



Opening ceremony at the Outstanding Airmen of the Year dinner on Sept. 19 at the AFA National Convention and Air, Space & Cyber Conference at National Harbor, Md.

Photo by Doug Van Sant

More than 7,200 attendees gathered for the 2016 Air Force Association National Convention and the Air, Space & Cyber Conference, dedicating time to better understand Air Force issues.

Top USAF leaders, such as Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein, and CMSAF James A. Cody, took the stage at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Md., just outside Washington, D.C. Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert O. Work and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. both gave keynote addresses. All speakers shared with audiences their present challenges as well as their visions for the Air Force's future.

The 68th annual AFA National Convention began Saturday, Sept. 17, with two days of AFA business, followed by three days of conference activity, filled with 38 speaker sessions.

A wreath-laying ceremony took place Sunday morning, Sept. 18, at the Air Force Memorial in Arlington, Va. Scott P. Van Cleef, the AFA board chairman, paid tribute to the lives and contributions of AFA members and friends who have died in the last year. Retired Maj. Gen. William J. Dendinger, AFA's national chaplain, conducted the invocation, homily, and benediction for the event. Van Cleef, AFA Vice Chairman for Field Operations David A. Dietsch, and Vice Chairman for Aerospace Education Richard B. Bundy read a memorial tribute list of the deceased, and Van Cleef, Goldfein, and Cody closed the ceremony by laying a wreath at the memorial.

The conference commenced with welcoming remarks by Van Cleef and an awards ceremony highlighting more than 40 individuals and groups for their contributions to the aerospace community. Van Cleef, Secretary James, Goldfein, and major command leaders presented citations of honor and Air Force crew and team awards, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve awards, and professional, civilian, education, and management awards.

James, joined on the main stage by Goldfein, Cody, Van Cleef, and AFA industry supporters, snipped the ceremonial red ribbon with oversized scissors—a sign of the official opening of the technology exposition—on Sept.

19. More than 120 exhibitors showcased their products.

AFA formally honored the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year with a ceremonial dinner following a reception sponsored by Northrop Grumman on Sept. 19. Cody congratulated the 12 airmen during his keynote address at the dinner ceremony. TSgt. Tamara R. Acfalle, one of the 2015 Outstanding Airmen of the Year, acted as master of ceremonies, and Deputy Chief of Chaplains Brig. Gen. Steven A. Schaick led the gathering in prayer. The Air Force Honor Guard presented the colors and the Air Force Band provided entertainment during the evening's festivities.

Thanks to financial support from Lockheed Martin, the 12 Outstanding Airmen attended events in and around Washington, D.C., throughout the conference. The "golden dozen" toured Capitol Hill and Arlington National Cemetery and visited the Pentagon. The conference acknowledged the profound challenges facing today's US defense complex and celebrated the achievements of the airmen operating within it. The event concentrated its focus via military leaders and national defense and policy experts on subjects ranging from cyber, space, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, to nuclear and energy issues.

The first day of the conference, Monday, saw much focus on the changing role of airpower in the US. Tuesday discussions centered on the cyber realm and acquisition in tough budget times.

Fifteen senior leaders discussed everything from training to innovation during the Today's Air Force—Senior Leader Perspective panel.

AFA's Air Force Anniversary Gala toasted the service's 69th anniversary on Sept. 21. Kenneth Goss served as master of ceremonies. During the event, the following were saluted with national aerospace awards:

Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, USAF (Ret.), 20th Air Force Chief of Staff, with the H. H. Arnold Award, recognizing the most significant contribution to national defense by a member of the military; Jamie M. Morin, director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, with the W. Stuart Symington Award, recognizing the top contribution by a civilian in the field of national defense; SpaceX, with the John R. Alison Award,

for the most outstanding contribution by industrial leadership to national defense; Harry A. Talbot, recognized with the AFA Chairman's Aerospace Education Award, for long-term commitment to aerospace education with a significant nationwide impact.

AFA Lifetime Achievement Awards went to: Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF (Ret.), Gen. Charles A. Horner, USAF (Ret.), Lt. Gen. James M. Keck, USAF (Ret.), and Lt. Col. John T. Correll, USAF (Ret.). Maj. Gen. Claude M. Bolton Jr., USAF (Ret.), received the award posthumously.

Frank J. Beatty, Dawn A. Goldfein, and Athena J. Cody—spouses of Deborah Lee James, Gen. David L. Goldfein, and CMSAF James A. Cody, respectively—shared personal stories of resiliency and the issues they focus on in meetings with Air Force families around the world during the Air Force Town Hall.

AWARDING EDUCATION

Greg Ennis, an engineering teacher at James Clemens High School in Madison, Ala., was honored as the 32nd recipient of AFA's National Aerospace Teacher of the Year Award. Ennis distinguished himself by integrating aerospace into his classroom, school, and community. He teaches grades nine through 12. The award was in partnership with Rolls-Royce. For more on Ennis, see the Wingman section.

In addition, AFA honored Allen Stubblefield of Fullerton, Calif., as the CyberPatriot Coach of the Year. Christopher B. Walcutt, of Winter Park, Fla., was named CyberPatriot's Mentor of the Year. CyberPatriot, AFA's flagship STEM program, is the nation's largest youth cyber education program.

AFA BUSINESS

Forty-one state delegations with 185 authorized delegates attended the National Convention, where they conducted AFA business, including elections and program management. In concert with AFA's mission to educate, advocate, and support, the delegates approved a Statement of Policy for 2017, a document that represents AFA's position on topics of importance to the Total Force, veterans and retirees, and Air Force civilians, including key modernization and national security issues.

AFA ELECTIONS

In national officer elections, F. Whitten Peters of Washington, D.C., was elected for a first term as Chairman of the Board. F. Gavin MacAloon of Fairfax, Va., was elected for a first term as Vice Chairman of the Board for Field Operations. Richard B. Bundy

of Spotsylvania, Va., was elected for a second term as Vice Chairman of the board for Aerospace Education. John T. Brock of Oviedo, Fla., was elected for a second term as National Secretary. Steven R. Lundgren of Fairbanks, Alaska, was elected for a first term as National Treasurer.

In other elections, National Directors elected for a three-year term were: Kathleen M. McCool of San Antonio, Director at Large; Leonard R. Vernamonti of Clinton, Miss., Director at Large; and Joan Sell of Littleton, Colo., National Director, West Area. Terry J. Cox of Enid, Okla., was elected to fill the remaining year of a three-year term as National Director, Central Area.

Newly elected Region Presidents are: Tyler Johnson, Central East; William H. Striegel, Northwest; and Russell V. Lewey, South Central.

DOD AND FOREIGN AF LEADERS

Many Air Force leaders participated in the conference as presenters and session

Left: USAF Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, CMSAF James Cody, and AFA's outgoing Chairman of the Board Scott Van Cleef open the technology exposition at the Air, Space & Cyber Conference. Below left: Gen. John Hyten, commander of Air Force Space Command, greets SSgt. Shawn Briggs at the Air Force's booth at the expo. Below: Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, gives a keynote address at the conference.



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Photo by Brittany Palmer



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AFA Chairman Van Cleef moderates the senior leader panel at the conference. Seated are (l-r) Goldfein, Cody, Gen. Paul Selva, Gen. Joseph Lengyel, Gen. Seve Wilson, Gen. Hawk Carlisle, Gen. Robin Rand, Gen. John Hyten, Gen. Ellen Pawlikowski, Gen. Carlton Everhart, Gen. Terrence O'Shaughnessy, Lt. Gen. Darryl Roberson, Lt. Gen. Marshall Webb, Lt. Gen. Scott Rice, and Lt. Gen. Maryanne Miller.



Photo by Brittany Palmer



Staff photo by Heather Lewis



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Above: Second Lt. Joseph Mabbitt and cadets Kyle Gaumnitz, Katie Zamora, and Winston Crosby from the Citadel tour the expo. Above right: John Shaud, a former AFA executive director, and his wife, Beverly, took in the sights.

attendees. Numerous senior Air Force leaders also took part in media-only sessions. Senior Air Force, DOD, and government leadership speaking at the conference included Work, Dunford, James, Goldfein, and Cody. Other high-level leaders included Gen. Paul J. Selva, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Gen. Joseph L. Lengyel, chief of the National Guard Bureau; Gen. Herbert J. “Hawk” Carlisle, commander of Air Combat Command; Gen. Robin Rand, commander of Air Force Global Strike Command; Gen. John E. Hyten, commander of Air Force Space Command; Gen. Ellen M. Pawlikowski, commander of Air Force Materiel Command; Gen. Carlton D. Everhart II, commander of Air Mobility Command; Gen. Terrence J. O’Shaughnessy, commander of Pacific Air Forces; Gen. Tod D. Wolters, commander of US Air Forces in Europe; Gen. Stephen W. “Seve” Wilson, vice chief of staff; Lt. Gen. Darryl L. Roberson, commander of

Air Education and Training Command; Lt. Gen. Marshall B. Webb, commander of Air Force Special Operations Command; Lt. Gen. Leon Scott Rice, director of Air National Guard; and Lt. Gen. Maryanne Miller, chief of Air Force Reserve.

AFA hosted NATO Air Chiefs from various countries: Brig. Gen. Vladimir Avdiaj, Albanian air force commander; Lt. Gen. Michael Hood, commander, Royal Canadian Air Force; Brig. Gen. Miroslav Kovac, commander of the Croatian air force and air defense; Brig. Gen. Jaromír Šebesta, Czech air force commander; Maj. Gen. Max Arthur Lund Thorsoe Nielsen, chief of air staff, Defence Command Denmark; Col. Jaak Tarien, commander of Estonian air force; Lt. Gen. Christos Vaitsis, chief of Hellenic air force general staff; Col. Armand Saltups, commander, Latvian air force; Col. Audronis Navickas, commander of the Lithuanian air force; Lt. Gen. Dennis Luyt, commander, Royal Netherlands air force; Inspector General Tomasz Drewniak, inspector of the Polish air force; Gen. Manuel Teixeira Rolo, chief of staff, Portuguese air force; Maj. Gen. Laurian Anastasof, chief of the Romanian air force; Maj. Gen. Miroslav Korba, commander of the Slovak air force; Col.

Bojan Breclj, commander, 15th Wing, Slovenian armed forces; and Air Chief Marshal Stephen Hillier, chief of the air staff, Royal Air Force.

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AFA National Convention Parliamentarian was David T. “Buck” Buckwalter. Inspectors of Election were Robert M. Gehbauer (chairman), Kevin M. Grady, Bob George, and Paul H. Weseloh. Vance M. Clarke chaired the Credentials Committee, serving with Thomas W. Gwaltney, James M. Mungenast, and Karel J. Toohey. ★

Below left: Goldfein greets TSgt. Lindsey Green at the USAF booth. Below: Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work delivers an address on the Third Offset at the conference.



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