

Founders Day

Honoring our Distinguished Graduates

FORTY-NINE YEARS AGO PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER SIGNED THE U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY INTO EXISTENCE WITH THE ENACTMENT OF THE AIR ACADEMY ACT.

FOUNDERS DAY RECOGNIZES THIS HISTORIC EVENT AND PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE ACADEMY TO HONOR ITS DISTINGUISHED GRADUATES.

THIS YEAR THE ANNUAL FOUNDERS DAY DINNER WAS HELD ON APRIL 4TH TO HONOR ACADEMY DISTINGUISHED GRADUATES, GEN. (RET.) ROBERT C. OAKS, '59, AND DR. PAUL KAMINSKI, '64.



General Robert C. Oaks

General Robert C. Oaks' lifetime of service to country, community and church represents the highest ideals of the Air Force Academy.

As a flier and warrior, he progressed from service as a young fighter pilot through commands at the flight, squadron, wing, and air command level, commanding two major air commands. Early in his career, he flew 188 combat missions in Vietnam.

He earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for accurate night close air support of troops under heavy enemy fire. And while at the Academy in the late sixties, he directed the Honor and Ethics Program. He was an unmatched role model for the cadets during the turbulent days of the Vietnam Conflict.

Years later he would culminate his military career as Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Commander, Allied Forces Central Europe. Through remarkable skill and wisdom, he successfully led the transformation of his command to meet the demands of Desert Storm and conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo.

In 1997, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints called on the retired General to be president of its congregations in northwestern Pennsylvania, and later the church's President for its Africa Southeast Area.

Over his long career, General Oaks always reflected the highest ideals of integrity, service and excellence. He faced both physical dangers and the daunting challenges of political-military realities on a world scale with a steadfast faith, unmatched personal integrity, and a genuine respect for his fellow men. ▷



Dr. Paul Kaminski

Through technical prowess and skilled leadership, Dr. Paul Kaminski made a profound and lasting impact on our Nation's security and military capability. Throughout his 20-year Air Force career, he was repeatedly thrust into pivotal roles not only in developing, but also in insuring the successful fielding of revolutionary technology and new warfighting concepts. Former President Reagan captured this well in 1984, saying "Seldom has a person of your rank achieved so much for his nation through the sheer genius of his ideas."

From 1977-1981, he worked with which former Secretary of Defense William J. Perry to establish the foundation for the DoD Stealth and Counter-Stealth program, which Perry called "the most important military technical program in the nation." Less

Lt. Gen. JD Dallager, '69, and Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Mark Anderson, '61, present the Distinguished Graduate award to Gen. (Ret.) Robert Oaks and Dr. Paul Kaminski.

publicized was his pioneering role from 1971-1976 as a Program Director in the National Reconnaissance Office, in the development of highly classified "National Technical Means," which now provide the nation with invaluable real time intelligence and targeting.

From 1981-1984, then Colonel Kaminski directed the Air Force Low Observable Program, where he became known for the remarkable development and operational introduction of Stealth Technology. As a technology visionary, he made other notable contributions in the field of precision-guided weapons, aircraft, missile systems, and the related technology base. After a brilliant Air Force career, Dr. Kaminski served from 1985-1994 in the private sector in multiple advisory and board positions, and as a CEO involved in technology, business strategy and investment banking.

He, then served as Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology from 1994-1997, turning his keen management skills toward Acquisition Reform. His concentration on "People, Partnerships, and Perseverance" was not only a reflection of his own values but also a template for major cultural change, ushering in a new era of advancement and affordability through programs procurement such as the Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM), the Global Hawk & Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, the C-17, and the Joint Strike Fighter programs. Dr. Kaminski's integrity, dedication, and unflinching concern for individuals during a lifetime of service to the nation exemplify the highest ideals of the Academy and the United States Air Force. ▣

JABARA AWARD WINNERS

MAJOR LEIGHTON ANDERSON, '92, (LEFT) AND MAJOR EDWARD LENGEL, '92, (RIGHT) WERE RECOGNIZED BEFORE THE CADET WING ON APRIL 3RD. BOTH RECEIVED THE 2003 COL. JAMES JABARA AWARD FOR AIRMANSHIP FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO AIRPOWER DURING OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM. THE AWARDS WERE PRESENTED BY COL. BOB ESKRIDGE, '77, VICE COMMANDANT.

