

THE LONGHORN AIRMAN



THE LONGHORN AIRMAN

18 SEPTEMBER 2011

VOLUME IV ISSUE 1



Cadets Thomas, Wang, Kamencic, Carrillo, Weathington, and Collins receive their "Remove Before Flight" cards. These cards bear the badge for each cadet's AFSC in the Air Force.

NEWSFLASH!!

Lt Temple passed Indoc enroute to becoming a CRO.
It's on to dive school now!

Air Force ROTC Detachment 825 Welcomes Former War Refugee as New Cadet Wing Commander

On August 21st, Air Force ROTC Detachment 825 welcomed its newest Cadet Wing Commander. Cadet Colonel Amela Kamencic, a civil engineering senior in UT's Cockrell School of Engineering, took command of the 95 cadets who are part of The University of Texas-Austin's Air Force ROTC program.

"It's truly an amazing story," said Detachment Commander, Colonel Jeff Staha, when referring to the path it took for Cadet Colonel Kamencic to reach this great milestone in her life. As a young child who saw her home destroyed before her family fled the war-torn country of Bosnia during the Bosnian War in the early 90s, Amela Kamencic's family would eventually migrate to the United States and finally to Pflugerville, Texas, a place they still proudly call home.

"She's the kind of cadet every Air Force ROTC Detachment wishes they had. She's smart, decisive, dependable, and already has a solid grasp on what we expect from our officers in today's Air Force," said Operations Flight Commander, Capt Scott Stout. "The benefits our program will reap from having 'Cheech' [her nickname] as our Commander will be felt for years to come."

Cadet Kamencic has a long list of achievements, culminating in her current position as Cadet Wing Commander. As a key member of the color guard, she has posted the American and Texas flags at Longhorn football games. During her sophomore year, Cadet Kamencic was the underclassman General Military Cadet Advisor (GMCA), and would later go on to serve as a Flight Commander. During her junior year, she revived the Detachment's drill team, known as "The Blue Falcons," which hadn't been active since 1997. Today, she proudly commands some of the nation's finest military cadets who are commonly referred to as Longhorn Airmen. "Welcome aboard Cheech! Aim High...Fly, Fight, Win!!!"

~Capt Scott Stout



Got an app for that?

Scan this with your smart phone and keep up with the Longhorn Airmen!

October	
4	AFSC Announcement & "Wet Down"
14	Dining-In
17-21	Warrior Week
25 & 27	President's Cup
November	
6	Paintball
10	Veteran's Day Retreat
19	Joint Color Guard
	UT vs. K-State
22	CW/CC Board
24-25	Thanksgiving Holiday
29	Awards Day
December	
1	Couch Story (LLAB)
3	County Line on the Lake
9	Senior Send-Off
16	Commissioning @ Capitol

THE LONGHORN AIRMAN

Finish the Fight

Today's schedule: eight hours of nonstop grappling, rolling, and ground and stand up fighting. Rinse and repeat for the next 12 days.

Welcome to Combatives.

I had the honor of being selected as one of the few cadets in the nation to attend the USAF Combatives instructor certification PDT along with some officers and enlisted personnel. Days consisted of learning, applying, and mastering Level 1 and Level 2 Combatives. Injuries occurred every day, including anything from a bloody lip to bruised ribs. We all learned to dig down deep inside ourselves and finish the fight no matter the pain we were experiencing.

For the first week, we had to fight for eight hours a day and master our techniques. At the end of week one, we were allowed to call out one person in the class for a classic one-on-one arena style battle. When it came to be my turn, I knew there was only person I wanted to fight. "Cheech vs. Chief!" I called out to a Chief Master Sergeant in our class who had a good amount of muscle against me. After our fight, I was the only cadet to receive a coin from the commandant of the Senior NCO Academy for my courage and intensity. Next, we were each tested in level one: ground fighting. Then, the moment we have all been waiting for – black instructor shirts. Being handed that shirt knowing I had embraced the sense of warrior ethos and am now a certified instructor is something I will always remember.

For the next week, we would instruct all of the cadets at Field Training Combatives and learn Level 2, stand up fighting, in the evening. Getting to instruct four Longhorn Airmen – Cadets Thomas, Moore, Paul, and Wawarzyniak – was one of the highlights of my summer. Toward the end of week two, we were certified in Level 2 combatives and my amazing ride was coming to an end. I will always remember the warrior ethos I learned in those 12 days and for the rest of my Air Force career, I stand proudly as a Level 1 and Level 2 Combatives Instructor.



Cadet Kamencic, Combatives Instructors, second from the right, second row

Field Training

0400 on June 30th might be the most interesting wakeup I have ever had. I thought my door was going to come off its hinges and my Cadet Training Assistant (CTA) was going to deafen us with his favorite whistle. Training Day (TD) 1 of Field Training at Maxwell AFB had begun! Everyone was scrambling to find their shoes, flashlights, towels, and camelbacks, then be outside in the unpleasant blinding light of the hallway ready for PT. We were expected to have this done in 20 seconds. Needless to say, this did not happen on the first day!

I had a less than favorable experience upon arrival. During the first 15 minutes of the in-processing line, I had misplaced my cover and an envelope containing my IDs, money, orders, and itinerary. Getting these items back was, to put it nicely, challenging.

That first day felt like a week. My flightmates and I made mistake after mistake as we settled into what would be our lives for the next 28 days. One of the most unexpected challenges of those first days was staying awake when sitting in briefings. Your mind and body are pushed so much more than usual, when it seems time to rest, it becomes a struggle keeping alert.

After the first couple days we were finally given time to interact with our flightmates and get to know each other. A huge goal of Field Training is to not only challenge cadets to become better leaders, but more effective followers and team players. There are all types of personalities in your flight. Some are impatient, some quiet, some too vocal, and many are nervous. This all becomes evident during group leadership problems, challenging obstacles, and when someone is called out of the blue to lead the flight. For me, it is a thrilling feeling to be thrown into an environment where people are depending on you to perform. For most, as I learned myself, adrenaline gets you going in those times, but the reason you keep going is because of your flight. The team, whether we felt like one or not, succeeded or failed together as one unit.

Aside from my roommates, I didn't know a soul the first 72 hours. At the end of field training, I knew everyone by their first and last name, school, home state, even some of their girlfriends (one guy's girlfriend seemed to write him twice a day). We had quite a bit of fun getting to know each other and found humor in the littlest things; after a week of not being able to smile outside my room, I had to find a release for it.

Eating was my most challenging event of the day. Having ten minutes to eat enough food to last 5, 6, or even 12 hours at a time seemed impossible at first. By the end I was a champ! I could eat two entrees, two sides, two dinner rolls (and yes, now I know how good they are!), and 24 ounces of Gatorade and water in under 8 minutes. It is truly amazing what your body can get used to.

The last two weeks or so of field training were at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center (JFTC) in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Every cadet was issued a paintball gun upon arrival to serve as their weapon for two weeks while we learned how the air force deploys. The training at JFTC was my favorite part of field training. TDs 17 and 22 were my best days at JFTC because I finally got to perform and lead my flight. Those chances are few and far between, and I learned to make the most of them.

I will never forget our times in the tent, making up games to pass the time, the unbelievable amounts of sweat that stained our ABUs, or developing the insane ability to drink over 300 ounces of water a day.

I will never forget the other 23 members of Alpha Flight. Every one of them changed me for the better and made field training the best four weeks of my summer. To everyone competing to go in the future, keep your head in the game and get excited about field training. It really is an unforgettable, challenging, once in a lifetime experience.

~Michael Thomas



Cadet Thomas, far right, and friends he will keep forever

THE LONGHORN AIRMAN

Special Tactics Officer Professional Development Training

Every American has heard of Navy Seals from the news, Green Berets from the “Rambo” movies, and Marines from their commercials showing individuals scaling mountains to fight giant monsters above fiery pits of lava. How many have ever wondered, “Does the Air Force have a special operations group like its sister services?” The answer: Yes, yes they do! The fact is the Air Force’s Special Ops are among the very elite, so secretive that they are commonly mistaken for their sister branches’ special ops. They are the brave men who serve as Combat Controllers (CCT) and Pararescue Men (PJs).

Having aspirations of becoming a Special Tactics Officer (STO), the officer side of CCT, I jumped on the opportunity to apply for the STO PDT, an internship of sorts offering the opportunity to spend a week with these Air Force “Supermen” at Hurlburt Field, FL. Of the 120 or so cadets from around the country who applied, only 30 were selected to attend. I got my orders, and my summer plans were made. During the middle of July I was to attend the STO PDT, the only PDT the Air Force offered this year. To say I was pretty psyched is an understatement.

On Sunday, July 10th, I arrived at the base to meet the 14 other lucky cadets attending the first session. Most of them, having just graduated Field Training, were pretty pumped to be there, but on several occasions I had to remind them to calm down; this wasn’t Field Training and no one was going to hunt them down for being a little slow to put their covers on, and no you’re not supposed to address the enlisted personnel as “Sir/Ma’am.”

The week was jammed-packed full of activities and informative briefings designed to give those attending a feel for how a STO trains and compiled all of the most hazardous duties the military has to offer (HALO jumps, Combat Dives, Search and Rescue missions, etc). Right off the bat (0600 Monday morning) we performed the STO Physical Fitness Test consisting of one minute of pull-ups, two minutes of sit-ups then push-ups, a timed three-mile run, and a timed 1500m swim. We got to experience what a three-hour ruck feels like, how to develop proper water confidence skills like drown-proofing, how to call in an air strike from an AC-130 on a target, plus much more. By the end of the week all of us were exhausted but completely satisfied with what we had learned and accomplished together.

My big take aways from this PDT? The people who volunteer for this job are by far the most humble and hardworking group of people ever; Hurlburt has the only buffet-style chow hall in the Air Force; STOs work with the best of the best from the Air Force, Navy, Army, and Marines; it actually rains...a *lot* in other parts of the country; and most importantly, my mind has never been more made up on what I want to do as an Air Force officer.

I want to be a STO.

~SeanZarsky



Cadet Zarsky, left, slogs through Santa Rosa Sound during the Hurlburt Field STO PDT

From JROTC to ROTC

During my freshmen year of high school, I was unsure whether I wanted a military lifestyle. In addition, I had never heard of JROTC until I saw it on the choice sheet. Since I liked flying and was slightly interested in the Air Force, I decided to join. My parents do not have a military background, but a few of my close family members do. I liked it right away, and I seemed to get the hang of it, and enjoyed wearing my uniform.

Through the years, I had leadership opportunities such as flight commander and rocketry team commander. I was also fortunate enough to take part in Retreat most days from my freshmen to junior year since I had JROTC the last period of the day. Along with teaching me how to be a leader and a follower, JROTC has been a great way for me to learn Air Force customs, drill, and other things that will carry on into ROTC. It has also been a great way to express my patriotism. I am now getting ready for my 3rd week of college. I mainly go to ACC, but come to the UT campus for Air Force Science classes. So far I have had a pretty good time getting adjusted; I look forward to being a part of DET-825.

~ Nathan Powell

Back to Field Training



Cadets Weathington and Machuca: “lucky” CTAs

With my various motivational techniques, some of which left me without a voice by day three, and ten long days of inspections, drilling, and PT-ing, Maxwell 2 was ready to move along to Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center (JFTC) in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. As a CTA, Camp Shelby allowed for a much needed increase in sleep and the opportunity to drive real Humvees on convoy missions and to play an insurgent or “Taji” citizen during the “exercise.” Although being a CTA had its times of frustration, extreme challenges on my bearing and eventually utter exhaustion, the reward of seeing the cadets of Papa Flight grow into their true potential and handing them their prop and wings really made the experience worthwhile. At the same, I was able to see the results of having high standards for yourself as well as your troops and also gain the experience of working closely with active duty officers and seeing the large operation of Field Training all come together.

If you can actually believe it, when given the opportunity this past summer to go through Field Training-AGAIN-I jumped at the chance! For Maxwell 2, Summer 2011, Papa Flight was under my watchful eye: CTA Weathington, or when under pressure CTA Weddington, Wurthington, Washington, Weatherly, or whichever version cadets managed while racking their brains for the proper verbage or greeting of the day. Other than correcting cadets on my name, my days (starting around 0330) consisted of enforcing the standards of the Field Training Manual and challenging Papa Flight to achieve the highest levels of self discipline, efficiency, and accountability.



~Chelsie Weathington

Miss Nan’s Grammar Tips

1. “Anyways,”* “supposably,” and “irregardless”* are not words. Don’t use them.
 2. Don’t rely on spell-check! Proof read a printed copy. Read it from the bottom to the top—you’ll catch more.
 3. “Myself” is always reflexive. Don’t use it as an object unless you are also the subject.
- *Some dictionaries will tell you these are words via popular usage. Don’t fall for it!

THE LONGHORN AIRMAN

First Impressions

In Austin, while completing my freshman year in mechanical engineering at the University of Texas, I had lots of fun adapting to my new college career. My classes were interesting and, as intended, enhanced my dream to become a pilot. I had enough time for two very demanding and regimented activities, UT Water Polo and UT Orchestra, besides other campus fun stuff. Nonetheless, even though I knew I was doing the right thing by studying hard and earning good grades, I felt the need to take a serious action toward fulfilling my dreams.

In joining AFROTC, there were no hesitations about what would be expected of me: commitment, leadership, and discipline. It is quickly becoming a whole new lifestyle (mainly a new sleep cycle) I must adapt to. However, I have joined Air Force ROTC because I need to challenge myself that much more.

I recently came across a quote by Mark Twain that erased doubts in my mind about such hard decisions: “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do...Explore. Dream. Discover.” It calls for an action to lead oneself to experience life, or as stated by that shoe company’s motto, “Just do it.”

Being a leader means being able to take well thought out risks and inspiring others to bring the best out in them, to help achieve their goals. And in doing so, bring out my best and achieve my goals. My experience as a new cadet in Air Force ROTC at Det 825 has been both enriching and motivating. The Corps environment has been extremely friendly. Since the detachment orientation, it is refreshing to be around a group of down-to-earth students, all of us new cadets hoping to accomplish similar goals. It took no persuasion at all to realize that one of the most valuable traits for us to gain is true camaraderie with one another. Getting up early in the morning for physical training is easier knowing there are new buddies doing the same. And by now, we have been briefed on the importance of core values to live by to ensure our success.

The Wing leaders have shown great patience in allowing us adequate time to learn proper military etiquette, and there is plenty to learn. I honestly think those of us with no prior military experience find it fun meeting at “the hangar” for extra help learning the ropes. Certainly a lot is to be expected from new cadets eventually, but I could not be happier the wing has made these first few weeks of a new semester a time to adapt. I keep my dream alive and remember the Air Force call to “Aim High.” My thoughts and my actual experience appear to be a good match thus far. Excited for all we will get to do this semester and later throughout college, I am very hopeful that all of us will have the distinct privilege of becoming officers in US Air Force.

~Benjamin Berezin



Fall 2011 Orientation



Col Staha joins Cadets Ramirez, Paige, Kamencic, and Burchett before the BYU-UT game. Hook 'em, Horns!



Another Weas...er, Stalford?! Philip Stalford, the youngest cadet, and Col Staha cut the Air Force birthday cake.

The Longhorn Airman is published four times a year; it is not an official publication of the USAF, AFROTC or The University of Texas at Austin; the opinions expressed in this publication do not represent any of these entities. No state or federal funds were used to print this newsletter. The Longhorn Airman was created with Adobe InDesign & PhotoShop software. Masthead photo U.S. Air Force photo by TSgt DeNoris Mickle; all other photos by Longhorn Airmen, unless otherwise noted. ~Nan Bradford-Reid, Editor