

DETACHMENT 850 NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 6 | FALL SEMESTER 2023

Skyraiders: Leaders of Character



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Letter from the Commander



Skyraiders old and new, I hope this semester has been as incredible for you as it has been for me. You've fulfilled a career dream of mine: to come back and be part of the amazing Skyraiders family. I was walking (or marching) exactly in your shoes in 2004 when I wore the proud colors of a Skyraider. Like many of you, I found a stronger purpose to guide my life and an incredible energy in the amazing cadets around me as we, together, strove to achieve our best. Nineteen years later, I am proud to find that you, the Skyraiders of today, continue to keep that energy and motivation to reach your potential alive and flourishing. First and foremost, thank you for what you are doing to bring your best to this program and uphold the proud heritage of the Skyraider name.

“Never have I seen a group that is quite so dedicated and effective at actually reaching its potential as the Det 850 Skyraiders!”

As I complete my first semester as a Skyraider, one word has taken on new meaning in my life...POTENTIAL. Potential is one of those words that holds incredibly deep meaning. Simply put, it means possessing the capability to become powerful. But what that means for each of us has infinite depth. Within each of you is immense greatness, and the ability to do great things. Yet, greatness rarely comes out naturally and without effort.

Throughout my life, I have been a part of many groups struggling to achieve their potential. As a father, I try to help my kids reach their potential. At church, I've guided youth groups striving to reach their potential. And in the military, I have led at many levels to reach the individual and unit's potential. But never have I seen a group that is quite so dedicated and effective at actually reaching its potential as the Det 850 Skyraiders! Our POC are phenomenal. The way I see you plan, re-plan, and execute LLABs that hone and develop GMC potential is amazing. GMC, your excitement and drive to excel at

anything the POC can throw at you is nothing less than inspiring. Watching you consistently striving to reach your academic potential, your leadership and wingman potential, your ninja-problem-solving potential, and your potential to develop impeccable character is nothing less than awesome. So, my only expectation now after my first full semester with you is...keep it going! Never settle for what you have already achieved. You will never know how much you can accomplish until you try to do more than you THOUGHT you could accomplish.

Now, let me say one last word about your cadre. Many of you already know this, but because some (like me) are new this semester, let me simply praise the incredible cadre that serve the Skyraiders of Detachment 850. Every one of them volunteered to be here – for you. They care about you, they care about the future of the Air and Space Forces, and they are 100% dedicated to helping you achieve your potential to lead in those forces. We believe in you, Skyraiders! Make us proud.

Meet the Cadre



Lt Col Trek Potter
Detachment Commander

“Always show more kindness than seems necessary, because the person receiving it needs it more than you will ever know.”
- Colin Powell

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I – I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.”
- Robert Frost



Lt Col Gregory Lotz
Recruiting & Operations Officer

“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children’s children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.” - Ronald Reagan



Maj Jan Liechty
Education Flight Commander

“Big things are built one brick at a time. Victories are achieved one choice at a time. A life well lived is chosen one day at a time.”
- Lysa TerKeurst

Capt Abby Keffer
Operations Flight Commander



“Take time to deliberate, but when the time for action has arrived, stop thinking and go in.”
- Napoleon Bonaparte



TSgt Alex Tornero
NCOIC Administration

“No greater battle fought. No lasting struggle, more noble. Pillars of principles fall faster to poor habits and weak minds. Shortcuts deflate the enduring strength of your efforts. Character, can’t be bought. A world in turmoil, a mind bemused. The enemy of your success, is you.”

TSgt Wesley Dickinson
Enlisted Training Instructor



“Lead, follow, or get out of the way!”
- Thomas Paine



SSgt Calvin Cook
NCOIC Administration

“Cherish forever what makes you unique, cuz you’re really a yawn if it goes.”
- Bette Midler

Ms. Natalie Richards-Gebbia
Office Manager



New Cadre Spotlights

We're incredibly lucky to welcome three new members to the Det 850 cadre. They've already elevated our team to amazing heights this semester, and we're excited to continue getting to know them!

Lt Col Trek Potter | AFSC 17D | Cyber Operator

The Potter family is so excited to join the Sky-raiders. The Air Force has been an incredible and meaningful adventure for us, and we are happy to be part of your development to join the ranks of so many heroes who serve this great nation.



Starting our journey in 2001 at Hill AFB, the Potters have seen many things. From duty stations in Utah (twice), Germany (twice), California (twice), Virginia, and Alabama and travels as far as Morocco, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, we love to see the world. We have six kids: three daughters (one on a church mission and one in college) and three boys. Four are still home and keeping us busy. We love music, Christmas, Halloween, video games, and board games.



I am a 17D Cyber Operator and have served in various operations of cyber defense, cyber offense, and technical innovation throughout my career. The Air Force network supports over 2 million people and connected devices and has been an exciting challenge for me to operate and defend. Most recently, I enjoyed leading the Information Warfare Division of the Air Operations Center at Ramstein Air Base, Germany where we brought non-kinetic effects to bear on threats to our NATO and regional partners, most notably against Russian threats.

Maj Jan Liechty | AFSC 38F | Force Support

Major Liechty was born in Utah and grew up in an Air Force family as the third of seven kids. His father was an officer who commissioned from AFROTC Detachment 855, Brigham Young University, the same Det where Maj Liechty and his two younger brothers would later commission from. Growing up, Maj Liechty loved playing basketball as he lived in numerous locations across the country and overseas (South Carolina, Germany, California, then graduating from high school in Boston, Massachusetts). He served a 2-year mission in Virginia for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, then became a cross-town cadet when he joined the AFROTC program



at BYU while attending Utah Valley University. He graduated in 2006 and commissioned as a Force Support Officer. Throughout his career, he has performed a wide array of jobs in many locations, both at home and deployed. His assignment locations include Spangdahlem Germany, Minot North Dakota, Nashville Tennessee, the Pentagon in Washington D.C., the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Hawaii. Additionally, he has deployed three times to the Middle East for a total of two years, participating in many military campaigns and operations. While a senior in college, he married the beautiful Stacia Young of Bountiful, Utah. They have six children together, three boys and three girls, ages 16 to 9 (two of which are adopted). Along with making an admirable attempt to be a consistently good husband, his other main goal is to raise his kids to be good Christians and good Americans; early returns show that he is mostly succeeding—however, results will continue to be closely monitored as time goes on. He also likes working out, professional reading, and helping shape the next generation of leaders our country so desperately needs.

SSgt Calvin Cook | AFSC 3F551 | Administration

I am SSgt Cook and I grew up in Michigan. I have been in the Air Force for nine years and I look forward to bringing my experience to this detachment in order to help shape the next wave of Air Force officers. My career has brought me to a lot of different places, to include Korea, Japan, Kuwait, and Florida. I am living with two of my friends who also made the move here. When I'm not here at work, I am usually playing games with them or out of the house seeing what Utah has to offer. I am an advocate for making the most of where you currently are. With this mindset, I've never stayed somewhere that I didn't like. As you can see, I've already made good use of my time here and I am always open to sharing my stories.



“Detachment 850
at the University of
Utah does it best.”

Leading from the Front

Cadet Colonel Cassian Baker, Wing Commander

As a cadet, you will meet people from other AFROTC Detachments, and I am proud to say that after seeing how all others do it, Detachment 850 at the University of Utah does it best. I am humbled to have received the opportunity to serve as the Wing Commander for Fall 2023.

This semester, I gave the Skyraiders a challenge to stay *Informed*, be *Competitive*, and bring *Energy* (ICE). Throughout the semester, I am proud of the Skyraiders' effort in this challenge. Skyraiders stayed informed at Commander's Chats and briefs. We were competitive, sweeping Escape & Evade and a high Physical Fitness average score. All Skyraiders brought energy everyday as seen by a high morale event attendance, flight jodies, and extracurricular clubs.

Cadets Neely, Pulver, and Willoughby distinguished themselves with the effort put into their roles as Wing Staff this semester. They had responsibilities elevated above the standards for their positions in prior semesters, but they continued to exceed expectations as credible leaders for the Cadet Wing.

My advice to all Skyraiders is to always ask for what you want, to not be scared to reach out to other units, and to excel at physical fitness. First, there are many unique opportunities in AFROTC that you will not be immediately competed for, it is important to make your desires known to your Flight Commander or Detachment Commander. Some of our greatest events put on throughout my time here have been while working with other units, so do not be afraid to reach out to get Skyraiders' exposure to operational missions! Finally, excelling at physical fitness is not only important for numbers in the program, but is critical to mental health and being able to support other members of your team.



Flight Commanders reflect on the semester



C/Capt Payton Kitchens
Flight Commander
Alpha Flight

My experience as a Flight Commander so far has been incredibly challenging and a ton of fun. Taking a flight of brand new AS100's and attempting to mold them into a fully functional team has been one of the most humbling and rewarding experiences of my life, with challenges that I never would've imagined encountering. I am lucky to have a flight with such talented and capable individuals, all of whom contribute in different ways. As the semester has progressed, I've learned more about each cadet, their strengths and weaknesses, and their unique personalities. I've also learned a lot about myself, and the type of leader I want to be. It's a small Air Force, so I can't wait to see and hear what my flight members accomplish throughout their careers.



C/Capt Tristan Leerhoff
Flight Commander
Bravo Flight

As an AS100 Flight Commander, I have had the privilege of working closely with the future leaders of the United States Air and Space Forces. Through the trials they have overcome this semester, Bravo Flight has formed a bond nearly unmatched in years beforehand. With their focus on wingmanship, morale, creativity, and high expectations, they have grown not only as people but as one cohesive unit. They have grown willing to band together to tackle both the challenges we throw at them as POC and the challenges of life and leadership in general. However, this was not only a learning experience for them, and I believe being a flight commander is one of the greatest leadership lessons one could ever receive. I am exceptionally grateful and proud of Bravo this semester, and know they will go on to do exceptional things as GMC, future POC, and Officers.



C/Capt Brian Schimmel
Flight Commander
Charlie Flight

Being the Flight Commander for the Charlie Cars has been an excellent experience with unique challenges. Teaching half of the class from the ground up while improving the skills of the rest was an interesting hurdle, but the 200s took it in stride and helped to get the 250s up to speed faster than you could say Kachow! I learned so much and want to leave my major takeaways. Delegate your duties within reason and allow the best-equipped people to handle those tasks. Record information and actions in case your future self needs them. Have free-flowing communication. Give people direction and empower them to solve problems their own way. And most importantly, ensure to pass on the "why." Finally, I want to give the utmost thanks to Charlie Flight and its Deputies and leave you with a quote: "One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation." – Arthur Ashe

GMC Perspective

ALPHA FLIGHT



CADET DANIEL FEISTEL

Det 850 has inspired me to step out of my comfort zone, run much more, and volunteer for various flight positions each week that help me develop my leadership and followership skills.



CADET RAYDEN RIDDLE

I have really enjoyed this past semester in Det 850. The physical and mental growth I've seen in myself is crazy! Not only has this program taught me how to be a team leader, but also how to be a better team player.

CADET TIMOTHY KREYLING

In the short time I've been in the program I can already see my fellow cadets and myself quickly becoming leaders of character. We are all pitted equally in high-stress situations, priming us on what our quick and decisive responses will be and how we react as wingmen, leaders, and warriors. This has been an incredible experience and I look forward to what's to come.



CADET ABIGAIL ROSS

My first semester at Det 850 has been both challenging and immensely gratifying. I have acquired a wealth of knowledge and created meaningful connections with the people around me, fostering incredible friendships. Even amid the most formidable challenges, I consistently leave with a heightened sense of strength and fulfillment.



BRAVO FLIGHT

CHARLIE FLIGHT



CADET CHASE JOHNSON

I joined Det 850 in the spring of 2023. Since then, I have made many friendships and connections with people in the program. Det 850 is full of upstanding and goal-oriented people who push me to constantly improve my mental, physical, spiritual, and social capabilities.

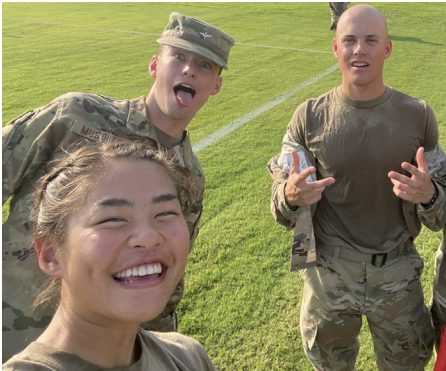


CADET CLARA SMITH

Being a part of Det 850 has been one of the most impactful experiences of my life. I have been challenged in ways that have made me a better teammate and leader. It has built my character in unimaginable ways and introduced me to some of the most awesome people. It really is a great community.

Field Training 2023

Let's hand it to our Skyraiders who completed Field Training in summer 2023! The intense instruction and assessment environment curated for all AFROTC cadets at Maxwell Air Force Base separates the wheat from the chaff in a very real sense. So it's no surprise at all that our cadets brought home a 100% pass rate, five Distinguished Graduate awards, five Gladiators (fitness score of 100%), and three Ironman/Ironwoman awards! Fly High Mighty Skyraiders!



L-R: Cadets Cooke, Musolff, & Schimmel



Cadet Danny Cronk



Cadet Jack Sandell



First two guidon bearers from the left: Cadet Schimmel & Cadet Cooke



L-R: Cadets Hasek, Bolingbroke, Phillips, & Saltzgeber

FT 23 CHAMPIONS

*indicates Distinguished Graduate

†indicates Fitness Gladiator

#indicates Ironman or Ironwoman

Cadet Blake Bolingbroke	MAX 1
Cadet Sterling Hasek*	MAX 1
Cadet Mason Phillips	MAX 1
Cadet Sarah Cooke*†‡	MAX 2
Cadet Nathan Musolff	MAX 2
Cadet Brian Schimmel†	MAX 2
Cadet Jack Sandell	MAX 3
Cadet Connor Vardakis	MAX 3
Cadet Daniel Cronk*†‡	MAX 4
Cadet Cassidy Lamm	MAX 4
Cadet Tristan Leerhoff	MAX 4
Cadet Jacob Carrington*†‡	MAX 5
Cadet Payton Kitchens*	MAX 5
Cadet Karston Modlinski†	MAX 5
Cadet Noah Orton	MAX 5
Cadet Joseph Scarlander	MAX 5
Cadet Carter Saltzgeber (CTA)	MAX 1-5

“You can be sure that the American spirit will prevail over this tragedy.” - Colin Powell

9/11 Memorial Run

“On the 22nd anniversary of 9/11, University of Utah’s Air Force, Navy and Army ROTC members gathered at the Rice-Eccles Football Stadium to remember the fallen. They ran the stadium stairs, each step a tribute to the heroes we lost that day. In their uniforms, they didn’t just tackle a physical challenge; they upheld a promise to honor those who sacrificed everything.

The sound of their footsteps resonated through the stadium, a solemn reminder of 9/11’s enduring impact. Their run wasn’t just a tribute; it was a reaffirmation of their dedication to service and honor. It showcased the unbreakable American spirit, always ready to stand together and protect the freedoms we hold dear.” – Cadet Jack Sandell



Cadet Tristan Leerhoff



Cadet Nathan Musolff



Escape & Evade

Given the opportunity to compete against their sister detachments, the Skyraiders of Det 850 tend to come out swinging. 2023 Escape and Evade – a high-stakes, military-style, all-night match of capture the flag – was no exception, with Skyraider teams taking four out of five awards, including first and second place. Special thanks to Det 860 at Utah State University for organizing and running this event each year!



A picturesque scene after a night of wading through rivers in sub-freezing temps



Pretty sure that's Cadet Zelaya...?



Cadets Smith, Willard, & Ashnault



TSgt Dickinson looking otherworldly in his night vision goggles



L-R: Cadets Riddle, Johnson, Swain, Dehlinger, Haley, & Clark



Second place winners, L-R: TSgt Dickinson, Cadet Baker, Cadet Collins, & Lt Col Potter



Awesome representation from Det 850, with the overall winning team in the middle: Cadets Johnson, Nuber, Zelaya, & Kornbluth

Learning on the Fly

Det 850's annual excursion to the Leadership Reaction Course at Army National Guard Camp W.G. Williams puts our Skyraiders' problem-solving skills to the test.



Cadets Feistel, Clark, & Chacon



Bird's-eye view of the task at hand



The POC are always watching



Cadets Musolff & Leerhoff



You can practically see the gears turning inside the GMC's heads



Cadets Johnson, Pauchano, & Kearney



Cadets Moore & Modlinski



Cadet Hardy could do this all day

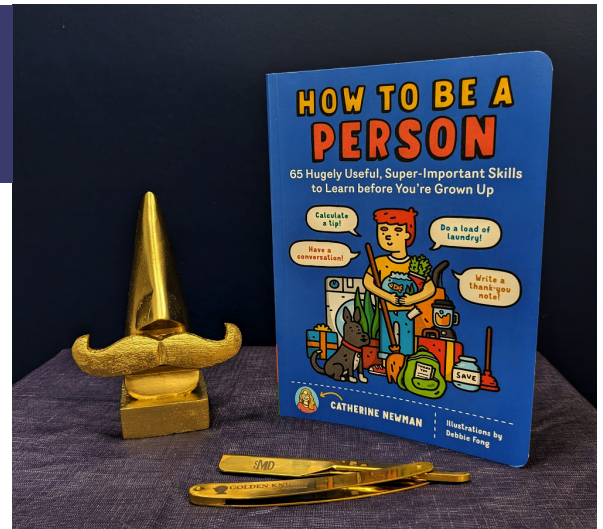
No-Shave November

Soup strainer, dirt squirrel, snot mop, upper lipholstery...

Whatever you want to call it, the magnificence of the Air Force mustache cannot be denied.

BUT THE QUESTION REMAINS:
Whose manometer is the best??

At the close of Movember, the most magnificent Skyraider flavor saver will receive a mustachioed eyewear holder; the worst gets a classic straight razor with which to rid the detachment of their whiskered embarrassment. *How to Be a Person*, Catherine Newman's illustrated guide for those of us who need a little help adulting, will go to the individual who probably shouldn't attempt to grow a mustache ever again.



DRUMROLL PLEASE.



Creepiest: Cadet Danny Cronk

Best: Cadet David Jumaa*

Worst: Cadet Warren Stone

**It is worth noting that either one of Cadet Jumaa's eyebrows could have won this competition hands-down.*



AFROTC DET 850

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GUEST PARKING

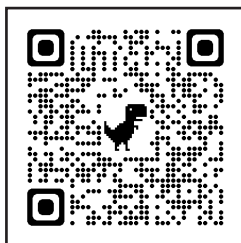
Lot 33 “Student Services”
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(southeast of the parking garage)



AFROTC Det 850 Skyriders



uofu_det850



Are you interested in providing financial assistance to our cadets through U of U scholarships and program support? Scan the QR code to get started. Thank you from Det 850!



U.S. AIR FORCE

