

Academy celebrates Acceptance Day, Convocation for Class of '25



C1C Benjamin Miller, Demons Echo Flight commander, leads a group of fourth class cadets to cite the honor oath during the U.S. Air Force Academy's Acceptance Day ceremony at Stillman Parade Field, Aug. 6. Acceptance Day marks the end of basic cadet training for freshmen cadets who also receive their fourth-class shoulder boards to signify their acceptance into the cadet wing. (U.S. Air Force photo by Josh Armstrong)

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U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. – Scores of freshmen cadets were welcomed into the class of '25 during the school's annual Acceptance Day event, August 6. Acceptance Day marks the end of basic cadet training, six weeks of mental, physical and military training. During the ceremony at Stillman Parade Field, the entire cadet wing marched in parade formation and the freshmen received their fourth-class shoulder boards, signifying their acceptance into the cadet wing.

Successfully completing BCT is one of the first steps cadets take toward earning a commission as an Air or Space force officer.

Retired Brig. Gen. Duane Lodrige, a 1975 Academy graduate and member of the class of '25's "Legacy Class" spoke to the cadets during the ceremony. Each graduating class is assigned a Legacy Class based on 50 years from the class date.

Lodrige congratulated the freshmen and advised them to “aim high in everything you do.”

“Always strive for excellence,” he said.

Lodrige admitted the Academy’s academic and military challenges can seem overwhelming at times, but advised the class of ’25 to place its trust in the senior cadets.

“The same upperclassmen who made my life miserable were always looking after me,” he said.

Despite the challenges, the Air Force and graduates of the Academy form a family that last a lifetime, Lodrige said.

“By far, the greatest gift will be the depth of the friendships you will form with your classmates,” he said.



A fourth-class cadet receives their shoulder board during the U.S. Air Force Academy’s Acceptance Day ceremony at Stillman Parade Field, Aug. 6. Acceptance Day marks the end of basic cadet training for freshmen cadets who also receive their fourth-class shoulder boards to signify their acceptance into the cadet wing. (U.S. Air Force photo by Trevor Cokley)

Convocation

Brigadier Gen. Linell Letendre, the Academy's dean, hosted a convocation after the Acceptance Day Parade to welcome the class of '25 to their first academic semester at the Academy.

"At the Academy, we will expose you to a vast array of concepts," Letendre said. "This is not about teaching you what to think, this is about teaching you how to think. Letendre said the Academy's curriculum aligns with the school's character and leadership framework to promote living honorably in any circumstance.

"You will be asked challenging questions and we will challenge your assumptions," she said. "This is not about teaching the latest theory of the day. Rather, our obligation is to equip you with a toolkit of lenses through which to analyze future conflicts or crises."

This is the third year convocation, an academic ceremony to mark the beginning of the academic year, has occurred. The Academy's academic year began Aug. 9.



Brig. Gen. Linell Letendre, U.S. Air Force Academy Dean of the Faculty, offers her remarks to onlookers at Stillman Parade Field during Convocation, Aug. 6. Convocation is an academic ceremony to mark the beginning of the Academy's academic year. (U.S. Air Force photo by Trevor Cokley)