

Chapter Presidents conference 2017 Notes

Elizabeth Granier and Keith Heien attended, Thursday August 31-Friday Sept 1st, Doolittle Hall, USAFA.

The Conference kicked off with a Reception for Parents Club Presidents and AOG Chapter Presidents at the Carleton House (Superintendent's Residence). This informal event allowed for parents and graduates to mingle and socialize with the Senior Staff and each other.

Thursday August 31st, The Welcome and Senior Staff briefed the Parents Club Presidents and Chapter Presidents at Doolittle Hall. After all the Senior Staff members were able to introduce themselves, there was an open session for questions from the parents and graduates. Many questions centered on how to better communicate information between the AOG, Senior Leadership, Graduates, and Parents about Cadet events and activities.

Following a short break, another joint session on communications took place. Newly hired Col (ret) Mike Peterson '87 who serves as Chief USAFA Outreach Division led the session. Specifics in his briefing for graduate chapters was to encourage request for senior leadership to attend and speak at Founder's Day events. The Division will also try along with the Athletics to send out schedules to parents clubs and alumni chapters the club and athletic schedules so events in the local area can potentially have alumni/parent/cadet interactions. Last key note was to encourage any parents and graduates who would like to be more involved in some aspects of promoting the Academy and Admissions questions can go to the AOG website and look for the Prop and Wings program. This program is under Admissions and allows for some training so individuals are more aware of what is appropriate and best to share with potential cadet candidates. <http://www2.usafa.org/connect/propandwings>

Other general key bits learned in this Communications briefing is that the Chapel is set to close for 4 yrs to undergo renovations. During this time, the hope is the newly renovated Planetarium and STEM classrooms will be able to do a tourist centered video and virtual chapel tour. This will also in that 4 yr period assist with tourist as the visitor center is also set to close and a joint visitor center with the City of Colorado Springs will open near the North Gate. This new building will allow visitors to see information about the academy and its grounds but also site within the Colorado Springs area. The Old Visitor center will be refurbished for another organization. At the time of the briefing, there was not a final decision on who or what this building will be converted into, but the Academy Band, stationed at Peterson AFB was mentioned as one unit with extreme desire to relocate to the USAFA campus area so they could be located on and near campus for parades and formations.

Lunch was at Polaris Hall which allowed some of the attending Chapter Presidents that have not visited the new Center for Character Development and Polaris Hall to view this building and some interior sections to include the Honor Board room. Following lunch, Col Jeff Collins, Director of Air Force Cyber Worx presented some information on what this unit does, how the cadets are incorporated in this active duty Air Force Unit, and went on to highlight the new building to be erected for this organization in hopefully 2018.

The Chapter Presidents were then brought back to Doolittle Hall for a joint briefing with the Endowment and Association of Graduates (AOG). This meeting took place in the board room of Doolittle Hall. This meeting allowed the Chapter Presidents to voice many of their concerns about the disconnect/confusion associated with the recent vote about merging boards and leadership and

communication issues in general. The Endowment Representative, Jennifer Bateman also gave an update on recent changes to the Endowment Board Chair and CEO hiring. The end result is there is potential for some drastic changes to potentially take place within the next 6 months- 1yr that might allow the merger of all 7 Endowment/Foundation organizations to be under a single leadership which might help avoid some of the issues of graduates feeling they are constantly bombarded for financial donations. The AOG and Endowment run into issues with organizations when compared to other Educational Institutions due to some entities are Government organizations and thus fall under a different set of laws, guidelines and rules than private organizations, educational organizations and fundraising/Not-For-Profit organizations which the AOG, Endowment and other entities for graduate/alumni relations do fall within.

End results, the Endowment is in need of assistance for graduates to have better financial support, especially for upcoming capital projects to include the Cyber Worxs building, Visitor Center, and other projects associated with upgrades to USAFA infrastructure. Randy Helms'79, the only USAFA graduate on staff within the Endowment Staff is the representative for all Class Gifts and Class Fundraising.

Final Meeting of the first day was career services. This office will lose its one staff member in the coming weeks and will be unstaffed for the near future. This office works with the Army and Navy to put on 3 Joint SACC conferences a year. The take away was that all graduates were encouraged to use LinkedIn which is a web-based networking site, as a way for graduates to connect. The US Air Force Academy has a group site all graduates are asked to join and then under this group there are regional sub-groups for Graduates only. These regional subgroups are meant to be locations where graduates can post jobs, look for jobs, and post other announcements. Chapter Presidents were asked to encourage all graduates to start using this LinkedIn source and spread the word to other graduates.

The day ended with a banquet at Doolittle Hall where distinguished chapter flags were given and pictures were taken. The 5 chapters that accumulated the most points in a year towards their distinguished chapter award were given special recognition and seating at the Friday Cadet Parade. Elizabeth and Keith accepted the flag on behalf of St Louis Gateway Chapter.

Friday, Sept 1st

A cadet parade took place with allocated space for the Chapter Presidents to view. The Parade included a 4 ship F-16 flyby.

Following the parade, the Chapter Presidents met back in Doolittle Hall, in the board room, for an admissions briefing. The Deputy Director of Admissions, Larry Jones '82 was the speaker and gave some general guidelines on the admissions process, the goals for the admissions and board to select a class that meets potential AF needs for rated vs nonrated careers and diversity. Many questions were asked concerning how graduates can play a role in this admissions process. The Admissions Liaison Officers (ALO) shoulder many duties in the admission process and graduates are encouraged to consider becoming ALO officers. It was brought up that ALO duties might in the future be divided into 2 separate duties to alleviate some of the workload on individual officers who do this as volunteers. The other way to assist was to again consider doing the Prop and Wings Program.

Due to the long Admissions briefing and question session, the last item was to have Chapter Presidents Mike Rose'69 and Kent Shin '86 provide some insight on events being done by their respective chapters. There was lunch and a few minutes for questions but time did run short.

Some questions that Elizabeth did get address with other Chapter Presidents concerning membership is that most of the chapters did not use this item for their points, or counted membership as stating it was the number of graduates listed in the AOG directory for the local area. Therefore, if our chapter would like to continue to count members as those active within the last 2 yrs by attendance at some event or meeting, that was fine with everyone Elizabeth discuss this issue, and they agreed that parents and spouses could also be counted as members if the club desired per how bylaws were written for that club.

Elizabeth and Bill Preston, the Alumni Chapter Liaison, have a phone meeting scheduled for Tuesday Sept 19th, 1030 St Louis time to get Elizabeth some training and administrative rights to alter and update the website.