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The Official Magazine of California Wing Civil Air Patrol

"The Encampment Standard"
A CAP Story



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The Official Magazine of California Wing Civil Air Patrol

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Col. Craig Newton
California Wing Commander

Lt. Col. David Oberhettinger
Asst. Director of Public Affairs
Editor, *Bear Facts* Magazine

Commander's Corner

By Col. Craig Newton, CAP
Commander, California Wing



A warm welcome to all our members in 2024. As we look ahead to 2024, we need to take a moment of reflection and see what we accomplished to get here.

2023 brought a big change to California Wing. Finally, out of the shadow of the pandemic, our membership numbers jumped and we are back to our pre-pandemic levels. What we lost during that time, we have not fully recovered. While we are back up in numbers, we lost some very experienced members and the members that stayed, lost some of their skills. Squadrons are having to rebuild their cadet cadre with no officers. Squadrons are having to scramble for trainers to get their members back up the professional skills that our customers expect from us. And in typical CAP fashion, we are back in fighting form.

As we enter 2024, I want to emphasize the importance of education; that education needs to start with each of us. It is not good enough let our own education fall away and expect others to learn. We need to set the example and learn. Learn something new; are you an aerospace education master? Then take some classes on cadet programs. The AXIS website is full of great information, covering many of the areas within CAP. On a side note, did you know that AXIS is scheduled to be retired and a new, more user friendly, application is coming in the spring?

Also, did you know that CAWG has its own version of the Learning Management System? It is also being reworked and updated. Stay tuned for more information.

Our cadets continue to amaze me. Our Cadet Advisory Council (CAC) has met for the second time and has formed committees to work on the tasks that they have been assigned, along with their own agenda items. The Wreaths Across America (WAA) gave our cadets the opportunity to demonstrate their respect and honor for our fallen service members. I have been privileged to attend several awards ceremonies in the past month. At one of these, I witnessed 10 cadets get their Curry Award. Several Mitchell awards and one Eaker. And that's just the ones I attended! Our future is in good hands with our cadets.

Continued . . .

ON THE COVER: Delta Flight on the march. Photo credit: Senior Member Frank Mancebo

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Commander's Corner
Continued from page 1

Just like our cadets, our senior members are doing remarkable things. From Waldo flights to MQ9 escort missions; from sUAS to HF radio, the list of what our senior members have accomplished is almost endless.

With all of the training available, we will continue to be the premier volunteer organization. We look around and see the contributions of the members of CAP. The next question “What will you leave as a legacy to CAP?”

Serving America’s communities, saving lives, and shaping futures. 



For CAP, the Numbers Tell the FY2022 Story



By all accounts, fiscal 2022 was a banner year for CAP. Consider these significant year-end milestones:

- 60,125 members, including 25,000 cadets. That’s a 6.5% increase in membership over the previous Sept. 30. Most notably, it pushes CAP back over the 60,000 mark and indicates a complete rebound from the membership decline experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 151 lives saved. That speaks for itself. Because of CAP technology that includes cellphone forensics and radar analysis, along with search and rescue aircrews and ground teams, 151 people are alive today. As credited by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, that’s the fourth-highest year for lives saved in our recorded history.
- 9,202 units of blood collected. This milestone is also a high mark for CAP, by a large margin. These blood units collected by Operation Pulse Lift over the past year also saved lives — up to three per unit, according to the American Red Cross — and moved the mission closer to its goal of 16,667 units by the end of the calendar year.
- 2,540 certificated VFR pilots and 62 new Cadet Wings pilots. CAP’s pilot proficiency program has added about a hundred experienced pilots, and dozens more earned their private pilot certificates through the Cadet Wings Program.

<https://www.cap.news/montana-wing-response-to-flash-flooding-nets-88-saves-awarded/>

<https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/programs/emergency-services/pilots>

<https://www.cap.news/operation-pulse-lift--blood-collection-mission-tops-15000-units/>

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CAP Going to the Dogs (Part 2)

CAP's Canine Volunteer Partners Take to the Air

By 1st Lt. David McCrossan, CAP

Editor's Note: The [lead article in the Summer 2022 issue of Bear Facts \(Part 1\)](#) reported on Group 2's February 2022 training exercise with CARDA, which was the first such training mission since the pandemic. Since its publication, CARDA representatives (including canine members of CARDA) have visited a number of squadron meetings throughout the Wing to explain how the dogs are trained and to answer questions from rapt audiences. This is a follow-up article on a more recent CARDA/CAP training exercise.

Please note that one result of the transition from a printed/mailed magazine to a digital version is the ability to include more color photos and to include linked videos, a capability we exploit in this article.

[Aircraft from across Northern California geared up on 22 July 2023 to support a long-standing partner of CAP, the California Rescue Dog Association \(CARDA\).](#) CARDA's mission is to train, certify, and deploy highly-qualified search dog teams to assist law enforcement and other public safety agencies in the search for lost and



CARDA handler Eloise Anderson with her search dog prepare for a training flight at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Photo credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan



"CHIKO," an eager CARDA search dog with handler Steve Von Ehrenbrook, ready to board a training flight bound for South Lake Tahoe on the ramp at Sq. 44, Concord, CA on 22 July 2023. Photo credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

missing persons. Of the three search dog groups in California that directly support the State of California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), CARDA is the largest and most geographically dispersed. CARDA provides search dog services to all public service agencies at no charge.

The Northern California part of this July training mission had been postponed earlier in the year due to weather. Aircraft from Concord, San Jose, Santa Rosa and South Lake Tahoe hosted a dozen experienced handlers. The goal of the training mission was to familiarize both handlers and dogs and prepare for future search missions supported by CARDA.



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CAP pilot John Heldt and CARDA handler Cat McBride before boarding for a training mission at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Photo credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

Trained specialist dogs are a familiar sight to many CAP Emergency Services ground team search missions when working alongside local emergency services personnel, such as the county sheriff’s department. Operating in an area search or specific target search role, these unique animals come into their own with their highly developed tracking skills.

CARDA dogs and handlers do train regularly with other emergency services departments, and many have flown in helicopters. The smaller fixed-wing aircraft flown by CAP create a new experience for many of these dogs. Handlers need to know that they will be ready and prepared for their search mission when they land. That means they need to be comfortable and undistracted by the experience of flying in a CAP plane. This training helps them maintain their focus.

All those who participated agreed that the training flights provided by CAP across several Northern California locations were invaluable in preparing dogs and handlers for the tasks. Specifically, these flights help some CARDA dog handlers with passing their required Mission Ready certification for Cal OES.

A previous canine visitor from a similar 2022 CARDA training mission was “Yipi,” a Kelpie-mix puppy, with her CARDA handler Kathy Gaughen, who brought 18 years of experience in searches. She explained: “This is the best time to start the dog’s training, although we do sometimes bring dogs into the program that are a little older—but generally before age two.”

The biggest takeaway from the training event was that CAP volunteers are out supporting fellow CARDA volunteers in support of the shared public safety mission. When the next real search arrives, we all know we’ll both be ready. 



CARDA search dog handler Cat McBride with Capt. Tony Stiebel and Capt. John Heldt of CAP returning from training flight at Sq. 44, Concord, CA on 22 July 2023. Photo credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan



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CHIKO," CARDA search dog with handler Steve Von Ehrenbrook, on the ramp at Sq. 44, Concord, CA on 22 July 2023. Image credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

[VIEW](#)



CAP pilots Eric Choate and Louie Rivas undertake briefing and preflight checks between sorties on a CARDA mission at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Image credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

[VIEW](#)



CARDA search dog awaits a training flight at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Image credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

[VIEW](#)



CARDA search dog awaits a training flight at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Image credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

[VIEW](#)



CARDA mission at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Image credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

[VIEW](#)



CARDA search dog awaits a training flight at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Image credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

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CARDA search dog awaits a training flight at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Image credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

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CAP pilot John Heldt preflights for a CARDA mission at Sq. 44, Buchanan Field, Concord on 22 July 2023. Photo credit: 1st Lt. David McCrossan

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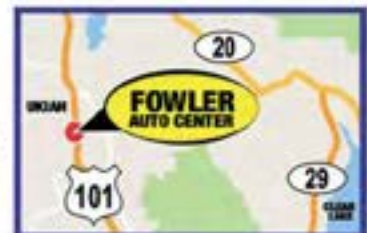
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“The Encampment Standard”

A CAP Story

By 1st Lt. Nicholas Pegis, CAP



Delta Flight flag with many streamers, including CTG Honor Flight. Photo credit: 2nd Lt. Nick Pegis

The Cadets of Delta Flight were getting ready for their upcoming squadron inspection. Some of the cadets had made many improvements since Day 0, and started to adjust to this temporary way of life known as Encampment. Some still needed a little more encouragement and guidance.

At the Wing’s annual Encampment, cadets are challenged to adapt to a culture that emphasizes unfamiliar norms and benchmarks. Cadets undergo many challenges to meet the “Encampment Standard.” These cadets were no different. Nervously working on their tasks, some were rolling shirts, while others were trying to make their beds with the precision that Encampment requires. When some of the cadets returned from various cleaning and dusting duties, one of the flight’s training officers came into the Delta Flight bay in the barracks. The training officer’s name is Senior Member (Technical Sgt.) Frank Mancebo. He told the cadets to grab their boots and shoe shine kits and then return. A few moments later the cadets returned with the requested items in hand.

Senior Member Mancebo sat down and began to teach these cadets how to shine their boots properly. He gave some advice and taught some techniques to get their boots to really sparkle. Now me, personally,

I always thought I had a really good shine on my boots. That is, of course, until I met Senior Member Mancebo. One day during Encampment I was sitting on the steps outside the barracks shining my boots, when Senior Member Mancebo came up and took one of my boots and began to shine it. I said “Frank, what are you doing?” He said, “I am going to shine this one boot.” “Why,” I asked?” “That way when you’re done with that one,” he said as he pointed at the boot I was working on, “they won’t match because it won’t be as good as this one.” We laughed, but really he was right. My boots didn’t even closely match.

As Senior Member Mancebo sat around with the cadets, he passed along his knowledge of shoe shining. But, he did something else; he began to talk *with* the cadets. He asked them questions like, What’s your first name? What do you like to do at school? Do you play sports? So on and so on. Senior Member Mancebo then shared some great life lessons, and talked about the importance of going to school. He also answered some of their questions they had about going into the military, having served himself. While Senior Member Mancebo was talking to these young cadets, I



Delta Flight on the march. Photo credit: Senior Member Frank Mancebo

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Delta Flight at Drill Competition. Photo credit: 2nd Lt. Nick Pegis



Delta Flight coming together on the guidon after the Group Run. Photo credit: 2nd Lt. Nick Pegis

noticed something different about them. They started smiling, even laughing, and looked like they were really enjoying this impromptu class. They no longer looked like the nervous, stressed-out cadets, running around frantically preparing for a squadron inspection. They looked calm, collected, and confident.

The ability to excel in something as trivial as shining shoes may not seem like an important life skill, but Encampment provides opportunities for confidence-building and for striving toward achievement as both an individual and a team.

When Senior Member Mancebo was done, they all went back to their duties, and they thanked Senior Member Mancebo for his valuable lessons. It's these positive moments in the course of their Encampment week that I know each one of these cadets will value and remember. I know I will as well. 

Inaugural Cadet Speech Competition

Cadet Senior Master Sgt. Inca Stienhans, San Francisco Cadet Squadron 86, gave a masterful presentation of her award-winning speech at the California Wing Conference on 21 October 2023.



Cadet Senior Master Sgt. Stienhans addresses the audience at the Wing banquet. Photo credit: CAWG Conference staff

All 52 Civil Air Patrol wings and 8 CAP regions host a cadet competition each year to determine which cadet team will ultimately represent their wings and regions at the National Cadet Competition (NCC). Core events reflect the range of challenges cadets face at the unit level, including Inspection, Written Exam, Physical Fitness, Team Leadership Problem(s), and various drill and color guard events. Since 2015, NCC has added a number of elective competitive events that reflect the CAP Cadet Program and emerging learning priorities. For the 2023 competition, a Public Speaking component was included for the first time.

For the California Wing (CAWG) Cadet Competition, each contestant in this inaugural event was asked to provide their views on the topic "Civil Air Patrol - Why We Do What We Do." The winner within each group was selected by the Group Commander, and the wing finalist was selected by the Wing Commander after they presented their speeches at the 2023 CAWG Cadet Programs Conference (CPC) in March. The excellence of the presentation was judged, as well as the text of each speech. As the CAWG winner, Cadet Stienhans received a partial scholarship to an upcoming National Cadet Special Activities (NCSA) or other CAP sponsored event. She will also have an opportunity to compete—presenting her perspective on CAP—at the regional competition, and the winner will go on to the national (NCC) contest.

The text of Cadet Stienhans' speech reads:

Good evening esteemed ladies and gentlemen, and good evening CWC 2023!

“Aspire to inspire: why we do what we do in Civil Air Patrol”

What Does “Aspire” Mean?

This word is a verb that means “to have a strong desire to achieve a goal or to become something.”

What Does “Inspire” Mean?

Inspire is a verb that means “to give somebody the desire, confidence, or encouragement to do something well,” “to give somebody the idea for something,” or “to evoke a certain feeling in someone.”

Now let us look at what we Aspire in Civil Air Patrol to Inspire others!

Civil Air Patrol Mission Statement is Volunteers serving America's communities, saving lives, and shaping futures.

To achieve this mission statement, at CAP we have 3 primary Programs:

1. Emergency Services
2. Aerospace Education
3. Cadet Programs

Emergency Services – What we aspire & how we inspire?

Members of CAP are always prepared, both in the air and on the ground to perform emergency services as a nonprofit organization. Trained CAP members make a difference in

their communities, assisting in times of disaster and searching for the lost. We as cadets have opportunities to learn and train to be emergency service members. As a Ground Team Member Trainee, and Urban Direction Finder Trainee, I learn important values and beneficial practices. When you go out to find a beacon or specific individual, you are committing not only your mind and body, but also respect for both the mission, and its objective.

Aerospace education – What we aspire & how we inspire?

Today's cadets, Tomorrow's Aerospace Leaders. Aerospace education empowers cadets with opportunities and resources to promote STEM education and careers. Civil Air Patrol Aerospace/STEM Education Programs bring over 40 free fun and engaging products and programs to cadets in squadrons and classrooms throughout the nation. We reach 300,000 youth each year with our hands-on lessons and material.

For example, are you all learning and having fun attending your Aerospace Seminars? I know that I am.

Cadet Programs – What we aspire & how we inspire?

The mission of Cadet Programs is to transform youth into aerospace leaders. Cadet education spreads over Leadership, Aerospace, Fitness, and Character Development.



Cadet Senior Master Sgt. Stienhans gives her speech. Photo credit: CAWG Conference staff

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We cadets have continuous opportunities to hone our Leadership skills, starting within our Squadron flights to taking and leading leadership training courses. It is amazing that every cadet gets to fly glider and powered aircrafts in orientation rides. This has inspired me and countless other cadets to continue their training to obtain their private pilot's licenses and beyond. CAP also offers special activities such as cyber security programs.

We cadets are trained in Character Development classes to follow the core values – Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence in All we do, and Respect.

These 4 core values are the building blocks in the real-world. CAP trains us cadets to be ready for the future.

If you notice a common thread in all 3 primary programs, the beauty of the organization is that it is entirely run by passionate volunteers to serve communities, save lives and shape our future.

It is senior members like ours who are our role models, continue to tirelessly work to make this happen. Let us take a moment to be grateful and applaud our senior members for their daily service and dedication to this program. [clap]

As leaders, we must lift our words and actions up to accomplish meaningful, purpose-filled goals. Calling on ourselves and others to achieve bigger, better things for a common good is inspiring. Without aspirations, inspiration is a sporadic emotion, fading in and out of focus.

With aspiration, we see on the horizon what is possible, what can be achieved. With inspiration, we can smile while we do the work. Inspiration puts the sparkle in our eyes and in our soul. It is our way to aspire greatly, lead spiritedly. We aspire to inspire in Civil Air Patrol. “We rise by lifting others”.

Thank you.

The winners within each CAWG group were:

- Group 1: C/SrA Lev Reyter - Sq. 3
- Group 2: C/MSgt Inca Stienhans - Sq. 86
- Group 3: C/A1C Isaac Gilmer - Sq. 25
- Group 4: C/SSgt Avamarie Dieutto - Sq. 1986
- Group 5: C/SSgt Elina Bergstrom - Sq. 92
- Group 6: No contestants
- Group 7: C/SMSgt Kayla Soleymani - Sq. 56
- Group 8: C/SSgt Katherine Kwon - Sq. 144



Cadet Stienhans receives her award from Col. Veta. Photo credit: CAWG Conference staff



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FACT SHEET | 2024



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About CAP

Civil Air Patrol is a congressionally chartered, Federally funded, 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and the civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force.

Operating in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, and serving communities nationwide, CAP's aviation-connected, diverse volunteer professionals and engaged community members from a wide range of backgrounds and professions perform Air Force-assigned missions as a Total Force partner. These missions include search and rescue and other emergency services, as well as disaster response, which CAP conducts for states and local communities as a nonprofit organization.

Civil Air Patrol's missions involve highly skilled personnel, low-cost aircraft and vehicles, specialized communications, advanced imaging capabilities, and other technologies. CAP's core cadet and aerospace education programs are also highly effective, providing a variety of innovative youth development initiatives and award-winning aerospace/STEM education resources.

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37K+ Orientation Flights

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- Conducts 85% of inland search and rescue in the U.S. as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and other agencies. CAP supported 455 SAR missions last year.
- Coordinates Air Force-assigned missions through CAP National Operations Center at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, at a cost of about \$170 per flying hour.
- Has 5,600 aircrew members and 37,000 emergency responders trained to Federal Emergency Management Agency standards.
- Provides 400 chaplains and 700 character development instructors who minister to youth and adult members and help comfort survivors and victims of disasters.
- Performs aerial reconnaissance for homeland security.
- Provides air intercept training, impact assessment, light transport, communications support, and low-level route surveys for the Air Force.
- Provides disaster-relief photography and support to local, state, and national agencies.
- Transports time-sensitive medical materials, blood products, and body tissues when commercial resources are unavailable.
- Maintains an extensive VHF and HF communications network.

AEROSPACE EDUCATION

- Educates adult and cadet members and the community on the importance of aerospace.
- Develops, publishes, and distributes national academic standards-based science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) aerospace education curricula for kindergarten through college classrooms, affecting more than 600,000 K-12 students nationwide. Nearly 50% of the schools served are Title 1.
- Generates interest in STEM careers through aviation-, space-, and cyber-focused activities and CAP "STEM Kits" associated with astronomy, flight simulations, model and remote-control aircraft, robotics, rocketry, weather, hydraulic engineering, and computer programming.
- Provides educators from diverse backgrounds with more than 40 free educational programs and products as well as services that include teacher orientation flights.
- Offers grant opportunities for adult and teacher members.
- Provides aerospace support for educational conferences and workshops nationwide.

CADET PROGRAMS

- Attracts more than 29,000 diverse youth ages 12-20 with a focus on leadership, character development, aerospace education, and fitness.
- Enriches school curricula through after-school programs.
- Offers orientation flights in powered aircraft and gliders and also offers flight training scholarships.
- Provides activities and competitions for cadets at the local, state, regional, and national levels.
- Makes opportunities for community involvement available through color guard/drill teams and emergency service missions.
- Exposes thousands of cadets to cyber defense careers through CyberPatriot, the Air and Space Forces Association's National Youth Cyber Security Competition.
- Inspires CAP cadets to attend all service academies. CAP cadets constitute approximately 10% percent of each U.S. Air Force Academy class.
- Produces cadets who enlist in the Air Force, U.S. Army, and U.S. Coast Guard at a higher pay grade if they have earned the Gen. Billy Mitchell Award.
- Awards scholarships in flight and academic opportunities to help enhance the nation's future workforce.



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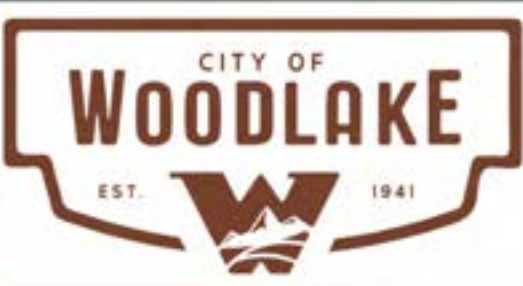
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CADET PROGRAMS

Today's Cadets, Tomorrow's Aerospace Leaders

Civil Air Patrol's cadet program is unlike any other because CAP features resources, traditions, training, education, and flight opportunities no other youth program can match. With no obligation to join the military, CAP weaves military traditions into leadership training, confidence building, character development, physical fitness, aerospace education, cyberspace activities, and other experiences that have proven to change the trajectory of lives for youth ages 12–18.

Former Civil Air Patrol cadets include Rhodes scholars, Medal of Honor recipients, four-star generals, aviation pioneers and astronauts, scientists, explorers, innovators, and military leaders.

YOUTH AVIATION INITIATIVE

The Youth Aviation Initiative is one aspect of the cadet experience that sets Civil Air Patrol's youth programs apart. In addition to numerous encampments and special activities designed to introduce cadets to new experiences and explore career opportunities, the Youth Aviation Initiative provides hands-on opportunities to explore aviation in-flight.

Civil Air Patrol's orientation flight program offers 10 introductory flights to each CAP cadet—five conducted in a powered aircraft and five in gliders. During these flights, cadets have the chance to take the controls and fly the aircraft. In fiscal year 2022, CAP pilots flew a combined total of more than 30,000 orientation flights.

NATIONAL FLIGHT ACADEMIES

The Youth Aviation Initiative includes a number of innovative CAP programs, such as Cadet Takeoff (TOP), which allows cadets the opportunity to attend a week-long flight academy. National Flight Academies offered periodically throughout the United States introduce cadets to both powered and glider flight operations and ground school. Many cadets will solo or be ready to solo after the flight academy training.



CADET WINGS

Civil Air Patrol's Cadet Wings program is funded by the U.S. Air Force and a grant from the James C. Ray Foundation with the primary objective of training pilots. Cadet Wings picks up where National Flight Academies end, taking students who have soloed through approximately 60 hours of training, preparation, and check ride to be private pilots.



Cadet Wings is a highly competitive program that includes a rigorous application process evaluating cadet eligibility based on CAP experience, academic record, and aviation qualification and knowledge. Many cadets are instructed by Civil Air Patrol flight instructors in CAP aircraft. Others train at local flight schools. Regardless of where training occurs, all Cadet Wings student pilots receive mentorship and guidance from members of the Youth Aviation Initiative panel, experts in aviation training and aviation careers. The mentorship of these individuals is what sets Cadet Wings apart from general

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aviation scholarships. CAP invests in their development as citizens and contributors to the aviation industry. Cadet Wings also offers selection for in-residence opportunities. A high percentage of cadets that graduate from Cadet Wings with their Private Pilot Certificate (PPC) continue to pursue careers in general aviation, commercial aviation, and service academies.

The most compelling aspects of Civil Air Patrol's Cadet Wings programs are these:

- lower cost per student
- fewer training hours
- greater pilot diversity than all of general aviation (per FAA and GAMA)

	CAP Cadet Wings	General Aviation
Female	25%	17%
Male	75%	83%
BIPOC*	24%	14%
White	76%	86%

*Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

CADET SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

In addition to the aviation-based activities and national academies that set Civil Air Patrol apart from other youth programs, CAP cadets can explore diverse and dynamic opportunities through National Cyber Academy, International Air Cadet Exchange, Pararescue and Survival Orientation Course, Space Command Familiarization Course, Civic Leadership Academy, Honor Guard Academy, National Blue Beret, Hawk Mountain Rescue Academy, Cadet Officer School, Engineering Technologies (robotics) Academy, Aircraft Maintenance & Manufacturing Academy, Noncommissioned Officer School, and more.

CYBER SECURITY TRAINING

CyberPatriot is the National Youth Cyber Education Program created by the Air & Space Force Association to inspire K-12 students toward careers in cybersecurity or other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. At the core of the program is the National Youth Cyber Defense Competition, the nation's largest cyber defense competition, which puts high school and middle school students in charge of securing virtual networks.



CADETINVEST

CadetInvest is CAP's scholarship program that helps ensure that financial requirements are not a barrier to career exploration and personal development during a cadet's CAP experience.

SUMMARY

The Civil Air Patrol cadet program hosts more than 27,000 young people aged 12-18 with a mission to shape them into dynamic servant leaders. Cadets have no obligation to pursue a career in the military, but the military traditions of rank, chain of command, leadership, self-reliance, and teamwork coupled with CAP's core values of integrity, volunteer service, excellence, and respect help forge the character of tomorrow's leaders.

For more information, contact:

Steve Cox, Public Affairs Manager: SCox@capnhq.gov, 334-296-5881

CAWG's Newest Unit Engages With Community

By Maj. Chris Johnson, CAP

Labor Day weekend introduced California Wing's newest squadron to the community when it assisted SCOPE in providing needed staffing as safety staff at the Mariposa County Fair. Thirteen of Squadron 1850's members volunteered their time in assisting SCOPE, the Sheriff's Community Organized Policing Effort, and also manned a very successful recruiting booth. Duties included walking the fairgrounds looking

for distressed persons among the thousands of fairgoers, taking tickets at the various gates, assisting disabled persons, checking for proper entry passes, and more. Recent advanced radio training by the squadron helped members in integrating into SCOPE's communications.

SCOPE had approached Squadron 1850 in July asking for assistance. This request was arranged by Lori Law of the Mariposa County Sheriff's Foundation, which has greatly assisted Squadron 1850 in making community connections vital to 1850's start up and continuing success. The Fair has helped set the stage for upcoming presentations to the Mariposa Board of Supervisors, County Fire SAR, and Mariposa Chamber of Commerce. Two members talked to the Chief Ranger of the Yosemite National Park, who expressed interest in working with CAP for SAREX training where CAP could provide radio relay in rough terrain within the park.

Authorized by the California State Legislature in May 1939, the first annual Mariposa County Fair was held in October 1939. CAP was glad to be asked to partic-



The Mariposa County Fair featured a rodeo. Photo credit: Capt. Ada Hurst

ipate in 2023 and plans are already in the works for 2024.

SCOPE and the fair administration had nothing but praise for Squadron 1850 in their volunteer service and professionalism. One member of SCOPE offered to sponsor a cadet for their entire cadet career! Squadron 1850 provided over 200 hours of community service over the 4 days of the Fair.

Mariposa-Yosemite Composite Squadron received its charter 9 March 2023. It currently has 25 members and is growing rapidly. We meet in the terminal building at Mariposa-Yosemite Airport (KMPI) every Tuesday at 1830.



"Mr. Mariposa" Cody Habeck, age 7, with Cadet Airman Coan. Photo credit: Capt. Ada Hurst

A Retrospective on the Last 4 Years of Emergency Services

By Lt. Col. Charles Christian, CAP

Editor's Note: On 21 October 2023 at the California Wing Conference, Lt. Col. Christian reminisced over the course of his tenure as CAWG Director of Emergency Services.



My hesitation about taking on the role of Wing Director of Emergency Services (ES) four years ago was fundamentally that we had inherited a well-functioning wing: nothing was broken and nothing needed to be fixed. I didn't want to break something that was already working well. My ES background was with a squadron where members showed up to a SAREX early, and they left late. And then they planned for the next day's operational period. People would work all day at work, and be ready to answer phones at all hours of the night. I saw pilots who launched in inclement weather to try to accomplish a rescue or bring closure to the family of a lost airman. I knew what California Wing members were capable of. I served on a lot of membership boards, and I heard this common theme: the incoming members explained that they were now in a position where they could give back and serve their community—and have fun doing it. And it was that context of volunteerism that helped frame my conversations with Ross about my position.

It was within this context that we discussed what it was that we could do. One thing I came up with was that the members were looking for an opportunity. If you give them meaningful work they always respond to the occasion—they will respond 100%. If I had a pie chart, it would show one color—100%. If we can capture some new opportunities, we needed to be a wing that had more to do than Search and Rescue (SAR). We wished to shift our SAR work portfolio toward disaster response; we knew that it was an emerging field that would be meaningful to the membership, and we knew that there was value to the community there.

So we went to talk to different agencies and agency representatives, including the general in charge of the California National Guard. The general and his colonels and staff were there to hear from us about what we could do, and we had to make some promises about our ability to perform—that we are reliable and professional, that we can do it safely, and that you will appreciate the product that we will deliver to you. I promised that (and I did so without hesitation—without any reservation whatsoever in my mind) because I knew from my previous experience that the members cared about the type of work that we wanted to do and they would absolutely step up and achieve it. And you did! And it gave us all the momentum that we needed in order to market our ES services. To go out and visit with agencies, capture that work, and bring it back for the members and for our organization within the Wing. Disaster response is a tough market: it is a really tough market. It is through your efforts, through your skills, innovations, preparedness, and ability to execute—time and time again—that we were able to go out and capture new work and bring it back to this wing.

Not four months into Colonel Veta's tenure, COVID came into our lives. And our first reaction was, "This derails all our plans." But the pandemic turned out to be an opportunity, and again the members demonstrated that they could perform in an outstanding fashion. We had roughly 600 members across the state working in food banks contributing thousands of volunteer hours, delivering hundreds of thousands



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of meals. That endeared us to the State, to the California State Guard, and the military reserve. Four months into my tenure, it was unbelievable support: we were supporting the Red Cross and LA County. We were doing food bank support in the Central Valley; it was an amazing thing to watch.

Not long after that, we obtained some new technology; we obtained WALDO cameras from National Headquarters. And the things showed up on the front porch: it was great, but what did it do? It came without a manual or any guidance. So, what did you do? You wrote the book. You figured out how to use it, and you taught what you had learned throughout the Wing. And barely two or three weeks later, we had massive wildfires in Northern California and the Central Valley. So, we photographed several thousand square kilometers of burn scar area. And we did it during the day, processed it overnight, and damage assessment by the National Guard began at 0700 the following morning. In less than a 24-hour turnaround, we were providing damage assessments! There were other teams that the customer had used in the past where it would take them months to do the same thing. But again, you adapted, and you outperformed, and you impressed the heck out of everyone.

Our counterdrug program has been incredibly successful, and the Coast Guard requested us by name for aerial support because they enjoy working with us so much. I don't know how to say in words how proud I am of everything the Wing has accomplished in Disaster Relief. Our SAR program hours are in decline. But we are still a very capable, premiere, SAR organization within this state and it is why the state contracts with us and it one of the ties we have to the State of California. They know that we have the capability, and that we have the people who are dedicated to the task and will perform to the very best of their capabilities—and deliver. They are professional, reliable, and repeatable. And everyone sees it.

How many of you have flown on our WADS missions? We do those almost every week. We are out there flying alongside fighter jets and training the military. They trust us—enough to fly their jets very close to us. It is a hazardous environment, and they don't trust anyone else to do this.

The reason we have these opportunities, the reason I was able to go and pitch the capabilities of Civil Air Patrol, was because I had absolute confidence in the members being always be able to perform and deliver. I really want to take this opportunity to say, “Thank you.”

The last four years as ES Director has at times been difficult. I felt like a therapist some of the time. The passions run high in this organization; you are here because you are passionate about what you do. And perhaps equally passionate when things are not going the way you think they should. This is okay. But what I do want to say though is that I truly appreciate everything you have done. And I appreciate all the support that Col. Veta provided over the last four years. Your efforts are incredibly valuable and very much appreciated all throughout this wing. Our job within the ES Directorate—as we saw it—was to support you, and I truly hope that we were able to do that. For the future, under new leadership by Mark Wheeler, his team, and our new Wing Commander, I know that if you give them your support, we will be able to bring in new business and find new ways to participate that excite you, that challenge you. And please give yourselves a round of applause, and thank you very much for everything you have done.



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2023 CAWG “Of The Year” Awards

The following California Wing awards for 2023 were announced during the California Wing Conference in October 2023.

Aerospace Education

C/2D LT BENJAMIN M. LEE	Frank G. Brewer Memorial Cadet Aerospace Education Award - Category I (Cadet)
MAJ PATRICK D. HANFORD	Frank G. Brewer Memorial Cadet Aerospace Education Award - Category II (Senior)
LT COL KENNETH J. ENDRIZZI	Frank G. Brewer Memorial Cadet Aerospace Education Award - Category IV (Lifetime Achievement)
CAPT NEIL R. MALONE	Major General Jeanne M. Holm Civil Air Patrol Aerospace Officer of the Year Award
KRISTIAN T. JOHNSON	Civil Air Patrol Aerospace Education Teacher of the Year

Cadet Programs

MAJ LISA M. CHERRY	John V. "Jack" Sorensen Cadet Programs Officer of the Year Award
C/CMSGT ZACHARY VAN LE	Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA) Outstanding National Cadet NCO of the Year
C/CAPT AVA L. FONTANILLA	Cadet of the Year

Cadet Programs / Aerospace

C/CMSGT ASCHER R. LAFAYETTE	Air Force Association's (AFA) Aerospace Education Cadet of the Year
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Chaplain / Character Development

1ST LT KAI E. CHEN	Character Development Officer of the Year
CH., CAPT AARON M. GONZENBACH	Chaplain Major General Robert Preston Taylor Chaplain of the Year

Communications

MAJ GEORGE D. GADD	Communicator of the Year
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Finance

CAPT LOUIS A. RIVAS JR.	Director of Finance of the Year
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CAPT NIKOLAY I. ZHEREBNENKOV	Colonel Lester E. Hopper CAP Wing Historian of the Year
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Inspector General

LT COL VALERIE G. HANLEY	Inspector General of the Year Award
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Legal

MAJ BENJAMIN W. KARABIAN	Major General Dwight H. Wheless Legal Officer of the Year Award
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Legislative

LT COL MARK W. KEMPTON	George Texido Legislative Officer of the Year Award
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Logistics

LT COL JAMES A. MILLER	Property Management Officer of the Year Award
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Membership – Senior

MAJ CHRIS A. JOHNSON	Senior Member of the Year
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Operations – Aircrew

CAPT RYAN D. UHLES	Pilot of the Year
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CAPT FARAMARZ BAGHERI	Lt Col T. Keith Riddle Aircrew Member of the Year Award
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CAPT NEIL R. MALONE	Airborne Photographer of the Year
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CAPT RICHARD C. ALLEGRO	Observer of the Year
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LT COL ROBIN Y. KIM	Instructor Pilot of the Year
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Operations – CD

LT COL SARABJEET S. LOHARA	Norm Edwards Counterdrug Officer of the Year Award
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Operations - Incident Staff

MAJ CHRIS A. JOHNSON	Colonel Edwin W. Lewis, Jr. Incident Staff Member of the Year Award
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Operations - Ops Staff

1ST LT MICHAEL J. KANG	Col David Kantor Operations Staff Officer of the Year Award
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Education & Training / Professional Development

CAPT RICHARD WEST	Professional Development Officer of the Year Award
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Public Affairs

2D LT ELISA MURESAN	Colonel Robert (Bud) V. Payton Public Affairs Officer of the Year
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CAPT ADAM C. STALEY	Recruiting and Retention Officer of the Year
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Safety

1ST LT DAVID S. YACONO	Safety Officer of the Year
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Unit / Organizational

CADET SQUADRON 86	Cadet Squadron of the Year
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CLOVER FIELD COMPOSITE SQUADRON 51	Composite Squadron of the Year
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SAN JOSE SENIOR SQUADRON 80	Senior Squadron of the Year
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CAPT ADAM C. STALEY	Unit Commander of the Year
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The award recipients are nominated to compete for the corresponding Pacific Region awards, in cases where a corresponding award exists at the regional level. ~~_____~~

The CAWG Group Challenge – Competing for Success

*By Cadet Chief Master Sgt. Hope Staley, CAP
California Wing Public Affairs NCOIC*

An anonymous author once wrote, “The best part of competition is that through it, we discover what we are capable of and how much more we can actually do than we ever believed possible.”

As the incredible 2023 California Wing (CAWG) Encampment drew to an end, returning cadets and senior members added yet another activity to the California Wing’s rich history of developing leaders. Unbeknownst to them, a new challenge was silently brewing in the background. On August 5th, a singular social media post teased the unveiling of a brand new contest, one that the Wing had never seen before. The very next day, CAWG Public Affairs officially announced the kickoff for the 2023 California Wing Group vs. Group Challenge, also known simply as the CAWG Group Challenge.

Lasting just over a month, the CAWG Group Challenge quickly became the Wing’s biggest remote competition since the 2020 Cadets vs. Senior Members PT Challenge, which encouraged members to stay healthy and active during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Each of CAWG’s eight groups were pitted against each other in a friendly competition in an attempt to “Race to the Top”, echoing the Challenge’s motto. Across the span of four weeks, members were challenged to aim for new heights and to propel their group to the top of three different categories:

Physical Training. Each week was dedicated to a specific exercise, and weekly winners were announced throughout the Challenge. The order of exercises (pushups, jumping jacks, sit-ups, and mile runs) encouraged the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle in the spirit of competition.

Volunteer Service. Echoing our Core Value, members were tasked with serving their local community through non-profit organization/activities and volunteer efforts. Every recorded hour contributed to the CAWG Group Challenge, additionally bringing members closer to earning the coveted CAP Community Service ribbon.

Book Reading. An area untouched before, the Book Reading category encouraged members to learn through the mighty power of physical books rather than using electronic devices to read stories. Members could read anything from leadership, aerospace, history, and fiction to contribute to the Challenge.

Dozens of squadrons across the Wing banded together, and the CAWG Group Challenge was underway. The rules were simple – every completed book, volunteer hour, and exercise counted as a point towards a group’s total number of points in each category. Submission sheets were released at the end of each week, allowing members to submit their results and contribute to their group’s total point tally.

The competition started with significant participation, and its momentum accelerated with every passing week:

Week 1 (6 - 12 Aug) started off strong, with Group 2 winning the pushup requirement with more than double the next highest tally number.

- o San Francisco Bay Group 2 = 3,702 points
- o Inland Empire Group 3 = 1,661 points
- o Central Coast Group 4 = 1,619 points
- o Central California Group 6 = 1,283 points
- o South Coast Group 7 = 700 points
- o NorCal Group 5 = 464 points



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- o Los Angeles County Group 1 = 434 points
- o San Diego County Group 8 = 368 points

Group 6 leaped into the spot of first place during Week 2 (13 – 19 Aug), with Group 2 following closely behind with a massive total of jumping jacks.

- o Central California Group 6 = 12,795 points
- o San Francisco Bay Group 2 = 11,056 points
- o NorCal Group 5 = 6,548 points
- o Inland Empire Group 3 = 4,596 points
- o San Diego Group 8 = 565 points
- o Los Angeles County Group 1 = 390 points
- o Central Coast Group 4 = 180 points
- o South Coast Group 7 = No points

Week 3 (20 – 26 Aug) ended with Group 4 winning by over a thousand sit-up points.

- o Central Coast Group 4 = 2,231 points
- o Los Angeles County Group 1 = 1,217 points
- o Inland Empire Group 3 = 1,146 points
- o San Francisco Bay Group 2 = 1,097 points
- o Central California Group 6 = 975 points
- o San Diego Group 8 = 710 points
- o NorCal Group 5 = 619 points
- o South Coast Group 7 = 300 points



Group 2 reclaimed its throne at the end of the Challenge (Week 4, 27 Aug – 2 Sep), bringing the competition to an end with the Mile Run. (Every mile completed earned one point)

- o San Francisco Bay Group 2 = 117 points
- o Central California Group 6 = 99 points
- o Inland Empire Group 3 = 85 points
- o South Coast Group 7 = 32 points
- o Los Angeles County Group 1 (TIE) = 10 points
- o Central Coast Group 4 (TIE) = 10 points
- o NorCal Group 5 = 7 points
- o San Diego Group 8 = 5 points

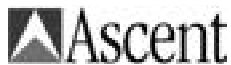
Throughout the month, stories of unbridled enthusiasm and esprit de corps spread throughout the Wing. Various squadrons teamed up together to form mass PT formations with the common goal of earning points for their Group. Lt. Col. George White of Cable Composite Squadron 25 (Group 3) continued to participate in the Challenge whilst vacationing in Europe, running a combined total of 43 miles across Switzerland, Zurich, Italy, Venice, Croatia, Naples, and Rome, contributing to half of his group’s mile run tally.

A grand total of 10,231 pushups, 36,130 jumping jacks, 8,295 sit-ups, and 365 miles were accomplished by the end of the Challenge.



Lt. Col. White taking a selfie of his morning run in CAP attire to encourage CAWG members to participate in the PT category. Photo credit: Lt. Col. George White

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CAWG members rose to the challenge to take on the Volunteer Service category, truly living up to CAP's missions and Core Values. Our members carried out efforts such as:

- Delivering blood products to local hospitals and American Red Cross facilities.
- Volunteering at the Los Angeles Kitten Rescue to help animals find permanent homes.
- Teaming up with Spark Growth (registered nonprofit) organization to organize Read-A-Thons to help raise money to rebuild a local library damaged by vandalism.
- Distributing textbooks and resource folders to lower income people/students in the community in preparation for the new year.
- Volunteering at Breast Cancer Awareness fundraising activities.
- Sorting through donations (clothes, toys, baby formulas, and other maternity/baby/postpartum items) at the San Rafael PostPartum Support Center.
- Organizing a Read-A-Thon event to collect items for Maui relief.

Various other activities included volunteering for special activities/organizations such as Meals on Wheels, Shooting Stars Foundation, Waves of Flags (Pepperdine University), and even serving as a volunteer security guard aboard the USS Hornet Museum Ship in Alameda, CA. The list doesn't even scratch the surface of what CAWG's amazing members accomplished!

A total of 747 volunteer hours were compiled, with Inland Empire Group 3 placing first in the category.


- o Inland Empire Group 3 = 253 hours
- o San Francisco Bay Group 2 = 182 hours
- o NorCal Group 5 = 73 hours
- o San Diego Group 8 = 71 hours
- o Los Angeles County Group 1 = 66 hours
- o Central California Group 6 = 64 hours
- o Central Coast Group 4 = 20 hours
- o South Coast Group 7 = 18 hours

The Book Reading category ended with a total of 172 confirmed books completed, with San Francisco once again landing at the top of the roster.

- o San Francisco Bay Group 2 = 55 points
- o NorCal Group 5 = 34 points
- o Inland Empire Group 3 = 32 points
- o Central Coast Group 4 = 16 points
- o Central California Group 6 = 14 points
- o Los Angeles County Group 1 = 9 points
- o San Diego County Group 8 = 8 points
- o South Coast Group 7 = 4 points

The CAWG Group Challenge was a huge success, with approximately half of CAWG's squadrons coming together to participate. The Challenge gained recognition across the nation, even receiving commendation from members in the incredible Georgia Wing. Members learned that the Challenge was not just about the competition; it was about camaraderie, determination, and a shared pursuit of excellence and teamwork. The Challenge proved to be a testament to the commitment of CAP members to their personal development, their group, and ultimately their community.

The California Wing would like to thank all who made this challenge a success, along with a huge thank you to Cadet Staff Sgt. Annalise Lucas for proposing it.

Although it has come to an end, its impact will resonate, inspiring future generations of CAP members as a celebration of the strength that comes from working together towards a common goal, embodying the very essence of Civil Air Patrol's missions and Core Values. 

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CAP TOP Flights

Bringing Educators into CAP

Introducing Educators to the Joy of Flying

By Capt. Paul Rivera, CAP

One of the three pillars of Civil Air Patrol is the Aerospace Education mission. We are raising up a new generation of pilots, aerospace engineers and technicians through our support and engagement with cadets and our support of STEM study.

To engage educators across public, private, parochial, and home schooling is the focus of our Air Force-funded TOP (Teacher Orientation Program) flights.

What is the program and why? CAP's TOP (Teacher Orientation Program) Flight was created to bring educators—whether from public, private, parochial, or home school—into our CAP organization through first-hand experience of flying with our mission pilots and our aircraft. The vast majority of our nation's teachers have never flown in a small plane, let alone an unpowered glider.

Their experience of what may be their first flight in a piston powered small plane or a glider, as well as their first contact with CAP, may broaden their knowledge of what CAP is about. It could even be a life-changing experience! This first experience is meant to be shared with their students and school and to imbue the importance and excitement of aerospace education and STEM subjects.

Where funding is available, powered and non-powered CAP aircraft can be both experienced by our educators.

When TOP was created in 2004, it was at that time a "Class C" mission and as such received minimal funding. However, in 2019 it was designated by the Air Force as a "Class A" mission with a major increase in funding to expand the program participants and pilot availability. All CAP pilots rated for cadet orientation flights are now eligible to fly the TOP flights, and the Air Force funds this program across all CAP wings.

How does the TOP program work within CAWG? Maj. Catherine Collom, our DAE (Director of Aerospace Education), is responsible for ensuring that all teachers enrolled in the Aerospace Education Member (AEM) program have the opportunity to schedule a TOP flight. Her Deputy Director, Maj. Mark Fridell, is the point-of-contact for coordinating the flights for the AEMs.

The process for an educator normally consists of local CAP members talking with local educators and introducing them to the program. Signing up a teacher to become an AEM will give them a CAPID and allow them access to our CAP eServices Website for a modest cost of \$35. These educators can then order STEM kits and access the multiple resources available to their students. The member that introduced the educator should follow up and contact Maj. Fridell to initiate the request for the TOP flight. If an educator finds the AEM program through the CAP national website, they will be directed to Maj. Collom. Maj. Collom is responsible for connecting the educator with a CAP member in their local area so they get the personal attention deserved.

Most of our CAWG squadrons will have an Aerospace Education officer to assist the educator in the process. Maj. Fridell can be reached by CAP email (mark.fridell@cawgcap.org) or via his phone at



AEM C J Brundahl, a 5th grade teacher at South Hills Academy in West Covina, took a TOP flight on 5 December. Photo credit: C J Brundahl

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925.872.8111. He will assist the squadron and/or the educator in signing-up as well as coordinating the TOP flight. For Southern California, 1st Lt. John Rochford, as well as Capt. Frank Bagheri, will coordinate for the actual TOP Flight schedules and logistics. Northern California will have a different operations team(s) for flights, and will be coordinated by Maj. Fridell.

Susan Broderick Mallett is a retired teacher, administrator, and university instructor with an educational tenure of 31 years in Alabama schools. As a public school principal, she led a nationally and internationally-recognized elementary school that integrated an aerospace theme throughout the curriculum. Since 2006 she has served as the Educational Outreach and Air Force Association (AFA) Programs Coordinator at the National HQ of the Civil Air Patrol at Maxwell Air Force Base, AL.

When asked about CAP TOP flights, Mrs. Mallet adds her insight.

“CAP’s Teacher Orientation Program (TOP) flights are a unique opportunity to put CAP educator members at the controls of a CAP airplane in flight, which allows them to connect STEM principles they teach with a first-hand knowledge of related aviation principles. It is hoped that prior to their flight, the teachers can obtain and practice on a CAP Flight Simulator STEM Kit, provided free to CAP squadrons and educator members at no cost. Additive is the pilot’s pre-flight briefing which gives a clear description and demonstration of the airplane’s control surfaces prior to the teachers using the actual control features in the cockpit to see and feel how the airplane is maneuvered in flight. Teachers sharing their flight experience with their students via video, photos, or live streaming, gives the students a better understanding of and interest in aviation and possible related career opportunities. Many times, the pilot will conduct a follow-on visit to the classroom to give a broader explanation of the many aspects of aviation while also sharing the benefits of CAP’s cadet programs with the students. Ultimately, TOP flights are a key component in helping both teachers and students gain an appreciation for and interest in aviation and CAP’s missions for America.”

1st Lt. John Rochford of Group 1’s Squadron 35 has conducted several recent TOP flights. He adds:


“Since becoming a Civil Air Patrol Mission Pilot in 2022, I’ve had the opportunity to participate in the TOP Flight program on two occasions now. I meet the teachers at an airport close to their school and introduce them to the plane by including them in a pre-flight inspection. We take off and head to their school so that we can fly over the school at a prearranged time so that their students can greet them from the ground. Each teacher takes a turn in the front seat so that they can fly the plane and experience the thrill of flight. The teachers take this experience back to their classrooms to share with their students, which hopefully sparks an interest with the students to pursue STEM-type activities. The teachers in the program are also given STEM kits by the Air Force to conduct experiments with their student to help spark that interest.”

The reach of this program can be expanded if we as CAP members contact all the educators that we know personally. We all know educators, whether from our own family education history, or friends and neighbors. If each of our members reaches out to these folks and discusses this important program, it should result in many more educators taking advantage of TOP flights.

Maj. Collum has a simple message to introduce the idea to prospective TOP flight participants. She poses the question:

“How does an educator get a free orientation flight? Civil Air Patrol has a special program for educators which entitles them to a free orientation flight in one of our CAP aircraft. An educator can sign up for a minimum fee and become what is known as an Aerospace Education Member (AEM). Along with all the other benefits of the program, a free orientation flight, known as a TOP flight (Teachers Orientation Program flight), is included.”

With a severe shortage of commercial and military pilots, our TOP flights are one way to increase the interest of students in our cadet programs as well as STEM subjects in general.

For more information on the AEM program, go to: [Educators | Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters \(gocivilairpatrol.com\)](https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com) 

REGION CADET LEADERSHIP SCHOOL (RCLS)

2023 UNIVERSITY OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN RCLS

BY C/LT COL TERRANCE FUNG, C/MAJ LIAM MCKINNON,
C/1ST LT ISIAH GONZALEZ, C/CAPT GRACE MURESAN
AS TOLD TO 2D LT ELISA MURESAN

Successfully completing a Region Cadet Leadership School (RCLS) is a requirement to earn the Eaker Award. On June 19-29, 2023, two cadets from California Wing Group 2, C/Maj Liam McKinnon (squadron 13) and C/Capt Grace Muresan (squadron 10), attended the RCLS held by the the University of Rocky Mountain at the US Air Force Academy campus in Colorado Springs. They learned Officership and Character standard and responsibilities, Communication skills as a leader, Interpersonal Relations to improve their mentoring, coaching, supervising, and disciplining techniques, Critical and Creative thinking, and Leadership Theory that can help them lead indirectly through delegation.

McKinnon said that the school was well run and organized, and that his most favorite part was getting to know cadets from other wings who had completely different backgrounds but still had the same goals and enthusiasm to thrive at CAP. He added, "My advice for any CAWG cadets going to events outside of the wing is to keep an open mind because sometimes events are run differently. *Use this fact to learn and grow* as a leader and a cadet." Muresan, who won the Best Essayist Award, agreed "I got the chance to use interpersonal relations techniques taught in the program, to convince my opposing-views team mates, to agree on the crucial points that I proposed." She continued, "I agree with McKinnon. Attending outside of wing schools will contribute significantly to the *awareness of diversity and maturity of your leadership skills.*"

C/Lt Col Terrance Fung (squadron 25, group 3) and C/1st Lt Isiah Gonzalez (squadron 144, group 8) also attended the RCLS as instructors and both received Commanders' Commendation awards. Fung advised, "For CAWG attendees, prepare to drop the stigma and ego as a cadet officer. You will soon learn that everyone at RMR RCLS work together and the environment is much more relaxed. Although you should still be professional and competent, the culture of RMR is extremely different. Don't be afraid to make friends with your fellow officers and *develop a relationship between you and your seminar leader so they can further guide you along your CAP career.*" Gonzalez added, "I think to get the best out of CAP, a cadet should figure out the why first. *Why do you want to join CAP?* Once you know what you want to achieve, find a mentor, be coachable and adaptable, and work your way up and around. RMR RCLS strengthened my belief in this view."

Min age is 16, the cost in 2023 is \$300.

Photo Credit: <https://photos.cap.gov/National-Cadet-Special-Activities/University-of-RMR/URMR-All-Course-Events/2023-URMR/2023-RCLS/> and C/Capt Grace Muresan



L-R: C/Maj McKinnon, C/Lt Col Fung, C/1st Lt Gonzalez, C/Capt Muresan

C/Maj McKinnon, C/Lt Col Fung, and C/Capt Muresan with their cohort



C/Capt Muresan received her 'Best Essayist' Award certificate from 1st Lt Hess and 1st Lt Stone.



C/Lt Col Fung and C/1st Lt Gonzalez as RCLS instructors.



RCLS attendees at the USAFA physical challenge course. They had to overcome their fear and stay fit to become an effective leader.

ON GUARD

PAGE 7

2023 CAWG Encampment – A Leadership Perspective

*By 1st Lt. Jillian Restivo, CAP
2023 CAWG Summer Encampment Public Affairs Officer*



Looking back on the summer of 2023, the California Wing Cadet Training Group (CTG) convened at Camp Roberts in San Miguel, California, for its annual CAWG Encampment from 22 to 30 July. The resounding success of this week-long cadet program highlighted the importance of dedicated teamwork, relentless effort, and invested time. This event marked a historic milestone as the largest-ever encampment in both California's history and the Civil Air Patrol, with a remark-



CAWG Pre-Encampment. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group



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news is you're the pilot.”*

~ MICHAEL ALTSHULER



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able participation of 570 individuals and representation from 7 wings-- CA, AZ, TX, IA, NC, FL, CO.




CAWG Encampment Day 0. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group

Among the participants were 384 first-time students, joined by 112 cadet cadre members and 78 senior contributors, all collaborating to usher in the newest cohort of The Cadet Training Group.



CAWG Encampment Day 1. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group

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The newly-formed Cadet Training Group (CTG) embraced the commitment to ‘Rise to the Challenge,’ confronting the week ahead with a blend of teamwork, discipline, and success. Organized into 15 flights (Alpha to Oscar) and further divided into 5 squadrons (155th-159th), cadets actively participated in character development classes and aviation sessions covering fundamental flight principles, bridge building, and core values. They honed their barrack maintenance skills to inspection standards and refined their drill and ceremony proficiency under the guidance of their flight cadre.

In a continuous pursuit of teamwork and camaraderie, students engaged in the Boom Course, an agility challenge fostering unity. Additionally, they enjoyed a special guided tour of military vehicles and an interactive aviation class, setting the stage for the upcoming orientation flights.

On July 28, a milestone was reached as 100 students experienced their first O-ride. Another 100 flew in the UH-60 Blackhawk, and 380 enjoyed a ride in the CH-47 Chinook—culminating in over 580 individuals taking to the skies that day.



CAWG Encampment Day 2. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group



CAWG Encampment Day 3. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group

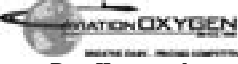
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CAWG Encampment Day 4. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group

Over the course of the week, a variety of captivating activities challenged every student, promoting teamwork and facilitating individual development. It was a week filled with challenges, teamwork, and personal development, leaving an indelible mark on each participant.

The exceptional leadership of Cadet Encampment Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Leon Zhao, and Commander Major Tim Albert, added an extra layer of excellence to the proceedings. Importantly, this



CAWG Encampment Day 5. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group

achievement was made possible by an extensive team of support staff, whose unwavering dedication significantly enhanced every aspect of the encampment experience. This collective accomplishment not only celebrated the present success but also cast a promising light on the unity and growth of future cadet leaders. 🚀



CAWG Encampment Day 6. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group



CAWG Encampment Day 7. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group



CAWG Encampment Day 8. Photo Credit: Cadet Training Group



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