



# The Accelerator:

## AFROTC Det 045 Monthly Newsletter

### September 2020



### MEET THE CADRE: Lt Col Joshua S. Sullivan

By C/3C Jun



Lieutenant Colonel Sullivan is the new AFROTC Detachment 045 Commander. He was commissioned after graduating from the United States Air Force Academy.

Listed below are questions answered by Lt Col Sullivan:

#### **Q: How did you get interested in joining the Air Force?**

*“As a young man entering into my junior year of high school, I knew nothing about the military. I was playing football and baseball at the time, so I assumed I’d end up at some college playing sports. Like most kids, my plans didn’t extend that far in front of what I could see. Fortunately, my mother and grandmother played a major role in helping me look into the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. With nothing to lose, I thought I’d begin the process of admission.*

*Throughout the interviews and paperwork, the gravity of the decision I was making never really sank in until stepping off the bus into basic training with bleach blonde hair (the whole baseball team dyed their hair for the playoffs a few weeks earlier) and a borrowed Naval Academy shirt from my buddy (because he promised to wear an AF Academy shirt on his first day at the Naval Academy). Needless to say, I drew a lot of attention and found out later my buddy never held up his end of the bargain. Through the ups and downs, I’ve loved it ever since!”*

#### **Q: What and where was your previous assignment?**

*“My previous assignment was AC-130W evaluator pilot and Deputy Director of Air Force Special Operations Command Operations Training Division at beautiful Hurlburt Field, FL.”*

#### **Q: What do you like to do in your free time?**

*“I love hanging out with my family, camping (or glamping in our camper), playing guitar and harmonica, and staying in shape. I also intend to pick up fly fishing again given our proximity to some great terrain and rivers. I’m also a collector of any and all dad joke material; nothing’s too corny.”*

### **Q: Where would you like to be after this assignment?**

*“Heather (my wife) and I haven't quite decided what's next as we've just started this adventure, but we are keeping as many options open as possible. My current focus is pouring into my family, the detachment, and the community around me. Heather and I will serve [at least] 21 years to allow our son to graduate from the same high school he started from here in San Jose, then we'll make a decision on retiring or continuing this AF adventure to another duty assignment.”*

### **Q: Any memories from Sept 11, 2001?**

*“I was beginning my sophomore year at USAFA on Sept 11, 2001. All doors in the hallway were swung open as we had just finished room inspections and most cadets were getting ready to walk to breakfast at Mitchell Hall. Cadets had desktops in each room with the ability to get local TV channels, and I can distinctly remember my buddies and I being stopped in our tracks catching the reruns of the first plane hitting the World Trade Center. We couldn't believe it. We were soon rushed off to breakfast where there was a reverent hush over the crowd of 4000 cadets, when our Commandant, then Brigadier General Mark Welsh, spoke to us about what was going on. As I listened to the uncertainty in his voice, I realized that the officers over us, the leaders, faculty, and cadre, were also trying to process what had happened, deal with the unknowns, and make decisions based on the information they had. The profession I had decided upon had suddenly become very real. That day in class was less about objectives, and more about learning that the military community is a family built upon human relationships as I listened to officers and professors speak of, and receive news about friends they had at the Pentagon and in NYC. It's a day I'll never forget. I recently had the chance to travel to NYC with my family to visit the Sep 11 museum. We had the honor of our tour being led by a mother of one of the victims in the WTC that day. It was a sobering reminder of the evil perpetrated that day and the heroes that gave their lives to save others.”*

## **MEET SOME OF THE NEW POCs**

By C/3C Caron and C/3C Zakravsky

With our new hybrid setting, both GMC and POC are learning to adapt. Alpha Flight decided to reach out to some of the new POCs and gain their experience and perspective. C/2d Lt Flores and C/2d Lt Kan were excited to give their advice and views to the GMC Cadets and to gain a better understanding of how the adaptation would be.



### **Q: How was your Field Training experience? Do you wish you could do anything differently?**

**C/2d Lt Flores:** *“Although it's the most fun I never want to have again, my field training experience was amazing. You get the opportunity to not only challenge yourself but learn from amazing diverse individuals and get an insight into how their detachments are run. Looking back, I know I did everything to the best of my ability so the only thing I would change, something out of my control, would be not getting my finger caught and injured.”*

**Q: In a few sentences, how would you describe the transition becoming a POC?**

**C/2d Lt Flores:** *“For me, the transition to POC was a quick 180. You go from a predominantly followership position to a leadership position. Especially as an IMT FLT/CC, you cannot afford to be in the background. You have to be out there to lead your cadets.”*

**Q: Do you have any advice for new cadets in the program? (100s/250s)**

**C/2d Lt Flores:** *“My advice to the new cadets would be to volunteer every chance they get at the detachment. The end goal for GMC is to get sent to field training, so the more they know about themselves as a leader the better.”*

**C/2d Lt Kan:** *“Be yourself, Look out for your wingman, take every opportunity to learn, do not be afraid to make mistakes because that's how we learn, put some time into self reflection and evaluation, find the balance and do not burn yourself out. For 250s, this year will be challenging but do not give up. Know what you want and go for it.”*



*“Be stubborn about your dream but flexible in your methods.” - Anonymous.*

**Q: What leadership qualities would you like to see more often in GMC Cadets?**

**C/2d Lt Flores:** *“Leadership qualities that I would like to see more often in GMC cadets are initiative and a willingness to accept mistakes and learn from them.”*

**C/2d Lt Kan:** *“Everyone has their own leadership styles. Learn from other people's leadership styles to improve and adjust your*

*own styles. Know yourself and just be yourself.”*

**How was your Field Training experience? Is there anything you would like to emphasize upon for FTP cadets?**

**C/2d Lt Kan:** *“My Field Training experience was great. I learned a lot about the importance of teamwork and leadership skills. Listen to other cadets and be respectful. It is okay if your suggestions get denied; It is completely fine and do not take it personally. The key to be successful in FT is to take care of your wingman. I will say attending FT is mandatory for those who want to be a Flight commander to train the future cadets, also, try your best in FT and show them what you got!”*

**With many external factors, like COVID and our hybrid learning, what advice would you give to FTP cadets in the program?**

**C/2d Lt Kan:** *“With many external factors, like COVID and our hybrid learning, my advice to FTP cadets in the program is to be flexible and creative!!! Motive each other! I know it is going to be hard. It*

is the same for POC as well, but we have been adapting the situation and keep moving forward. We never stop and nothing can stop us! AIR POWER!”

**Is there any valuable experience that you are learning/gaining from being a brand new POC Cadet?**

C/2d Lt Kan: “Keep learning! Understand you are not perfect and you will never be perfect. Perfection is the standard, excellence is tolerated. Never be that person who thinks they know everything after coming back from FT.”

**Flight Names and Shields**

By C/3C Meas and C/3C Cortez

Even though the COVID lockdown is still in effect, it is not enough to prevent the flights of Detachment 045 from showing off their flight shields and flight spirit. On 18 September 2020 the flights were able to present their flight names, shields, and stories on the Air Force’s Birthday. All the flight shields were vibrant, colorful and had their own personality. The stories were just as creative, with many clever lines thrown in by the cadets. Creativity from the cadets was not limited despite it being an online LLAB, if anything, it showed how creative our cadets really are.



The IMT flights were the Bravo Boomers, followed by the Charlie Chinooks. The Bravo Boomers shield reflected air superiority with fighter jets showing off their strength. Then we have the Charlie Chinooks, with a “doge” in the pilot’s seat. Do not forget that they’ve got our six.



FTP looked to bring out their own game, starting with the Alpha Alligators, which featured a very fierce looking alligator in its natural habitat, a swamp- specifically, their swamp (angry ogre not included). This was followed by the Delta Dawgs- please note, not to be confused with the “Delta Dogs”. It seems they took heavy inspiration from Cerberus, so extra points for Greek mythology! Echo flight hit back with the very intimidating name of the



Echo Eggs, which features a rather eggscellent drawing of what appears to be egg-to-egg combat, sunny side up no less. This must mean their aircraft were never *scrambled* into combat.



Last, but most definitely not least, comes the POC flight in the form of the Zulu Zoomers! Their flight

shield is a sarcastic view of the circumstances we now find ourselves in, as we can all officially be known as “zoomers”. However, does this put them in direct opposition to the Bravo Boomers? No one really knows, but you’d imagine the roles would be reversed, considering their seniority.

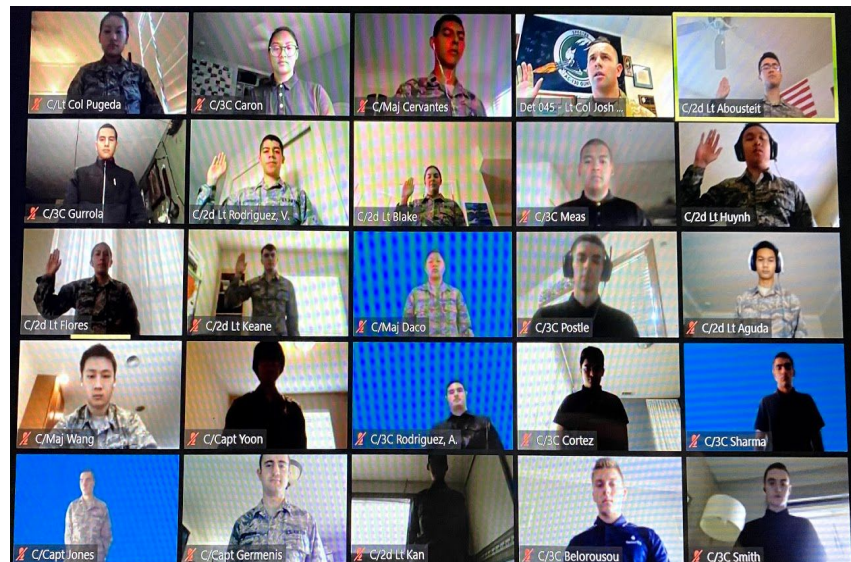
Charlie Flight had the honor of winning the best flight shield, and Delta came out on top with a ravishing story. While we did not have the opportunity to see this event unfold in-person, as per tradition, the effort put into the individual shields, their associated stories, and warrior pride was never left behind.

## **How is ROTC going to be for Fall 2020?**

By C/3C Anaya & C/3C DelVecchio

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there are many unknowns that await all of us going forward this Fall semester. San Jose State and Detachment 045, along with the neighboring universities and colleges, are taking the proper precautions, in accordance with CDC recommendations, to ensure that we all as a community do our best to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 most universities and colleges have moved to a fully online or hybrid format to limit in-person contact as much as possible.

Here at the detachment, we have adopted a hybrid format where our Aerospace Studies classes are completely online and a few of our LLAB and PT days are in-person (about 6 total). Attending in-person days is critical, yet attending these in-person meetings has been extremely difficult for crosstown cadets due to carpool restrictions. As a result, many of those who depend on carpools and grouping up with others for a ride share are now tasked with finding a way to San Jose on their own as social distancing restrictions make it almost impossible for carpools to be done safely. Not only are crosstown cadets affected more significantly than others, FTP cadets who are forced to be 100% online due to their location face the daunting task of making an impact on the detachment while never setting foot in San Jose. FTP year is an important one and not being able to be present to make your voice heard due to your situation is not a situation anyone would wish for. However, the detachment has given those online cadets



numerous options to make their voice heard so it is important to get involved and get your name out there during these trying times. Remember to stay strong Detachment 045, it has been a hard year for many of us, but let's not forget that COVID-19 and the lockdown is temporary; it's just another hurdle and a test of our dedication and will to be an officer of the U.S. Space Force or U.S. Air Force.

## **Honoring the 19th Anniversary of 9/11**

By C/3C Vano

As a cohort, from Extended cadets to 100s, we are the last group to be born before the life-altering day of September 11th, 2001. That historic and unprecedented day in America's history left a mark in the hearts of all Americans. To honor and remember this event, the 200 class watched a video that the Air Force media put together. The video was heart-wrenching and called us all to remember why we strive to serve this great nation. In class, Captain Tasso reminded us that when we begin our service, many of those around us will have started their Air Force career because of 9/11. All of us have joined ROTC for different reasons, but regardless of the why, we all have committed ourselves to serving this greater purpose. This greater purpose that prevents this country from reliving a time like 9/11. The hurt of 9/11 still runs deep in the veins of this country, but as future officers we must take the time to honor the lives lost and remember the greater purpose of serving our country that brings us together.



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