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Phase V: Moving Beyond the Cadet Program

A Guide for the Cadet to Senior Member Transition



**CIVIL AIR PATROL
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA**

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PREFACE

This pamphlet is designed to guide cadets in the transition from cadet membership to senior membership.

Features for this pamphlet include

- a comparison of the cadet and senior education and training structures,
- definitions and resource lists for publications and programs most frequently used by senior members,
- information regarding whom at the local unit cadets should speak to when going through the membership transition process,
- a description of carry-over benefits cadets may receive based on their achievements in the Cadet Program,
- an overview of the Senior Member Education and Training Program, and
- the stories of several cadets who chose to continue their service as senior members in Civil Air Patrol.

OVERVIEW

CAP Needs You!

Your training and experience as a cadet provide an excellent foundation for the opportunities of the future. You have served faithfully and invested in your education and training. *You are valuable to CAP, your experience as a cadet makes you a role model for others, and you are an essential resource in your unit.* Are you ready for the next challenge? Are you prepared to continue your service to your community, state, and nation? If so, becoming a senior member can be the next step for you. Think of this as Phase V or the step that follows serving as a cadet. Regardless of where you stop your cadet service, serving as a senior member is what naturally follows serving in the Cadet Program in CAP. Life as a senior member is full of new challenges and hard work, but like the Cadet Program, it is very rewarding. This pamphlet will help guide you on the path to senior membership.

Purpose of This Guide

The purpose of this guide is simple: to give you, the 18 – 20-year-old cadet, an outline of the activities and progression of the Senior Member Education and Training Program. Whether you have been in CAP for one year or five years, the transition from cadet to senior membership represents a new beginning – an opportunity to move into a new role, with new responsibilities and new opportunities to grow.



Captain Klara Olcott, a former cadet, who went on to serve as the commander of SWR-AZ-388.

We also want to give you a place to start. It will describe the Senior Member Education and Training Program, its components, and how you fit into your new role. It will list and briefly describe some of the most frequently used terms and resources so you will know where to find the answers to your questions. It also outlines what eligible benefits cadet membership may be entitled to when you become a senior member. Finally, it will provide you with a few helpful tips to make the membership transition easier for you and your unit.

Important Questions to Ask

There is life in CAP after cadet membership, and it can be just as rewarding and fulfilling. However, there are some questions that nearly all cadets ask themselves as they become eligible to "turn senior."

- Why should I become a senior member?
- What do senior members do?
- What does the senior member program have to offer me?
- How does the education and training program work?
- Will there be anyone to help me learn my job, or will I be on my own?
- What are the steps in the membership transition process?



Above: Colonel John Knowles (as cadet left with now Major Teri Knowles) presents an Earhart and Eaker Award. Cadet Wyatt Hartman on the right has since transitioned to senior membership.

GETTING STARTED

As you think about becoming a senior member, remember, it's important to make the decision and begin the process before your 21st birthday. It takes positive action on your part to start the membership transition. If you do not, on your birthday, you will be placed in the patron member status for the remainder of your membership year automatically. To remain fully active after your 21st birthday, you must begin the transition to senior membership. Staying a financial supporter of CAP as a patron member is also an option if your schedule doesn't allow full participation at that time.

Applying for Senior Membership

Before you begin, seek guidance from your squadron personnel officer and ask for a local mentor to be assigned who has experience in the cadet to senior transition process. If there is not someone local who can help, you can apply for a mentor on the Education and Training Mentoring page at the following link:

<https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/members/ed-training/mentoring>

Becoming a senior member is not automatic. You begin by filling out a CAP Form 12, Application for Senior Membership.

Additionally, you must complete an FD-258, *FBI Applicant Fingerprint Card*. You will submit this form with a completed CAPF 12. Fingerprints must be recorded on the form FD-258. Some units have a fingerprint kit and a trained person who can take your prints on the form. If this isn't the case for you, you would have to contact local law enforcement officials to have them take your fingerprints for you.

What the Transition Means to You



Brigadier General Edward Phelka, a former cadet, presents cadet milestone awards while Lt Col John Henderson and Col Joe Winter, who are also former cadets, look on.

Becoming a senior member signals your new future in Civil Air Patrol. It's an acknowledgment of what CAP has given you and recognition that your next chapter in the program has begun. While many former cadets report that being a senior member is great fun, they also say that being a senior means more responsibility and requires a change in mindset. As a cadet, you learned and practiced leadership. As a senior member, you will be expected to demonstrate leadership. As a cadet, you may have led other cadets, but you weren't responsible for them. As a senior member, you are responsible. It's a challenge to become a senior member and master Civil Air Patrol again. More importantly, it's a chance to give back to the people who helped you succeed as a cadet and provide that chance to cadets now entering the program.

What to Read

One of the best things you can do is to bookmark the CAP publications page from the website. Should you have any questions, "the regs" will provide the answers or at least steer you in the right direction. You can download most publications from CAP's web page and click "Forms and Publications."

<https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/members/publications/indexes-regulations-and-manuals-1700>

Whom to Talk To

It's a good idea to speak to your Education and Training Officer (ETO) approximately six months before you transition to senior membership. Introduce yourself, begin to build some friendships, and schedule a time when he or she can sit down and talk with you. The point here is to let the ETO know you are ready to start this new phase and have them help you develop a plan to achieve your goals as well as learn what credit you'll receive.

Take time to figure out what you want to do, which areas interest you, and your availability in the immediate future. Write out a list of goals that you want to accomplish for yourself. Do you want to serve on a ground team, become a scanner or observer, work with the unit's records, or continue to work with cadets?

It's also important to understand that it's okay to participate in CAP at a different pace. Do you have the extra time for weekend activities, or are you only able to attend regular meetings? Can you only go to a couple of meetings a month? Are you only available for special projects? These are all viable options, but you must communicate with the unit's leadership about what you can contribute. Matching expectations for involvement is key to success in the senior program.

Many cadets leave CAP when in college or if they join the military. By communicating your availability and choosing a role you can fulfill, you can stay in CAP. Be realistic; a career in the senior member program is a marathon, not a sprint. It takes longer to progress in the senior program. It's okay to balance your life with CAP, and you don't have to give up CAP when you go to college or join the military.

When you are ready, go back to the ETO with your list. Ask for an overview of the different jobs available and how to train for those jobs. Try out a few specialty tracks and shadow some of the staff members in your unit to find what sparks your interest. Often it could be something you didn't expect. That's natural, as is changing your mind if a job is not what you hoped it would be.

CARRY-OVER AND ADVANCED CREDIT FOR CADET SERVICE

Becoming a senior member doesn't necessarily mean beginning from scratch. Starting in CAP as a cadet provides you with some significant advantages when turning senior. Cadets who earned the Mitchell, Earhart, Eaker, or Spaatz awards are exempt from several Education and Training requirements. They may be awarded advanced grades, keep their ES qualifications, and/or receive other considerations. Credit for your cadet service and what carries over is discussed in detail below.



Lt Col Robert Bowden and Maj Rod Rakic, who are former cadets, flying a COVID mission.

Emergency Services Qualifications

As you become a senior member, all of your ES qualifications carry over, and your sorties earned as a cadet still count towards your Search and Rescue ribbon. You continue to work ES missions without interruption. You may have spent more time on a ground team as a cadet. As a senior member, you may want to explore serving as mission base staff. Consult CAPR 35-6 and CAPR 70-1 for further information.

Transfer of Awards and Ribbons

Many of your ribbons transfer over to senior membership. Ribbons that carry over include Encampment, National Cadet Special Activities, National Cadet Competition, International Air Cadet Exchange, Cadet Advisory Council, Disaster Relief, Find, Search and Rescue, Community Service Ribbon, the highest cadet achievement ribbon you attained, and all ribbons you earned Unit Citation and higher. Other ribbons may count some of the things you did as a cadet, such as recruiting. Consult CAPR 39-1 and CAPR 39-3 for details about ribbons and awards.



Brigadier General Richard Anderson, a former cadet, served as National Commander 1993 - 1996.

Advanced Standing in the Education and Training Program

Senior members have an Education and Training Program with five levels. As a new senior member, depending on your level of progression in the Cadet Program, you may be eligible to receive credit for some modules in Level I and some modules in Level II of the Senior Member Education and Training Program. You may also qualify for credit for other awards such as the Aerospace Education Program for Senior Members (Yeager) Award (AEPSM). Cadets who have completed Phase II, III, IV, or the General Carl A. Spaatz Award are eligible for some credit within the ET Program. Please read the details concerning what's available and application procedures in CAPR 40-1 paragraph 11.2; meanwhile, the graph below shows what you might qualify for based on milestone awards you may have completed.

SENIOR MEMBER CREDIT FOR FORMER CADETS TRANSITIONING					
	LEVEL I	CADET PROGRAMS TECH RATING	CADET PROGRAMS SENIOR RATING	YEAGER AWARD (AEPSM)	LEVEL II DAVIS AWARD
Mitchell Award 	9-12 modules				2 modules
Earhart Award 	9-12 modules				3 modules
Eaker Award 	9-12 modules				7 modules
Spaatz Award 	9-12 modules				8 modules

Advanced Promotion

When you become a senior member, depending on your level of achievement in the Cadet Program and age when you transition, you may be eligible for an advanced promotion to a higher grade. Members between the ages of 18 and 20 enter into the grade structure of flight officers, and those age 21 and older become regular officers. Please see CAPR 35-5, *CAP Officer and NCO Appointments and Promotions*, paragraphs 3.7 and para 7.4.3 for more details about promotions. Getting promoted as a senior member requires completing a CAPF 2. For special promotions, like the ones former cadets are eligible to receive, you must submit the paper form. Your unit Personnel Officer or your mentor can help you with the promotion process. Promotions in the senior program are not automatic. Senior member promotions require commander approval, and the time between promotions for senior members can be several years.

ADVANCED PROMOTION ELIGIBILITY FOR FORMER CADETS		
	AGE 18-20	AGE 21+
Mitchell Award 	 FLIGHT OFFICER	 SECOND LIEUTENANT
Earhart Award 	 TECHNICAL FLIGHT OFFICER	 FIRST LIEUTENANT
Eaker Award 	 TECHNICAL FLIGHT OFFICER	 FIRST LIEUTENANT
Spaatz Award 	 SENIOR FLIGHT OFFICER	 CAPTAIN

Additional Benefits

There are many benefits to becoming a senior member other than the opportunities for advancement as a senior member.

Job Skills

The skills you learn and the jobs you perform while a senior member can benefit you in the workforce. Administrative, interpersonal, and problem-solving skills are essential in today's job market. What you learn as a senior member in CAP can serve you and all of us in the future. When searching for jobs, CAP on your resume can help differentiate you from other candidates. For example, a senior member responsible for the unit newsletter can show the application of skills in various areas, from publishing to writing. Many senior roles complete tasks that are valuable on a resume. Senior membership is an excellent way for professionals young in their careers to distinguish themselves from fellow candidates.

Helpful Suggestions

These are a few hints that can make the transition to life as a senior member a little easier.

- Seek out senior members who transitioned from cadet status within the last few years and pick their brains. They would be happy to share with you their experiences and give you ideas for making your transition easier. Consider getting a mentor. You can seek one locally or through the Mentoring Program.

- Before you transition, look through your Cadet Master Record and qualification cards to ensure all are current.
- Try to spend time with different staff officers to see if there are any positions/specialties that are particularly interesting.
- Scan through the regulations and manuals listed in the Definitions and Resources list for a complete picture of the Education and Training program.
- If you have some time before you become a senior member, set a goal of obtaining the Mitchell/Earhart /Eaker/Spaatz Award. Milestones provide benefits in the senior program!
- It's hard to "be one of the cadets" one week and be the cadets' leader the next. Give yourself and the cadets (your former peers) time to adjust. It'll all work itself out.
- Some seniors will suggest you not participate in the Cadet Program for at least a year after the transition or change units to separate yourself mentally from cadets. For some, this is a great idea. For others, you may be able to identify as a senior member right away. Do what's best for you but understand, you are no longer a cadet, and different rules apply.
- Don't let your membership lapse. Make sure you take the time to process your senior membership and equivalency, even if you are focused on college or a career. Many senior members regret having let their membership lapse when they rejoin the program later in life.

You are changing peer groups and roles. It may take a while until you feel like you fit in, but remember, you are already a part of the squadron. Soon the senior program will be familiar to you, and the senior members will become colleagues and friends.

These suggestions have helped cadets in the past during their transitions. There may be things that you and your commander can think of that can also help smooth the transition.

It is important to transfer to senior membership with a plan for the future. It will make your transition a more enjoyable experience.

COMPARING STRUCTURES

Introduction

A good starting point in understanding what the Senior Member Education and Training Program is all about is to compare its structure to that of the Cadet Program. If you know the differences between the structures and why the differences exist, you can chart your course for participation in the senior program.

Cadet Program Structure

CAP cadets focus on learning and growing: to learn leadership, to grow in character, to grow in citizenship, to grow in physical fitness, and to grow intellectually. As you know, cadets complete this in the classroom, through activities, and through assisting in accomplishing CAP's missions. The Cadet Program's structure and outcomes were designed around these purposes.



Col Mike Fernandez, who is a former cadet and served as Utah Wing Commander, and Lt Col Jason Hess, who is a former cadet and served as Utah Wing Vice Commander, escort cadets at National Legislative Day in Washington D.C.

As you know, mentoring, assigned readings, classroom discussion, self-study, structured activities, and periodic examinations are all parts of the Cadet Program. These materials and the class structure provide guidance and conformance to a uniform program of learning and growth through all phases of a cadet's career.

The subjects discussed in the Cadet Program, including leadership education, character development, aerospace education, and physical fitness, are the core of the cadet's learning experience and are uniform throughout the Cadet Program.

For the program administrators, the structure provides a series of goals for the cadets to achieve within a defined structure. Therefore, an evaluation of the cadet's progress is simplified because the goals are already defined.

Education and Training Program Structure

The purpose of the Senior Member Education and Training Program is to train members to accomplish CAP's mission. The mission of the CAP Education and Training program is to provide a cadre of adult volunteers who can accomplish CAP's threefold mission.

The Senior Member Education and Training Program offers senior members more flexibility in setting their goals and how to achieve their goals. Like the Cadet Program, there is a definite structure for progression. Unlike the Cadet Program, where the system focuses on passing achievements, the Senior Member Education and Training Program focuses on building skills that make the organization work at each level (individual, unit, group, wing, region, national). Consequently, it will be your responsibility to seek out training opportunities and grow as an officer as you progress in grade and responsibility.

As a senior member, you should attend meetings regularly, participate in activities, obey senior officers, wear your uniform properly, and be of service to your community, state, and nation. Sound familiar?

The difference is, there is no education and training oath for seniors; instead, it is a program outlined in the regulations (CAPR 40-1). Senior members may take an oath when they promote. The senior program is different because there is no sunset date for participation and no deadline to get promoted before "aging out." The Senior Member Education and Training Program may have some minimum timeframes to be met in terms of service and training, but there is no maximum time limit. This flexibility allows you, the new senior member, to set your own pace and balance CAP with school, life, and career.

The Cadet Oath

I pledge that I will serve faithfully in the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program, and that I will attend meetings regularly, participate actively in unit activities, obey my officers, wear my uniform properly, and advance my education and training rapidly to prepare myself to be of service to my community, state, and nation.

Education and Training Resources

Additionally, unlike the Cadet Program, the Education and Training program relies heavily on "on-the-job training." Senior members help chart their own course for training and seek out their own mentors and opportunities. They set the pace of their training and, in conjunction with their mentors and squadron leadership, select and train in their specialty tracks.

To help senior members receive the training they need, they use several tools under the auspices of Education and Training, including Volunteer University, Specialty Track Study Guides, and the Mentoring Program.



Volunteer University



Col Regena Aye, a former cadet, has served as North Central Region Commander and Chief of Education and Training.

Training Program levels. There are five levels similar to the four phases that you progressed through in the Cadet Program. They will be described in greater detail beginning on page 17.

For more information regarding Volunteer University, please go to the following link:

<https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/members/ed-training/volu-main>

Specialty Track Study Guides and Pamphlets

Specialty tracks are the specific areas that you will work in and train to learn. A specialty track is related to a duty position in the unit, and pamphlets called Specialty Track Study Guides describe how to grow your skills in these areas. As you progress through the senior program, you may eventually enroll in several specialty tracks (see page 20). It is recommended that one test the waters and try several different specialty tracks as an assistant in the related duty assignment to see what fits you best. Then after approximately six months, select 1-2 that you enjoy and would like to pursue further. Be aware that some tracks take longer to complete. If advancing quickly is your goal, chose a specialty track that will allow you to do so.

The modules in Volunteer University (aka "Vol U") are the foundation of what will be your senior member educational training. Think of Volunteer University like you would a college or school. It offers classes and activities that allow you to grow and progress. The program is Education and Training, the place you go to get the training is Volunteer University.

Through a series of academic training modules (Levels I – V), Volunteer University will guide you on your educational path through the Senior Member Education and

Former cadets who have received the Eaker Award or higher may request credit for the Technician Rating in the Cadet Programs Specialty Track after transitioning their membership. Spaatz cadets may request credit for the Senior Rating in Cadet Programs. Credit may be obtained by emailing National Personnel (CAP/DP) at Immeforms@capnhq.gov and requesting the appropriate rating.



Mentoring Program

The CAP Mentoring Program works in conjunction with all aspects of the Senior Member Education and Training program, progression through command, and progression in several other areas like Operations qualifications. During the transition process from cadet to senior, former cadets recommend that you ask your Education and Training Officer for specifics about the mentoring program and about being assigned a mentor to help guide you through the process.

For more information on the mentoring program, please go to the following link:

<https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/members/ed-training/mentoring>

Cadet Program and Education and Training Program Similarities

In a final comparison of the cadet and senior education and training programs, there are two areas the programs have in common: drill and ceremonies and customs and courtesies. As the Auxiliary of the United States Air Force, *all* members are required to be familiar with drill and ceremonies and customs and courtesies. The good news is, as former cadets, you will have the advantage of already being proficient at this component of CAP life. In fact, this may be an area where you can help others with your expertise!



Capt Boaz Fink, who is a former cadet, balanced college and serving as a new senior member. “ROTC reaffirmed how important CAP was to my development and my success in ROTC and in college. Being able to give back to CAP as a senior member has been a great experience.”

OVERVIEW OF THE SENIOR MEMBER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM

Introduction

It helps if you know where you're going. This section provides an overview of the Senior Member Education and Training Program. While this is just an overview, it will summarize the opportunities open to you and what the program requires as you tackle this exciting challenge.

Mechanics of the Senior Member Education and Training Program



Col Joe Abegg, who is a former cadet and served as New Jersey Wing Commander, presents an Eaker Award.

Like the Cadet Program, members earn advancement in the Senior Member Education and Training program by completing a series of training levels. To complete a training level, senior members study modules and complete activities designed to make them more effective members and leaders.

Even if you receive some credit due to your cadet achievements, it's important that you understand this section as you continue to progress in the program. The full spectrum of Senior Member Education and Training levels is described in detail in CAPR 40-1.

Levels in the Senior Member Education and Training Program are similar to phases in the Cadet Program. Below is a chart that outlines the requirements for each level. Does this remind you of the Cadet Super Chart?

EDUCATION & TRAINING PROGRESSION CHART					
	LEVEL I ONBOARDING	LEVEL II THE LEARNING PHASE	LEVEL III THE LEADERSHIP PHASE	LEVEL IV THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP PHASE	LEVEL V THE EXECUTIVE LEADESHIP PHASE
	MEMBERSHIP	GEN BENJAMIN O. DAVIS AWARD 	GROVER LOENING AEROSPACE AWARD 	PAUL A. GARBER AWARD 	GILL ROBB WILSON AWARD 
PREREQUISITES		COMPLETION OF LEVEL I	COMPLETION OF LEVEL II	COMPLETION OF LEVEL III	COMPLETION OF LEVEL IV
COMMAND OR STAFF ASSIGNMENT			TOTAL OF 1 YEAR	TOTAL OF 2 YEARS	3 YEARS; OF THAT ONE MUST BE GROUP OR HIGHER
EDUCATION & TRAINING	MODULES	MODULES (PART 1 & 2)	MODULES	MODULES	MODULES
SPECIALTY TRACK		CHOOSE DUTY POSITION, SELECT TRACK AND EARN TECHNICIAN RATING 	EARN SENIOR RATING 	EARN MASTER RATING 	
LEADERSHIP			ATTEND TWO CONFERENCES AT ANY LEVEL AS A SENIOR	SERVE ON STAFF IN ET OR ON STAFF AT AN NATIONAL, REGION, OR WING CONFERENCE	SERVE ON STAFF IN ET OR ON STAFF AT AN ACTIVITY LISTED IN (CAPR 40-1)
ACTIVITIES		EARN THE YEAGER AWARD 	MENTOR A MEMBER THROUGH LEVEL I	PUBLIC PRESENTATION TO A NON-CAP GROUP OR AE PRESENTATION	MENTOR A MEMBER THROUGH TECH RATING

Level I - Onboarding

As noted above, Level I represents the initial training for all active seniors joining CAP. Volunteer University offerings are divided into onsite, online, or as a blend of the two. In Level I, you will learn how to be an active senior and what you need to progress in the program. This training should last between 4-6 hours. For former cadets who earned the Mitchell or higher, it may be only an hour or two. You must complete the Cadet Protection Basic Course and Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Nondiscrimination modules if you haven't done so as an 18-20-year-old cadet. Level I can be completed entirely online and should be available in AXIS as soon as you become a senior member. Be sure to check your Accomplishments page and only take the modules you need!

Level II – The Learning Phase (Benjamin O. Davis Award)

Level II is where you will learn and develop individual skills. In the modules or classes offered through Volunteer University, members will learn the expectations associated with being a CAP member, commit to serving as a staff officer or NCO, understand the proper wear of the uniform, and become familiar with CAP customs and courtesies. This is done while also building a solid understanding of the CAP missions and the positions that support them. Do some of these topics sound familiar to you?

Members can complete most of the modules in Level II online. Most members complete them on their own and at their own pace. A few modules in Level II require you to work with an instructor face-to-face or enroll in an online cohort. Cohorts are groups of 25 members who study together online with a team of instructors. We call the modules that require an instructor moderated. You can learn more about automated and moderated modules on the Volunteer University level pages.

CAP values cadets who transition to senior membership. There is a specific path in Level II tailored for those who transitioned from cadet within the last year or two. Former cadets who earned the Mitchell or higher do not have to study followership or leadership fundamentals. Instead, the modules former cadets study to help you with differences in the senior program and capitalize on your knowledge. As a former cadet, with the approval of your commander, you are eligible for promotion after completing Level II. Part I. Level II Part II requires a member to earn the Yeager Award and a Technician Rating in a specialty track.



"When I made the transition to senior member, I was able to use my cadet experience to help give a cadet's perspective to my squadron's leadership. Having that experience allowed me to suggest a number of positive changes to leadership that were implemented and helped improve our squadron. You bring a unique perspective to the senior member ranks and the Cadet Program is always in need of former cadets to transition and remain." Col John Rhoades, a former cadet who later served as Colorado Wing Commander.

Level III – The Leadership Phase (Grover Loening Aerospace Award)

Level III prepares members to lead at the squadron level while continuing to master their selected specialty track. Like the other levels, you will need to complete the corresponding Education and Training modules offered through Volunteer University. Some modules can be completed online on your own and at your own pace. Some modules require you to take them in person with an instructor or online as part of a cohort.

As you continue in your specialty track, you must attain a senior rating to complete Level III. Additionally, you must serve at least one year in a command or staff position and attend two wing, region, or national conferences (sorry, cadet attendance does not count). These are rewarding and can be pretty fun as you interact with other members from all over CAP. Finally, you must mentor another senior member through Level I of the Senior Member Education and Training Program.

Level IV & Level V – The Senior and Executive Leadership Phases



Former cadets Col JD Ellis and Col Jane Davies

“The Cadet Program helped me to immediately assume a leadership role in the senior member program. My focus was, and still is, to give back to the Cadet Program that I have benefitted from so much. Serving as a senior member mentoring cadets and other cadet leaders has allowed me the opportunity to do that. Nothing is more rewarding.” Col JD Ellis

These levels are much further down the road. They will provide you with a more holistic and strategic view of CAP as an organization. Level IV, the Senior Leadership Phase, will focus on how groups and wings work. Level V, the Executive Leadership Phase, focuses on how the region and national echelons work.

After Level V, you will be presented with the Gill Robb Wilson Award. The Wilson Award is the senior member equivalent of the Spaatz Award. It is the pinnacle of the Senior Member Education and Training Program. Only a small number of members have earned the Spaatz Award and the Wilson Award. Will you be one? If you could not earn the Spaatz Award, can you set your sights on the prestigious Wilson Award?

Specialty Track Selection

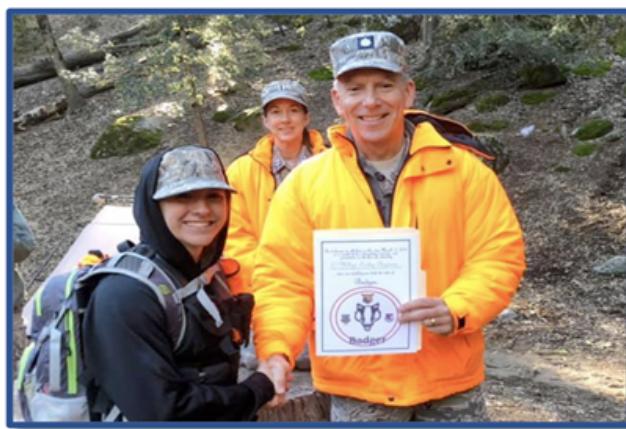
Soon after you transition, you will have a chance to participate in selecting a specialty track of study. Remember, your specialty track is related to one of the many different jobs available to you. You can choose an area you want to study based on the unit's needs. Almost every specialty has a pamphlet designed to acquaint the reader with what's expected in the job and has a checklist to record progression. Depending on the needs of the unit and your talents, you and your squadron commander will choose from among the following:

200 Personnel	212 Standardization and Evaluation	221 Chaplain
201 Public Affairs	213 Emergency Services	222 Command
202 Finance	214 Communications	223 Historian
203 Inspector General	215 Aerospace Education	225 Character Development
204 Education and Training	216 Cadet Programs	226 Recruiting and Retention Officer
205 Administration	217 Safety	227 Information Technology
206 Logistics	219 Legal	
211 Operations	220 Health Services	

When you receive a technician rating in a specialty track, you qualify for the Leadership Ribbon. Once you receive a senior rating, you will attach a bronze star and a silver star for a master rating.

How Senior Promotions Work

Promotions for senior members work differently than they do for cadets. Recall that promotions are part of a cadet's primary developmental experience in the Cadet Program and are tied to academic, experiential, and physical achievement. Cadets can't "bank" achievements, tests, or evaluations. As you remember, the mission of the cadet in the Cadet Program is to learn and grow. Cadets can also progress quickly and earn promotions as often as every 60 days.



Lt Col Ross Veta, a former cadet, who later served as California Wing Commander.

In contrast to the Cadet Program, tests are not the primary requirement for promotion in the senior program. Instead, there are training modules, job performance, and projects which show your progression. The mission of the senior member is to fulfill the missions of the Civil Air Patrol as an organization. Of course, senior members learn and grow along as they accomplish CAP's missions!

Promotion boards do not work the same way in the senior program. Senior members do not report to promotion boards like cadets. The senior program requires promotion boards, but they are more like a committee. Promotion boards in the senior program make a recommendation to the commander about promotions. Like the Cadet Program, there is an evaluation form for senior members; however, it is not required for advancement. Your mentor or commander may complete a CAPF 40 evaluating your performance. Use this opportunity to grow your skills, make a plan for the future, and explain how the unit can support your growth.

Perhaps most importantly, promotion is a symbol of your commander's faith in your potential, as well as the expectation that you will fulfill that potential in a more senior position. Your commander must certify that you have performed all duties assigned in an exemplary manner and that you are ready for increased rank and responsibilities.

There are two significant similarities: both the Cadet Program and the senior program have minimum time-in-grade requirements, and promotions are not automatic upon completing the requirements. Completion of the requirements makes one eligible, but the commander has the final call. As mentioned earlier, CAPR 35-5 is the publication the outlines promotions. Below is a chart outlining the duty performance promotions structure for CAP officers.

DUTY PERFORMANCE PROMOTION CHART FOR CAP OFFICERS					
	SECOND LIEUTENANT (2nd Lt)	FIRST LIEUTENANT (1st Lt)	CAPTAIN (Capt)	MAJOR (Maj)	LIEUTENANT COLONEL (Lt Col)
PERFORMANCE STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	EXEMPLARY	EXEMPLARY	EXEMPLARY	EXEMPLARY
	MEMBERSHIP LEVEL I, LEVEL II PART 1	GEN BENJAMIN O. DAVIS AWARD LEVEL II (PART 1 & 2) 	GROVER LOENING AEROSPACE AWARD LEVEL III 	PAUL A. GARBER AWARD LEVEL IV 	GILL ROBB WILSON AWARD LEVEL V
PREREQUISITES	6 MONTHS AS A SENIOR MEMBER (SM)	18 MONTHS AS A 2nd Lt	30 MONTHS AS A 1st Lt	4 YEARS AS Captain	5 YEARS AS Major
		COMPLETION OF LEVEL I	COMPLETION OF LEVEL II	COMPLETION OF LEVEL III	COMPLETION OF LEVEL IV
APPROVING AUTHORITY	UNIT COMMANDER	UNIT COMMANDER	GROUP COMMANDER (WING COMMANDER FOR WINGS WITH NO GROUPS)	WING COMMANDER	REGION COMMANDER

Documentation & Forms

CAP still uses a variety of forms to complete its business, especially on the local level. Below are some common forms you might see or use as a senior member:

CAPF 2: *Request for Promotion Action.* Senior members use this form to request promotions. The unit Personnel Officer can help you complete it and submit it.

CAPF 2A: *Request for and Approval of Personnel Actions.* Its best description is, "It's a general-purpose form." That's exactly what it is. Nearly every routine action, from appointments to service awards, can be initiated on this form (or its corresponding eServices function). The "Other" box in Section IV makes it genuinely multi-purpose. Each section refers to the guiding CAP regulation, making it very easy to complete.

CAPF 12: Application for Senior Membership. You must also send in your fingerprint card. Refer to CAPR 39-2.

CAPF 17: *Application for Senior Member Activities.* Think of it as the senior member version of Form 31. Not all activities use this form, so it's essential to follow the application instructions for each activity or to contact the activity director for direction.

CAPF 40: *CAP Performance Feedback Form.* The F40 is the senior equivalent of a CAPF 60-9X series of feedback forms. However, there is only one form for all levels, and it more closely resembles the review you would get from your employer.

CAPF 45: *Senior Member Education and Training Record.* This form records your progress at the unit level. It should be continuously updated and documented to back up the information in your eServices account. It also records unique local information not stored in eServices.

FD 258: *FBI Applicant Fingerprint Card.* This form must be submitted with the CAPF 12. Only this form may be used to record fingerprints.



**Col Alisha Cope, Chaplain Lt
Col John Reutemann, Lt Col
Aaron Angelini, and Lt Col
Dan Roman; staff at the
University of Rocky Mountain
Region at the U.S. Air Force
Academy. All are former
cadets.**

DEFINITIONS AND RESOURCES

It helps to know the language, so before going further, it's helpful to present a list of some acronyms and terms with which you might not yet be entirely familiar.

Cadet Sponsor Member (CSM): This is a special membership category for parents, guardians, and grandparents of cadets who wish to help but do not have the time to serve as fully active members. CSMs complete Level I and wear a distinctive uniform. They do not hold grades, and their contributions are limited to chaperoning and transporting cadets. However, many CSMs end up liking the program so much they become full members.

Patron Member: This is a special membership for those who want to donate funds to the Civil Air Patrol program but do not participate actively as a senior member. These members may retain certain benefits, such as being allowed to attend CAP-sponsored conferences but are not allowed to wear the uniform or fly/ride in CAP aircraft.

Aerospace Education Member (AEM): This is a special category of membership for members of the educational community who desire to promote CAP's objectives and purposes but do not desire to participate in the active membership program.

Specialty Track Pamphlets: This is a series of pamphlets that CAP uses as training guides and checklists for its staff positions and jobs, for example, Logistics, Cadet Programs, Aerospace Education, etc. A listing of all current specialty tracks available on page 20.

Specialty Track Ratings: Specialty tracks have three levels of achievement: Technician, Senior, and Master.

Education and Training Officer (ETO): This officer is responsible for planning, implementing, and tracking member progress through the Education and Training program within their unit. It's their job to help you get the training you need.

Professional Development Officer (PDO): This is a legacy term; it is now Education and Training Officer (ETO).

Squadron Commander Course (SCC): Volunteer University offers this training as electives for those in a Level III online cohort. Members can complete SCC in person also. While not required, it is recommended members complete these while enrolled in Level 3 training. This training is a replacement for the former Unit Commanders Course (UCC).

Aerospace Education Program for Senior Members (AEPSM): The Aerospace Education Program for Senior Members is related to the Yeager Award. This program is designed to provide senior members with a strong foundation in aerospace education and is very similar to the aerospace requirement of the Cadet Program. This self-study course, using the text, Aerospace: The Journey of Flight, is taken online in the AXIS eLearning module. You may log in to AXIS through the Learning Management System (LMS) in eServices. Former cadets who have received the Spaatz Award may receive credit for AEPSM after transition by emailing CAP/DP at Immeforms@capnhq.gov and requesting credit.

CAPR 30-1: Organization of Civil Air Patrol. This regulation provides an in-depth analysis of the various command structures within CAP. This regulation has an accompanying pamphlet that describes duty positions.

CAPR 39-1: CAP Uniform Regulation. This regulation tells you what you can wear and where to put it.

CAPR 39-2: CAP Membership. This regulation defines CAP membership categories and prescribes proper administrative procedures for membership application and renewal.

CAPR 39-3: Award of CAP Medals, Ribbons, and Certificates. This regulation describes the medals, ribbons, and certificates that may be awarded to Civil Air Patrol (CAP) members, establishes the requirements to qualify for them, explains the administrative procedures involved, and prescribes how the medals and ribbons are worn.

CAPR 35-1: Assignment and Duty Status. This regulation provides guidance on assignment and duty status procedures.

CAPR 35-5: CAP Officer and Noncommissioned Officer Appointments and Promotions. This regulation describes procedures on CAP promotions and demotions.

CAPR 40-1: The CAP Senior Member Education and Training Program. This regulation is the primary source of information about your development as a senior member.

CAPP 40-7: The CAP Mentoring Program. This pamphlet is the primary source of information about mentoring in the Civil Air Patrol.

CONCLUSION

The end of service in the Cadet Program is actually a new beginning in service to Civil Air Patrol. Many exciting leadership, training, and growth opportunities await you when you become a senior member.

Your experience as a cadet is very valuable to your unit and CAP. CAP values your service and wants you to continue to contribute and grow. As a senior member, you can teach a new generation of cadets what you learned. Please do not miss this chance to continue to pay it forward and to serve. It is extremely rewarding.

The key to your success as a senior member is a thorough understanding of the Education and Training program and the options it offers you. The more you explore those opportunities, the more you will find that you can use the experiences you gained as a cadet to help you as a senior member.

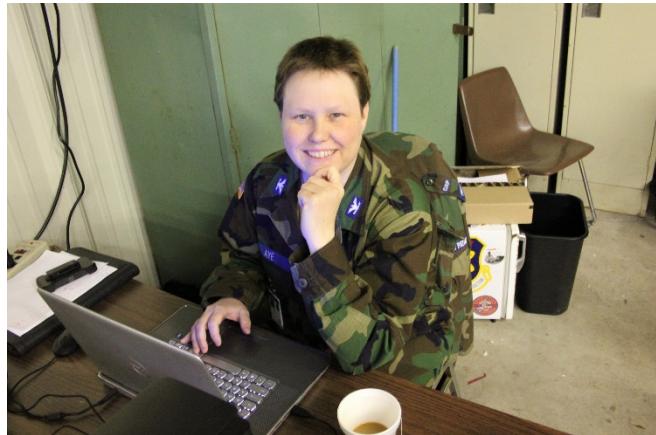
Take this pamphlet with you when you speak to the Education and Training Officer in your unit. Use it as a reference to ask questions throughout your transition and use it as a resource when younger cadets come to you for advice about becoming a senior member when it is time for them to transition.

You're making an important decision to continue your valuable service to Civil Air Patrol. We hope you find it fulfilling and will continue your membership for many years to come. Best wishes for success in your transition from cadet to senior member!

TESTIMONIALS

The following stories are from cadets who chose to move to Phase V and serve as CAP senior members regardless of how far they progressed in the Cadet Program. Each made different choices, and each balanced a variety of demands. Some continued to serve in Civil Air Patrol, and others let their membership lapse for a period. Each has words of wisdom for those considering the cadet to senior member transition. Can you see yourself in any of their stories? Will this be you a few years down the road?

Col Regena Aye, National Headquarters



Col Regena Aye became the Chief of Education and Training for Civil Air Patrol in May 2020 after finishing service as North Central Region Commander. Col Aye also served as the Activity Director for National Blue Beret. Outside of CAP, Col Aye is a professor and coordinator for the Instructional Design and Performance Improvement doctoral Program at Baker University.

"Wayne Gretsky said, 'You miss all the shots you don't take.' His quote has always inspired me to try things. I joined the Cadet Program late due to some health issues, so I was a seventeen-year-old cadet basic. That means I transitioned from high school to college while progressing in the Cadet Program. I struggled a little to balance CAP and school as a cadet, but I managed it. Moving to college also meant changing squadrons, and the closest unit was almost an hour away. I didn't attend weekly meetings consistently, and I maximized my CAP time during school breaks. The time management skills I learned in the Cadet Program helped me tremendously. I was motivated to stay a cadet because I wanted to earn the Spaatz Award and attend NCSAs, including the International Air Cadet Exchange. I completed the Cadet Program in 1992, just a couple of months before I turned twenty-one.

When I became a senior member at age twenty-one, my CAP world transitioned. I went from the top of the Cadet Program to a captain and ES officer in a unit. I had worked closely with some senior members before my transition, and they were very welcoming; however, my perception was that others did not want to work with cadets or young seniors. I think part of not feeling as welcome was my reluctance to move into the senior space, and I was not as outgoing as I should have been at that time. New things can be challenging. It was odd to go from saluting all the lieutenants in the unit to them saluting me. By that time, I was established in the college

community and more detached from my CAP community. I had a job on campus and an overload of classes because I changed majors. I was disconnected and barely active for a few years before I let my membership lapse when I was in a master's program and studying abroad in Russia.

Fast forward a few years, and I was married and working at a college. I came from work one day, and my husband had found a great activity we could both enjoy—serving in Civil Air Patrol. While I was able to jump back into CAP and happy to see old friends again, I regretted having let my membership lapse. I had to reestablish a lot of things, and it was not easy. I could have avoided all that trouble and set myself up for success had I thought to keep my membership. After I rejoined CAP, I found I loved it as much as I had before. I soon found myself serving as a squadron commander. I later applied for wing commander for the experience and was selected. I am a CAP member today because I am motivated to give back to a program that changed my life in countless positive ways. It helped me progress more quickly in my career and has given me invaluable leadership skills. If I had it to do again, I would be more outgoing as a new senior member to build stronger connections with the adults, and I would not let my membership lapse.

Col Joe Winter, National Headquarters



Col Joseph Winter was appointed the Provost, Volunteer U March 22, 2020. Before joining the Vol U team, Col Winter served as Maryland Wing Commander. He also served as the deputy director for the National Cadet Competition and Director of Cadet Officer School. Winter also is the former director of the Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Familiarization Course held at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, and the former director of the Air Force Space Command Familiarization Course in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Outside of Civil Air Patrol, Col. Winter is an Air Force officer, serving as the Commander of the 175th Force Support Squadron. In addition, Col. Winter is employed by Loyola University Maryland as an affiliate faculty member with the Communications Department, teaching courses in public relations.

"As I began to explore where to attend college, leaving the Cadet Program was never a consideration. As I visited college campuses, I also explored the local CAP unit to ensure that I continue my CAP cadet experience. As I chose a small liberal arts college outside of New York City, I remained active as a CAP cadet to my home squadron, participating as much as I could on weekends, holiday breaks, and virtually.

As I continued to stay engaged as a cadet, I began conversations with my mentors about how I would fit in as a new senior member. My mentor recommended that I challenge myself to get engaged in another mission area of CAP, or in a way that would be very different than my cadet experience. I thought that I was a well-rounded cadet engaged in emergency services, aerospace

education, and leadership development in the Cadet Program; however, I quickly realized that I had lots more to learn and grow. So with the help of others, when I became eligible, I transitioned to the senior member program and the New York Wing Staff as the director of development for the Cadet Program.

Because I was still finishing up my undergraduate pursuits, I knew I had to prioritize and balance my commitment as a student and my new role as a CAP senior member. For me, it was all about time and expectation management. Most importantly, I knew my limits, and professionally with CAP, it was an open conversation with my new CAP leadership about expectation management with time and performance. With those foundational expectations set, my transition to a new senior member was successful. I'm thankful that I had a mentor that helped guide me during my transition to the senior member program. I'm grateful they pushed me to do something that wasn't working directly with my peers but rather a position to use my talents and challenge me to grow personally.

Transitioning to the senior member program was something that I always knew that I would do. As a cadet, I don't think I had a great appreciation for the work behind the scenes to ensure that the Cadet Program was executed. For me (and my peers), we showed up at the squadron meeting, and magically the tools and resources were provided for us to execute the training plan. We just had to follow the breadcrumbs and participate in that leadership laboratory. It wasn't until I went off to college that I appreciated the role of having access weekly to amazing mentors who didn't just talk about CAP but life. During my freshman year in college, I missed that Wednesday night experience where I could simply ask life questions, explore why our training plan didn't work out well, and celebrate our junior cadets' success as they promoted – to name a few. Those moments of reflection that I knew I needed to repay the bank and step up to be that mentor to that thirteen-year-old former me, help transport cadets to weekend events, support the growth of the unit, and simply put, continue to serve. Since my first duty assignment as a senior member was on the wing staff, my squadron peer group interactions were limited. I think that helped set boundaries of being an adult member versus a cadet member. It allowed me to make new connections with CAP members while avoiding the temptation of reverting to my cadet experience. I also think that remaining engaged but not fully participating during college supported my transition. The closeness I had with my fellow cadets remained but the outside "hanging out" with my fellow cadets became less and less.

My advice to those cadet members who are thinking about making the transition to senior membership I offer you this piece of advice – do it! We owe it to the adult members who spend countless amounts of time, energy, and effort to help shape our lives, the lives of our fellow cadet members. The time to repay the leadership of our local squadron is now, and it's easily paid back

by giving back those few hours a week, which will help maintain that volunteer spirit of our program.

Col JD Ellis, Mid-Atlantic Region



Colonel Janon "JD" Ellis is currently the Deputy Chief of Staff for Cadet Programs, Mid-Atlantic Region, Civil Air Patrol. Colonel Ellis joined Civil Air Patrol (CAP) as a cadet in 1978 with continuous service to date. As a cadet, he served in numerous cadet positions to include the North Miami Cadet Squadron cadet commander and later cadet commander of the Miami Springs Optimist Cadet Squadron. He earned the General Carl A. Spaatz Award as a member of the Florida Wing and continued to serve CAP after being commissioned in the U.S. Air Force with Texas, Arkansas, and Illinois Wings. He also served overseas as the commander of the Yokota Cadet Squadron, Japan. Most recently, he served as the commander of the National Capital Wing. Colonel Ellis is a 23-year veteran of the U.S. Air Force, where he earned the rating of master navigator with over 4000 hours in the C-130. Colonel Ellis retired from active duty service in the USAF in 2009 and is currently a Department of the Air Force civilian on the Headquarters USAF staff.

"I was still progressing in the Cadet Program until nineteen years of age; as a result, I did not give transitioning to senior membership earlier much thought. My goal was to finish the program to include earning the Spaatz Award. Once that was accomplished at nineteen, I only had 22 months remaining as a cadet anyway. Besides, I considered the Cadet Program much more fun!"

In my first year as a senior member, I had to balance my studies as a senior in college and my final year as an AFROTC cadet. It was not difficult to balance as the transition from cadet to senior was pretty much seamless. As a Cadet Colonel in the squadron, I was treated as a senior member; the only difference was changing the epaulets and having an official senior member duty title. To me, this is how the cadet to senior transition should occur. In other words, prepare to become a senior member while still a cadet.

If I had it to do all over again, I would not change a thing! I encourage everyone to remain a cadet if you are able. I understand that things do come up at times where this may not be possible. An individual has many more years as a senior member than a cadet. Time is limited as a cadet so cherish it!

I transitioned at age twenty-one to senior (remained active in CAP) because my goals were (and still is) to give back to the cadets and CAP in general for all that I have experienced in CAP. Not just the "book knowledge" but the maturity, leadership, communications skills, professionalism, attention

to detail, and the countless traits I've been taught through those experiences. Just as important were the life-long friendships made. I still have regular contact with some of my fellow cadets...40 years of friendship! Service as a CAP senior member allows me to continue to help. Teach, advise, and mentor cadets and senior members alike.

I suggest getting ready, the sooner, the better! Have an experienced and respected CAP senior member mentor you. Learn from them what it takes to become an effective and successful senior member and leader. Also, learn any technical traits from them, if applicable. Learn not just from one but many; you can have more than one mentor!

The Cadet Program prepared me to assume a leadership role in the senior member program immediately. My focus was and still is to give back to the Cadet Program that I have benefited from so much. Serving as a senior member mentoring cadets and other cadet leaders has allowed me the opportunity to do that. Nothing is more rewarding!"

Lt Col Jennifer Smith, Missouri Wing



Lt Col Jennifer Smith serves as the Missouri Wing Chief of Staff. She previously served in Cadet Programs positions and coached the Cadet Competition Team. She also served as a squadron commander and is a Character Development Instructor.

"My Civil Air Patrol cadet to senior transition involves a long period of being a nonmember, inactive in the program. As a cadet, I stayed active in the program until about age twenty. At age nineteen, I had received my Spaatz Award; I participated in IACE and continued to be an active member at a local squadron in my college town. At age twenty, Civil Air Patrol became less of a priority and harder to relate with cadets (too young) and senior members (too old or not appropriate). I had not found my place, and my interests were changing. My membership lapsed as I became busy with school, working, and then getting married and starting a family.

After a 15 year break, when my son became old enough to join the program, I rejoined Civil Air Patrol. Not only was the difference between being a cadet versus a senior member a drastic difference, but the program had changed a great deal as well. Initially, I joined to be a part of the program with my son, no big goals for myself; I was happy to be the squadron CDI and help out where needed.

Civil Air Patrol gave me so much more as a senior member. The program became a significant part of life for us (my son and me), something for us to do together, talk about and have a passion for together. For that special bond, I am incredibly grateful to Civil Air Patrol. The program has also been incredible in my personal and professional development; I had forgotten so much about what CAP has to offer. Civil Air Patrol has pushed me out of my comfort zone from public speaking to planning to leadership roles and allowed me incredible opportunities. I only wanted to be the CDI when I returned and have learned and loved so much in moving forward from Deputy Commander of Cadets to Squadron Commander to Chief of Staff.

I haven't even gotten to the best part, giving back. As a former cadet, the Cadet Program will always be near to my heart and to be on the senior member side of the program is extraordinary! To play the smallest part in seeing a cadet achieve more, progress in the program, self-discipline at school or work is the most incredible payback. My interest doesn't end there as I love all the missions and opportunities Civil Air Patrol offers. I've been back in the program for nine years, and there is still so much more to learn; I have so many things I want to do in the program, different areas to understand, mission areas to participate within. During my 15 years out of the program, I was busy with family and other areas of interest; in retrospect, I regret not being a part of the program in some form. I feel like I could be further in my knowledge and training. Civil Air Patrol has made me a better person, and I am incredibly grateful to have rejoined as a senior member."

Lt Col Sarah Wildman, North Central Region



Lt Col Sarah Wildman is the assistant Standards and Evaluation Officer for North Central Region. She completed a term serving as Director of Safety for the region in May 2020. She is a professional pilot.

"Professionally, I graduated college with a Professional Pilot degree and immediately started a simulator co-pilot internship. I moved on to flying small business jets for a small charter company, becoming Captain-qualified after a couple of years. Now I fly jets as a charter pilot for a different company.

I joined CAP at age seventeen, participated in Color Guard and ES training, and then moved out of state for college. A local squadron welcomed me and helped me continue my cadet career. I joined the Wing Staff as a college sophomore and a C/CMSgt, gaining experience organizing and leading through all areas of CAP – ES weekends, Cadet Programs events, Safety program administration, Professional Development courses, flight instructing, and more. I finished up the 14th achievement in the Cadet Program and am pleased to earn the Earhart Award before aging out. I stayed a cadet until age twenty-one because I immensely enjoyed my cadet experience, knew it was a unique opportunity available for a limited time, and very much wanted to complete as many of the Achievements as possible. I made Cadet Major in my three and a half cadet years.

Upon transition to senior membership, I continued to help with numerous activities. I balanced a demanding major, part-time work as a student, and part-time work as a flight instructor with being a new senior member. In my first year as a senior member, I didn't see much change as I had already been doing so much and balancing the same items as a cadet. I think it worked out well. It was a learning experience about what I could handle and what I should focus on.

If I had to do it over again, I would make the same choice. I'd stay a cadet as long as I could for the opportunities and then transition to senior. I transitioned to senior membership because I enjoyed the friendships and the learning I was gaining. I got to impact others and give back. Four months after I turned senior, I was invited to teach cadets at a National Flight Academy. How amazing is that? To have JUST been a cadet, to know first-hand how the program works and the considerable effort and time commitment required to be selected for an NCSA, and then get to help three cadets know the accomplishment of a first solo. It's hard to beat that satisfaction!

Since I transitioned to senior membership, there have been times that work had to come first, and my CAP activities have been minimal. My schedule can make it hard to participate, but you have to prioritize and look for opportunities to do things you enjoy. I have worked with local leaders and contacts to find a role to participate in during those times.

There are some advantages to being a senior member and some positives. I don't miss the PT test! Seriously: the camaraderie among members, the opportunity to help both fellow members and the community, the unique flying, and the long-term mentors I've gained. Those things are invaluable. There are a lot of senior members in CAP who work in aviation. I have met women and pilots who work for a variety of companies and in other roles. When I have career questions, I have a great network of colleagues willing to share their wisdom.

If I could give cadets transitioning to senior membership one or two suggestions, I would start researching the senior member training structure and service areas. Talk to seniors about the

ones you find interesting, and maybe they could use your help before you turn senior. Participate in a variety of cadet opportunities – a broad experience builds long-term skills and knowledge to draw upon. And more senior leaders than you might realize are former cadets who would be happy to answer questions."

Major Julian "Cosmo" Gluck, Louisiana Wing



Major Julian "Cosmo" Gluck, CAP, is an international non-profit leader and Air Force bomber pilot who flew combat missions as part of the campaign against ISIS and the Taliban. A member of the Civil Air Patrol since 2005, he was honored for "exemplary military service ... beyond the call of duty" as the 2018 Air Force Times Airman of the Year. Major Gluck is a recipient of the 2019 Secretary of the Air Force Leadership Award and was named to the 2020 Forbes 30 Under 30 as a standout honoree for Law and Policy in North America.

"My participation as a cadet in the Civil Air Patrol was foundational in my leadership journey, and continuing to volunteer as a senior member has been a personally meaningful way to prepare the next generation.

I knew as a cadet that I wanted to give back to this organization when an adult, but before joining the fabled "dark side," I set a goal of finishing out the Cadet Program by earning the Spaatz Award. The son of a former cadet who became a senior member, I finally decided to join CAP at the end of my high school freshman year. Although striving to advance as rapidly as I could on a condensed timetable, I shipped off to the Air Force Academy in 2008 with just the Eaker and Spaatz unchecked. Rather than transitioning to the senior side immediately—particularly since I was fully involved in academic studies and Academy activities—I proceeded to knock out my remaining Cadet Program requirements when time allowed during our short school breaks over the next few years.

"Listen, if you had one shot or one opportunity to seize everything you ever wanted in one moment, would you capture it, or just let it slip?" Like Eminem said, you only have one opportunity to be a CAP cadet. Thankfully you get three shots at the Spaatz exam. After not having looked at the material for several years and then studying for the "final test" as if it were a university exam, I made sure I was calm and ready, passing the Spaatz (#1801) over the summer before my firstie (senior) year, a couple of months before turning twenty-one.

I sent in my paperwork to transition to senior membership a few months later but just continued to pay my dues in the background for a few years. It was not until after having graduated Euro-

NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training and feeling more settled in my role as a B-52 pilot following my first deployment that I became an active participant in a unit again—this time as a senior member. Senior membership provides outstanding opportunities to grow as a leader and make a significant difference in others' lives. With the specialty tracks, emergency services, and a wide variety of programs, there is something (and likely many things) that you will find enjoyable and meaningful. Over the past decade, I have appreciated serving as a Cadet Programs officer and deputy commander, assisting at encampments and activities, and speaking to large groups of cadets and seniors. Training cadets and leaders of cadets while concurrently serving as an Air Force officer and pilot helps connect me with my roots and instills pride in returning the favor that many thousands and I received when cadets through the virtue of others' input and dedication to this program. Additionally, I have found mentorship and giving back through The Spaatz Association meaningful.

Finally, I certainly encourage cadets to make the most of their time in the Cadet Program, whether that includes flying training or national cadet special activities. Just remember that the Spaatz is not the end of your journey in CAP. There is more beyond the "Cadet Super Chart" to accomplish and learn and others to serve and lead as a senior member. Your journey is just beginning.

For more stories on his experiences as a cadet and senior member, check out the link to Major Gluck's 2020 CAP National Conference Keynote Speech here:

<https://vimeo.com/451923717/4f4e9f63cd> "

Capt Boaz Fink, North Central Region



Capt Fink majored in engineering at the University of Minnesota and was an ROTC student. He commissioned in May 20201 and joined the Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program (ENJJPT). ENJJPT is the world's only multi-nationally manned and managed flying training program chartered to produce combat pilots for NATO. This fighter-focused pilot training program is the most competitive flight training program in the U.S. Air Force, with only the top 50 cadets in all of Air Force ROTC being selected.

Captain Boaz Fink joined Civil Air Patrol in 2011 as a cadet. He attended four encampments as a cadet and Region Cadet Leadership School, National Flight Academy, Cyber Academy, Undergraduate Pilot Familiarization Course, and National Blue Beret. He also served on staff at many events, including National Cadet Competition, Cadet Honor Academy, and National Cadet

Competition. Boaz earned the General Carl A. Spaatz Award in March 2019. He transitioned to senior membership in September 2019. Capt Fink previously assisted with teaching the online Unit Commanders Course before becoming a Volunteer University Instructor.

"I stayed a cadet until I was twenty-one, mostly because I wasn't doing anything in CAP where being a senior member was vital. As a cadet, I had much easier access to NCSAs, which I valued in my cadet career. Being a cadet also didn't stop me from flying, which was another passion of mine.

I balanced a lot as a new senior member. To be honest, CAP fell pretty low on the priorities list; however, I was always able to carve out time for it. For me, being in engineering, Air Force ROTC, and in a fraternity made me figure out how to manage my time. Being involved in CAP is something I love doing, so I did it when I could, and if school got busy, I'd take a break from it. The key is to find a CAP role that has that flexibility and helps out where you can.

Looking back, I absolutely would have made the same decision. I loved being a cadet and all of the opportunities that came with that. In my mind, I had the rest of my adult life to be a senior member, so why rush it? There are some things I like about being a senior member. I like being able to get credit for the work I do as a senior member. There are many restrictions for cadets and what positions they can hold, and by the time I was a 20-year-old cadet, I was doing a lot of things senior members do. By transitioning to senior membership, I was able to be put in duty positions that reflected the work I was doing for CAP.

For those cadets considering the transition to senior membership or even a lapse in membership because life is busy, I have some advice. KEEP YOUR MEMBERSHIP! At the end of the day, even if you can't give time to CAP, it's still a donation to a great organization, right? I will always be grateful for the opportunities that CAP gave me, and I know that I may not be able to give back to CAP as much as I want to in the early stages of my career. But in the future, it'll be a lot easier to get involved while still being a member and not losing all of the credit I worked so hard to earn. Maintain your priorities. CAP will always take more of your time if you offer it, and I've seen many new senior members get burnt out from CAP because they didn't balance their involvement with CAP with other things they wanted to do. CAP will always be there, so find a way to be involved sustainably. You'll enjoy it a lot more that way."

Capt Klara Olcott, Arizona Wing



Capt Klara Olcott is the Commander of the 388th Composite Squadron in the Arizona Wing. She transitioned to senior membership in 2016 at the age of twenty-one.

"I waited as long as I could to transition to the senior side, but I knew I would because I had been accepted as a peer in emergency services and as a leader in Cadet Programs. My grade didn't matter; my position (GBD) and experience did. I was balancing work, private pilot training, and then EMT training. I thought I might not have time to be a senior, but the great thing about CAP is you can participate as much or little as you choose, as long as you are serving in a supportive role."

Some roles are not as flexible and can take a lot of time. Command roles or those where you are the primary officer in a duty position should be allotted the time they are due. Don't take a job you don't have time to do well. Just like in the Cadet Program, others count on you to contribute to the team. As a new senior, I started as Administrative Officer for my unit and designed our Google Drive file system, and gave all staff access to their areas, so it decentralized my tasks and helped us pass our SUI without a single discrepancy! Not only did it end up taking less time after my initial work, I was later selected as Wing Administrative Officer of the Year.

If I had it to do all over again, I would transition exactly when I did. There are often more benefits to being a cadet if you are eligible to remain with it. It is essential to focus on developing areas of interest and skills in the departments of CAP that are predominately for seniors to ease the transition. You can begin to interact more with seniors and learn more about duty positions before transitioning to senior membership. It's okay to ask questions and to do the things the regulations allow.

Dedicated seniors helped me and sacrificed for me throughout my cadet career, and I wanted to pay that forward. The professional development credit that carried over from being a Spaatz also helped; it's a great thing after years in a program not to start from zero. I enjoy the shared love of aviation with a group of people that I had already grown to admire and become close friends with. Being a senior member is about being part of a community of fellowship, service,

and professionalism. I enjoy contributing to a community that prefers to be constantly learning and to give so much more than it takes.

If I could give cadets transitioning to senior membership advice, I would tell them to get a mentor and distance themselves from their former role. I had disconnected from my squadron for the last few years of being a cadet since I was serving at region and National. Later, I also distanced myself from my squadron and wing for a couple of years to continue growing and engaging as a senior in leadership positions at higher echelon activities. When I reconnected with my unit's senior side, I still didn't do much with the cadet side. I regularly attended senior meetings, became a staff officer for over a year, then served as deputy commander for seniors, and was mentored into becoming commander about a year later.

While it has been one of my greatest challenges, becoming a squadron commander, and being mentored into it the year prior, has been a rewarding experience. Working with a staff that appreciates and respects me helps me know I made the right decision to continue serving my squadron. I have now served as commander for a whole year, and my technical proficiencies have been particularly helpful."

1st Lt Cole Oakland, Kansas Wing



1st Lt Cole Oakland is an EMT/Paramedic. He serves on the Kansas Wing staff and the National Blue Beret staff. Cole chose to transition to senior membership before the age of twenty-one.

"Starting my CAP service in December 2009, my time in Civil Air Patrol has been full of wild, fun adventures and experiences. I started in Kansas City and gained valuable leadership experience at the Squadron level before attending National Blue Beret in 2015. Foxtrot Flight still holds a special place in my heart! I was fortunate to participate in NBB once more as a cadet on the Public Affairs Team. The pinnacle of my cadet career was my time as the Wing CAC Chairman and Region CAC representative, where I directly impacted the Cadet Program throughout Kansas and North Central Region. I served with some great leaders and had amazing mentors like Colonel Regena Aye and Colonel Linette Lahan. I also want to touch on my time with the Colorado and Pennsylvania Wing Encampments, some of the most memorable activities throughout my CAP career.

My experience in the Cadet Program was terrific; I was exposed to many new experiences, had the opportunity to serve in various positions at wing and region, and enjoyed the leadership education provided through the program. With that said, I chose to transition to the senior program because I was ready to assume a new level of leadership in the organization. Even as a flight officer, I felt I could act as a subject matter expert on behalf of cadets to senior leadership when issues arose on either side.

I transitioned to senior member shortly after my eighteenth birthday and joined the flight officer ranks. I chose to do this because I moved to a different city whose squadron was at risk of folding due to inadequate senior membership. After many discussions with several senior leaders, including my wing and present squadron commanders, I decided to become a senior member.

Fast forward to 2021; I have served five years as a senior member and haven't had a single day that I regretted. I started in the flight officer ranks and was fortunate to serve on wing staff as a Public Affairs Officer and serve in two squadrons in various leadership positions. On top of that, I've been to NBB three times on the PAO staff and have helped mold cadet PAOs into exceptional leaders. My time as a senior member has been different than my cadet experience, but the increased responsibility has been something I have thoroughly enjoyed. I have served as a Public Information Officer for two primary CAP missions in Kansas and worked with several state and regional leaders to spread CAP's message and missions to various government agencies and the general public.

During my time as a flight officer, I continued my service in the public affairs section and brought my cadet experience to the senior membership. I enjoyed providing mentorship and advice to cadets who also struggled to decide whether to transition at eighteen or continue through the Cadet Program. The senior program brings a new level of responsibility and a sense of duty that I thoroughly enjoy. Some might suggest that being a flight officer and a senior under the age of twenty-one is awkward. From my experience, being a flight officer was not uncomfortable in the slightest. I felt that I could bring my experiences as a cadet to the table and function as a senior member leader in my duties. I will say, the decision to transition at age eighteen takes a lot of maturity. To be taken seriously as a senior member by both cadets and seniors, you have to interact with adult members in a more mature fashion than as a cadet. You also have to be able to interact with cadets on a senior level. You are no longer a "peer," but a leader, and your attitude must be able to reflect this.

My advice to transitioning cadets is to seek a mentor who has experienced what you are going through and ask for advice. Also, use your Unit and Wing leadership to your advantage, and seek out their guidance. Ultimately, do what YOU believe is the right thing- this choice will affect you and you alone."

TRANSITION CHECKLIST

Things to check on when I meet with the Personnel Officer

- Has my CAPF 12 marked "Cadet to Senior" and fingerprint card been sent to NHQ?
 - Do I need to pay dues as a senior or a cadet?
- Might I be eligible for an advanced promotion based on my cadet service?
- What ribbons that I earned as a cadet can be worn as a senior?
- Do I need to email CAP/DP at Immeforms@capnhq.gov for specialty track or Yeager credit?
- What duty positions might be of interest to me and help me with my career or work? What positions does the unit need to be filled?

Things to check on when I meet with the Education and Training Officer

- What advanced credit in the Education and Training program might I be eligible for?
- How much of Level I do I need to complete as a former cadet?
- What Specialty Tracks am I interested in?
- With unit approval of my specialty track, has that enrollment been recorded in my online record?
- Have I downloaded my specialty track study guide from the <http://www.capmembers.com> website?
- What training that I completed in the Cadet Program can be carried over into the Senior Program?
- Has completion of the above training been recorded in my online file?
- Does the unit have a mentor for me, or should I request one through the Mentoring Program?

Phase V: Moving Beyond the Cadet Program
A Guide for Cadet to Senior Member Transition

NHQ CAP/ET

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