

THE LONGHORN AIRMAN

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Cadets Forkner, Cunningham, & Kamencic brave late night hours during the 24-hour POW-MIA run

Experiencing Egypt

Egypt, popularly dubbed ‘*Um Al-Dounia* (Mother of the World) by Arabic speakers, is a land rich with history, encompassing an array of cultures and a variety of peoples. I was blessed enough to be sent to Egypt by the Air Force this past summer for a Professional Development Training (PDT) Program. I joined a group of cadets from the Air Force Academy (surprisingly, they were semi-normal and fun!) to study Arabic for one month.

I often say, “The best way to understand a culture is to know the language” and what better way to learn the language than through immersion? We cadets stayed in the heart of Cairo, Egypt’s capital, and studied at a local language school. We were fortunate to have five local Egyptian instructors teach us six different areas of the language: vocabulary, reading, grammar, conversation, and the local dialect. We were in class for six hours every day, Sunday - Thursday.

The PDT program and the Academy did an excellent job of exposing us to Egyptian culture. We attended weekly lectures, learned how to cook a local dish, explored popular areas of the city, and learned how to intermingle and barter like the local citizens. We also visited historical sites and museums with a guide who relayed the areas’ stories and significance.

I am thankful for the opportunity I had to take part in the experience. I grew as a cadet, an individual, and a language-learner. Thank you, U.S. Air Force, for taking the lead among the military forces and encouraging and providing the chance for all Airmen to be culturally and linguistically equipped, and of course, for sending me to ‘*Um Al-Dounia*.

~Forever grateful, Jasmine S. Bogard

Slipping the Surlies...

SOAR is a ten-day glider training program at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). Cadets have the opportunity to fly 14 sorties and potentially solo. Classes run year-long for USAFA cadets but in the summer, some ROTC cadets get this exciting chance to be towed up to 9000 feet, released, and fly without engine over the foothills of the Rockies. The program is entirely student-run with cadre there only to supervise. On average, each student receives two or three sorties per day, getting pre-flight and post-flight briefs. The IPs are highly trained USAFA students; no experience is necessary for participants. Once a cadet completes ten sorties, memorizes the boldface checklists, and passes the pre-solo quiz, they receive their wings.

The first flight was a basic demo flight where the instructor controls the aircraft for a majority of the flight. However, everything was turned over to me for the second flight. At first, it was overwhelming to enter and fly the traffic pattern at altitude, run through landing checklists, make radio calls, and clear for other aircraft, all simultaneously. The IPs were always there for me if I got out of position and conditions were unsafe. By flight number seven, things started to click. The flight’s pace seemed slower and this allowed me to perform takeoffs, aerotows, and landings much better. Then, on the second to last training day, I went on my pre-solo flight and then, my solo.

For any wannabe pilot, the exposure to working a flight line, learning an aircraft, memorizing boldface, and flying by your own control is extremely valuable. Cruising along the tops of the Rockies amid some of the most beautiful terrain in the country can be fairly motivating, also. This experience has shown me that pilot is definitely the career for me; if selected, I cannot wait to go to pilot training. The only advice I have for future SOAR cadets is to bring a camera and don’t forget sunscreen (I forgot).

~Kevin Stout

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Week One as a Longhorn Airman

Freshman Orientation was my “Kick off” into AFROTC and introduction to The University of Texas at Austin. It was a great way to meet many of the GMC as well as the POC, but most importantly to meet and interact with my future wingmen. In-processing was a boring way to spend one of the last days of summer but getting issued my uniforms, eating delicious food at the Union, and undergoing team-building activities with my fellow freshman cadets was a great way to salvage the rest of the day. I was definitely looking forward to my first day of Aerospace Studies with Major Nguyen.

I enjoy the class since it doesn’t involve the entire detachment and there is more time to interact with my peers. I wasn’t sure what to expect at lead lab but it turned out to be a fun and relaxed lab much different from the aerospace class. The short lectures taught by cadets were very easy to follow and made the time fly by rapidly. After the first week of lead lab I couldn’t wait to start wearing blues again as I did in high school.

The worst of it all happens at about 0400. Waking up for PT isn’t the most motivating thing in the world. The first few times, PT was hard. After a summer of not running, the 20 minute run became dreadful. PT wasn’t easy, but was very rewarding at the end.

TGIF was a great way to wrap up a long week: there’s nothing like finding similarities with your peers and upperclassmen. I got to meet a few people I hadn’t previously met, as well as strengthen friendships with my peers. Being a freshman cadet is a lot of work balanced with a lot of fun. I know that the end result—commissioning into the United States Air Force—will be well worth it.

~ Tyler Maness



300s Hinojosa, Wang, Thomas, Carrillo, and Kim after contracting during Lead Lab (see “War Story” pg 4)



Col Bowman shows where the sign will go for DET 825’s Raptor on a stick in the hallway of Bellmont

Air Force is Family & F.U.N.

Got FUN? I do, and I found even more in a rather surprising place: the United States Air Force! This summer I had the privilege of going to Offutt AFB, NE for two weeks in June to participate in Professional Development Training. Prior to my PDT, I viewed the USAF as an elite organization, always serious about getting the job done to perfection, leaving no room for one of my personal core values: always have fun! However, my PDT provided ample opportunity to realize that the Air Force also places a large emphasis on having fun, and it’s possible to enjoy oneself and accomplish the mission at the same time!

Besides shadowing a couple communications officers (the only maybe not fun part), I got to tour a RC-135, have lunch with the 55th Wing Commander—Gen Shanahan—rifle through the armory, shoot some machine guns (M240b), run for my life from a Security Forces dog that almost bit my hand off, and practice water survival training with some SERE sergeants. I would have never suspected that the adventure and opportunity the USAF offers could be so fun! But it’s not just the activities or missions that make the USAF enjoyable; it’s the people and relationships that bring greatness to the Air Force.

Over the course of my PDT, I became a passionate believer that the USAF is family. It started with SSgt Gomez, the NCO assigned to drive our bus, help us with paper work, and guide all 24 of us cadets around the base. During the course of our first conversation, he asked a few of us the names of the cadre at our detachments, knowing by name some of the



Former POW, Capt Raymond L. McKee, Sr. cuts an Air Force Birthday cake with the youngest cadet, Josh Pitel. Capt McKee, an Army Air Force veteran, served as a B-17 Bombardier with the 429th Bomb SQDN in Italy during World War II. March 18, 1944, Capt McKee’s aircraft was shot down over Trieste. He bailed out & was captured by German SS. Wounded & brutally beaten, he remained a POW until his camp was overrun by the Soviets in 1945. Thanks to a radio message sent out to U.S. forces, Gen Jimmy Doolittle intervened. The POWs were flown to Le Havre, France and freedom.

NCOs at A&M, UF, Clemson, and a few other schools. I was shocked at first, but began to realize how tight knit the Air Force community really is—truly family. Additionally, I spent two weeks with 23 other AFROTC cadets, all from different schools. I was the only one representing the Longhorn Airmen. Despite our different backgrounds, we found family with each other.

After two weeks of getting to know and spend quality time with each other, several cadets voiced their enthusiasm at joining the USAF, knowing they’d be working with some of the greatest people on the face of the earth. Before the PDT, per the confession of different individual cadets, a few had decided



Cadet Ingels, left, prepares for water survival training with an Aggie fellow-trainee

they wanted to quit ROTC and not actually commission into the Air Force. But in light of meeting and getting to know other honorable people in a family-style community, a unanimous decision to commission arose. After my experiences at this PDT, I eagerly look forward to continuing to have fun with my Air Force family!

~Josh Ingels

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~Nan Bradford-Reid, Editor

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New Cadet Spaces



East wall of the Weatherall Classroom, Sanchez 464



Northwest corner of SZB 464



Annie Weatherall memorial plaques, rt, & Lt Gen Eickmann memorabilia

It Starts Here
Cadets rap the star
when leaving SZB 464



Southwest corner of SZB 464-the POW-MIA Return with Honor Wall, Payne Exhibit, & F-16



Cadets Nguyen and Kostrzewa study in the Hangar-Bellmont 614

Win As One

Whistles and air horns blowing, doors being kicked, CTAs screaming “GET UP!” Just another summer morning at Maxwell AFB. Waking up at 0400 seems like it would be tough, but with unpleasant wakeup calls we received, India Flight at Maxwell 2 was ready for PT in 30 seconds. Sleeping in our PTUs and always having our hydration packs and flashlights within arm’s reach, no one had a second to stop and think about how tired they were because we were constantly moving at the “speed of excellence.” And this sense of urgency did not let up for the duration of our encampment.

TD-1 at Maxwell was certainly a shock for most cadets; a group of Military Training Instructors (MTIs) were waiting for us when we got off the bus to “welcome” us to our training. Needless to say, there was some serious anxiety everyone on the bus was feeling. After in-processing, it was off to our new homes for the next few weeks.

Once we got to our rooms, the bonds between our new roommates began to form immediately, but as a flight we were just 24 people who marched around together for the first few days. However, it didn’t take long before everyone’s personality began to appear during GLPs and academic sessions. We began to learn who was strong in what areas and how we could all work together as a flight to maximize our potential as a whole, rather than doing everything individually.

PT, reveille, breakfast, hygiene, academics, lunch, briefings, academics, combatives, dinner, retreat, flight commander time, lights out, rinse, repeat. For the first 12 days of Field Training, the routine stayed fairly consistent without a second to spare. We began to countdown our time at FT not by days, but by meals. “Only an hour til dinner, then the day’s nearly over,” was said more than once by my flight mates. Eventually, everything became a blur because we were constantly moving and going somewhere else; we couldn’t distinguish the differences between days anymore.

However, there were a few fun events that broke up the monotony of being in-garrison. We were taken to the gun range to qualify on the M-9, which was amazing because not only were we getting to fire a weapon, we weren’t having to sit in “the Boyd” and using every ounce of energy we had just to keep our eyelids open during another briefing. Another activity to get our blood flowing was combatives, a



Capt John E. Simpson Library-west wall and northeast corner, Belmont 618E



Cadet Stout, right, with wingmen he met at Field Training, Air Force Family.

program that taught us basic military fighting techniques that would be used in hand-to-hand combat.

After 12 days at Maxwell, Max 2 hopped on C-130s for part two of Field Training, expeditionary Ops. This is what most people consider “the fun part” of FT. We left the drab classrooms of Maxwell for the tents and buildings without air conditioning at Camp Shelby in Mississippi for training in a simulated deployment. Here we learned how to clear rooms, do tactical road marches to avoid being ambushed, and how to properly execute convoys in hostile environments, among many other things. However, the best part at Camp Shelby was carrying around a paintball gun 24/7 (that includes to the showers and latrines) and being able to shoot all of those CTAs who have been screaming at us for the past few weeks.

Ops at Camp Shelby also allowed us to bond more as a flight. Cadets who had been quiet in-garrison were now outspoken and breaking out of their shell. As a flight, we could rely on one another and the trust that had been built up to this point allowed us to perform at a much higher level than when we first stepped off those buses on TD-1. We were no longer “gaggle India” as our CTA liked to call us, we were a team working together to accomplish our mission; we were India Flight.

Field Training was certainly an experience I will never forget and really opened my eyes about how to work with different personalities and leadership styles so that a group of individuals can become a team. It allowed me to become a better leader, as well as a better follower and wingman. After all, as my FTU commander constantly reminded Max 2, we “fight as ONE and win as ONE.”

~Brandon Stout



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Cdt Cunningham, left, grapples with an instructor at combatives training, Maxwell AFB

Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting...

I can break your arm 5 ways. No really, I can! Better yet, I can teach you how to do it. This summer, I had the privilege of attending the Cadet Combatives Course at Maxwell AFB, Alabama; one of the best experiences I have had in ROTC. I had the wonderful opportunity to learn and then instruct others in the techniques of a kind of submission grappling called Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ). I learned how to get the dominant position in a fight, and to win reliably.

Those of us who went through the program are now basic instructors in USAF Combatives, a qualification we will carry for the rest of our lives. More importantly, I got to experience, in a very real way, what it means to be a warrior and how to finish the fight. I was beaten by people smaller than I, and I beat people who were larger. We all learned how to fight smart and how to teach others the confidence and determination we had acquired.

The days were mentally and physically challenging, but never dull and always rewarding. All in all, it's just one more awesome thing you can do as a Longhorn Airman!
~David Cunningham

September Events

25—Det 825 Honor Guard, UCLA at home

October Events

14 & 15—Cadet PFAs

15—Dining-In Camp Mabry

19 & 21—Warrior Week

22-23—Parent/Alumni Weekend

25-29—President's Cup

November Events

7—Paintball

11—Veteran's Day Retreat, UT Tower

13—Joint Honor Guard OK State at home

25-27—Thanksgiving Holiday

30—Awards Day

December Events

2—Senior Send-Off

3—Salt Lick

17—Commissioning

Keep up with the Longhorn Airmen at www.det825.org/



TSgt Hall receives a silver dollar from newly-minted 2Lt Kevin O'Brien, August 17

War Story—What Would You Do?

By An Anonymous Troglodyte

Today is the day. After all the hard work as a GMC and excelling at field training, I am officially entering the Professional Officer Corps (caveman's note: "excelling" means single-digit finisher, no double digits for any Longhorn Airmen this year...standard). Today, at 1300...precisely, the boss will administer the oath of enlistment: "I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic..." Man, I am stoked. I am feeling pretty full of myself. I'm drying off from a shower (lookin' good is a full-time job), check my watch iPhone. It's 1240. Plenty of time, just got to get dressed and walk five minutes to Sanchez. No sweat. Then it happens...

I can't find my cover. I check every where, and I just don't have it. I remember now: my hat's in my backpack. Of course, this isn't helpful at all, since I left my backpack unattended and someone took it back to the hangar for me (some well-intentioned wingman, no doubt). I have only one resource: my stalwart wingman. I am decisive. I tell my wingman, "find my cover." Never mind that I just sent him out single ship. I now sit and wait. It's 1242. Lot's of time. No sweat.

My iPhone reads 1255, and OK, I begin to sweat. No wingman, no cover. In five minutes, it will be 1300...precisely. I know what I did next, but what would you do?

Words of the Wing King

This semester, every Longhorn Airmen has something to look forward to. For our new cadets, there is a lot to ingest: warrior knowledge, essential leadership skills, camaraderie, and, most importantly, tradition. Current cadets have the privilege of mentoring our newest Longhorn Airmen, preserving our heritage, and establishing new traditions as we populate the halls of Belmont and Sanchez. As the Wing Commander, I am both proud and excited to be a part of the leadership that claims Belmont as the new home of the Longhorn Airmen.



As if seeing our F-22 "in flight" as soon as we get off the elevators isn't enough, there are tons of opportunities this semester to learn, develop, and of course, have fun! We honored our POW/MIAs in the annual twenty-four hour run, will eat the best barbeque Austin has to offer, play paintball, and hold the first annual Parent-Alumni Weekend.

So, whether you are counting down in the double digits until commissioning or it's your first semester here and you're still wondering what it takes to be a Longhorn Airman, get ready for an exciting year! Just remember, keep academics first and everything else will fall in place!

~James Forkner

Winner!

AS 200 Shanae Jefferies correctly identified Sir Winston Churchill as the person who said "The price of greatness is responsibility."



2LTs Hanson, Lee, DiPaola, Bull, and Cameron commissioned May 21st.