

Date: 2 August 2024

Subject: Trip Report, 2024 USAFA Long Blue Line Leadership Conference/AOG Chapter Representatives Conference

Background:

In early July 2024; I was presented with the opportunity to attend and represent the TCAAOG at the Annual Association of Graduates Chapter Representatives Conference. Attendance at this conference is a pre-requisite to achieving the Distinguished AOG Chapter Award. This year, the AOG Chapter Representatives Conference was imbedded within the USAFA Long Blue Line Leadership Weekend Events (26 – 28 July 2024).

Along with the AOG Chapter Representatives Conference, The Long Blue Line Leadership Weekend was intended to serve as a Homecoming for USAFA graduates and guests, an opportunity to reconnect with fellow graduates and friends, hear from USAFA Leadership personnel while engaging with representatives of the USAFA Association of Graduates, and the Air Force Academy Foundation.

A summary of the Long Blue Line Weekend Events, AOG Chapter Representatives Conference agenda items, and selected USAFA Facility Upgrade Information is as follows:

LONG BLUE LINE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (26 – 28 July)

Friday, 0800 – 1100 Basic Cadet and Graduate March Back from Jack's Valley:

All graduates were invited to follow the Basic Cadet march back from Jack's Valley to the Cadet Area. This march back also marks the Basic Cadet transition from field training to the Academic year. Approximately 150 grads participated in this event. Photos can be found at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBBz7t>

Friday, 1100 – 1430 Mitchell Hall Lunch and USAFA Leadership Panel Discussion:

Graduates were encouraged to participate in this lunch with the Basic Cadets and Upper Classmen. Each grad was imbedded within a table of Cadets. Photos can be found at: <https://flic.kr/S/aHqjBBz9C>

Leadership Panel – Presenters included:

- USAFA Vice Superintendent
- USAFA Dean of Academics

- USAFA Vice Commandant of Cadets
- USAFA 10th Air Base Commander

Discussion centered on the alignment of the cadet core curriculum between the Dean and the Commandant of Cadets, with the goal of the 47-month long cadet experience culminating in:

- Warfighting Mindset Right Out of Graduation
- Four Year Leadership Development with Detailed Support Curriculum
- Critical Thinking Exercises Designed to Apply Academic Training to Practical Issues and Warfighting Scenarios

Facility Upgrades (10th Air Wing):

- **Sijan Hall** – Planned Major Refurbishment of Dormitory Facilities (no timetable discussed).
- **USAFA Cadet Chapel** -The Cadet Chapel is now encased in a large transitory white enclosure. It has been determined that the original 1962 contractors, as a cost saving measure, used asbestos based caulk on the glass panels (30 to 40 % of all glass tiles) to complete the construction, now rendering the refurbishment project as a hazardous site remediation effort. Although the original estimate was to complete the Chapel refurbishment by 2024, significant cost overruns and schedule delays have now pushed the estimated refurbishment project completion into 2027 at the earliest.

Friday, 1900 – 2100 Long Blue Line Awards Dinner:

- Awards included the Young Alumni Excellence Award, and the Leadership Award. Photos can be found at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBBzmd>

Saturday, 0800 – 1500

USAFA Long Blue Line Leadership Conference, Presentations included:

- Dean of Faculty Update and Institute for Future Conflict Introduction.

- Institute for Future Conflict Brief: Lieutenant General (Ret.) Shwedo '87, Director, Institute for Future Conflict.
- USAFA Admissions Update: Colonel Pipes '98, USAFA Director of Admissions.
- USAFA Cadet Wing Update: Colonel Alexander '99, Chief of Cadet Wing Training and Support.
- USAFA Preparatory School Update: Colonel (Ret.) Primas '92 Prep School Deputy Director & Colonel Landez '01, Commander, U.S. Air Force Academy Preparatory School.
- Young Alumni Q and A Panel – Discussion centered on engagement of young graduates with the AOG and perceptions of the AOG among young USAFA grads.
- Hotel Polaris Tour: Planned World Class Hotel and Dining facilities located just within the North Gate. It's mission centers on being the conduit connecting the public with USAFA. When completed, Hotel Polaris, with planned opening in early 2025, will provide 375 guest rooms/suites ranging in cost from \$250 - \$350 per night (approximate).

USAFA Admissions Update (Class of 2028 Profile):

- 10,099 Valid Applicants:
 - 1,419 Offers
 - 1,100 Appointments
 - Three hundred thirty-one (331) women (30% of the class) were admitted, (779) men were admitted).
 - The class of 2028 includes 79 children of Service Academy Grads (7% of the class), 53 are children of USAFA grads.
 - Cadets were admitted from every State in the Nation, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

- Cadet Activity Profile:
 - Athletic Letter (82%)
 - National Honor Society (47%)
 - Band/Orchestra (18%)
 - Eagle Scout (14%), JROTC (12%), CAP (5%)
- General USAFA Grad Data:
 - USAFA Long Blue Line now includes grads from 7 decades.
 - The median age for the USAFA grad population is now 46 years.

Photos from Saturday's Long Blue Line Conference can be found at <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBBFjs>

Sunday, 1000 – 1400

1015 - 1130: Founders Day Celebrations/Events & Community Support/Outreach:

- Chapter Inputs from:
 - Lt Col (Ret) Shuey '78, KC AOG Chapter
 - Lt Col (Ret) Curtis '85, Central Oklahoma AOG Chapter
 - Honorable Mike Rose '69, South Carolina AOG Chapter
- Discussion centered on including local Parent's Club coordination for fundraising events/Founder's Day Events.
- USAFA AOG provided an assistance input for Founder's Day Event Speakers and/or Lunch Event Speakers. POC at USAFA AOG is Felicia Recker: felecia.recker@afacedemy.af.edu
- Additional discussion centered on the 50th anniversary of female grads from the Service Academies event. Although a formal event agenda has not yet been developed, this "grass roots" initiative is gaining traction with a request for personal stories from female Service Academy grads by August 2024. POC for this initiative at USAFA AOG is naviere.walkewicz@usafa.org

- On a separate but related issue, additional emphasis on our female USAFA grads can be found at “From Firsts to Futures” with the following communication portals:
 - Facebook: USAFA Women
 - Instagram: usafawomen50
 - LinkedIn: USAFA Women
 - Website: USAFA-women.org
 - **Action Item:** TCAAOG to develop a separate alpha roster of our female grads and use this special data base to relay pertinent female grad information to applicable grads in a timely manner.

1130 – 1400: Collaboration Across Groups, Open Q and A, Closing Remarks, & Closure of Long Blue Line Leadership Conference:

- Discussion centered on the development of the Long Blue Line Portal <https://portal.usafa.org> :

This portal serves as our central hub for the USAFA community connecting grads, cadets, and faculty/staff; and provides exclusive access to valuable resources, events and networking opportunities.

Additionally, additional communication portals consist of:

- Long Blue Line portal: <https://www.usafa.org>
- Chapter Links: <https://www.usafa.org/Chapters/Search>
- Affinity Group Information: <https://www.usafa.org/affinitygroup>
- USAFA Events: <https://www.usafa.org/events>

Final Discussion & Action Item Review:

As a result of final Q & A and Round Table Discussions, the following conference action items include:

- USAFA AOG to provide a script/information sheet for Founder’s Day Event to Local Chapters.
- USAFA AOG to provide information to AOG Chapters regarding USAFA Honor Code change(s) and how these changes will be administered.
- USAFA AOG to provide all local AOG Chapters the opportunity to review and provide conference agenda inputs prior to the next annual event.

- USAFA AOG to examine/provide an opportunity for local AOG Presidents/ Representatives to meet socially prior to the commencement of other Long Blue Line activities.
- USAFA POC for these items: Michael Barnes, Senior Director of Alumni Relations, ph: 719.247.8746 x146; email: michael.barnes@usafa.org

Conference Adjourned: 1355 hours, 28 July 2024.

Best Regards,

Dave Reiner '77