



AFA WMC Soaring High

Reflecting on the Triumphant 2023 and Charting Our Course for 2024

As we take flight into 2024, it's with the exhilarating winds of 2023 still guiding our wings. Last year was a banner year for the Air Force Association's Wright Memorial Chapter (AFA WMC), marked by remarkable achievements that solidified our unwavering commitment to advocate, educate, and support.

2023 Highlights - Our A Year in Review

Advocacy in Action

We championed legislative efforts that secured increased funding for childcare and healthcare access for our servicewomen, tirelessly advocating for policies that empower their success. Some highlights of our activities include:

Working with National, State, Local Legislative and Community Leaders

- Actively participated in, and provided funding support to, the 'Ohio Defense Forum', which provides an opportunity for defense installation leadership, community leaders, industry representatives, and elected officials to connect, build awareness, and gain a deeper understanding of the current defense environment and the role they play in supporting all facets of national defense. [Also met with CCSAF #18 Mike Mosely; Mr. Tim Grayson, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force for Mission-Centered Analysis and Operational Imperatives, Lt Gen (Ret) Robert McMurry, and Dr. James Weber, Principal Director for Hypersonics, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Critical Technologies, OUSD)]
- Actively participated in 'Digital Dayton Roundtable' discussions with State, local and military senior leaders, and advocated for support of the Air Force's vision to significantly enhance a digitally-empowered Air Force equipped with an agile workforce, state-of-the-art technologies, and intuitive processes that drive model-based enterprise decision-making.
- Met with AFMC, AFLCMC, and AFRL leadership to discuss challenges and needs to guide our advocacy follow-on activities (talking papers, presentations, letters/emails to legislative leaders, etc.)
- Sent advocacy-related letters or emails to Ohio Senators and local Congressional representatives
- Actively participated in numerous recruiting and workforce related forums related to STEM, attracting talent to the government, and with local University Presidents on developing programs to meet these needs
- On a lesser note, we also attended the following AFA advocacy-related events, asked pertinent questions, and shared that information across key stakeholders in the Wright Memorial Chapter
 - AFA's Advocacy Training Meeting in Oct 2023
 - Multiple AFA Mitchell Institute virtual events

Outreach to the Community

- Supported the FAI-NAA (Fédération Aéronautique Internationale - National Aeronautic Association) 117th General Conference, held in Dayton, OH
- Participated in numerous community Dayton Region Military Collaborative and Dayton Development Coalition events financially and through volunteer efforts
- Became an active support of the “President’s Club of Dayton”, which encourages servant leadership through active community service in the Dayton region. The PCoD celebrates and promotes volunteer service and leadership to nurture a positive image of those who give back.
- Hosted the Dayton, OH-area Air Force Ball, which also celebrated the 50th anniversary of the end of the Viet Nam war, and opened it up to the community

National Defense and Aerospace Issues

While our response to “Work with National, State, Local Legislative and Community Leaders” (above), addresses this area as well, AFA WMC 212 expanded its partnership with the Dayton Development Coalition, the Miami Valley Military Affairs Association, and other senior military and civilian leaders at WPAFB and Springfield ANGB leaders to enhance the effectiveness of our Advocacy efforts.

Education in Action

Through dynamic mentorship programs, professional development workshops, and educational outreach initiatives, we equipped students, cadets, and active duty members in the Air Force with the knowledge and skills to thrive. Some highlights include:

General Aerospace Education or STEM Program - AFA WMC 212 contacted 11 high schools in the Dayton Region to offer support for their STEM programs; some were interested, some not. (It’s hard to understand how a school would not engage with a program offering free money!). In the end, we presented STEM scholarships to five local schools - Mad River, Fairborn, Huber Heights, Northridge, Xenia, and Belmont school districts. (Note: when we made those presentations, we invited a corporate sponsor to attend and participate in the presentation.)

Additionally, we provided financial and volunteer support to the Dayton, OH -based non-profit organization *Air Camp*, which is a hands-on, educational adventure to learn more about STEM using aviation and aerospace as the medium; while also promoting the values of scholarship, leadership, and citizenship. (On a side note, we also co-hosted Stephen Gourley, AFA’s Vice Chair of the Board for Aerospace Education, when he came out to review *Air Camp* and discuss how AFA National might support its operations.)

We also invited/supported twenty STEM students at the AFA WMC Chalets at the Dayton Air Show to (hopefully) elevate their interest in STEM and aerospace; as well as visited the Dayton Regional STEM School to determine ways we could support their STEM efforts within our Chapter’s goals and mission.

Lastly, we sat on a State of Ohio-sponsored Advisory Group related to workforce needs STEM; advocating for increased government funding , as well as academic and private sector support

for STEM education - particularly in aerospace-related fields as we raise awareness about the importance of a strong STEM workforce for national security and technological advancement.

National Youth Cyber Education Program and StellarExplorer Programs. - Though we are a larger Chapter, we don't have enough volunteers for all AFA programs and this is one of them. Thus, this was a program with no measurable activities. However, we hope to improve in 2024.

Teacher of the Year (ToY) - While this is a great program, we found it difficult to motivate school districts to nominate a deserving teacher. However, to highlight our main accomplishments, we...

- Created an educators email distribution list so I can send announcements about ToY education related information (as well as Air Camp and Stellar Express)
- Identified first ToY candidate and shared ToY link
- Requested National build a "slick sheet" highlighting the benefits of being nominated as a ToY to help with recruiting

Support Soaring - We stood shoulder-to-shoulder with our Air Force sisters, offering unwavering support through scholarships, emergency grants, and community engagement programs, fostering a spirit of camaraderie and well-being.

Support in Action

Support to the Air Force's workforce, its veterans, their families, and their communities is an important part of our mission. Some key 2023 highlights are :

Support of Airman/Guardians

- **AFIT Awards** – as codified in AFIT Instruction 36-110, AFA WMC 212 sponsors five awards related to the faculty, staff, and students at the Air Force Institute of Technology. We sit on the Awards Selection Committee, chaired by the Provost, and we present the awards at an all-AFIT Chancellor's Call
- **Non-Profit Support** - We sponsor many other WPAFB organizational non-profits (AFSA, CGOC, Top 3, TOP 5/6) related to their events associated with the holidays, promotions, food banks, childcare, etc.)
- **Pitsenbarger Scholarships** – We provide two \$1,000 scholarships to CCAF graduates pursuing their Bachelor degrees. We also sit on the Selection Board (hosted by the Base Education Office) to determine the most deserving of our AFA WMC Pitsenbarger scholarships.
- **New Commander's Reception** – We sponsored a networking event which brought together seven senior-ranking General Officers, SESs, and Colonels to meet community members who they will interact with to help them succeed in their leadership roles
- **AFA WMC Top 4 Awards** – We presented three awards to WPAFB airman - the Heritage Award – for military officer leadership; Legacy Award – for civilian leadership, and the Enlisted Award – for military enlisted leadership - at the Air Force Ball. (Note: we also presented an Ambassador Award for community leadership in support of the Air Force mission.),

- **Airman's Attic Support** –our volunteers help manages the 'Airman's Attic' at WPAFB, providing gently used items available at no cost to Enlisted Airmen (Grades E-6 and below) and Officer Airmen (Grades O-3 and below) in a retail style setting. The hosting Wing Commander (88 ABW) calls this one of the 'crown jewels' on the base; not only for its services, but for how it is organized and led.
- **Air Force Ball** – AFA WMC 212 provided free tickets to junior enlisted airman so they could attend the Dayton, OH-area's Air Force Ball
- **WPAFB Commercial Sponsorship** –a "win-win" for the Base and AFA WMC, we support the 88ABW Commander's Commercial Sponsorship, which is designed to connect WPAFB military, families, civilian workforce professionals with local organizations.

Support Veteran/Retiree Programs

- Salute to Veterans Week – we supported this event with monetary and volunteer contributions for veterans at the Dayton VA Center.
- Summer Festival at the Dayton VA Nursing Home - we entertained the veterans with games and music and supported the Homeless Program at the Dayton VA with Kroger gift cards to be issued to veterans with food insecurities.
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program - we supported this picnic event with monetary and volunteer contributions for veterans at the Dayton VA Center
- Holiday Meal – in conjunction with AFSA, we supported this event with monetary and volunteer contributions for veterans at the Dayton VA Center
- USO - we supported this event with food contributions for veterans utilizing the USO facilities
- Ambassador Program - AFA WMC was credited with approximately 200 hrs. of volunteer time with the at the Dayton VA.
- Habitant for Humanities - Veterans Build - The Miami Valley defense and aerospace community (to include AFA WMC 212) stepped up (financially and through volunteerism) to enable a local veteran to reach their goal of homeownership. The most recent Veteran supported will move into their house in January 2024.
- Gala of Hope - we supported this event with monetary and volunteer contributions. Gala of Hope deepens its honor and support of veteran cancer patients in the greater Dayton community, launching a Veterans Hope Fund to give greater hope to those in active treatment.
- Fisher House Foundation - In support of the three local Fisher Houses (two at WPAFB and one at the Dayton VA Medical Center), we provided volunteers for their "Trans Am Drive-in" fundraising event. We also provided networking support to support the local organization.

Support of Cadets

- Rafi's Golf Tournament – designed to supports Junior ROTC Units in Greene County, Ohio, we supported this event with monetary and volunteer contributions
- CAP Uniforms – We provided uniforms to Indiana and Northern Kentucky CAP cadets

- AF Marathon Water Station – helped sponsor the AFA/ Bellbrook HS JROTC of this event with financial and volunteer support
- ROTC Scholarships – Provided scholarships to four cadets of the AFROTC, Det 643
- ROTC Leadership – Connected AFA’s Doolittle’s Leadership Center (Patrick Donley) with all four ROTC commanders from local Dayton colleges to facilitate bringing AFA’s “Lead, Develop, Care” program to participating cadets. (This is still a work in progress.)

Chapter Communications

Communications with Members

Some highlights of our member communication program activities - to include past or future events, advocacy, sponsor recognition, human interest stories, other important links, and ‘news you can use’ - include:

- Maintaining our Facebook Page (though there is room for improvement)
- Created a new [AFA WMC 212 LinkedIn page](#) so people could have “news you can use” information” pushed to them
- Building a new [AFA WMC website](#) to enhance our ability to communicate with our members and giving us the flexibility to do so that subbing off of AFA National’s website does not provide
- Sending out emails (to our 2,000+ members) with Chapter updates or Calls Of Action

Support of Membership Activities

- Conducted Chapter Networking Meetings (with a guest speaker)
- Hosted “After Hours” Networking Socials
- Co-hosted the Dayton, OH-area Air Force Ball
- Hosted special AFA chalets at the Dayton Air Show
- Connected members with local volunteer organizations to engage in community service projects and build positive relationships with the Dayton community.
- We hosted in-person Chapter Networking luncheons (meetings) in support of our advocate, educate, and support mission and role. Luncheon speakers included Lt Gen Shaun Morris (AFLCMC Commander), Brig Gen (now Maj Gen) Dale White (PEO for Fighters and Advanced Aircraft), Dr. Susan Edwards (President, Wright State University) and Dr. Cassie Barlow (President, Strategic Ohio Council for Higher Education/SOCHE
- We held Executive Board meeting to discuss Chapter activities, finances, and AFA WMC 212 plans to continue the success in holding Chapter meetings, as it did in 2023, and distributed the resulting minutes to Chapter members
- We are discussing how to offer virtual and hybrid options that support our 2,000+ Chapter members

Charting Our Course for 2024

While we celebrate our triumphs, we recognize there's always room for improvement. In 2024, we aim to:

- **Double down on our advocacy efforts:** We will double down on our advocacy efforts, pushing for policies that dismantle barriers and ensure true equity for women in the Air Force.
- **Expand our educational reach:** We will broaden our educational reach, providing targeted programs that address the unique needs of women at every stage of their military careers.
- **Strengthen our support network:** We will deepen our commitment to supporting our Air Force sisters, their families, and veterans, offering a robust network of resources and fostering a culture of care.

Summary

The AFA WMC: A Cornerstone of American Security

The Air Force is the bedrock of our national security, safeguarding our skies and ensuring our freedom. The AFA WMC plays a vital role in supporting this vital mission, not just by advocating for the Air Force, but also by empowering its workforce, veterans, and their families. We are steadfast in our commitment to STEM education, scholarships, and grants, ensuring the future of our Air Force is bright.

As we embark on a new year, let's remember the importance of our mission and the impact we make. Together, we can make 2024 another year of remarkable achievements, solidifying the AFA WMC's position as an indispensable force for the Air Force and our nation. So buckle up for a warp speed flight and prepare for another incredible year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Babcock". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line underneath the name.

David Babcock
President

Note: The source for the information above was extracted from our Chapter reports sent to AFA National

If you have any questions or comments, please contact David Babcock at president@afadaytonwright.org or 937.478.6138