

# Alumni Newsletter

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
AFROTC DETACHMENT 270

Spring Semester 2025



## Commander's Farewell and Semester Review

Cadets, Alumni, and Parents,

It has truly been an honor serving as Commander of Kansas State University's AFROTC Detachment 270. The last three years here in Manhattan have been immensely rewarding and I'm so thankful to my team and the cadets for what they've taught me in that time. Our cadets have learned a great deal this year about communication, team work, planning, problem-solving, and innovation. I know they will build on that with the new Commander and team in the next school year.

This May, we watched as 12 cadets completed their program and were commissioned into the United States Air Force as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants. I am incredibly proud of the work that these 12 students put into ensuring the next generation of cadets are prepared for the challenges ahead of them. Major Brian Tabares, Captain

Patrick Whaley and Technical Sergeant Corey Perez have injected hundreds of hours into developing a program that is comprehensive and forward-thinking, driving real-world examples and experiences into training. As Major Tabares leaves the Air Force, we wish him well in his next adventure.

Thank you all for the kind words as I move into the next chapter of my career. We plan to stay in Manhattan as it has truly become home to our family. God bless and God speed.

Very Respectfully,

Brian J. Witthoef  
Lt Col, USAF Commander,  
AFROTC Detachment 270

### In this newsletter you can expect:

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## Operation Iron Vortex

BY CADET EMILY LOVE

From 25-26 April 2025, cadets from AFROTC Detachment 270 participated in a comprehensive Field Training Exercise (FTX) known as Operation Iron Vortex, held at Fort Riley. This capstone event simulated a real-world deployed environment and was the culmination of a semester-long fictional scenario designed to challenge cadets in a wide range of operational skills. Over the course of the exercise, cadets engaged with role-players portraying local groups, requiring them to apply negotiation tactics, peacekeeping strategies, and cultural awareness. Other core training activities included land navigation, Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC), base building and defense, and room clearing procedures - all aimed at preparing cadets for the dynamic and unpredictable nature of deployed operations.

The purpose of Operation Iron Vortex was to immerse cadets into a high-pressure, realistic training environment that tested their leadership, adaptability, and teamwork under stress. With limited sleep and continuous interactions throughout the night, cadets were pushed to their mental and physical limits. The exercise emphasized mission planning, communication, and decision-making in ambiguous situations, mirroring the complexities of modern military deployments. By simulating a full-scale operation, this FTX provided a critical opportunity for cadets to translate classroom instruction into hands-on leadership experience, preparing them for the challenges they may face as future officers in the United States Air Force.



## Active Violence Training

BY CADET DIETHER LEACH

"On March 06, 2025, our detachment had the privilege of participating in an Active Violence Training session led by the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI). The training was designed to equip our cadets with the skills and knowledge necessary to respond effectively to high-pressure, violent situations. Through a combination of an informative ALICE briefing and realistic, hands-on simulations, we learned strategies for identifying potential threats, maintaining composure during a crisis, and taking quick, decisive actions to ensure safety. Additionally, we applied first aid techniques during simulated scenarios, reinforcing the importance of providing immediate care in emergency situations. This experience not only emphasized the need for preparation in unforeseen challenges but also gave our cadets a greater sense of confidence and readiness in handling difficult situations."





## Commissioning Spring 2025

BY MELISSA WINKEL, OFFICE SPECIALIST III

On 16 May 2025 Air Force ROTC Detachment 270 held its 2025 Spring Commissioning Ceremony where 12 Kansas State University cadets and three Washburn University cadets were commissioned as officers into the United States Air Force. The guest speaker was K-State Salina Aviation Department Head, Lieutenant Colonel Tysen "Tyni" Pina (Ret). Cadets followed a long tradition by taking the Oath of Office, pinning of the insignia, and the Silver Dollar Salute, and ending with the

singing of the Air Force Song. During the ceremony Cadet Anne Langford was awarded the distinguished graduate award during the ceremony.

The Commissioning cadets were as follows: Dr. Dean Michael Aguou, Ph.D, Bachelor of science in Nursing; David Bartlett, Bachelor of Science in Professional Aviation and Minor in Aviation Safety; Brody Boehm, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering; Shelby Clinton, Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering; Sierra Creek, Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Bachelor of Science in Political Science; Evan Drake, Bachelor of Science in History; Lily Galimba, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering; Stephanie Hackett, Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Drew Holliday, Master and Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering; Ann Langford, Bachelor of Arts in History; Cameron Maltz, Bachelor of Science in Construction Science and Management; Lydia Payne, Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Deirdre Poague, Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering; Riley Shelton, Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering; Zach Shepard, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering.

## Pass In Review

BY CADET DESHOAN MCCLAURIN

In the military, the pass and review process is essential for upholding discipline, operational readiness, and unit cohesion. As cadets begin their journey in the world's greatest Air Force, this formal inspection enables commanders to assess cadets and ensure that standards are upheld. With the arrival of a new Cadet Wing Commander, Cadet Jay Soykan, and Deputy Commander, Ian O'Rourke, it is crucial for them to start strong. By emphasizing accountability and meticulous attention to detail, pass and review cultivates a culture of excellence and professionalism within the cadet corps. Additionally, it provides leadership with a vital opportunity to acknowledge achievements and address areas for improvement, reinforcing the significance of teamwork and preparedness.



## Drop Night 2025

BY MELISSA WINKEL, OFFICE SPECIALIST III

On 24 April 2025, Detachment 270 celebrated with 10 of their fellow cadets who discovered what their future jobs would be with the United States Air Force during Spring 2025 Drop Night . The list of cadets and assignments included: Pilot - Cadets Henry Bash, John Goodner, Bruce Reinhard, and Karan Shah; Weather and Environmental Sciences Officer - Cadet Maddy Mairs; Intelligence Officer - Cadets Emily Love, Ian O'Rourke, and Joe Sanchez; Developmental/Electrical Engineer - Dallas Barton. Combat Systems Officer - Clay Jansson.



## Dining Out 2025

BY CADET SIERRA CREEK

On April 12th, 2025, Kansas State University Wildcat Warriors held its annual Dining Out at Liquid Art Winery. Over 200 guests were in attendance - the largest event attendance to date. Cadets, families, friends, and distinguished guests came together for an evening of celebration.

Commissioning seniors were recognized with the honor of a traditional saber arch, marking the end of their journey as cadets and the beginning of their careers as 2nd Lieutenants in the United States Air Force.

Thanks to generous donors, all cadets attended free of charge. Donor support also made it possible to award several scholarships to outstanding cadets.

Cadets of Detachment 270 recognized and thanked the outgoing cadre members for their hard work and commitment to mentoring and leading the cadets during their time of service at K-State.

It was a great night to come together, reflect on the year and celebrate the hard work and accomplishments of our cadets and cadre.



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### FOR INFORMATION ON SUPPORTING THE DETACHMENT

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