



Letter to Airmen

Honorable Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force

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Letter to Airmen: Education and the Airman

As the most technologically superior and powerful Air Force in the world, we are all aware that we must maintain our intellectual superiority with lifelong education for all Airmen – officer and enlisted. But this marks only the beginning.

As an expeditionary force, we find ourselves deployed to foreign countries with increased responsibilities in new mission areas. To ensure success, we need to go beyond our typical Air Force and Joint Force warfighting skills. Therefore, I am spearheading refined initial and developmental education for all ranks. You will see Basic Military Training increased by 2 ½ weeks to ensure our new Airman enter our Air Force battle ready. Officers will see changes such as cultural and language classes added to their curriculums. These are just a few of the additions that will be critical to our overall Force Development construct.

Understanding different languages and different cultures is especially important in the Global War on Terror, where we work with many coalition partners in distant lands. In that regard, I was inspired by the innovative Airmen I met during my recent trip to PACAF. In Misawa, I had breakfast with some Airmen who had just returned from an AEF deployment. Due to their established relationship with the Japanese, they were able to work side-by-side with Japan Air Self-Defense Force members a world away in Kuwait.

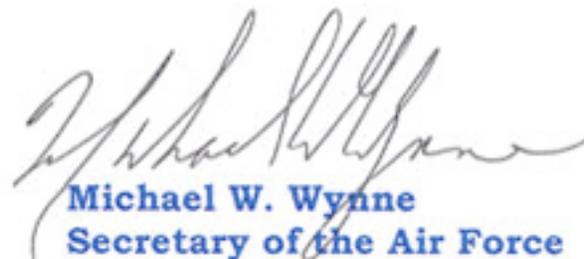
We must take the Air Force's basic educational foundation to the next level and be relentless in our continued pursuit to become knowledge-enabled Airmen. All Total Force Airmen have the opportunity to incorporate higher education into their development, through Air Force sponsored degrees, the Community College of the Air Force, or with tuition assistance for civilian institutions.

Make education a priority throughout your career, and doors will continue to open. Your achievements will become a part of your record of success for all evaluations.

Developing people to lead the world's best air, space and cyberspace force takes the personal commitment of all Airmen—a commitment to focus on developing ourselves and encouraging our fellow airmen—to learn as much as possible about the complexities of our profession of arms. I am committed to supporting you as you take on these new challenges.

In the words of former President John F. Kennedy, we must "...think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation." I am extremely proud of your contributions to protecting America. Your continued education will help keep our country strong for decades to come.




Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force