



The Board of Directors of Blue Alliance
Present

**“Strength Through Shared
Experience”**

November 7th, 2015
Eisenhower Golf Course, USAFA, Colorado



Courage

**Courage is the price that Life exacts for granting
peace.**

**The Soul that knows it not, knows no release from
little things;**

**Knows not the livid loneliness of fear,
Nor Mountain heights where bitter joy can hear
The Sound of Wings.**

**How can life grant us boon of living,
Compensate for dull gray ugliness and pregnant hate,
Unless we dare the Soul's dominion?**

**Each time we make a choice, we pay with courage to
behold the restless day.
And count it fair.**

- Amelia Earhart

Blue Alliance: Strength Through Shared Experience

Event Agenda

1330	Falcons Beat Army	Falcon Stadium
1730	Open Bar	Grill Room
1800	Welcome of Distinguished Visitors Jeff Breininger, '85, Chairman, Blue Alliance	Eisenhower Room
1830	Dinner Served	
1900	Distinguished Visitor Comments Introduction by Kevin Highfield '87 <i>The Honorable Gordon Tanner</i> <i>General Counsel US Air Force</i>	
1930	Flight of Heroes Award Presented by Greg Mooneyham '87	
1940	Panel Discussion – Strength Through Shared Experience Introduction by Tricia Heller, '87 Tara Sweeney, '95, Moderator	
2015	Open Discussion Open forum Q&A, Tara Sweeney	
2030	Closing Remarks – Jeff Breininger	
2045	Adjournment and Toast – “One More Roll”	



Gordon O. Tanner is the General Counsel of the U.S. Department of the Air Force and Chief Legal Officer and Chief Ethics Official for the Air Force in Washington, D.C.

In this role, he provides oversight, guidance and direction for legal advice provided by more than 2,600 Department of the Air Force military and civilian lawyers worldwide. Tanner is the first-ever presidential appointee confirmed by the Senate who's

not only openly gay and married to a same-sex spouse, but also a military veteran. Mr. Tanner retired as a Colonel in the US Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps Reserves. Mr. Tanner received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science, University of Alabama in 1970 and a Juris Doctor degree from Vanderbilt University School of Law in 1972. He resides in Washington DC with his partner Robert Patlan.

Flight of Heroes

In 2007, a small clutch of out-and-proud graduates of our United States Air Force Academy began to conceptualize and implement the charter for a support network for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender [LGBT] graduates and faculty. The journey of this small, noble group brings us to today – to an era where open service is, daily, becoming a reality.

Throughout this journey, Blue Alliance has witnessed uncountable quiet acts of heroism and character. We have seen lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and questioning [LGBQ] cadets maturely discuss their career needs and those of their growing community. Graduates and faculty alike were inspired by these demonstrations of character and leadership and committed to recognizing these heroes in our midst on a recurring basis. We have witnessed the Cadet Wing demonstrate courage in forming the LGBT Cadet Group Spectrum

In 2012, The Board of Directors of Blue Alliance therefore created a recognition: The **Blue Alliance Flight of Heroes** into which, each year, we will induct the cadet, alumnus, faculty, or ally who best demonstrates the ideals of courage, leadership, humanity, integrity, accomplishment, and loyalty at the center of our shared experience at or since the Air Force Academy.

2012 – Dr. Steve Samuels

2013 - Founding Board Members of Blue Alliance: Darrel Slack, Jeff Breininger, Trish Heller, and Greg Mooneyham

2013 - Founding Cadet Leaders of Spectrum: Dan Dwyer, Shaina Thompson, and Andrew Jacobs

2014 – Colonel Gary Packard, '82, Permanent Professor and Chair of the Behavioral Sciences and Leadership Dept., USAFA

Mr. William “T” Thompson, USAFA AOG CEO, ‘73 and Mr. Gary Howe, USAFA AOG EVP, ‘69 are inducted into the

Blue Alliance Flight of Heroes for 2015. T and Gary have been there for Blue Alliance since Day 1. In 2008 at our first gathering at USAFA, T invited us to sit in the Press Box to watch the football game against BYU. He readily welcomed us, introduced us and asked the obvious question, “Guys, what took you so long?” Gary has been our defender as many members of the USAFA AOG Board pushed back when Blue Alliance applied for Affinity Status. Gary helped guide us through the process to ensure that Blue Alliance would be approved at the earliest possible date. Both T and Gary continue to support us with their attendance at our events and sage advice. We thank you both and it is an honor to present T Thompson and Gary Howe with this award.



William 'T' Thompson '73
CEO



Gary Howe, '69
EVP

PANELIST BIOS

Colonel Gary Packard, USAFA '82

Gary is a 1982 graduate of USAFA and a command pilot. He is the chair of the Dept. Of Behavioral Science and Leadership at the Air Force Academy. Gary has a graduate degree in Psychology from Michigan State and a Ph.D. from UNC Chapel Hill. He also holds a Master's Degree in Aeronautical Science from Embry Riddle. He hails from Chelsea, MI. His main academic and teaching interests are leadership & character development and social influences on development.

Major Brent Cox, USAFA, 2005: T-38 Pilot Instructor Course (PIT) Instructor Pilot, Randolph AFB, San Antonio, TX.

Brent Cox is a 2005 graduate of the US Air Force Academy. Following undergraduate pilot training, he spent three years in Enid, OK flying the T-6 as a first assignment instructor pilot. Brent then spent over three years flying the A-10C in Tucson, AZ with combat time in Afghanistan. He is currently stationed at Randolph AFB, TX serving as a T-38 instructor pilot for the Air Force's pilot instructor course. He resides in San Antonio with his husband and Blue Alliance board member, Tyler Haugseth.

Kathleen Robbins, USAFA '68

Kathleen graduated with an Engineering Science degree from USAFA, then flew as a C-130 instructor navigator in Vietnam for two years. While in the AF, she completed an MBA and resigned in 1975. Following the AF, she worked in corporate America, beginning with P&G, and was CEO of Cellular One of East Central Illinois for eight years. In 2007 she co-founded the Jatropa Projenou, an effort to develop a biodiesel and soap industry in Haiti using seeds from a native tree to produce oil. Today she travels to Haiti 3 to 4 times a year.

Master Sergeant Thomas E. Ashley Metcalf, First Sergeant, 310th Security Forces Squadron, Schriever Air Force Base, Colo. He is responsible for enforcing standards of conduct and administers disciplinary actions in the unit. He advises the commander on the health and welfare of the squadron as well as monitors morale and personal fitness of assigned Airmen. Master Sergeant Metcalf grew up in an Army family and calls both Arkansas and Texas home. He has been assigned to duty locations in Guam, Germany, and North Dakota. He has also deployed in support of Operations Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. In 2007, Sergeant Metcalf joined the Air Force

Reserve, 310th Space Group supporting the transition to a Reserve Space Wing. Prior to assuming his current position, he was the Flight Chief for the Force Support Sustainment Flight

Master Sergeant Debra (Deb) A. Sheppard is currently the Superintendent of Cadet Group Three, Commandant of Cadets, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO. Sergeant Sheppard is the senior enlisted advisor to the Group Air Officer Commanding for the management, training, supervision, and administration of 10 cadet squadrons totaling over 1,100 Air Force officer candidates and 13 enlisted Academy Military Training (AMT) NCOs. She plans, directs, and implements policies, programs, and procedures directly impacting the morale, welfare, administration, and training of all assigned personnel. MSgt Sheppard grew up as an Air Force Brat living all over the United States and in England. She entered the Air Force in Feb 1997. Her background includes numerous leadership roles across the medical community. She has been stationed at locations in Arizona, England, Diego Garcia, Texas, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Cadet First Class Calvin Llarena from South San Francisco, CA is the current President of USAFA Spectrum and one of the original members who helped form the club in 2011, after the repeal of DADT. He enlisted in 2008, served in the Air Transportation career field, attended USAFA Preparatory School, and is now the squadron commander of CS-15. C1C Llarena is hoping to become a pilot before attending medical school.

April Harker serves as a Supervisory Customer Support Specialist, Office of the Chief Information Officer within the Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary. April recently transferred to the Department of the Interior (DOI) from federal service within the Department of the Air Force (DAF). April was born in Greenville, North Carolina, and is a current resident in downtown Denver. She received her commission and Bachelor's Degree in 2008 from The United States Air Force Academy. She joined the Air Force Reserve in 2010 and became a federal employee in 2013.

Chaplain, Major Sarah D. Schechter Chaplain, Captain (Major Select) Sarah D. Schechter is Branch Chief of Plans and Programs at the United States Air Force Academy, CO where she is also Rabbi and Chaplain to the Dean of Faculty. She directs the Religious Respect Training program for USAFA, advises leadership, and ensures the free exercise of religion for Cadets and Airmen and abroad. Chaplain Schechter was ordained

Rabbi through Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in 2003 and became an Active Duty Chaplain in 2004. Chaplain Schechter was the 2010 Air Education and Training Outstanding Company Grade Officer Chaplain of the Year and the 2012 Air Force District of Washington Outstanding Company Grade Officer Chaplain of the Year.

Lieutenant Colonel Cynthia Clefish is currently the Commander, 460th Civil Engineer Squadron at Buckley AFB, Colorado. She is responsible for a 221-Airmen squadron maintaining \$3.8B infrastructure, supporting a 13,000-Airmen Wing and 88 mission partners. She is responsible for energy, environmental, housing, real property, emergency services, for department, and expeditionary civil engineer programs. Lieutenant Colonel Clefish entered the Air Force in 1998 as a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology ROTC program. She has served in a wide range of civil engineering positions at base level including Engineer Project Manager, Maintenance Engineering Chief, and Operations Flight Commander. Lieutenant Colonel Clefish also served as the GeoBase Branch Chief, Maintenance Engineer and Programmer for the Civil Engineer Director at Headquarters Pacific Air Forces. Additionally, she was the Operations Support Branch Chief for the Civil Engineer Director at Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command.

Blue Alliance Board Members

Jeff Breininger – Executive Director, Class of '85

Greg Mooneyham – Past Executive Director, Class of '87

Tricia Heller – Past Executive Director, Class of '87

Kathleen Robbins – Class of '68

Kevin Highfield – Class of '87

Tara Sweeney – Class of '95

Brent Cox – Class of '05

Tyler Haugseth – Class of '10



One More Roll

Commander Jerry Coffee, Hanoi, 1968

We toast our hearty comrades, who have fallen from the sky,
And were gently caught by God's own hand to be with him on high.

To dwell among the soaring clouds they knew so well before,

From tail-chase to victory roll at heaven's very door.

As we fly among them there, we're sure to heed their plea:

**Take care, my friend, watch your six, and do one more roll just for
me.**

The Blue Alliance Logo

Explained



The triangle shape was chosen to depict the journey of the Air Force, the Academy, and each Cadet and graduate into a distant, sometimes unclear future. This triangle is dissected by the cross-section of the tetrahedron that form the spires of the Cadet Chapel.

The words Blue Alliance form the foundation of the dark-blue left section of the triangle, forming a beacon in the dark.

The Polaris Star dominates the left section, in a pink hue, that represents our slightly differing perspective on navigating an uncertain future.

The right side of the triangle is lighter, showing our hope for a brighter future built on the common imprint of our Academy experience, depicted by the Cadet Prop and Wings insignia, on our collective character.

The stripes on the right-hand band are based on the four class colors of the current Cadet Wing, tapering off in a growing line of class colors into the past....a past built on the contributions of those brave LGBT graduates who went before us.

Blue Alliance is a registered 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization. Please visit us on the web at <http://www.blue-alliance.org>

Blue Alliance is a volunteer organization whose members are not compensated. Please consider making a tax deductible donation.