

SAF/PA Quarterly Newsletter

Aug 2021

Training and Development

Air Force Public Affairs Webinars Available Online

In addition to information about upcoming PA webinars, a variety of recorded webinars on topics important to the career field are available on PA SharePoint.

DINFOS Professional Development Webinars Broadcast Monthly

DINFOS is providing monthly professional development opportunities via Facebook Live the last Wednesday of every month at 2 p.m. Eastern on the DINFOS Facebook page. Please free to share ideas for future topics and guests.

New CCAF Degree Available Soon

The Military Technology and Applied Sciences Management CCAF degree, which is the replacement degree program for Airmen who attend joint schools, is forecast to be available in October. Degree requirements are the same as for other CCAF degree programs: 60 semester hours (SH) and students should be at least a Journeyman (5 skill-level) at the time of graduation. A minimum of 15 SHs of AU/CCAF institutional credit must be applied, and a minimum of 9 SHs must be applied in each academic discipline area. Remaining credit may be applied from institutional, non-institutional (UGT, SQT, ACE, certifications, ITRO), and in-transfer credit.

Civilian Tuition Assistance Offered

The Civilian Tuition Assistance Program provides 75 percent of tuition costs up to \$4,500 per fiscal year (not to exceed \$250 per semester hour or \$166 per quarter hour) to all permanent, full-time appropriated fund employees, including those in wage grade positions.

AF civilians can also use credit-by-exam via the College Level Examination Program, Defense Activities for Non-Traditional Educational Support, and Subject Standardized Tests. Each of these are free when taken at an on-base or fully funded testing center.

Grants for PRSA and IABC Accreditation Available

The Air Force Public Affairs Alumni Association offers monetary grants to help offset the cost of accreditation by two professional communication organizations.

AFPAAA will provide up to four grants of \$250 each per fiscal year to Air Force personnel who successfully complete accreditation by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) or International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). To

help offset the expense of the application for accreditation, applicants can submit a request - along with proof of accreditation - within 18 months of certification to scholarship@afpaaa.org.

To be eligible, an applicant must be:

- Enlisted (through E-8), Civilian (through GS-14), or Officer (through O-5)
- Active, Guard, or Reserve
- Not receiving financial assistance for accreditation from another source (e.g. a Reservist's civilian employer, or Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line for eligible enlisted people)

To view this and more information visit <https://afpaaa.org/activities.html#support>

(AFPAAA, Lou Timmons, loutimmons@gmail.com)

2021 Education With Industry Fellows Presentations Online

The 2021 EWI Fellows recently presented their capstone projects to senior PA leaders.

Management and Resources

Ensure Your Duty Titles/Duty AFSCs Are Correct

Per AFI 35-101, para 1.17.2, all new public affairs officer accessions or cross-flows will have the duty title "Public Affairs Officer" until fully qualified as 35P3s. Additionally, they will have the Duty AFSC of 35P1 until they have completed all the core tasks in the CFETP and 18 months of on-the-job experience in a PA office. This applies to all officers regardless of assignment location.

Update on Public Affairs Duty Identifier

The Public Affairs duty identifier that was approved at the SAF/PA level has not yet been approved for wear by AF/A1. The wear and purchase of the identifiers is not authorized until final approval and publishing in AFI 36-2903. The most current list of approved Duty ID Patches can be found in table 5.1 of AFI 36-2903.

Update Your Contact Information

PCS? PCA? Change jobs? Not sure what contact information is current where? All good reasons to check the following:

AFPC Secure: Your official email is displayed at the top left of the screen. Click on "Click here to update your information."

myPers: After logging on, go to "My Account" and click on "My Profile" to check your primary and alternate (personal) email accounts.

vMPF: Check your work/home email addresses and phone numbers on the verification page that pops up when you log on. Also check that your new AEF Indicator was properly assigned (required within 15 days of arrival). Airmen with invalid or blank AEFIs are considered available, per AFI 10-401.

MyVector: After logging in, go to “My Profile” and update your duty title and phone number.

MilConnect: The Global Address List (GAL) contains work contact information for all mail.mil email addresses, which forward to AF E4C. Changes made in MilConnect transfer to the GAL. Sign in to MilConnect and under “I want to...” click on “Update work contact info (GAL).”

Air Force Directory Services: If you’re assigned outside the Air Force, forward your Air Force E4C e-mail to your new e-mail account by submitting a request here. From the menu, under “Custom Recipients, Single Users,” select “Submit or Change Request” and enter the required information. A confirmation will be sent within 24-28 hours with a link to activate e-mail forwarding. Verify it was established by going to “User Self Service,” “View Report,” “email.”

PACE Awards Guidance Available Soon

Guidance for the 2021 Public Affairs Communication Excellence Awards will be available soon so it’s time to start working on submissions. All activities cited in entries must have taken place between 1 Oct 20 and 30 Sep 21. For inspiration in writing your 2021 PACE Awards entries, see the 2020 winners.

Interested in upcoming civilian job vacancies? Check here!

Staying up to date on upcoming position vacancies allows you to be better prepared to apply for a position when it posts.

To review the Request for Personnel Action (RPA) Tracker, log in to myPers. Then click on “Resources for FSS” (upper right), then click on “Civilian Personnel Flight.” Select “Request for Personnel Action Tracker” under Most Viewed Articles, or enter “23172” in the search box, then click “Request for Personnel Action Tracker.”

Select “Fill RPA Status Report” to see all Air Force RPAs. To narrow the search from the several thousand RPAs from every career field, filter the database by the “PP-SRS-GR” (pay plan, occupational series, grade) column and search for the occupational series (1035, 1084, 1071, 1060, 1020, 1001, etc.).

Strategy and Assessments

Vector and Waypoints Updates

We've made some major improvements to Vector and Waypoints, our engagement planning and message sites. Both tools are always available through the Tell Our Story page on the Air Force Portal.

Vector users can now:

- Manage the PA engagements assigned to them through customized views that show Vector entries each user has entered and those for which they've been assigned as a POC
- Search a database of media queries, or log the queries they handle
- Search a database of senior leader quotes, or enter quotes they want to archive
- Open any single entry in Vector to see how it relates to other entries.

Waypoints now supplements high-level talking points on department and service priorities with an updated collection of talking points on 50+ issues and counting. The site also allows you to access an interactive dashboard of senior leader quotes that have been entered in Vector.

Media Operations

Service Member Verification Requests

Over the past few months, we've seen an uptick of Airmen and Guardian service verification media requests. If it appears a reporter is fact-finding versus responding to an incident about an Airman or Guardian, please make sure they are providing you with either a DOB or a SSN so you can ensure you are releasing the correct information. As you can imagine, there are many common names within the Department of the Air Force. You can also refer the reporter to either SAF/PA or AFPC/PA, who will be able to do a full service verification. If identifying information (DOB or SSN) is provided by the reporter, please make sure you follow the guidelines in AFI 35-101 para 2.6. prior to release.

Current Top Line Messages

Wing and MAJCOM/FieldCom PA offices are able to find the current top line messages that Department of the Air Force senior leaders are using via the Waypoints website under the current issues tab.

Signature Blocks

As a reminder, PAs should include a phone number in their signature blocks. We want to make sure we make it as easy as possible for media and fellow PAs to be able to contact us.

Official Senior Leader Photos

Senior leader photos will be posted to af.mil when they are available.