

Air Force Admissions Liaison Officer Program

Program holds annual meeting at 183rd Fighter Wing

by Lt. Col. James Bentley
183rd Logistics Commander

In May 2009 the Illinois chapter of the Air Force Admissions Liaison Officer Program held its annual meeting at the 183rd Fighter Wing. The Admissions Liaison Officer (ALO) program is an organization of Air Force officers who recruit, interview, evaluate, and mentor candidates for the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) and applicants for Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) scholarship programs. ALOs also serve as Air Force team recruiters, directing individuals to Non-Prior Service (NPS), AF Reserve, and Air National Guard recruiters. There are currently 63 Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard and retired officers serving in the Illinois ALO program which are part of the overall ALO force that serves in all 50 states and around the world. ALOs are critical to the USAFA admissions process and to AFROTC.

The job of an ALO is to create and nurture an initial interest in the Air Force, sell the Air Force well, and keep that “spark of commitment to country and service” burning in the top fifteen percent of the nation’s high school students. ALOs, as primary Air Force representatives in our communities, must know all about the Air Force Academy and ROTC programs to be effective recruiters.

Each ALO is responsible for informing local potential candidates, parents, civic leaders, high school counselors, administrators, congressional staffers, etc., about Air Force officer career opportunities. They meet with students and parents individually as well as in groups to inform them about opportunities, admissions requirements, and application procedures. They counsel and mentor candidates throughout the admissions and scholarship application processes. When



Members of the Illinois chapter of the Air Force Admissions Liaison Officer Program pose for a photo during its annual meeting held at the 183rd Fighter Wing in May 2009. (Photo submitted by Lt. Col. James Bentley)

candidates enter the Academy or AFROTC programs, they maintain contact and support with them through graduation and beyond.

ALOs represent the Air Force at college nights, science fairs, service clubs, Parents’ Club meetings, congressional events, high school awards ceremonies, and other similar public activities. Occasionally, ALOs speak on radio, TV, and before civic groups to explain the Academy and AFROTC to the public. They sponsor cadets in public speaking appearances and counseling sessions when they are home on leave from the Academy and AFROTC. They are also called upon to help with arrangements for visiting Academy representatives.

In addition, ALOs recommend educators for the Educator Orientation program. This program brings teachers and counselors to the Academy and gives them a better understanding of USAFA’s mission and the type of person who has the potential to succeed as a cadet.

ALOs are key part of both the USAFA and ROTC admissions programs and their evaluation of potential officer candidates is vital to the selection process. The officers that are currently serving as ALOs from the 183rd are Col. Stephen Baggerly, Col. Ricky Yoder, Lt. Col. James Bentley, Major Kevin Elbrecht and Capt. Steve Simon.



Independence Day - July 4th