

CADET SPONSOR HANDBOOK

SECTION I – THE SPONSOR PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

The Cadet Sponsor Program is designed to provide cadets with an avenue to form friendships and gather support beyond the formal Academy environment. If you can remember the first time you left the nest and the feeling of leaving behind the comfort and security of your parents’ home, then you will understand the needs of the young men and women in the Sponsor Program. Rigorous Academy standards can tax even the best of spirits, producing feelings of great stress to make the grade in some cadets, and in others, moments of loneliness, homesickness and doubt. As a cadet sponsor, you provide a home-away-from-home during a cadet’s years at the Academy. You serve as the cadet’s mentor, friend, and advisor, providing a caring environment to relax away from the pressures of the Academy. You are also in the position to serve as a positive adult role model helping cadets understand their role as a career Air Force officer and reinforcing positive social values.

The Sponsor Office attempts to match sponsors with cadets who share the same basic characteristics. Cadets can request “by name” sponsors. When two sponsors request the same cadet, we honor the wishes of the cadet.

SPONSOR QUALIFICATIONS

One of the primary reasons for the Sponsor Program is to expose cadets to career-oriented military members. Therefore, we strongly encourage participation by active duty officers in grades O-3 and above and NCOs grade E-6 and above. While these categories receive first priority, reserve and retired officers and NCOs, National Guard, Civil Servants (grades GS-05 and above), USAFA graduates and Academy professors may also apply. Call the Cadet Sponsor Office at 333-2727 for details regarding the application process.

SECTION II – UNDERSTANDING THE CADET

In order to successfully interact with a cadet, it is important to understand the life of a cadet who is attending the Academy. This section is designed to familiarize the sponsor with the terms and acronyms frequently used by cadets.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

ACADEMY SPIRIT	The weekly base newspaper
ACQ	Academic call to quarters: time cadets must be in their dorms studying
ACPRO	Academic probation. Restrictions placed on cadets who fail to meet a grade point average of 2.0.
AF	Air Force
AFA	Air Force Academy
AFI	Air Force Instruction — the instructions provide a set of policies and guidelines outlining Air Force operating procedures
AD	Department of Athletics
A-HALL	Arnold Hall
AMI	A.M. Inspection; room inspection to ensure cleanliness and adherence to standards

AMT	Academy Military Training NCO
AOC	Air Officer Commanding
AOG	Association of Graduates—the Academy's alumni association
BASICS	New cadets just entering the Academy
BCT/BEAST	Basic Cadet Training
C-STORE	Cadet term referring to the Army-Air Force Exchange Service outlet in Vandenberg Hall.
CW	Cadet Wing
CIC	Cadet in Charge
C1C	Cadet First Class (a fourth year or senior cadet) — “Firstie”
C2C	Cadet Second Class (a third year or junior cadet) — “2 Degree”
C3C	Cadet Third Class (a second year or sophomore cadet) — “3 Degree”
C4C	Cadet Fourth Class (a first year or freshman cadet) — “4 Degree”
DF	Dean of Faculty—organization responsible for cadet academics
DOD	Department of Defense
DOOLIE	A new, first-year cadet at the Academy
DOOLIE DAY OUT	Basics’ first opportunity to leave USAFA to spend a few hours with a sponsor family
FAIRCHILD HALL	Building that houses the Commandant of Cadets, library and academic facilities.
GR	Graded Review
GRAD	Short for graduation; also refers to an Academy graduate.
GRAD WEEK	Graduation Week: the six day period at the end of the Academic year including Memorial Day, which encompasses all of the graduation activities; starts with Ring Dance on Friday and culminates with Graduation in Falcon Stadium the following Wednesday
HARMON HALL	Building located due south of Arnold Hall. Houses the superintendent, Directorate of Financial Management, Judge Advocate Office and other Academy administrative support functions.
JACKS VALLEY	Wooded area on the north side of the Air Force Academy used for various summer field training events.
MITCH’S	Abbreviation for Mitchell Hall (the Cadet Dining Facility)—named in honor of Maj. Gen. Billy Mitchell.
NCOIC	Noncommissioned Officer in Charge
OI	Operating Instruction (outlines how an organization conducts business)
OIC	Officer in Charge
PA	USAFA Public Affairs Office: responsible for the official release of all Academy-related information.
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
POV	Privately Owned Vehicle
RETREAT	Military ceremony signaling the end of a duty day. As a gesture of respect, in the event you are outside the building when retreat is sounded, you are required to

	stop and face the direction of the nearest flag
SCA	Scheduling Committee Actions—cadet programs falling outside of the Schedule of Calls (below) must be approved by the interdisciplinary scheduling committee
SIJAN HALL	Cadet dormitory located on the south side of the terrazzo
SFS	Security Forces Squadron
SOC	Schedule of Calls; the framework schedule governing how cadets may use their time; allocates time to the major mission areas—academics, athletics, military, as well as personal time to pursue their own areas of excellence
SQUADRON	A squadron typically averages more than 100 cadets of all class designations. Additionally, each squadron and group has a full-time Air Officer Commanding who commands the unit. The Cadet Wing is approximately 4,000 strong and comprises four groups of 10 squadrons each.
SUMMER PREP WEEK	The week of preparatory activities for summer sessions.
TERRAZZO	The open paved space between buildings in the cadet area
TDY	Temporary Duty
UOD	Uniform of the Day
USAFA	United States Air Force Academy
VANDENBERG HALL	The cadet dormitory located on the north side of the terrazzo; the larger of the two cadet dormitory facilities within the cadet area.

SECTION III - CADET RESPONSIBILITIES

THE HONOR CODE

In addition to the academic, physical, and military responsibilities the cadets assume, they are also charged with challenging moral responsibilities. Cadets accept and live by a simple statement of military values: “We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does.” This Code, established by the first class to enter the Academy, is based upon the traditional concept that an officer’s word is a bond and that cadets must be uncompromising, forthright, and honest in all activities throughout life.

“Why Is The Academy So Demanding?”

The defense of the United States and its concept of deterring war rely heavily upon the ability of the Air Force to discharge its mission properly. In our modern world, we need officers of great ability, skill, and judgment.

These future leaders are the Air Force Academy cadets of today whom you will be encouraging and advising.

The self-discipline, mental toughness, knowledge and leadership skills that our country needs dictate intensive and demanding training.

Your efforts and concern as a caring participant can make a big difference in helping a homesick or tired cadet who keeps plugging away at his or her studies and other tasks. Your willingness to give cadets your time, to listen sympathetically and to show your genuine concern will one day bear fruit far beyond the smiles you will earn from them today. In short, your involvement is vital to the cadet’s experience and the shaping of the air and space leaders of tomorrow.

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The Officer Development System, or ODS, philosophy is designed to integrate a cadet's developmental activities across their entire four-year experience, with continuous emphasis on character-based officership. And we need to get the whole community involved—especially sponsors—so that it is more than just a training or classroom topic.



THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Young men and women apply for admission to the Academy through several programs, Congressional and otherwise, and are selected through a tough competitive process. Competition includes evaluation of a variety of factors including a scholastic records review, physical testing, and athletic participation. All criteria is designed to select individuals possessing the character necessary to become career Air Force officers. Some cadets may arrive directly from high school. Others have served one year or more of prior enlisted service. Some will have completed a year at the USAFA Preparatory School. All in all, you will find cadets to be bright, articulate, and interesting young people. Having completed the admissions process, the cadet enters the Academy where the pace is hectic and the responsibilities demanding.

DAILY CADET LIFE: “THE GRIND”

From overviews on academic requirements to survival training, it will be evident how vital your role as a sponsor is in the development of a cadet through the off-duty support you provide. The following section is designed to acquaint you with daily cadet life.

Academics – The academic year runs from August to mid May. The average cadet academic load is about 22 hours per semester (16-17 is common at most colleges and universities). Cadets may major in diverse areas such as political science or management, but are required to take many technical “core” courses such as computer science, mechanical engineering, thermodynamics, etc.

Athletics – Athletic participation is required of all cadets attending the Academy. Approximately 1,000 cadets are involved in competitive intercollegiate athletics. All other cadets participate in Cadet Wing intramurals to meet the athletic requirement. Intramural contests between squadrons are highly partisan and are designed to promote not only physical strength and flexibility, but serve to instill *esprit de corps* among cadets.

Military – Organization of the Cadet Wing is similar to that of a regular Air Force Wing comprised of groups and squadrons. Most cadets have a staff or command job in their assigned group/squadron and subsequently are occupied with off-duty responsibilities ranging from the complete coordination of ceremonial events to training other cadets. As you can see, between studying, participating in athletics and meeting military requirements, cadets lead a hectic, fast-paced life.

Aviation – Cadets are frequently involved in both mandatory and voluntary aviation programs while attending the Academy. Activities vary from pilot indoctrination programs to navigation classes, free-fall competitive parachuting, or soaring flights. In some of these programs, cadets play the dual roles of student and instructor.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

The summer period for cadets is divided into three training periods. Since most cadets are involved in summer programs, your association with them need not end during the summer. A few selected activities are as follows:

Basic Cadet Training – This is the first training the cadet will encounter and is similar to basic recruit training at traditional military institutions. Designed to turn high school graduates into fourth-class cadets, the instruction is conducted by upper-class cadets under the supervision of the Commandant's staff. The upper-class trainers, called "cadre", provide basic cadets with their first exposure to the United States Air Force Academy.

Global Engagement – This 10-day program that cadets attend during their third class summer. The training covers the expeditionary Air Force's concept of "deployment of troops." Cadets receive training in civil engineering, services and security forces. Included in the training is a deployment to Jacks Valley for five days. This program is a tremendously demanding, both physically and mentally, with many unusual experiences. Many cadets return during subsequent summers to work the program as GE cadre.

Combat Survival Training – Training includes critical skills in convoy security and tactics, combat lifesaver training, small unit tactics and counterinsurgency doctrine along with cultural awareness and surviving in today's expeditionary environment.

Academics – Academic instruction continues year-round at the Academy. While some cadets must forfeit their summer leave period to take remedial courses, others take voluntary courses to enhance their academic instruction.

Flying – The summer period also offers a variety of aviation classes in flying, navigation, soaring, and parachuting.

Off-Base Programs – Numerous off-base programs have been designed to give cadets an understanding of the operational Air Force and how it functions. The summer session is ideal for this type of training, allowing cadets the time and opportunity to see the Air Force at work at installation sites.

Leave – Unless the cadets are scheduled for summer academics, they are normally allowed to take one, three-week summer period as leave.

UNIFORM DESIGNATION AND INSIGNIA

Although they differ somewhat in detail and shade of blue, the cadet uniform is similar to regular Air Force uniforms. The shoulder boards worn by cadets denote both class (first, second, third, or fourth class) and rank (dependent upon the job the cadet holds in the group/squadron). Class designations are as follows:

Cadet first class – senior

Cadet second class – junior

Cadet third class – sophomore

Cadet fourth class – freshman

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

As military professionals (cadets, active duty, and civilian employees), we are granted the great privilege of religious expression. Diverse religious expression is a hallmark of American liberty, and when we take the oath to protect and defend the constitution, that vow includes the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion. Therefore, the United States Air Force Academy will support the free exercise of religion through religious programs coordinated by our chaplains and by a positive and proactive application of DOD and USAF religious accommodation policies in ways that include the following:

Worship – The commandant has developed standing Schedule Committee Actions to allow cadets to coordinate an opportunity to attend worship or other like meetings once per week according to the tenets of their faith or of a widely recognized personal belief system. Every attempt will be made to accommodate the religious expression of all faith groups represented within the cadet wing. The commandant is the approval authority for exceptions to this policy. Cadets are free to explore religious traditions beyond their self-identified faith as listed in CAMIS; however, cadets must use the pass system referenced in chapter eight of this document.

Holy Days – HQ USAFA/HC will identify major faith holy days observed by the diverse population of the cadet wing. HQ USAFA/HC will provide recurring guidance regarding acceptable accommodation practices for holy days. AOCs and AMTs will accommodate the observance of holy days consistent with mission requirements.

Immunizations – Cadets must go through the chain of command for waiver of immunizations request. Reference AFI 48-110, Immunizations and Chemoprophylaxis for additional guidance.

Dietary Issues – Mitchell Hall provides vegetarian meals for cadets who, for personal or religious reasons cannot or do not consume certain meat products. For example, during Passover for Jewish cadets and Ramadan for Muslim cadets, special arrangements can be made with the Mitchell Hall Nutritionist to accommodate dietary needs/restrictions. These arrangements are to be initiated by the supported cadet through the Mitchell Hall Nutritionist (10 MSG/SVCF). 10 MSG/SVCF will validate these special meal requirements with a USAFA Chaplain (USAFA/HC). Cadets can discuss other special meal requirements with the 10 MSG/SVCF for evaluation/consideration on a case by case basis.

Dress and Apparel – Head coverings not approved in AFI 36-2903, Dress and Appearance of Air Force Personnel must be approved by AOC. When approved, head coverings may be worn indoors or concealed under military headgear outdoors. Unconcealed religious items will not be worn during

parades, details/functions or in official photos. Other religious items may be worn while concealed, worn during religious services/ceremonies or worn in the cadet's own room.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

For allegations of sexual assault, the Academy has a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator and victim advocates available to ensure the respectful and dignified care of the victim. If a cadet victim of sexual assault confides in a sponsor that they were sexually assaulted, the victim should be encouraged to call the SARC immediately at 333-SARC (333-7272) in order to discuss restricted (confidential) and unrestricted (non-confidential) reporting options.

The SARC serves as the single point of contact for integrating and coordinating sexual assault victim care from an initial report of sexual assault, through disposition and resolution of issues related to the victim's health and well-being for all USAFA personnel. Whether a victim comes forward through restricted or unrestricted channels, the immediate priority is to care for the victim. The SARC and VA are trained first responders that can help the victim understand the dynamics of sexual assault, put them in touch with other helping agencies to facilitate recovery and help the victim through the investigative and legal processes.

Restricted Reporting – Restricted (confidential) reporting enables cadets, prep school candidates and active duty personnel who are victims to report allegations of sexual assault to the installation SARC without triggering a law enforcement investigation. This reporting option gives the victim access to medical care, counseling, chaplain services and a victim advocate, but does not initiate the investigative process. Due to the confidential nature of this reporting option, it is critical that a victim's chain of command (AOC, AMT) and law enforcement not be notified of the sexual assault as they are considered mandatory reporters. If a disclosure is made to the victim's chain of command or law enforcement, a victim will lose confidentiality and an unrestricted report will have to be made.

Unrestricted Reporting – Unrestricted (non-confidential) reporting enables all victims to report allegations of sexual assault through standard reporting channels including the victim's chain of command, law enforcement (SF and AFOSI), and the installation SARC. Unrestricted reporting is the preferred reporting method by the Department of Defense and the Air Force because it allows the SARC to provide the widest range of support services to the victim and enables prosecution of alleged perpetrators when investigations warrant those charges. In an unrestricted report, law enforcement conducts an investigation after which commanders and legal authorities may pursue prosecution for the alleged perpetrator. The victim making the unrestricted report has access to medical care, counseling, chaplain services and a victim advocate. At the request of the victim, the SARC and VA can work with the victim's commander to address duty or disciplinary concerns.

Independent Reporting – Should information about a sexual assault be disclosed to command or law enforcement from someone other than a victim, an investigation into the allegation will be initiated, and it will be considered an independent report. Commanders must report all sexual assaults that they become aware of when it involves individuals in their supervisory chain of command. Law enforcement personnel are required to investigate all crimes that they become aware of to include sexual assault. To preserve a victim's restricted reporting option, it is important that as a sponsor, the victim's disclosure to you be kept private.

All victims of sexual assault can have their questions answered confidentially and receive assistance by contacting the SARC at 333-SARC (333-7272). Contacting the SARC first preserves options for the victim!

SECTION IV - YOUR ROLE AS A CADET SPONSOR

SPONSOR ACTIVITIES

As a cadet sponsor, there is no requirement to attend everything the cadet is involved in or knock yourself out. Cadets do not expect to be entertained or taken out to expensive meals or events. On the contrary, they are looking for the warmth and friendship of your family in their home-away-from-home. Letting them become part of your family is the greatest gift you can give. They may want to use your phone to call parents or friends, but don't feel obligated to overextend yourself financially. If the cadet does not have a cell phone, you should suggest that cadets acquire a calling card in order to pay their own bills. Ultimately, the freedom to make a sandwich, drink a soda, sleep, watch TV, or study without interruption combined with your willingness to listen and your concern for them as individuals are the most precious gifts cadets can receive.

CADET/SPONSOR RELATIONSHIPS

Cadets will strive to please you by good behavior to earn a return invitation. They are expected to be courteous guests and to express their thanks with a thank you note. Cadets are taught to address military superiors and their elders as "Sir" or "Ma'am". Relations between sponsor and cadet need not be excessively formal and we rely on your good judgment in this area. However, if you have problems with your cadet, please contact the Squadron AOC immediately.

SPONSOR DIVIDENDS

Aside from the personal satisfaction you receive in sponsoring a cadet, you may be asking yourself what you get in return. Cadets will normally invite you to events as their guest, traditionally banquets and dinners, to show their appreciation. They will also volunteer to help you with tasks or projects as they are genuinely grateful for your caring and seek to find ways to demonstrate their gratitude. While the sponsor Program provides many dividends, participants often gain their most satisfying moments merely by interacting with their cadet. By sharing a family atmosphere many of these family ties continue for years after graduation.

PASSES AND PRIVILEGES

As a rule, cadet privileges increase with class designation. Fourth-class cadet privileges are extremely limited, while upper-class cadets have more privileges but are often limited by weekend duties, class performance, status, and other factors. The number of day and overnight passes earned by each cadet is determined by both their class year and their squadron's overall performance in all facets of Academy life. AOCs may also grant discretionary passes for business, religious activities and official social dining events. You can also visit cadets at certain places in the cadet area. For example, Arnold Hall has an auditorium, food court, snack bar, etc. where cadets can reciprocate and host you in their environment. Further, the Academy has many picnic areas and additional facilities that serve as social gathering areas.

CADETS AND ALCOHOL

Colorado law makes it a Class 1 misdemeanor to distribute alcohol to someone under 21. Penalties: include six to 18 months in jail and/or a fine of \$500 to \$5,000 and a six-month revocation of a driver's license. Alcohol use as it relates to the cadet is in accordance with state laws; the individual

must be 21 years of age or older to buy or consume alcohol. While those over 21 may drink alcoholic beverages, it is not encouraged. Remember, alcohol use has been linked to sexual assaults. Do not condone situations where alcohol use can lead to criminal activity.

OFF-DUTY CLOTHING STANDARDS

You should also familiarize yourself with clothing standards particular to fourth-class cadets. They are not allowed to wear civilian clothing until the privilege has been earned, sometime near the end of their first year. Cadets are active young adults who enjoy throwing a Frisbee or passing a football and may wear USAFA-issued athletic clothes when participating in such activities. Additionally, they must wear Service Dress when transiting to and from the Academy and when they leave the sponsor's home. To avoid embarrassment to the cadets, you may want to suggest, prior to their arrival, they bring appropriate uniform items. Should you have any questions, call the Directorate of Training Support at 719-333-2220.

CADETS AND CARS

Academy policy states that cadets may own/maintain no more than one automobile and that privilege is offered to cadets ONLY as they enter their last two years at the Academy. This privilege is extended to cadets who are in good standing, i.e. cadets not on probation or punishment. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the cadet to ensure the vehicle is licensed, insured, and registered on the Academy. Lending your car is not a responsibility or a requirement of cadet sponsor. If you choose to do so, you must realize that you do so at your own risk with possible negative outcomes in terms of damage to property belonging to others. Safe alternatives to borrowing are commercial transportation, carpooling, and prior coordination of rides with sponsors. Normally, you may have to pick up cadets as third and fourth class cadets are not permitted to own or maintain cars. Cadets and sponsors should designate a specific area for pick-up, as sponsors are not permitted within the cadet area. Any sponsor family member may pick up the cadets.

CADETS AND FRATERNIZATION

As a sponsor you need to be aware that cadets are prohibited from developing relationships that involve or give the appearance of partiality, preferential treatment, or improper use of rank or position. For these reasons, unprofessional relationships, including dating between cadets and officers, enlisted personnel, or USAFA Preparatory School cadets and between cadets in each other's chain of command (those holding leadership positions within the squadron, group, or Wing) is prohibited. Additionally, fourth-class cadets are not permitted to date or become too familiar with upper class cadets.

CORRECTING THE CADET

Cadets need to learn from their mistakes...that's part of their training. Overlooking an error or mistake will only encourage them to continue the behavior. One experienced sponsor recommends establishing house rules for cadets visiting your home. The sponsor further added that it is unfair to expect cadets to follow your rules if you don't tell them what the rules are.

Perhaps the most important things you want to remember about house rules are that the rules must clearly and accurately reflect your expectations of cadet behavior in your home.

Suggested house rules you may want to address include the following:

- We each have a right to our own opinions and the right to disagree with the opinions of others.

- If I request a phone call to let me know if you're coming over for the weekend, then please call me early so I may adjust my plans accordingly.
- If you are unable to come over for an extended length of time, at least call or e-mail from time to time to let me know how you're doing.

Other areas you may want to address from the start include:

- Your policy on alcohol consumption
- Cleaning up after themselves while visiting your home (this may include a list of duties such as making the bed if they slept over)
- Put things back where they found them
- Address your feelings on picking up the cadet at the Academy and how you feel about last minute phone calls requesting a ride to the mall, airport, etc.
- Your policies on the cadet arriving unexpectedly for a meal or bringing a friend for a meal.

Helpful Hints

- Be a sounding board
- Communicate your house rules and regulations
- Give cadets responsibilities as a family member
- Expect the same courtesy from a cadet as you would a family member
- Teach your cadet and learn together
- If possible, have an open house to meet the cadet's parents
- Take pictures for the cadet's family and future reunions
- Enjoy your time together; cadets feel sponsors are influential and positively impact their future
- The AOC is the only individual authorized to grant sponsor passes
- Fourth-class cadets must be in uniform until they are formally recognized by upper class cadets (normally in the spring)
- Fourth class cadets feel uncomfortable around upper class cadets
- Cadets must sign in and out of their squadron area
- Cadets must stay within a 150-mile radius of the Academy
- When cadets visit sponsors, they are expected to be with a member of the sponsor family at all times
- Only first and second-class cadets can own cars
- Cadets cannot ride on a motorcycle or ATV nor are they allowed to ride as a passenger on these types of vehicles
- We do not recommend you buy alcohol for cadets and remember that if they consume alcohol in your home, they must be 21 years of age or older
- Cadets in uniform must be seated at restaurants if drinking in public