

Department of the Air Force

Presentation

Before the House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense



United States Military Academies Overview

Witness Statement of
Lieutenant General Richard M. Clark
Superintendent of the United States Air
Force Academy

March 2, 2021

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BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

LIEUTENANT GENERAL RICHARD M. CLARK

Lt. Gen. Richard M. Clark is the Superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado. He directs a four-year regimen of military training, academics, athletic and character development programs leading to a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission as a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force or United States Space Force.

Lt Gen Clark graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1986. His commands include the 34th Bomb Squadron, Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota; 12th Flying Training Wing, Randolph AFB, Texas; 8th Air Force, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana and Joint Functional Component Commander for Global Strike, Offutt AFB, Nebraska. He has also served as a White House Fellow in Washington, D.C.; the Commandant of Cadets, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado; Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché, Cairo, Egypt and as the Commander, 3rd Air Force, Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

Prior to his current assignment, he served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia.



EDUCATION

- 1986 Bachelor of Science, Management, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
- 1991 Distinguished Graduate, Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
- 1994 Master of Arts, Human Resource Development, Webster University, St. Louis, Mo.
- 1996 Distinguished Graduate, U.S. Air Force Weapons School, Ellsworth AFB, S.D.
- 1998 Distinguished Graduate, Master of Strategic Studies, Naval Command and Staff College, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.
- 1999 Master of Airpower Studies, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2005 Distinguished Graduate, Master of National Security Studies, National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
- 2006 National Security Managers Course, Syracuse University, N.Y.
- 2010 U.S.-Russia Security Program, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
- 2014 Joint Flag Officer Warfighting Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2015 Joint Force Air Component Commander Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2017 Pinnacle Course, National Defense University, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.

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ASSIGNMENTS

1. May 1986–February 1987, Junior Varsity Football Coach and Candidate Counselor, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
2. February 1987–February 1988, Student, Undergraduate Pilot Training, Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas
3. February 1988–November 1991, EC-135 Pilot, 2nd Airborne Command and Control Squadron, Offutt AFB, Neb.
4. November 1991–November 1994, B-1 Pilot, 28th Bomb Squadron, McConnell AFB, Kan.
5. November 1994–July 1997, B-1 Instructor Pilot, B-1 Flight Training Unit, 28th BS, Dyess AFB, Texas
6. July 1997–June 1998, Student, Naval Command and Staff College, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.
7. June 1998–June 1999, Student, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
8. June 1999–August 2000, Action Officer, Air Force Office of Legislative Liaison, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
9. August 2000–August 2001, Fellow, President's Commission on White House Fellowships, Washington, D.C.
10. August 2001–May 2002, Assistant Director of Operations, 77th BS, Ellsworth AFB, S.D.
11. May 2002–May 2004, Commander, 34th BS, Ellsworth AFB, S.D.
12. May 2004–June 2005, Student, National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
13. June 2005–January 2006, Vice Commander, 12th Flying Training Wing, Randolph AFB, Texas
14. January 2006–March 2008, Commander, 12th FTW, Randolph AFB, Texas
15. April 2008–April 2009, Director, Joint Interagency Task Force - Iraq, Multi-National Force - Iraq, Baghdad, Iraq
16. May 2009–July 2010, Vice Commander, Eighth Air Force (Air Forces Strategic), Barksdale AFB, La.
17. July 2010–August 2012, Commandant of Cadets, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
18. August 2012–August 2014, Senior U.S. Defense Official; Chief, Office of Military Cooperation; and Defense Attaché, Cairo, U.S. Central Command, Cairo, Egypt.
19. August 2014–April 2015, Vice Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command, Barksdale AFB, La.
20. April 2015–October 2016, Commander, 8th Air Force (Air Forces Strategic), Barksdale AFB, La., and Joint Functional Component Commander for Global Strike, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb.
21. October 2016–October 2018, Commander, Third Air Force, Ramstein Air Base, Germany
22. October 2018–August 2020, Deputy Chief of Staff, Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
23. September 2020–present, Superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS

1. April 2008–April 2009, Director, Joint Interagency Task Force - Iraq, Multi-National Force - Iraq, Baghdad, Iraq as a colonel.
2. August 2012–August 2014, Senior U.S. Defense Official; Chief, Office of Military Cooperation; and Defense Attaché, Cairo, U.S. Central Command, Cairo, Egypt, as a brigadier general.
3. April 2015–October 2016, Joint Functional Component Commander for Global Strike, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., as a major general.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Command pilot

Flight hours: More than 4,200, and 400 combat hours

Aircraft flown: B-1, EC-135, KC-135, T-1, T-38, T-6 and C-21

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Defense Superior Service Medal

Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster

Distinguished Flying Cross

Bronze Star Medal with oak leaf cluster

Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Aerial Achievement Medal

Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster

Combat Action Medal

Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal

OTHER HONORS

Honorary Doctorate, University of Maryland Global Campus

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EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant May 28, 1986

First Lieutenant May 28, 1988

Captain May 28, 1990

Major Sept. 1, 1997

Lieutenant Colonel May 1, 2000

Colonel Aug. 1, 2004

Brigadier General Nov. 18, 2009

Major General June 4, 2013

Lieutenant General Oct. 21, 2016

(Current as of Sept 2020)

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Introduction

Chairwoman McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and other distinguished members, thank you for the opportunity to address this committee on behalf of the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). I am grateful to share some of our latest updates and successes, but also to inform you of some of the obstacles we are facing as well as those we anticipate in the years to come. The interest, counsel, and support of this committee is greatly appreciated, as each of our service academies strive for success in the crucial mission we all share: developing the leaders of character who will shape the future of our national defense and reinforcing the strength and effectiveness of our respective services.

About six months ago it was my great honor to take command of the institution I am proud to call my alma mater. As a cadet at the United States Air Force Academy I found my purpose and established a foundation of character and service that I could not have built anywhere else. I have returned as Superintendent to find an Academy on an upward and ambitious trajectory, but also one facing great challenges – some unique to our mission, and others that we share with campuses and communities across our country. In these initial months, I laid out priorities that seek to recognize and overcome not only the challenges we face at our Academy, but also those that our graduates will soon encounter as decision-makers in an era of great power competition and rapid change.

Priorities

In the nearly four decades since I first arrived on this campus as a basic cadet, our society, the technologies we employ, and the ways we conduct warfare have changed significantly, and in some ways, so too has our Academy. We will continue to embrace

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purposeful change and evolve to maintain relevance and effectiveness, but my first priority is one that is fundamental and unwavering even as the world changes around us: **we must continue to develop leaders of character.** Character is the cornerstone of leadership, and should be the hallmark of an Air Force Academy graduate. Our academic, military, and athletic training, and culture and climate initiatives will remain aligned with the moral compass that character provides. We must also recognize that how we teach and develop character must continue to evolve so that the progress of each graduating class builds upon the previous. Without this steadfast commitment to character, the leadership foundation we establish here will not be strong enough to support the weight of our goals and ambitions.

My second priority is our immediate tactical challenge, and one of the toughest our Academy has ever faced: **we must persevere and defeat COVID-19.** Focusing on the health and safety of our cadets, the Academy, and our greater community will continue to be at the center of our decision-making process. I am proud of how our Academy has responded to this crisis and continues to lead the way in this tough battle by utilizing the amazing brainpower we have within our faculty, staff, and cadets. Trusting the science, employing our mathematical expertise, and adhering to guidelines will continue to be our approach. Some of us may be done with COVID-19, but COVID-19 is not done with us. Now is not the time to lose focus – it is a time for continued vigilance.

Third, **we must prepare leaders who will fight and win in future conflicts** that will look very different than those experienced by any of us speaking today, even with our many collective years of military experience across our respective services. While COVID-19 is an alarming and historic challenge, we are also in an era of great power competition, where our freedom to operate in the air and in space cannot be taken for granted. As our Air Force Chief of

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Staff, General Charles Q. Brown, Jr., stated, we must “accelerate change or lose.” Our Academy will do just that, developing innovative, creative, and bold thinkers and leaders, prepared to solve the unknown problems of tomorrow.

Finally, in our approach to all that we do at our Academy, **we must ensure that respect and dignity for all permeates throughout our culture.** This emphasis not only reinforces a climate that makes our campus a better place to live, work, learn, and serve, but it is also a strategic imperative for our Air and Space Forces. Our cadets come from increasingly diverse communities across our nation, and our graduates must be prepared to lead increasingly diverse Airmen and Guardians. Our graduates must enable and empower the diversity of thought that can be derived from this uniquely American strength. They must be able to relate to other cultures and excel in partnerships and coalitions with allied nations as we navigate the complexities of expanding joint and collaborative combat operations. In order to outpace and outthink our adversaries, we must fully employ the diverse creative, innovative, and problem-solving capabilities of our people. If dignity and respect is not ingrained in our culture, we will not only fail in these collective efforts, but we will also fail in the proper development of future leaders.

COVID-19

Each class that graduates from the United States Air Force Academy, including my own Class of 1986, prides itself on the quality of their cohort and the unique difficulties they overcame together in a program of academics, military training, athletics, and character development that is among the most challenging offered on any campus across our nation. Despite this friendly class rivalry, from my perspective leading our Academy as we confront COVID-19, there has never been a more difficult time for cadets to work through our

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transformative program. For our more junior cadets in particular, their experience thus far looks much different than what they envisioned when they accepted appointments to come here. Across the Cadet Wing, our future officers are receiving real-life leadership and character-building lessons that transcend the typical training environment, and are incomparable to the experiences of past graduating classes.

I am proud of the perseverance and determination our cadets have displayed over the last year, but the incredible talent and tireless efforts of our faculty and staff have enabled our mission to continue. I cannot overstate it – they have gone above and beyond and have modeled the kind of selfless service that we want our cadets to embody in their future careers. To safeguard our cadets and community last spring, in two firsts for our Academy, we sent our lower three classes home early, and graduated the Class of 2020 a month ahead of schedule. In another historic first, the Class of 2020 included 86 graduates who entered the United States Space Force – our first graduates to enter the nation’s newest service branch. To facilitate the completion of the Spring Semester, our faculty converted all classes to a 100% remote environment in only 9 days.

This past July, the Secretary of Defense designated all accession sources and military training pipelines as mission essential. Our Academy is one of those key Air and Space Force accession sources, and we became one of the first universities in the nation to have its entire student body return to campus. We safely brought the Cadet Wing back to our campus in phases and redesigned our courses for the Fall Semester to be flexible based on changing and unpredictable conditions. These efforts allowed us to welcome the Class of 2024 to the Academy for an on-time Inprocessing Day, and to successfully complete Basic Cadet Training.

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Across our campus community, we have confronted continuously shifting conditions with flexibility and innovative solutions. In order to create space to allow for appropriate Quarantine and Isolation (Q&I) areas, we contracted with a few local hotels not far from our gates to house approximately 400 healthy cadets. At present, we have been able to reduce that number to 135 first-class (senior) cadets residing at hotels as COVID-19 positivity rates have decreased. Accordingly, we adjusted academic, athletic, and special event schedules in order to limit the risk of exposure to our cadets and Academy community. Similar to our local community and other parts of the nation, we experienced an increase in COVID-19 cases last November. We anticipated this situation and had a plan in place to implement stricter protocols and restrictions for our cadets in order to limit community spread. As a result of following our coordinated procedures, we were able to significantly reduce the number of positive cases, send the vast majority of the Cadet Wing home for the holiday break in December as scheduled, and again bring them back to campus in phases before beginning the Spring Semester. In order to limit the risks associated with additional travel, we have canceled Spring Break and have instead scheduled additional time off for cadets throughout the Spring Semester in the form of extended three-day weekends.

The Pandemic Math Team (PMT) has been one of our greatest enablers of our continued mission success. They are a multidisciplinary group of experts and professionals who have put the brainpower of our faculty and staff to work. The team consists of 14 PhDs in statistics, data analytics, mathematical modelling, and engineering; eight PhDs in biology, virology, and biochemistry; and five M.D.s and public health professionals. Together, they assess the threat of COVID-19 and develop risk-characterized policy options and testing strategies. PMT models have provided forecasts for COVID-19 case counts and expected Q&I volume. Additionally,

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their analysis has driven the methods of our surveillance testing, which employs a pooled testing protocol developed at our Academy to effectively and efficiently test a large volume of cadets, faculty, and staff with minimum use of testing resources. We have demonstrated the ability to test over 700 cadets in a day with diagnostic results in fewer than six hours.

We have shared the lessons and protocols from our pooled testing with the Air Force Surgeon General, and some of these lessons-learned are currently being adapted for use at other Air Force installations. We continue to refine our models and update COVID-19 policies and protocols based on data from surveillance testing. The fact that approximately 90% of cadets who test positive for COVID-19 are asymptomatic underscores the importance for continued surveillance testing to identify and respond to new cases as early and quickly as possible. In early January, we began administering our first COVID-19 vaccinations to Tier 1a and 1b personnel. We developed a web-based questionnaire to capture the prioritization of our personnel, which is based on the Department of Defense established schema. The online program enables our medical team to rapidly generate a list of personnel who are ready to accept the vaccine when shipments arrive. Depending on availability, we have been able to execute Point of Dispensing (POD) operations in our hockey arena. As of February 22, 2021, we have administered a first vaccine dose to 2,515 personnel, both doses to 1,209 personnel, and anticipate a new vaccine shipment every other week.

This collaborative approach to COVID-19 has been an immense effort requiring the dedication of every unit on our installation, and I am incredibly proud of how our cadets, faculty, and staff have responded. They have been a model of the kind of grit and determination, coupled with ingenuity and intellect, which our nation should expect of leaders in its Air and Space Forces. There is no question, however, that the challenges of this current environment can take a

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toll on our mental health – cadets, faculty, staff, and leadership alike. We have a wide range of resiliency resources and helping agencies available to our cadets and Academy community, allowing us to focus appropriate attention on cadets in Q&I, and mitigate the added challenges and adverse effects of this environment on 4-degree (freshmen) resilience and integration, among other difficulties unique to military service academies. It is a strength, not a weakness, to seek help, and at our Academy I will not accept any kind of cultural stigma being placed on those who have the courage to reinforce their mental well-being.

Our ongoing fight against COVID-19 has also been enabled by your support, and the support of the American people. On behalf of our entire Academy community, I would like to extend our thanks for the generous funding assistance we received in FY2020 to aid in our efforts to safeguard the health of our cadets, faculty, and staff. Without this support we would not have been able to safely achieve continued mission success.

Honor

The mission of the United States Air Force Academy is to educate, train, and inspire men and women to become leaders of character, motivated to lead the Department of the Air Force in service to our nation. While COVID-19 has presented numerous obstacles to how we maintain our high standards and accomplish this crucial mission each day, the historic challenges we have confronted with this global pandemic will in the end prove temporary. How we approach living, working, learning, and defending our nation with our honor intact has a more fundamental and long-term consequence for the development of the officers who will soon lead our Air and Space Forces. Tactical challenges are a fact of military life and often influence our key decision-making processes, but short-term actions cannot come at the expense of strategic plans and

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priorities, or undermine our approach to something as foundational to our culture as our Honor Code: *“We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does.”*

After our Academy made the unprecedented decision in March to send the lower three classes home, amidst these uncommon circumstances and challenges, the Dean of Faculty detected an increase in infractions through various academic safeguards. These infractions included various forms of cheating during the Spring Semester, ranging from failing to properly cite sources, to using unauthorized online tutoring websites to receive exam solutions in real time, to cadets coordinating responses to exam questions. Although some of these infractions unfortunately do occur even in a traditional learning environment, the remote learning environment increased the temptation and availability of means to cheat. This was a phenomenon that occurred not only at our Academy, but at universities across the country that also grappled with a rapid transition to remote learning. In total, 240 cadets were suspected of violating the Academy’s Honor Code during this timeframe.

The cadet-led process of working through these Honor Code infractions could not begin until cadets returned for the Fall Semester. We continue to progress through these cases, and we are dedicated to ensuring cadet accountability throughout the entire Honor process. The vast majority of cadets have admitted to cheating and were placed on six months of Honor probation and remediation. The remainder are pending cases at various stages of the Honor process. Cadets in violation of the Honor Code are not allowed to represent our Academy until they complete the required remediation. Remediation is a consequence and not an act of leniency. If earned, it provides an opportunity to reset the moral compass and deepen a cadet’s understanding of and respect for the Honor Code.

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The men and women at our Academy come from all walks of life, across all 50 states, 435 congressional districts, and a number of our allied partners around the world. You yourselves have nominated many of them. We recognize that when they step foot on our campus for the first day of Basic Cadet Training, they do not automatically develop the character we expect of them. They come to us with years of prior training and examples on what honor and character mean – from their parents, peers, teachers, the media, and other influences throughout our society. Some of that training is positive, and some of it is negative. Our challenge is to identify flaws in character and honor, and, if possible, to educate the cadets on what is expected of them. Adhering to shared values and a higher standard does not happen overnight – it is a four-year process. If during our efforts to develop their character they have demonstrated that they are unwilling or unable to meet our standards by the time they commission, we will make the hard decision to disenroll them. If, however, we are confident in their potential for rehabilitation, we will use tools such as probation and remediation to provide course correction. Fortunately, probation and remediation have proven to be effective tools, where more than 90% of cadets who go through remediation do not commit another Honor Code infraction.

In light of these incidents and my strong belief in the crucial importance of honor to the development of our cadets and the future of our military, I directed a review of our entire honor program in January. To conduct this examination, the Honor Review Committee will work in partnership with Air Force CyberWorx, the Air Force's lead problem-solving unit, which we host here at our Academy. This Committee is conducting a holistic review of the program and is holding discussions with senior leaders, cadets, alumni, and other stakeholders to see if and how we can improve the honor system. The Committee is reviewing tenets of the current Honor Program, previous honor assessments, studies, reports, and surveys. They are also examining

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internal processes, structures, and activities associated with the Honor Program. The purpose of this review is to provide findings and recommendations for improvement, ensuring the Cadet Honor Code and Honor Program remain relevant and effective.

As we anticipate the results of the assessment, we continue to evaluate and update temporarily remote academic programs, implementing lessons learned to deter future violations. These efforts include enhanced use of technology to monitor for plagiarism, and real-time monitoring of websites to identify unauthorized information sharing. In addition, we are continuing to refine our approach to remote learning, and our faculty developed supplemental course content and resources for cadets. The Honor Code is not only foundational to the Air Force Academy, but it serves as a guide for cadets to live an honorable life, whether serving in uniform or not. This review will help us ensure that living honorably remains the cornerstone of the Academy, where every cadet upholds our Honor Code.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Even one incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment at our Academy is unacceptable. Any prevalence of these degrading behaviors is corrosive to the high standards we hold ourselves to as leaders, the core values of our Air and Space Forces, and our Academy. We are not where we need to be, and we must get this right. The strength of our Air Force depends on eradicating sexual assault.

The results of the 2018 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey (SAGR), which provides information on the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment, showed a significant increase in sexual assaults at each of the military service academies. We continue to explore and implement evidence-based programs and policies that are designed to reduce risk

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factors and improve protective factors for our cadets, Airmen, and Guardians. Since the release of the 2018 Sexual Harassment & Violence (SH&V) Report, the Academy has improved the capacity for victims to access care and make official reports of sexual assault. Reporting here has remained steady despite the COVID-19 protocols enacted this year. We must continue to build upon our past efforts, reinforce where our methods have been successful, and refine our approach where we are falling short.

In the summer of 2019, we launched the Department of Defense Catch a Serial Offender (CATCH) Program on our campus, which provides sexual assault survivors with an opportunity to anonymously disclose subject information in a database when making a restricted report. The purpose is to identify matches from multiple victims' observations that point to a serial offender who otherwise may not have been identified. At that point, the victim is privately notified and given a chance to convert from a restricted to an unrestricted report in order to initiate an investigation. In addition, since 2017, we have implemented a number of other programs and initiatives:

- **Cadet Healthy Personal Skills (CHiPs)** is a Life Skills and Healthy Relationships Program aligned with the Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy (AFSAPS). It is primarily focused on prevention for freshmen and foundational skills for Healthy Relationship Training (HRT).
- **Healthy Relationship Training (HRT)** is aimed at building a culture that prevents sexual assault through identifying relational warning signs (i.e., red flags, consent, and boundaries).

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- **Cadet Wing Intervention Training (CWIT)** focuses on empowerment, bystander awareness, and cadet responsibility. It is introduced in the sophomore year, with a further, leadership-focused training during the senior year.
- **Sexual Assault Resistance Education (SARE) Centre / Enhanced Access, Acknowledge, Act (EAAA):** Studies of this educational program done with females have shown a significant reduction in victimization from sexual assault. In the spring of 2019 we conducted a beta test of the program with 50 cadets, followed in the fall by half of the female cadets of the Class of 2023. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, continuation of the pilot program in the spring of 2020 was paused out of health and safety concerns. Currently, planning is under way to complete the training program for the second half of the female cadets of the Class of 2023 and the female cadets in the Class of 2024.
- USAFA's **Safe-to-Report** policy grants amnesty to victims for certain minor, collateral misconduct, in order to encourage reporting. This policy served as the model for recent legislation in the FY 2021 NDAA, which directed the services to adopt similar policies.
- **Prepare Peer Leaders – Teal Rope:** This 6-hour training program focuses on developing skills in advocacy and resources for victims of sexual assault. As Teal Ropes (peer leaders), cadets act as liaisons in assisting cadet victims of sexual assault in accessing SAPR resources. The program began at our Air Force Academy Preparatory School in January 2019, and in the Cadet Wing in March 2019. Currently, there are 102 trained Teal Ropes in the Cadet Wing and 12 trained Teal Ropes at the Preparatory School. This effort of connecting Teal Rope cadets with

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victims of sexual assault has proven highly effective in the COVID-19 environment as an additional resource for victims to access our programs and resources.

- Through our **“Tell the Supt” Anonymous Comment Tool**, developed February 2019 in response to a past SH&V Report. We invited all cadets to provide suggestions, ideas, and feedback via an online anonymous tool – directly to the Superintendent. This tool generated 161 responses within the first month, ranging from personal stories to suggestions, to cadets discussing conversations with one another. All of this is valuable information that sheds light on the cadet experience with sexual assault at the Academy we otherwise would not have been able to obtain.

From April 7-9, 2021, we will be the virtual host of the 2021 National Discussion on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at America’s Colleges, Universities, and Service Academies. This event was developed from a Department of Defense Service Secretaries directive to service academies, universities, and colleges, requesting collaboration to discover and promote evidence-based initiatives to improve the culture of sexual assault and sexual harassment reporting. It provides a forum where experts and leaders across the military services, industry, and academia can partner to discover and promote evidence-based prevention practices and implementation strategies for sexual assault and sexual harassment. We have hosted or participated in a number of other prominent and productive discussions over the past several years, and firmly believe that we must continue this dialogue and give an empowered voice to survivors of sexual violence as we work together to find solutions to eliminate sexual assault and sexual harassment on our campuses.

Addressing this problem must begin even before our cadets arrive at our Academy. To that end, we have been focusing increased efforts on selecting applicants of the highest character,

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who will adopt, internalize, and demonstrate our Core Values when given the privilege to join our Cadet Wing. These efforts have included enhanced accessions training and a video on our Core Values that all applicants are required to view before moving forward with their application. As a commander and 35-year member of our Air Force, I simply will not accept a culture and climate on our campus, in our campus community, or in our Air and Space Forces, that tolerates any prevalence of sexual violence, sexual harassment, or degrading behavior of any kind.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As I stated in the discussion of the priorities I established as Superintendent, I believe that embracing and empowering our diversity is a strategic imperative for our Academy, the future of our military, and the successful implementation of our National Defense Strategy. As we employ the Chief of Staff of the Air Force's recent "Accelerate Change or Lose" directive, we must also consider that the change we need to improve the culture and climate across our installation, and to win the conflicts of the future, spans from social to technological. We need to continue to break down barriers and utilize our full strengths as much as we need to foster cultures of innovation, creativity, and discovery. This will require us to take a hard look at ourselves to ensure we remain on the right flightpath.

To that end, this past summer we conducted an Internal Racial Disparity Review in order to provide an assessment of biases within our policies, processes, practices, curriculum, and artifacts, and to identify racial disparities unique to our Academy. This review demonstrated that our endeavors are strong, but we still have work to do so that racism and injustice do not negatively affect our operations, culture, and climate, and do not impede our mission success. As

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we draw upon the findings of this review to inform plans for future action and tangible, enduring change, we have already begun to implement some of the recommendations it provided. As a result of the review, the Academy established an accountability framework, including a Diversity and Inclusion Executive Committee, made up of USAFA senior leadership that has met monthly since December. In addition, we established a Diversity and Inclusion Action Group, made up of action officers across all Academy Mission Elements, that has met four times in the past three months, tracking review recommendations to closure. In addition, we recently hired a new Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer. Other actions have included:

- Additional funding was provided to cadet affinity groups, with plans to partner with alumni affinity groups for long-term initiatives.
- Based on the Racial Disparity Review, our faculty added a lesson this term to the Leadership 100 course to discuss the Department of the Air Force Racial Disparity Report.
- We developed a framework to address bias incident reporting.
- Listening sessions were held that aligned with special observance activities to obtain feedback from various demographic populations.
- Our Cadet Wing is planning to establish a Diversity and Inclusion Cadet Leadership position in all 40 squadrons (similar to SAPR “Teal Ropes” position).
- Last month, we created a Diversity and Inclusion reading room at the Cadet Library.

As I have been honored to return to the United States Air Force Academy campus for the third time in my career, I am often asked what has changed over the nearly four decades that have passed since I first arrived as a basic cadet from Richmond, Virginia. One thing that has not changed is our purpose: we are here to develop leaders of character. But as I look at our campus,

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our cadets, and our community, I see an Academy that has grown, and that continues to evolve alongside a rapidly changing nation and world. Our society is becoming more diverse, and with it, so are our Air and Space Forces and our service academies. Aided by recent efforts in admissions outreach and communications, our demographic trends are headed in a positive direction so that the composition of our Cadet Wing will more accurately reflect the composition of the United States. The Class of 2020 was the most diverse graduating class in Academy history, where 29% of the graduates were women, and 31% of the graduates identified as race/ethnic minority members. The Class of 2024 is the most diverse class ever at the Academy, with women comprising more than 30% of the class, and race/ethnic minority members comprising more than 36% of the class. While we are at all-time highs in these numbers, there are certain demographic groups where we have not achieved the numbers we strive for, and we will continue to focus our efforts on improving the diversity of our incoming classes.

In recent months, concerns about a new virus in the ranks of our military has come to light – extremism. Fortunately, our Academy stands ready to combat this virus because of our focus on fundamental concepts such as character, dignity, and respect for all human beings. As long as we instill these values across our leadership culture, these fundamentals can act as a vaccine that helps to inoculate us against intolerance, hate, and extremism. As long as the vast majority of our cadets, faculty, and staff recognize the value of diversity and embody dignity and respect toward all, it leaves no room for that virus to grow or spread throughout our ranks. In some ways, this approach is similar to the lessons we have learned in confronting sexual assault – focusing on the fundamentals of healthy relationships and respect for our teammates and community that everyone at our institution can learn from and appreciate. Just as sexual

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harassment and sexual assault have no place within a healthy and respectful relationship, hate and extremism have no place in a climate of dignity and respect, where diversity is valued.

Infrastructure

The United States Air Force Academy campus is unique among those across our nation in that much of our infrastructure – including the dormitories, classrooms, gymnasiums, training centers, and administrative buildings – was constructed at the same time, from the late 1950s to the early 1960s. As a result, many of our facilities begin to deteriorate and age out at the same time. Our campus is scenic and offers a number of advantages, but its location on the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains also means that our facilities are exposed to extreme temperature swings and high winds that exacerbate the degradation of roofs, pavements, utilities systems, and other systems. Recognizing its unique place in American history and culture, in 2004 our Cadet Area was designated a National Historic Landmark. While this designation honors the significance of our campus and mission, it also comes with special construction limitations that can complicate enhancement projects and increase the cost of some repairs.

We continue to prioritize investment in our facilities and infrastructure in order to posture the Air Force Academy to meet its mission requirements, care for our Airmen, Guardians, and their families, and ensure that we are prepared for the future. Since 2006, we have received more than \$900M for the restoration and recapitalization of facilities and infrastructure, most of which came in the form of operations and maintenance funds provided within the Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (FSRM) program. In addition, we have also received substantial Military Construction (MILCON) funding for projects across our campus. These projects have included:

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- A 9-phase restoration of Vandenberg Hall, our largest dormitory at 2,500 bed spaces.
- Restoration of Mitchell Hall, our cadet dining facility.
- A 7-phase restoration of our Cadet Gym.
- Replacement of high temperature hot water lines to the Cadet Area and other areas on base which provide heating and cooling from a central plant to cadet dorms, our academic building, and other facilities.
- In FY 2019, we were awarded a \$158M project to repair the exterior envelope of our iconic Cadet Chapel, with an expected completion in 2024.

Coupled with traditional funding programs, we are fortunate to have partnerships with non-profit organizations like the Air Force Academy Foundation, the Association of Graduates, the Air Force Academy Athletic Corporation, and other smaller foundations. This support provides financial resources, goods and services, and real property gifts. We use these gifts to provide a margin of excellence in the enhancements of facilities and infrastructure of the kind that are not typically provided by funds appropriated for FSRM and MILCON programs. A prominent example of this partnership is Polaris Hall, completed in 2016, which now houses our Center for Character and Leadership Development. This project consisted of \$27.5M in MILCON and \$17M in enhancements funded by donations. Other recent projects funded by donations have included:

- A new scoreboard for Falcon Stadium and renovation and expansion of the home team lockers in the stadium.
- An Air Warrior Combat Memorial to highlight Academy graduates and other Air Force aviators who have distinguished themselves in aerial combat.

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- Restoration of the Air Gardens, a key feature within our Cadet Area. In addition to the restoration, the project provides two outdoor classrooms complete with electrical power outlets and wireless network connectivity.
- A Southeast Asia Memorial display in our academic facility, Fairchild Hall, to complement history courses and inspire cadets.

Conclusion

Last year, our faculty, staff, and leadership team embarked on an ambitious effort to develop a strategic plan across the mission elements of our Academy. The resulting plan, paired with the aforementioned leadership priorities I have implemented, represent a collective dedication to excellence and renewed mission focus throughout our campus. The events of the past year have been a case study in the need for flexibility and adaptability, so in crafting our plans and priorities we cannot be afraid of change.

As leaders we must also recognize the necessity of making decisions that may reshape our institution. I am excited about one such effort on our campus that embodies and empowers this mindset and will help prepare our cadets to solve the untold problems they will face in their careers – 10, 20, and 30 years in the future. Our new Institute for Future Conflict (IFC) was established to act as an integrator of scholarship and thought leadership, providing resources that will enable cadets, faculty, and senior leaders to examine the technological and socio-cultural demands of modern conflict. The IFC will focus its efforts along three lines: learning to leverage emerging and disruptive technologies, understanding potential adversaries and allies, and educating on the foundations of warfare and conflict. Through initiatives to strengthen faculty and cadet research, enhance faculty development, provide opportunities for cultural immersion

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travel, and much more, I am confident that this new Institute will help us accelerate the change needed to remain ahead of and outpace our adversaries.

Developing leaders of character prepared for the demands of modern conflict is not without life lessons and learning from mistakes, failures, and hardships. Across a number of the areas I have mentioned, we have work to do in order to maintain the high standards our society rightfully expects of its service academies. However, on our campus I also see a population of cadets who are much more informed, technologically savvy, innovative, and physically fit than any who have come before them. I see an opportunity for us as senior leaders and educators to shape this next generation of officers into one of limitless potential. Even in the midst of a historic hurdle like COVID-19, the performance of our cadets, faculty, and staff coupled with the support of our extended communities, have instilled in me a great level of confidence about our future. While we are not ready to declare victory anytime soon in a mission that requires constant improvement, innovation, and refinement, I believe our path is one of continued success in developing the future leaders of our Air and Space Forces. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to speak before this committee, and I look forward to your questions.