP's reputation as a values-driven organization. His sustained excellence produced lasting improvements in ethical climate, resiliency, and trust.



MALCOLM C. KYSER, JR. COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR

Col. Michael W. Marek

SOUTH DAKOTA WING

Col. Michael W. Marek has served with distinction as a Civil Air Patrol communicator for more than 42 years. His sustained leadership, technical expertise, and commitment to mentorship have had a lasting impact on communications capability at the wing, region, and national levels.

Col. Marek remains highly active, leading key initiatives including the annual communications exercise and the restoration of required wing radio nets, while overseeing repeater and ReadyOp node projects to ensure operational readiness and compliance with national standards. He mentors the current Director of Communications and provides critical guidance on evolving requirements.

A consistent presence on HF and VHF nets, he reinforces operational continuity across the wing. As Wing Commander, he advanced ReadyOp capabilities, installing six nodes and enhancing situational awareness. He also secured over $200,000 in state funding for access to the state trunked radio system, greatly improving interoperability. Nationally, he served from 2007 to 2018 in senior communications roles, including Communications Team Leader, leading major regulatory updates and system procurements. Col. Marek has demonstrated unparalleled dedication, strengthened mission readiness and shaped communications programs nationwide across more than four decades of exemplary service and leadership.



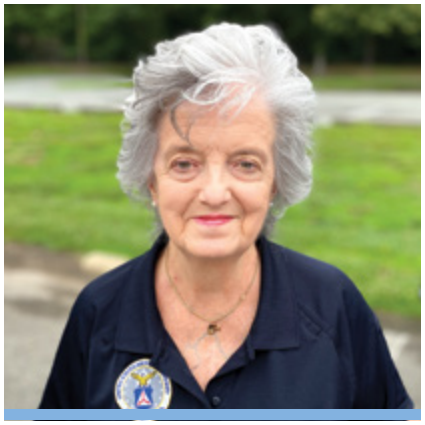
NORM EDWARDS COUNTERDRUG OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Lt. Col. Roger Corbin

TEXAS WING

Lt. Col. Roger Corbin has served with distinction in the Texas Wing for over a decade, demonstrating sustained excellence in leadership, aviation operations, and mission execution. A member of Civil Air Patrol since 2011, he has continuously contributed to mission readiness and operational effectiveness across the wing. He has served as Group V Commander for the past two years and previously as Assistant Counterdrug Officer for three years, providing steady leadership, program continuity, and mentorship to personnel at multiple levels. A highly experienced Mission Pilot with instrument ratings in the C 172, C 182, and C 182T, Lt. Col. Corbin has been a key contributor to the Texas Wing Counterdrug Program since 2013. He actively trains and mentors pilots and aircrew, instilling a culture of safety, precision, and professionalism in all mission activities.

During 2024 and 2025, Lt. Col. Corbin maintained an exceptional operational tempo, flying 36 counterdrug sorties split evenly between Mission Pilot and Mission Observer roles, and logging 46.5 Mission Pilot flight hours. He also accumulated more than 128 total CAP pilot hours, primarily on federally funded missions, demonstrating sustained readiness and availability. Additionally, he serves as a Scan/Forward Looking Radar Operator on a wide range of missions and has held key unit staff roles including Finance, Maintenance, Operations, and Logistics Officer. His dedication, leadership, and technical expertise continue to strengthen mission capability and operational effectiveness throughout the Texas Wing.



DIRECTOR OF FINANCE OF THE YEAR

Capt. Paula F. Smith

MARYLAND WING

Capt. Paula Smith has served with exceptional distinction as Maryland Wing Director of Finance, demonstrating outstanding leadership and dedication to mission success. She has been the driving force behind a dramatic improvement in the wing's financial health, accountability, and professionalism. Her meticulous oversight and proactive approach resulted in a flawless annual audit with zero findings, a significant achievement. She consistently ensures full compliance by carefully reviewing transactions and mentoring unit finance officers to resolve issues and strengthen processes.

Capt. Smith maintains continuous awareness of wing financial status, providing clear reports that enable informed command decisions. Her unwavering commitment is exemplified by her participation in every finance committee meeting, ensuring continuity of leadership. She works closely with the Wing Bookkeeper to guarantee efficiency and accuracy in financial operations.

Overseeing finance authorizations and budget reviews for 31 units, she elevated both compliance and understanding through hands-on mentorship. She conducted in-depth training sessions and provided ongoing guidance to finance officers and commanders. Holding a master rating in the Finance Specialty Track, Capt. Smith's expertise, leadership, and commitment have transformed Maryland Wing financial operations and strengthened mission readiness.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Lt. Col. Todd P. DePorter

WYOMING WING

During Lt. Col. Todd DePorter's eight years of service in Professional Development and Education assignments at the squadron and wing levels, he has advanced member growth, leadership development and organizational excellence. A Master-rated Professional Development officer for three years, Level IV graduate and Volunteer University Level IV instructor, he supports virtual instruction while mentoring members across the wing.

As a cadet, he earned the Brig. Gen. Billy Mitchell Award and the grade of Cadet 1st Lt. DePorter retired from the U.S. Air Force after 26 years as a chief master sergeant, a Professional Military Education instructor and Director of Personnel and Programs at the Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy.

As Wyoming Wing Education and Training officer, he created the innovative Squadron Commander Professional Development Program, improving commander readiness, retention and performance. His efforts contributed to a 25 percent reduction in commander-related Subordinate Unit Inspection discrepancies. He also expanded opportunities for cadets and senior members to attend national schools, encampments, emergency services training and leadership programs. Through vision, mentorship and unwavering commitment, Lt. Col. DePorter helped reverse organizational decline and elevate professionalism across the wing.

COL. DION DECAMP GROUND TEAM OF THE YEAR

Bellingham Composite Squadron Ground Teams

WASHINGTON WING

The Bellingham Composite Squadron Ground Team is recognized for exceptional professionalism, operational readiness and mission performance in support of Civil Air Patrol Emergency Services. Throughout the year, the team maintained a high state of readiness by enforcing general Emergency Services qualifications, communications proficiency, medical readiness and physical fitness standards among both cadet and senior members, ensuring a sustainable and capable force.

The team distinguished itself through the planning, hosting and execution of multiple Search and Rescue Exercises, culminating in a Washington Wing Search and Rescue Evaluation conducted under U.S. Air Force oversight. During the evaluation, members successfully executed ground search operations across multiple locations while integrating aircrew coordination and mission base activities, validating their ability to perform under real-world conditions and national standards. The team also played a critical role in disaster response during major flooding events from Dec. 8-22, 2025, supporting FEMA-tasked operations across four counties. Squadron members participated in nine ground sorties, collecting imagery and geospatial data that documented flooding and landslides affecting nearly 45,000 civilians. As the only squadron in Washington Wing supporting the CAP-NASA Aviation Weather Mission, team members conducted observation sorties that contributed directly to national research objectives.

HEALTH SERVICES OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Lt. Col. Christopher M. Hiles

MARYLAND WING

Lt. Col. Christopher Hiles has distinguished himself through exceptional professionalism, decisive leadership, and dedication to the health and safety of Civil Air Patrol members. Over the past year, his impact has been profound, revitalizing the encampment medical program by restoring and modernizing protocols he originally authored, ensuring consistent standards of care and improved preparedness for large-scale activities. He reestablished cadet medic training and delivered the Medical Mitigation for the Leader course, mentoring cadets and senior members while inspiring future careers in healthcare.

During the 2025 Tri-Wing Encampment, Lt. Col. Hiles demonstrated extraordinary medical leadership. He directed rapid, effective response to a cadet injury, ensuring proper stabilization and transport. In a separate critical incident, he led life-saving efforts for a non-CAP cadet who suffered respiratory arrest, maintaining respirations until emergency personnel arrived, directly contributing to the cadet's survival. His training also enabled others to respond effectively to in-flight medical emergencies.

Beyond emergency response, Lt. Col. Hiles provides trusted medical guidance to commanders and families, supports regulatory compliance, and advances professional education as a senior instructor in Incident Command System courses. His mentorship and commitment have strengthened health services programs and operational readiness across the organization.



COL. LESTER E. HOPPER HISTORIAN OF THE YEAR

1st Lt. Christian M. Smith

NORTH DAKOTA WING

1st Lt. Smith revitalized North Dakota Wing's history program in 2025 through exceptional leadership, research and preservation efforts that strengthened institutional memory and heritage awareness across the wing. Serving as historian for both North Dakota Wing and Grand Forks Composite Squadron, he compiled and documented annual histories, ensuring missions, milestones and member achievements were preserved for future generations.

Recognizing the need for long-term preservation, 1st Lt. Smith established a centralized North Dakota Wing historical repository, secured wing funding and created a sustainable system for preserving documents, photographs and artifacts. He further organized and cataloged more than 900 historical records

within the Happy Hooligan Archive, creating a shared home for squadron and wing heritage.

He authored a Charter and Emblem Guide documenting North Dakota Wing's heraldic history, recovered records of inactive units and developed historically accurate squadron patches that preserved lineage while meeting CAP standards. He also designed a history display for the 2025 North Dakota Wing Conference and delivered a well-attended presentation on Civil Air Patrol's Cold War aerial radiological monitoring mission, restoring awareness of an important chapter of CAP history.

Expanding public understanding of CAP's legacy, 1st Lt. Smith authored a historical essay for the City of Grand Forks' 150th anniversary publication. He transformed a dormant program into a lasting resource that preserves North Dakota Wing's heritage for future generations.



COL. EDWIN W. LEWIS, JR. INCIDENT STAFF MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Cadet Lt. Col
Aidan David Dillon Leary

DELAWARE WING

Cadet Lt. Col. Aidan served in key Incident Command System positions, including planning section chief, ground branch director, communications unit leader and mission staff assistant, providing critical support for Delaware Wing's most complex operations.

As the primary incident staff planner for Operation Fertile Keynote, Cadet Lt. Col. Leary coordinated mission planning, aircrew scheduling, flight releases, interagency communication and post-mission reporting. Working with CAP-USAF, NORAD, the National Operations Center and Air Force partners, he helped achieve a record of zero mission cancellations caused by staffing or administrative issues.

His expertise earned national recognition when he was selected to lead Civil Air Patrol's incident staff component for Operation AMALGAM MUTE, a mission conducted with NORAD and multiple Air Force organizations. He successfully synchronized planning and operations among numerous agencies while operating under national-level evaluation conditions.

A qualified flight release officer, Cadet Lt. Col. Leary executed more than 100 flight releases in 2025, ensuring timely sortie generation and mission readiness. He also strengthened Delaware Wing's operational capability by mentoring cadets and senior members, improving staff processes and developing future incident staff leaders.



INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE YEAR

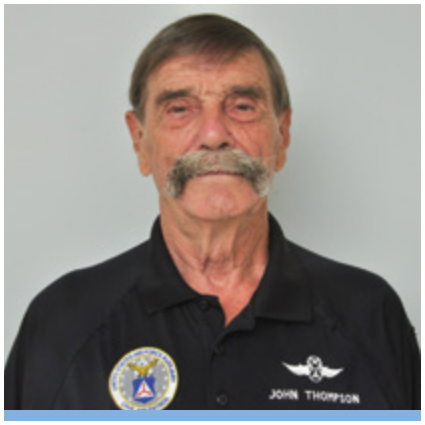
Lt. Col. Kenneth W. Sturgill

CALIFORNIA WING

Lt. Col. Ken Sturgill distinguished himself as the California Wing Inspector General, following more than six years as Assistant Inspector General. During a period marked by significant staffing shortages and increased training requirements, he demonstrated extraordinary initiative by personally organizing and leading inspection teams to ensure continuity of Subordinate Unit Inspections across all 75 units in the wing. His leadership ensured uninterrupted oversight, maintaining compliance and mission readiness during challenging conditions.

Over the course of his tenure, Lt. Col. Sturgill conducted nearly 200 inspections across all eight groups, reflecting exceptional dedication and mastery of Civil Air Patrol regulations. Recognizing the challenges posed by the wing's geographic size, he pioneered the use of virtual inspection methods, leveraging technology to sustain a high operational tempo without compromising quality or thoroughness.

His tireless commitment included extensive personal time devoted to preparation, travel, and execution of inspections, directly enabling units to meet compliance standards while identifying areas for improvement. Lt. Col. Sturgill's leadership fostered a culture of accountability and excellence across the wing. His professionalism, innovation, and selfless service have significantly strengthened operational integrity and set a lasting standard for Inspector General performance.



ORDER OF DAEDALIANS EXCEPTIONAL INSTRUCTOR PILOT OF THE YEAR

Maj. John Howard Thompson

WISCONSIN WING

Maj. John Thompson has demonstrated sustained excellence in flight instruction and pilot development in support of Civil Air Patrol aviation operations for more than a decade. Since 2014, he has served as a CAP aviator and flight instructor, accumulating 822 CAP flight hours across 636 sorties. Demonstrating a steadfast commitment to developing others, he logged 339.6 flight hours as a CAP Flight Instructor during 253 instructor sorties, representing more than 41 percent of his total CAP flight time.

Throughout his career, Thompson prioritized mentoring and training pilots at all experience levels rather than personal flight accumulation. He served in multiple aviation roles, including instructor pilot, check pilot, mission pilot, mission observer, orientation pilot and mission scanner. His instruction supported initial pilot qualification, Form 5 evaluations, mission training and continuing proficiency development. Thompson's effectiveness as an instructor is reinforced by extensive operational experience supporting training, proficiency and AFRCC-tasked missions, ensuring pilots receive practical, mission-focused instruction grounded in sound judgment and standardized procedures. He operated 15 different CAP aircraft and flew to or from more than 60 operating locations, enabling instruction across diverse aircraft platforms and mission environments. Through more than a decade of dedicated service, hundreds of instructional sorties and an unwavering commitment to safety, readiness and professional development, Thompson has made a lasting impact on CAP aircrew capability and mission success.

MAJ. GEN. DWIGHT H. WHELESS LEGAL OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Lt. Col. Spencer R. Horn

NORTHEAST REGION

Lt. Col. Spencer Horn joined Civil Air Patrol as a cadet in July 1994 and earned the rank of Cadet Lt. Col. before transitioning to senior membership. Since January 2007, he has served as a Legal Officer, including continuous service as Northeast Region Legal Officer since September 2010. An attorney and senior leader within the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Horn brings extensive legal expertise to CAP. Over the past year, he provided counsel to commanders and members on membership matters, disciplinary actions and regulatory issues, helping resolve complex concerns before they escalated.

He also answered the call to serve as the National Equal Opportunity Officer, expanding his impact across the organization. A trusted mentor to Legal Officers throughout the region, he advises on legal and administrative matters, reviews agreements and activity documents, and supports Inspectors General with complaint reviews and legal sufficiency determinations. In 2025, Lt. Col. Horn partnered with Northeast Region Cadet Programs staff to develop and conduct a pre-encampment seminar focused on best practices and prevention of common issues leading to Inspector General complaints, contributing to successful wing encampments across the region. A graduate of the National Legal Officers College, he holds a Master rating in the Legal Officer specialty track and a Senior rating in the Inspector Gen. specialty track. His exceptional professionalism, sound judgment and steadfast commitment have strengthened legal support throughout the Northeast Region.



GEORGE TEXIDO LEGISLATIVE OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Lt. Col. Adrian Cuarta

FLORIDA WING

Lt. Col. Adrian Cuarta has distinguished himself through exceptional leadership, vision, and dedication in advancing the Florida Wing's government relations and legislative engagement. Recognizing a critical gap in state-level advocacy, he volunteered to serve as State Government Relations Advisor and State Legislative Squadron Commander, immediately launching a comprehensive effort to educate legislators on Civil Air Patrol's value. Within 18 months, he met with 25 state legislators, secured both House and Senate sponsors, and established a strong foundation for future funding initiatives.

Understanding the need for a scalable approach, Lt. Col. Cuarta developed and implemented the Florida Wing State Legislative Program, creating liaison positions within each group to expand outreach statewide. He designed and delivered formal training, provided standardized engagement materials, and ensured consistent messaging to maximize effectiveness. His leadership increased Legislative Squadron membership fivefold and fostered coordinated engagement across the wing.

He further established a State Appropriations Work Group to define funding requirements, culminating in Florida Wing receiving its first-ever state appropriation of $62,500 for FY25–26. Additionally, he helped secure a $49,500 FEMA grant to support critical equipment needs. Lt. Col. Cuarta's innovation, persistence, and strategic leadership have created a lasting framework for sustained funding and elevated the visibility and impact of Civil Air Patrol throughout the state.



COL. DAVID KANTOR OPERATIONS STAFF OFFICER OF THE YEAR

1st Lt. Lawrence M. Ahern

CALIFORNIA WING

Since rejoining CAP in 2018, 1st Lt. Lawrence Ahern has strengthened mission capability through leadership, training and operational excellence. He served as assistant operations officer from 2020 to 2021 and has served as operations officer for Sacramento Composite Squadron 14 since 2021, guiding preparedness efforts and developing mission staff. Lt. Ahern has planned and executed training activities that increased qualification opportunities, improved interoperability and strengthened mission staffing. He served as project officer and instructor for the Group 5 Mission Scanner Ground School; project officer, Air Operations Branch director and mission observer for the November 2024 Group 5 Search and Rescue Exercise; project officer and Air Operations Branch director for the January 2025 Group 5 Search and Rescue Exercise; project officer for Airborne Photographer training; and Air Operations Branch director for the April 2025 Group 5 Disaster Relief Exercise.

Ahern is qualified as a SAR/DR mission pilot, mission observer and Air Operations Branch director. He has participated in 16 SAR/DR exercises and training events, two Mission Aircrew Schools, a California Wing COVID-19 support mission, four Felix Keynote assignments and a wildfire imagery assessment mission, flying 131 sorties. His professionalism, technical expertise and steady leadership have strengthened California Wing mission readiness and operational effectiveness.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Capt. Kim M. Butts

WYOMING WING

Since becoming Wyoming Wing director of logistics, Capt. Kim Butts transformed the wing's logistics program, restoring accountability,

compliance and professionalism to an area that had faced significant challenges for more than a decade. After earning her senior logistician credential, she led a comprehensive effort to identify and account for wing resources, resolve longstanding discrepancies and implement corrective actions across the organization.

Working with wing leadership, squadron commanders and Rocky Mountain Region logistics staff, Capt. Butts achieved near-total accountability of wing assets, ensured proper entry of property into the Operational Resource Management database and resolved the only supply discrepancy identified during the wing's Compliance Inspection. In the two months preceding the inspection, she corrected dozens of records, closed multiple Reports of Survey and restored disciplined logistics practices, helping the wing earn an effective rating while significantly reducing discrepancies from prior inspections.

Capt. Butts also strengthened logistics education by mentoring commanders and logisticians in resource management, inventory procedures and property accountability. She developed and presented a successful Logistics and Supply Seminar at the 2025 Wyoming Wing Conference and played a key role in damage assessment, recovery planning and reconstitution efforts following the downburst windstorm at F.E. Warren Air Force Base. Her leadership established a new standard of logistics excellence across Wyoming Wing and the Rocky Mountain Region.



COL. ROBERT V. "BUD" PAYTON PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER OF THE YEAR

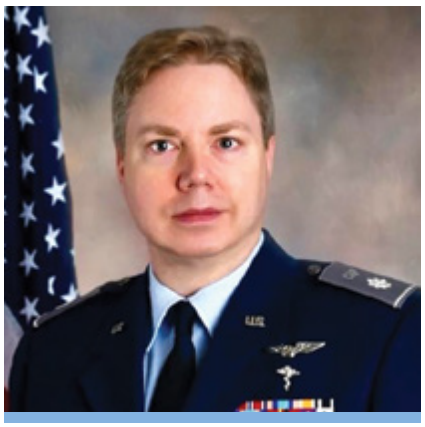
Capt. Samantha L. Moat

CALIFORNIA WING

Since becoming California Wing public affairs officer in April 2022, Capt. Samantha L. Moat has strengthened Civil Air Patrol's visibility, enhanced public trust and expanded awareness of all three CAP missions across the wing and beyond. In May 2025, she qualified as a public information officer, one of only a handful in California Wing and the only one assigned to NorCal Group 5, providing critical communications support during emergency services operations and high-profile events.

Capt. Moat significantly expanded CAP's public reach through her leadership at the 2024 Aerospace Education STEM Academy, where she coordinated with Edwards Air Force Base public affairs staff and secured national exposure through U.S. Air Force social media channels. She further highlighted CAP's aerospace education mission by authoring an article for Airman Magazine. She also served as public affairs officer for the 2024 Region Commander's Course and California Wing Conference, delivering timely, professional coverage of key activities and accomplishments.

A dedicated mentor and communicator, Capt. Moat recruits and trains cadets in photography, writing and social media while supporting Cadet Programs with graphics and promotional materials. Her leadership during Maj. policy changes and communications transitions ensured compliance, continuity and professionalism throughout California Wing. Capt. Moat's sustained service, mentorship and commitment to excellence make her exceptionally deserving of this recognition.



SAFETY OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Lt. Col. Todd A. Meyer

WISCONSIN WING

Since assuming key safety leadership roles within Wisconsin Wing, Lt. Col. Todd A. Meyer has strengthened the organization's approach to risk management, member safety and operational readiness. Appointed Wisconsin Wing assistant Health Services Officer in April 2025 and Wisconsin Wing

Director of Safety in October 2025, he fostered a culture of accountability by implementing the Year of Ownership framework and emphasizing safety as a leadership responsibility at every level of command.

Lt. Col. Meyer improved wing-wide communication by establishing quarterly safety newsletters and virtual safety meetings. He mentored squadron safety officers, provided hands-on training in CAPSIS and operational risk management, and empowered units to take greater ownership of safety planning and documentation.

A recognized leader beyond Wisconsin Wing, Lt. Col. Meyer serves on the CAP National Headquarters Safety Staff and was recognized as the organization's most active contributor to The Dispatch, CAP's monthly Health Services, Safety and Chaplain Corps publication. During the 2025 Wisconsin Wing Encampment, he successfully managed a COVID-19 outbreak, coordinating mitigation efforts that contained the spread without interrupting training activities. Lt. Col. Meyer has strengthened safety culture, protected mission success and advanced CAP's commitment to safe operations.

AFNORTH COMMANDER'S AWARD

Lt. Col. Craig S. Miler
1st Lt. Ernest E. Trower
2nd Lt. Daniel T. Everson

WASHINGTON WING

Lt. Col. Craig Miller, 1st Lt. Ernest Trower, and 2d Lt. Daniel Everson are recognized for their outstanding achievement as a Civil Air Patrol aircrew during a major flood response mission on December 11, 2025. The crew successfully completed the first aerial photography sortie in support of FEMA during the disaster, providing critical imagery for emergency response efforts.

During the mission, they faced a serious in-flight emergency when they detected a burning odor followed by smoke from the aircraft's engine. Through exceptional teamwork, calm decision-making, and professional airmanship, they safely managed the situation and shut down the aircraft on the taxiway before a potential fire could occur. Their composure under pressure enabled the successful completion of the mission while ensuring the safety of the crew and preservation of the aircraft.



Each year, CAP-USAF recognizes one wing from each region for having the best program in a specific mission area.

AEROSPACE EDUCATION

Great Lakes Region
Ohio Wing

Mid-Atlantic Region
Maryland Wing

North Central Region
South Dakota Wing

Northeast Region
New Jersey Wing

Pacific Region
California Wing

Rocky Mountain Region
Colorado Wing

Southeast Region
Alabama Wing

Southwest Region
Arizona Wing

CADET PROGRAMS

Great Lakes Region
Kentucky Wing

Mid-Atlantic Region
Maryland Wing

North Central Region
Missouri Wing

Northeast Region
New Jersey Wing

Pacific Region
Hawaii Wing

Rocky Mountain Region
Colorado Wing

Southeast Region
Alabama Wing

Southwest Region
Texas Wing

DISASTER RELIEF

Great Lakes Region
Indiana Wing

Mid-Atlantic Region
Maryland Wing

North Central Region
South Dakota Wing

Northeast Region
Pennsylvania Wing

Pacific Region
Alaska Wing

Rocky Mountain Region
Wyoming Wing

Southeast Region
Georgia Wing

Southwest Region
Louisiana Wing

HOMELAND DEFENSE/ HOMELAND SECURITY

Great Lakes Region
Wisconsin Wing

Mid-Atlantic Region
North Dakota Wing

North Central Region
South Dakota Wing

Northeast Region
New York Wing

Pacific Region
Hawaii Wing

Rocky Mountain Region
Colorado Wing

Southeast Region
Puerto Rico Wing

Southwest Region
Texas Wing

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Great Lakes Region
Wisconsin Wing

Mid-Atlantic Region
North Carolina Wing

North Central Region
South Dakota Wing

Northeast Region
New York Wing

Pacific Region
Hawaii Wing

Rocky Mountain Region
Colorado Wing

Southeast Region
Puerto Rico Wing

Southwest Region
Texas Wing





The Civil Air Patrol Hall of Honor was created by the Civil Air Patrol National Executive Committee in 1972 to pay tribute to individuals who were instrumental in establishing or developing the organization. The Hall of Honor exhibit, located in the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, contains CAP memorabilia and bronze plaques of each inductee, listing offices held and inclusive dates.

HALL OF HONOR MEMBERS

Mr. Gill Robb Wilson *.....1972
Gen. Carl A. "Tooey" Spaatz* 1972
Brig. Gen. D. Harold Byrd*.....1972
Brig. Gen. William C. "Cecil" Whelen* 1972
Brig. Gen. Paul W. Turner*.....1972
Brig. Gen. Lyle W. Castle*.....1972
Brig. Gen. F. Ward Reilly*.....1972
Col. Clara E. Livingston*.....1972
Col. Joseph S. Bergin*.....1972
Col. Alan C. Perkinson*.....1972
Maj. Gen. Lucas V. Beau*.....1973
Col. Edwin Lyons* 1973
Brig. Gen. Earle E. Johnson*.....1973
Brig. Gen. S. H. "Hal" DuPont, Jr.....1974
Col. James E. Carter* 1974
Brig. Gen. William M. Patterson*.....1976
Col. Zack T. Mosley* 1976
Col. Robert H. Herweh* 1979
Dr. Mervin K. Strickler, Jr.*.....1979
Brig. Gen. Thomas C. Casaday*.....1980
Col. Louisa S. Morse*.....1982
Col. Gordon T. Weir*.....1982
Brig. Gen. Johnnie Boyd* 1983
Col. Lester L. Wolff*.....1985
Lt. Col. William D. "Bill" Madsen* 1985
Col. Larry D. Miller* 1986
Col. Obed A. "Poncho" Donaldson*.....1987
Mr. John V. "Jack" Sorenson* 1987
Dr. Paul E. Garber*.....1988
Col. Guy P. Gannett*.....1992
Col. Troy G. Sullivan, CAP*.....1992
Brig. Gen. Warren J. Barry*.....1993
Maj. Gen. Richard L. Bowling 2008
Senator Thomas R. Harkin.....2014
Brig. Gen. Richard L. Anderson 2015
Maj. Gen. Mark E. Smith.....2025

*Indicates inductee is deceased.

2026 LIFE MEMBERS

Life Membership is one of the highest honors and is generally reserved for past national commanders, executive directors/chief operating officers, and CAP-USAF commanders.

Mr. Paul J. Albano, Sr.
Brig. Gen. Richard L. Anderson, CAP
Col. Paul C. Ashworth, USAF
Mr. Hal J. Basham
Brig. Gen. James C. Bobick, CAP
Maj. Gen. Richard L. Bowling, CAP
Maj. Gen. Charles L. Carr, Jr., CAP
Maj. Gen. Amy S Courter, CAP
Mr. Harry B. Dyer
Ms. Susan K. Easter
Col. Paul Gloyd, USAF
Mr. John Scott Hamilton
Col. Russell D. Hodgkins, Jr., USAF
Dr. Theodore C. Marrs
Col. Garland W. Padgett, USAF
Col. Aaron D. Reid, USAF
Mr. Don R. Rowland
Mr. John A. Salvador
Col. Ronald T. Sampson, USAF
Lt. Col. Thomas W. Shubert
Maj. Gen. Mark E. Smith, CAP
Maj. Gen. Joseph R. Vazquez, CAP
Col. George C. Vogt, USAF
Col. William R. Ward, USAF
Col. Clyde O. Westbrook, USAF
Ms. Renova Williams Hamiga
Col. Mark Wootan, USAF





LYCOMING™



BUILDING ENGINES SINCE 1929

WILLIAMSPORT, PENNSYLVANIA

@LycomingEngines
www.Lycoming.com

SCAN to FOLLOW US!

© 2024 Avco Corporation

OVER 100 YEARS IN SERVICE

Vanguard

VISIT OUR STORE IN
CITY BEAUTIFUL A

PROUDLY supports the CIVIL AIR PATROL



CIVIL AIR PATROL

CELEBRATING

20 years of Partnership with CIVIL AIR PATROL



NORFOLK
800.221.1264
WWW.VANGUARDMIL.COM

©2026 Vanguard Industries Inc. All rights reserved.