



Stories in Character

November 2, 2013

Eisenhower Golf Course, USAFA, Colorado



The basis of true strength is Character.

Character is "the sum of those qualities of moral excellence which compel a person to do the right thing despite pressure or temptations to the contrary." As the bearers of the public trust, both as cadets and as officers, it is the Honor Code that helps build a personal integrity able to withstand the rigorous demands placed upon them.

- Academy Admissions webpage

Spirit of the Code

Do the right thing, and live honorably

- Air Force Cadet Wing Honor Code Reference Handbook

The Board of Directors of Blue Alliance

present



[Chinese character for strength]

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Character & Air Force Leaders



Eric Fanning is the Acting Secretary of the Air Force, Washington, D.C. He was confirmed as the 24th Under Secretary of the Air Force on April 18, 2013, and began to serve in the additional role of Acting Secretary of the Air Force June 21, 2013. He is responsible for the affairs of the Department of the Air Force, including the organizing, training, equipping and providing for the welfare of its more than 333,000 men and women on active duty, 178,000

members of the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve, 182,000 civilians, and their families. He also oversees the Air Force's annual budget of more than \$110 billion.

As under secretary, he is the senior Air Force energy official and the focal point for space operations, policy and acquisition issues on the Air Force staff. He serves as co-chair of the top Air Force corporate decision making body, the Air Force Council, and also leads the Air Force Space Board, the Air Force Energy Council, the Force Management and Development Council, and numerous other Air Force decision bodies.

Prior to assuming his current position, he served as the Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy/Deputy Chief Management Officer, deputy director of the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism, and Senior Vice President for Strategic Development at Business Executives for National Security.

Additionally, he worked on the national and foreign assignment desks at CBS National News in New York and various political positions in Washington, D.C. with the House Armed Services Committee, the Immediate Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the White House. Mr. Fanning is a graduate of Dartmouth College.

A Leader of Character

General Mark A. Welsh III currently serves as the 20th Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force. After graduating from USAFA in 1976, his career has spanned the breadth of the Air Force – from A-10 Instructor to the Air Officer Commanding of Cadet Squadron 5, on to F-16 Squadron Commander, USAFA Commandant of Cadets, and Commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe. The most prevalent words in his biography are joint, strategic, and training.



To those of us who have been watching, General Welsh has never missed an opportunity to make the Air Force a better place for EVERY Airman to serve. General Welsh has served as a teacher, an example, an ally, and a visionary leader. Character made his career and serves as our greatest lesson.

Blue Alliance is proud to host General Welsh and his wife, Betty, in a forum that he inspired through his leadership and never-ending commitment to the betterment of his people. And so we will share a toast of thanks in tribute to our collective efforts in building and strengthening the vital alliances that make for character, solutions and success --in service to our country and support of our comrades in arms, both past, present and future.

Superintendent's Welcome



Lt. Gen. Michelle D. Johnson is the nineteenth Superintendent at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo. Prior to her selection to be the Superintendent of the United States Air Force Academy, Lt. Gen. Johnson was the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations and Intelligence, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Casteau, Belgium.

A distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1981, General Johnson completed graduate studies as a Rhodes Scholar before earning her pilot wings in 1984. She has served in various assignments in air mobility, airlift and tanker flying operations and training, academic instruction and personnel. She has commanded the 9th Air Refueling Squadron, the 97th Operations Group and the 22nd Air Refueling Wing. The general commanded a deployed air refueling squadron in Operation Southern Watch and an air refueling wing in support of operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. She has served as the Air Force aide to the President, an Assistant Professor of Political Science, and Associate Air Officer Commanding at the U.S. Air Force Academy. She was also the Director of Personnel for Air Mobility Command and Director of Air Force Public Affairs. General Johnson served as the Deputy Director for Information and Cyberspace Policy on the Joint Staff and as the Director, Strategy, Policy, Programs and Logistics, U.S. Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

General Johnson is a command pilot with more than 3,600 flying hours in C-141, T-41, KC-10, C-17, C-5 and KC-135 aircraft.

Teaching Future Leaders

Brig. Gen. Andrew P. Armacost is Dean of the Faculty, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo. He commands the 700-member Dean of Faculty mission partner and oversees the annual design and instruction of more than 500 undergraduate courses for 4,000 cadets in 32 academic disciplines. He also directs the operation of five support staff agencies and faculty resources involving more than \$350 million.



General Armacost graduated with honors as an ROTC Distinguished Graduate from Northwestern University in 1989 with a Bachelor of Science in industrial engineering. He is an experienced operations research analyst, supporting a variety of Air Force and joint projects. General Armacost joined the faculty at the U.S. Air Force Academy as an instructor of management after completing a Master of Science in operations research as a Draper Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was selected to return to MIT to pursue a Doctorate of Philosophy, completing his degree in operations research before resuming his teaching and research duties at the Air Force Academy. He later served as chief analyst at Air Force Space Command.

Prior to his current assignment, General Armacost was the Permanent Professor and Head of the Department of Management, commanding 38 military and civilian faculty members, responsible for all curriculum, personnel, budget, research and long-range planning.

Leading with Character



Pat Steadman was selected in May 2009 to fill a vacancy in the Colorado State Senate and has since been twice elected to that seat. At age 49, Pat has been a long-time resident of Denver's Capitol Hill neighborhood. He grew up in Westminster, Colorado, and graduated from Westminster High School, Regis College and the University of Colorado School of Law. He currently serves as the Chair of the Joint Budget Committee.

Pat got started in politics during law school by working to fight ballot issues that targeted the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. After finishing law school, Pat worked to oppose Amendment 2 on the 1992 general election ballot. When the anti-gay amendment was approved by voters, Pat co-founded the non-profit organization that led the successful lawsuit challenging its constitutionality all the way to the United States Supreme Court. The landmark case of *Romer v. Evans* declared Amendment 2 unconstitutional and established the first significant court precedent protecting the equal rights of LGBT Americans.

After law school, Pat served as general counsel for a public sector labor union, but his career soon turned to politics as ballot issue campaigns and lobbying work became his passion. Pat joined a lobbying firm in 1994 and became a partner in the firm in 2001. As a lobbyist, Pat worked extensively to support public education, advance civil rights and civil liberties, promote access to health care, expand worker's rights, and defeat censorship and other

assaults on cherished freedoms. Over the course of 15 years of lobbying his accomplishments were many and included several significant pieces of legislation protecting the LGBT community that were sponsored by his predecessor, Sen. Jennifer Veiga.

Pat has always been actively engaged in his community. He was appointed by Denver's Mayors to the Denver Women's Commission and the Denver GLBT Commission, and was the first person to chair the Advisory Board for Denver's Agency for Human Rights and Community Relations. He has spoken at countless forums and debates, appeared on television and radio programs and campaigned for and against various ballot issues across the state. As a senator, Pat has put his extensive knowledge of state government to work on the Joint Budget Committee and is respected for his leadership in tax and fiscal policy. Pat has also championed the arts, criminal justice reforms, economic development and tourism promotion, and was the lead sponsor of the Colorado Civil Union Act. In 2013 he was honored at the White House with the Harvey Milk Champion of Change Award for more than two decades of advocacy for equal rights.



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: Stories in Character

Event Agenda

- 1:30pm **Falcons Beat Army** Falcon Stadium
- 2:00pm **Open Bar and Networking** Eisenhower Golf Course
- 2:30pm **Stories in Character** Eisenhower Room
Karl Alvarez
- 2:40pm **Formal Welcome to USAFA ***
Introduction of USAF and USAFA Leadership by Karl Alvarez
* Military dignitaries will join and speak as their schedules allow
- 3:00pm **Buffet Meal**
- 3:30pm ***Flight of Heroes* Inductees 2013**
Introduction of Awards by Karl Alvarez
Presentations to Inductees
Stories in Character by Dr. Steve Samuels
- 4:00pm **Leading with Character**
Introduction of Senator Steadman by Tricia Heller
Colorado State Senator, Patrick Steadman
- 4:15pm **Partner Perspectives**
Introduction of Partners by Karl Alvarez
Cadet Spectrum
KnightsOut
USNA Out
- 4:30pm **Blue Alliance: Moving Forward**
Tricia Heller, Blue Alliance ED
- 4:40pm **Thanks and Acknowledgements**
Karl Alvarez





From The Ramparts

From the ramparts we will go into the sky,

Far away from comrades here.

To whatever fate may bring:

Fame, or Glory, even Death.

But no matter what may come,

Life is better, purpose more, honor bright

Because 'twas here we first beheld,

What greater thing could be.

“a Proposed Hymn for the Cadet Wing”
Clifton Williams, March 1965

Blue Alliance

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, bisexual, and transgender [LGBT] graduates and faculty. The journey of this small, noble group brings us to today – in a post-DADT 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.

The Board of Directors of Blue Alliance has, 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.

In 2012, Dr. Steve Samuels was the Inaugural Inductee into the Blue Alliance *Flight of Heroes* as a courageous ally to the LGBQ and LGBT communities at the Air Force Academy and in Colorado Springs. Dr. Samuels and his wife, Dena, work tirelessly to create "Safe Spaces" for cadets and other youth.

We will award one or more awards each year at a Blue Alliance event. It is our sincere hope that *Flight of Heroes* inductees will serve as the much needed role models for cadets and graduates. To that end, we will take recommendations for inductees throughout each year.

2013 Inductees

Blue Alliance *Flight of Heroes*

The Founding Board of Blue Alliance is inducted into the Blue Alliance *Flight of Heroes*. Their vision, courage, and shared commitment to build an Air Force Academy where open service was possible for every American have inspired every member of BA.

Building bridges to Academy leadership and demonstrating their unflinching support of cadets serving under the weight of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, they created an organization of which we can all be proud. "Blue Alliance gave me my Academy back," and "My service now matters" are statements members have made while attending Blue Alliance events. Air Force and Academy leadership have welcomed LGBT graduates and LGBQ cadets into the greater Academy community due to the sheer strength of character of this small group of titans.

Trish Heller, Darrel Slack, Jeff Breininger, and Greg Mooneyham!



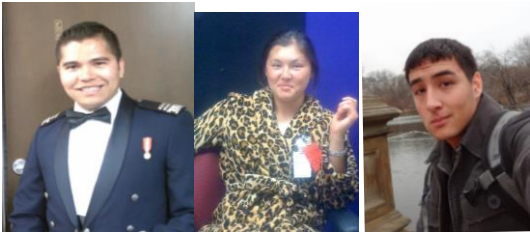
The members of Blue Alliance humbly thank these remarkable leaders in our midst. "Here's a Toast."

2013 Inductees

Blue Alliance *Flight of Heroes*

The Cadet Leaders of USAFA Spectrum are inducted into the Blue Alliance *Flight of Heroes*. They demonstrated unique courage and brave support to their fellow cadets in times of uncertainty immediately following repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

Collaborating with Academy leadership and representing the best of the Core Values, these leaders hunkered down and supported everyone around them. In a time of great uncertainty and turmoil, this small cadre placed themselves in the middle of the storm and were the first, courageous boots on the ground.



Dan Dwyer, Shaina Thompson, and Andrew Jacobs!

Blue Alliance humbly thanks these remarkable leaders in our midst. "Here's a Toast."

Stories in Character

Failure of Character

I suspect most stories in character are about successes. This one is about failure.

As a straight parent of two, I have tried to work for years in the cause of human rights. The goal of treating every person equally has always been in my life, and my research has covered both gender and race relations highlighting minor inconsistencies and major discriminatory practices. Since coming to USAFA, the legalized discrimination based on extreme religious views, without data, against people with different sexual orientations has also been a focus of mine.

So imagine my surprise when my son told me he was gay. The surprise wasn't that he was gay (I had asked him if he knew his sexual orientation during the summer before he left for college. He said he didn't know). The surprise was that I was upset. I wasn't so upset that it was apparent. I asked about his boyfriend, and that we would like to meet him when we visited next month. Most important, I told him I loved him and I would always be there for him. But I was still upset. And I didn't know why. My sister is a lesbian, I have friends who are LGB&T, but this was different.

What is character? For me, character was not turning away from my ugly feelings and pretending they didn't exist. For me, character was recognizing that I needed help here. For me, character was knowing (hoping?) that I had enough credit built up to have earned the benefit of the doubt.

I called three friends who were queer, and was completely honest with them. They were all kind and patient; asked me questions about what was bothering me and listened, and offered their thoughts. I spoke with my best friend (my partner), and let her know exactly how I was feeling. After a short period of time, I identified some clear issues. I wasn't happy that my son was part of a group that was not treated like an equal in this country. I was scared for him, as the specter of sexual disease and assault just quadrupled. Selfishly, my chances of being a grandparent went down (again, given the heterosexist nature of this country). And I was very unhappy he, as a frosh, was dating a senior.

It didn't take long. Certainly some of the issues went away, others are still here. But my feelings of discomfort had largely disappeared. Yes, I'm still scared at times... like the time he was rousted outside of a bar by police and had to go to court on a trumped up charge (minor fine and dismissed... phew) that would never have happened if it was a straight bar. But that kind of fear comes with the parenting territory. My love for him, and my friends' love for me, made me realize that character isn't an end product, but a long road with many turns and surprises around the corners. I'm sure my character is improving as long as I am open to my own flaws and have the kind of friends who treat my flaws as normal parts of a (mostly) good person.

When and Why

Character is often about doing the difficult thing when you know it's the right thing to do. But sometimes character is the opportunity to change your mind, for the right reasons, and recognize a path you had refused to take before.

My first appointment of that day was with a cadet who was facing a MRC and wanted a character reference. This cadet not only blew off a mandatory function, but also got caught hiding in his closet by his AMT. During the course of our discussion, we talked about how important it is not only to *do* the small mandatory stuff, but *why* to do it. Military professionals must not be influenced by others when they know the right thing to do, nor do they do what is easiest or in their short-term best interests; they do it *because it is right*. Thus, you attend mandatory events not because they are mandatory, but because you know it is your duty to attend them. That's a subtle difference, but it's why cadets are here and not at a civilian school.

After he left, I ran into a colleague and we discussed the new academic processional at graduation. I had long been against it. Aside from not owning regalia, I just didn't see the purpose. I was convinced that the processional was just more nonsense that most military members thought was stupid. 2013 was to be the first ever academic processional and I told my friend I was determined that it would occur without me.

On the heels of my discussion with my student, the hypocrisy of my position was so obvious it stopped me in my tracks. Not only was this a clear example of professionalism, but also it was an opportunity to show the importance of academe, of the "Athens" side of USAFA. My next thought was, "but I'm about to lose a sizable chunk of my salary due to sequestration, and my doctoral robes cost \$450!" And then my inner voice reminded me that doing the right thing is not about what's easy.

The rest of my walk that morning had me wrestling with this issue and trying to think it through carefully. As I was holding the door open for a cadet who was behind me, I heard, "Sir, you want to hear something funny?" I looked over and realized I had no idea who this 4-degree is, but said "Sure." "I'm here because of you." He told me that after he was accepted, he saw me in a video chose USAFA. To cover up my stunned response, I said humorously, "Uh oh. How's that working out for you?" He laughed and replied he'd had some tough days, but since Recognition, "this is the best place in the world."

So I was clearly being sent a message, as coincidences don't pile up like this. I returned to my office and witnessed a military friend volunteer for a deployment to Afghanistan that needed to be covered. And I realized that character is doing the right thing because it is right thing, even (perhaps especially) when it may not be convenient. That brightly dressed dot on the field in the academic processional during graduation was me in my brand new robes.

Reflections on Karl Richter

(1942-67)

Karl Richter has joined the elite pantheon of heroes now become legends. He embodied in practice General Lee's call to duty ("the sublimest word in the English language") to do his duty in all things, never wishing to do less. One hundred missions were not enough for Karl. Above and beyond the call of duty, Karl added 98 more missions before giving his life due to enemy fire, fighting for his country's cause.

But the Karl Richter I knew was really a regular, fun-loving guy—an ordinary person like the rest of us back then and, for that matter, like the cadets here tonight. I was a doolie and he a second classman—my flight sergeant. He saw his role as much more than ceremonial. No he took us under his wing—never harassing any of us. His was true leadership—visiting my South Carolina roommate (still a friend half a century later) and me from New York, finding out our individual challenges, and taking time to coach us on how to help each other and ourselves. That was real character in action.

Even during the holiday season in 1964 when my parents drove me and my younger sisters to the Gator Bowl where USAFA was playing, Karl (now a firstie and I a third classman) made sure he came over to greet me. In short, as a leader he cared about all of us even long after his formal responsibilities had passed.

Karl was also into having a good time—having a brew with the guys, less concerned about spit shine and other formalities. To the honor code's call to truth telling (and its corollary of keeping one's word—promise keeping), justice as fairness, and respect for property (the obverse side of the "don't lie, cheat or steal" coin, he added respect for life and human dignity. These defined his life as a cadet and as a junior officer—not platitudes for Karl, but guides to follow throughout his tragically short life. That's the Karl Richter I remember so vividly.

- Colonel Paul Viotti '66, USAF Retired



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.



....Blue Alliance: *Character in Action!*