

NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

HEADQUARTERS, USAF ACADEMY, COLORADO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AIR FORCE ACADEMY PREP SCHOOL GRADUATES 140 FUTURE CADETS

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo.--The Air Force Academy Preparatory School graduated 140 future Air Force Academy cadets today (May 25), the second largest class in the school's 11-year history.

Thomas D. Popp, of Auburn, Wash., was named "Mr. Cadet Candidate," the Prep School's highest graduation award.

All members of the 1971 class will accept appointments to the Air Force Academy. The largest Prep School class, 164, was graduated in 1970. This year's class brings the total number of graduates to 1,351 since the Prep School was established in 1960.

At the Prep School, selected members of Regular and Reserve Air Force components who are not fully prepared academically for the Academy are given a year of concentrated study in English, mathematics, military training and athletics to prepare them for entrance.

Other top honors went to Gregory A. Scharlach, Fostoria, Ohio, academic award; Bruce H. Fritzsche, Highland Park, Ill., athletic award; and Carl I. Peterson, Englewood, Colo., military award.

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY MISSION:

PROVIDE INSTRUCTION, EXPERIENCE AND MOTIVATION TO EACH CADET SO THAT HE WILL GRADUATE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE, CHARACTER AND QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP ESSENTIAL TO HIS PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT AS A CAREER OFFICER IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE.

Popp, who was graduated with a 3.66 grade point average (4.0=A), was selected the top grad for his overall excellence in academics, athletics and military training.

A member of the Prep School's golf team, Popp was also 137 pound champion in intramural wrestling. He was a commander of "B" Squadron, the "Honor Squadron of the Year" and served a Group Commander, the top student leadership position.

Popp was graduated from Auburn (Wash.) Senior High School where he belonged to the National Honor Society. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence J. Popp, reside at 431 12th S.E., Auburn.

Scharlach was graduated with a 3.51 grade average. While at the Prep School he was a forward on the basketball team which established a 15-4 1970 record.

To be selected for the academic award, Scharlach possessed high college board scores and excelled in the school's military and physical training programs.

He was graduated from Fostoria (Ohio) High School in 1970 where he was a member of the National Honor Society. His parents are Mr. and Mrs. Donald W. Scharlach of 817 N. Main St., Fostoria.

Fritzsche was a standout on the Prep School football team as an offensive and defensive lineman and he helped the squad post a 5-1 record. He also played guard on the basketball team and was a member of the lacrosse team.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Fritzsche of 1773 Berkeley Rd., Highland Park, Fritzsche is a 1970 graduate of Deerfield (Ill.) High School.

Peterson is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ivor C. Peterson, 2290 E. Eastman Ave., Englewood. He established a 3.39 grade average and played lacrosse for the Prep School.

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Peterson was selected for the military award because he was outstanding in all phases of the military training and for the high respect in which he was held by his classmates.

-JAC-

Lt General George B. Simler
Commander, Air Training Command
Randolph AFB, TX 78148

Dear George:

As you know from previous personal contacts with Lt Colonel Norman R. Lucie, Deputy Director of Admissions and Registrar, the identification of regular airmen for the United States Air Force Academy Preparatory School has consistently proven to be a problem. From your prior experience as Director of Athletics, I am sure that you are more than familiar with the operation of the Prep School and that its primary mission in being established was to give regular airmen the opportunity to better prepare themselves for competing for a cadet appointment.

My staff has consistently explored every conceivable means to improve the quantity and quality of regular airmen but with little success. Several courses of action have been placing articles in the Airman Magazine, The Air Force Times and visiting Technical Training Centers. The results have been very disappointing; consequently, approximately two years ago we established an Air Force Academy NCO Liaison Officer position at Lackland Air Force Base, the functions of which I am certain you are familiar. Currently filling this position is MSgt Zigmars Krassauskas who is doing an admirable job with the excellent cooperation of Lackland Air Force Base. To augment his efforts, contact was also made with the Air Force Recruiting Service to solicit the support of 1500 recruiters in the field. Brigadier General William C. McGlothlin, Jr., was extremely cooperative, and Sgt Krassauskas indeed is receiving referrals from the field of recently enlisted regulars who appear to have the minimum qualification for consideration. Notwithstanding these efforts, we have not been able to attract more than about fifty-five individuals each year of sufficient caliber to warrant either entrance into the Prep School or directly