



Northeast Texas AFA 416

Educate, Advocate, Support, and Inspire Military Service

Our mission is to promote dominant U.S. Air & Space Forces as the foundation of a strong National Defense; to honor and support our Airmen, Guardians, and their Families; and to remember and respect our enduring Heritage.”

Educate the public on the critical need for unmatched aerospace power and a technically superior workforce to ensure U.S. national security.

Advocate for aerospace power and STEM education.

Support the total Air Force family and promote aerospace education.

The chapter is part of the AFA National (www.afa.org), headquartered in Virginia, the Texoma Region, comprised of AFA chapters in Oklahoma and Texas, and the Texas AFA (www.texasafa.org). The Air & Space Forces Association is the voice for aerospace power and the Air & Space Forces family. We connect service members, and the total Force family, through professional development, unique programs, and support initiatives before, during, and beyond their time in uniform.

Northeast Texas, Chapter 416 of the Air & Space Forces Association (AFA) is a non-profit, independent, professional military and aerospace education association that promotes public understanding of aerospace power and the pivotal role it plays in the security of the nation. Led by volunteers, we educate the public about national defense, how to support the members of our Air & Space Forces and their families and promote Aerospace Education designed to better our youth, communities, and nation. Our chapter area represents Northeast Texas from Rockwall, East to Arkansas, North to Oklahoma and south to the Athens area.

The chapter strives to positively impact communities. The chapter encourages and supports STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) activities and school education programs. We provide support for robotics, drones, solar cars, early college training, girls, and other programs. We employ the AFA developed CyberPatriot (www.uscyberpatriot.org) and StellarXplorer (www.stellarxplorers.org) programs and provide support to schools who use them. We provide some financial, industry, and member support to school and Civil Air Patrol (Air Force Auxiliary) programs. We offer school program grants and funding for their educational programs as well as offer student scholarships through AFA and through our annual high school senior essay contest. View more about our programs.

We are the **recipients of National and State awards** including the prestigious AFA Texas Chapter of the Year, the National Community Partner Gold Award for excellence in partnering with our communities, and Academic Achievement Awards for our STEM education efforts.

We can always use new talent, help with our programs, and more. You can learn more by reviewing www.netxafa.org or reaching out to TX416.Northeast.President@afa.org or TX416.Northeast.Treasurer@afa.org, or calling/texting Vance Clarke, at 903-274-9981.



Inspire Military Service



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

LIEUTENANT COLONEL STEVEN L. LEMAIRE

Lt Col Steven LeMaire is the Commander, 344th Recruiting Squadron, Arlington, TX. He leads a squadron of eight flights of 93 people across Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, covering 106,000 square miles. He partners with military, civic, community and educational organizations to inspire, engage and recruit future Airmen and Guardians to deliver airpower for America.

He manages a \$1 million budget, contributing to training pipeline sustainment, force management goals, and strategically the readiness of the U.S. Air Force to deter war and protect the security of our nation. The squadron's mission is to inspire, engage, and recruit diverse, highly qualified applicants to ensure our nation's continued total force dominance through Air, Space and Cyberspace.



Lt. Col. LeMaire was commissioned in 2008 after graduating from Angelo State University, Texas AFROTC program. He held a variety of positions as an Operations Research Analyst at the squadron level, Army Joint Test and Evaluation Program Office, Headquarters Air Force, Air Operations Center, and Director, Commander's Action Group for Twelfth Air Force (Air Forces Southern). Prior to his current position, he served as the Chief, Strategic and Operational Plans, Planning Enterprise A5X at Twelfth Air Force (Air Forces Southern), Davis – Monthan AFB in Tucson, AZ.

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

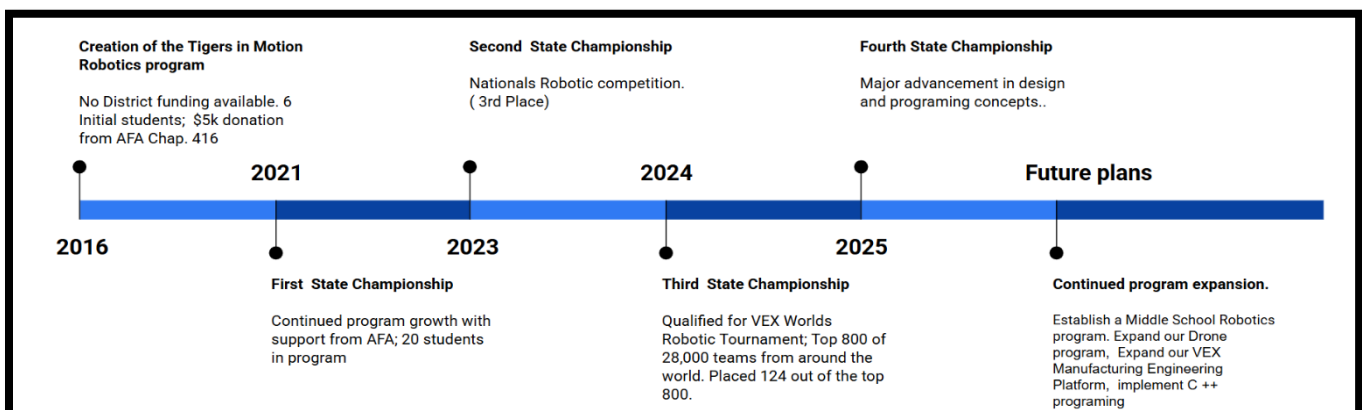
Defense Meritorious Service Medal
Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster
Joint Service Commendation Medal
Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster



OUR STORY: COMMERCE TIGERS IN MOTION ROBOTICS

Commerce Tigers in Motion was established in 2016. At the time, no funding was available from the district, and I was encouraged to contact the Air Force Association chapter 416 in Greenville, who had a strong reputation of supporting STEM programs in local school districts.

After our initial introduction I was asked to make a presentation before the Chapter 416, AFA Board. During the presentation I had the opportunity to meet Terry Thomas, Vance Clarke, Lt. Col. Larry Ratliff, (USAF Ret.) and Tom Bailey. These gentlemen would help lay the foundation for the incredible success our program would have in the future. Shortly (minutes) after that initial presentation AFA presented our program with a check for \$5,000!





Teacher of the Year

Receiving \$500, Mementos, and Competing at AFA Texas

Dana O'Neal

Chapter 416 is pleased to nominate Dana O'Neal for 2025 Teacher of the Year. Dana has been a tremendously resourceful teacher who provides a model for others. She found the AFA National grants to fund her 2024 schoolwork. The chapter was made aware of her grant and led her to Civil Air Patrol resources and has been working hard to build her 2025 program. She was impressed with AFA programs and is coaching a team in StellarXplorers. This on top of the rocketry and astronomy work tied into her students' studies. A truly exceptional educator, Dana has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to fostering curiosity, innovation, and excellence in her students and colleagues. Her multifaceted contributions to the field of education, her students, and the broader community exemplify the qualities of an outstanding teacher.

Tremendous Educator: O'Neal is a master educator who teaches Biology, Astronomy, and Environmental Science with passion and expertise. Her dynamic teaching methods inspire students to explore the intricacies of the natural world, the mysteries of the cosmos, and the importance of sustainable practices. She creates engaging lessons that cater to diverse learning styles, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed and develop a lifelong love of science.



Inspires Student Achievement: Her dedication extends beyond the classroom, as she coached students in prestigious national competitions such as Plant the Moon, Artemis ROADS Challenges, and Stellar Explorers. Under her mentorship, students have gained hands-on experience in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), cultivating skills that will serve them in their academic and professional pursuits. These competitions have provided students with the confidence and knowledge to tackle real-world challenges, reflecting Dana's ability to bring science to life.

Dana is renowned for her creative and impactful instructional techniques, including the use of rocket launches to teach scientific principles. By incorporating this unique and exciting approach, she not only enhances students' understanding of physics, aerodynamics, and engineering but also instills a sense of wonder and curiosity that ignites a passion for learning. Her hands-on activities make science accessible and thrilling for all students, fostering an environment where inquiry and discovery thrive.

Support for Fellow Educators Dana is a dedicated advocate for professional collaboration and growth. She has created and shared instructional support materials with her colleagues, enabling them to enhance their own teaching practices. By fostering a culture of teamwork and innovation, Dana has had a far-reaching impact on her school and beyond. Her efforts to uplift and support other educators demonstrate her commitment to the collective success of the teaching profession.



Teacher of the Year Runner-up

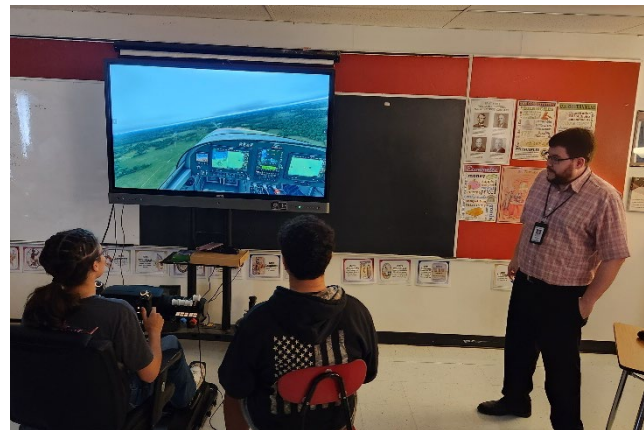
Receiving a \$250 award

Isaac Frazier

Mr. Isaac Frazier is the Aviation Maintenance STEM/Career and Technology Educator at **Lone Oak High School (LOHS)**. He has been teaching for 7 years and helped start the Aviation program 2 years ago in 2023-24.

His first step towards building this program was when he wrote a grant for a flight simulator. He was awarded \$600 to purchase the simulator and this sparked the student's interest in the aviation industry. He then collaborated with other LOISD staff to write a grant proposal for the Tango Flight Program. The Lone Oak ISD Education Foundation (LOISDEF) awarded 2 grants with about 10 different donors to make this program possible. Mr. Frazier was also awarded another LOISDEF grant in January 2025 to add more necessities to the workshop.

Mr. Frazier started with Cohort 1 in the aviation classroom in 2023-24. He has taken his students on tours to L3-Harris and American Legends Aircraft Company. Mr. Frazier also planned field trips to different airports for fly-ins. They went to the Dallas Executive Airport and Majors Airport where students were able to meet and talk to industry professionals and pilots.



Mr. Frazier and his students also attended the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) golf tournament for the last 2 years and raised approximately \$5,000 for the LOHS Aviation Program. During the summer of 2024, Mr. Frazier organized a 2-day mentor training with the Tango Flight Owner & Instructors. The mentors have a variety of experience including A&P mechanics and engineering. Over 2 days they became familiar with the curriculum, practiced using the different tools, and built a vertical stabilizer as an example for the students when school started this year. 5 mentors were trained and set up a schedule to attend 2 hours during the school day for a couple days per week so that there are always mentors available to help in the shop.

Now, in 2024-25 that 1st Cohort of students have spent the last 6 months building parts of the airplane that is anticipated to be finished by the end of 2025-26. The 2nd Cohort of students began their year of classroom instruction and field trips in 2024-25 and will join the 1st Cohort next school year to help complete the build. The ultimate goals of the program are to expose students to the aviation industry by building an airplane, earn an aviation maintenance certification, and make connections for their future. Mr. Frazier is helping to make that dream a reality for our students every day.



Teacher of the Year Runner-up (Receiving \$250 award) Bryan Cole

Mr. Bryan Cole has been an educator for 11 years, with the past six years dedicated to shaping and expanding the STEM program at **Sulphur Springs Middle School (SSMS)**. During this time, he has tirelessly worked to advance robotics, engineering, and computer science, providing students with exceptional learning opportunities and preparing them for future success in STEM-related fields. His passion for education, combined with his unwavering commitment to student achievement, makes him an outstanding candidate for this prestigious honor.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. Cole has played a pivotal role in fostering a thriving STEM environment at SSMS. He has not only served as a classroom teacher but has also become a leader and advocate for STEM education. His innovative teaching methods and hands-on approach have inspired students to explore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in ways that go beyond traditional classroom instruction. His ability to engage students in critical thinking and problem-solving has led to significant growth in STEM participation at SSMS.

Mr. Cole's leadership extends far beyond his own classroom. He has been instrumental in coaching Destination Imagination Global Science teams, serving as the coordinator for the Texas Youth Robotics Association, and leading eight VEX IQ middle school teams and four VEX V5 middle school teams. Under his leadership, the middle school robotics program has grown to include over 300 students, making it one of the largest and most successful in the region. His dedication to expanding access to STEM opportunities has provided students with the skills and confidence to pursue careers in engineering, technology, and beyond.



In addition to coaching, Mr. Cole has made significant contributions to competitive robotics at the regional, state, and national levels. He has worked tirelessly to host multiple robotics tournaments each year, ensuring that students not only have the opportunity to compete but also to collaborate, innovate, and develop teamwork and leadership skills. His mentorship and guidance have led multiple teams to success at the VEX Worlds Championship, an achievement that highlights both his technical expertise and his ability to inspire and empower young minds.

Beyond competition, Mr. Cole has shown a deep commitment to student growth and development. He continually seeks out new opportunities for students to expand their knowledge, pushing them to think critically, solve complex problems, and work collaboratively—all essential skills for future STEM careers. His ability to create an engaging, supportive, and challenging learning environment has earned him the admiration and respect of both students and colleagues.

Mr. Cole's impact on STEM education at Sulphur Springs Middle School and the broader robotics community cannot be overstated. His tireless dedication, leadership, and passion for innovation have transformed the program into one of the most successful in the area. He has not only shaped the lives of his students but has also contributed significantly to the future of STEM education. His contributions to STEM education and robotics have been nothing short of exceptional.



2025 AFA Essay Contest

Chapter 416 annually sponsors an essay contest that provides college scholarship funds for Texas High School Seniors (including home schoolers). The contest offers students willing to do some research, provide logic and critical thinking to a topic pertaining to national security, and present it in written form, a scholarship opportunity. Top essays will be posted on our website and printed in our newsletters. (www.netxafa.org)

How the Contest Works: Students will produce a three-page essay, including references, along with an entry form which has specific requirements and due dates. Essays are judged and the top three essays are awarded scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000. Often there are additional awards provided beyond the top three entries due to the generosity of our donors.

Northeast Texas Scholarship Sponsors

1st – \$2,000 – Lt. Col. John Murray Family

2nd – \$1,500 – Dr. Jerry Ransom

3rd – \$1,000 – CMSgt Bobby & Louise McCasland Family

2025 Finalists, All Receiving Scholarships

\$500 (8) and one each, \$1,000, \$1,500, & \$2000



Catherine Winslow Biard is the daughter of Will and Anne Biard. Catherine is a senior at Paris High School and is on track to graduate as salutatorian of her class. Catherine is involved in Varsity Cheerleading, National Honor Society, Future Problem Solving, Student Council, Key Club, Althea Garden Club, and serves as Editor on the PHS Yearbook Staff. In efforts to make a difference in her community, Catherine is a founding member of Teens Going Green, a nonprofit organization that originally raised money to plant 100 trees for the centennial anniversary of the 1916 Fire, and now continues to plant trees to boost tourism and quality of life in Paris, TX.

Catherine will be attending the University of Texas at Austin in the fall where she will major in Biology and plans to continue to post-grad work at a dental school.



Brody Emmert is a Senior at Sulphur Springs High School where he is very active in the band, tennis, and his academics. Brody is a horn player in the Wildcat Band and has served as head Drum Major for the past two years. Just this past year Brody made the ATSSB All-State Band. He also has played on the varsity tennis team for the past four years. Brody is currently ranked #2 in his graduating class and aspires to study Civil Engineering at Texas A&M University in College Station. He plans on joining the corps of cadets there and being in the Fightin' Aggie Band."



Olivia Fitzgerald is a senior at Paris High School where she is a member of the Varsity Cheer team, National Honor Society, and Althea Garden Club. Once she graduates, Olivia plans to attend Southern Methodist University, where she will be pursuing a degree in Political Science, hoping to one day practice law with her father. In her free time, Olivia enjoys being involved in church activities, spending time with friends, and traveling.



2025 Essay Finalist – AFA Essay Contest



Jaelee Johnson is a senior at Paris High School, where she excels academically and is actively involved in her school and community. She serves as senior class president, Spanish Club vice president, and is the leader of the Paris High School group participating in the Scope Out Cancer 2025 outreach program. She is also a dedicated cheerleader and holds the title of Crape Myrtle Queen in the Althea Garden Club. With a 4.0 GPA and a passion for science, Jaelee will be attending Baylor University in the fall as a pre-med biology major, working toward her goal of becoming a pediatrician. She is deeply rooted in her faith, having given her life to Christ, and finds joy in serving others. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, especially her younger sister, Jaiah, and leading within her church youth group.



Nicholas Just is a dedicated senior from Greenville High School with a passion for school sports, particularly soccer and football, which he has actively participated in since 7th grade. Outside of sports, Nicholas is working towards his dream of becoming a commercial pilot by pursuing his private pilot's license. When he's not flying, he enjoys baking, cooking, and playing video games with friends. His drive and dedication to both his athletic and aviation pursuits reflect his strong work ethic and determination to succeed.



Amy Rodriguez is a senior at Paris High School. She has actively participated in numerous extracurricular activities, including Future Problem Solvers, National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Althea Garden Club, and Key Club. She's also a student council treasurer, varsity tennis player, and a part of the yearbook staff. A standout achievement includes being a Future Problem Solvers state qualifier for four consecutive years and competing at the international level. Amy plans to attend SMU in the fall, where she will study biochemistry on the pre-med track with the ultimate goal of becoming a surgeon. She loves traveling, spending time with her family, watching movies, and trying new things.



RaChelle Singleton is a dedicated 18-year-old student at Woodson High School. Throughout her time at Woodson, she has been actively involved in various extracurricular activities, including playing on the volleyball team, participating in One Act Play, and serving as a member of the National Honor Society. Since her sophomore year, she has also been a passionate photographer for the school's journalism program, capturing memorable moments and telling stories through her lens. Beyond her academic and school-related commitments, RaChelle enjoys spending quality time with her friends and family, reading books, traveling to new places, and taking pictures that reflect her unique perspective of the world. She is also deeply involved in her faith and loves attending church. This spring, RaChelle will be graduating with her associate degree. Following high school, she plans to attend Hardin-Simmons University, where she will pursue a major in photography with a minor in business. With her strong passion for visual storytelling and entrepreneurial spirit, she hopes to turn her love for photography into a fulfilling career.



2025 Essay Finalist – AFA Essay Contest



Keira Taylor is a senior at Union Grove High School. Keira is the Salutatorian of her class and is involved in Cross Country, Basketball, and track. She is also a member of the National Honor Society. In addition to her High School activities, Keira is also an equestrian and competes in the show jumping discipline for horse riding. She has a passion for training off track racehorses and giving them a new purpose. When Keira graduates, she plans on attending Louisiana Tech, where she will pursue her degree in Aviation Management and become a commercial airline pilot.



Alyson Thomas is the daughter of Brad and Erin Thomas. As a senior at Sulphur Springs High School, she is active in her school as the co-captain of Fellowship of Student Athletes and a member of National Honor Society and student council. She also enjoys serving within her community by volunteering for organizations such as Claws for a Cause as well as at her local country club for various children's activities and clinics. Alyson is also a four-year varsity member of the Lady Cat golf team and has committed to continuing her career at Harding University while pursuing a degree in civil engineering.



Caleb Valentic is the son of Melissa and Jacob Valentic. He is a 17-year-old senior at Woodson ISD. His hobbies include reading his Bible and talking to God, spending time with his family and friends, playing sports, reading, and spending time in The Great Outdoors. At Woodson, he participates in football, basketball, UIL, NHS, and the FFA. During his time in the FFA, Caleb advanced all the way to the state level with his Public Relations team, where they placed third. After high school, he plans to attend Tarleton University to attain a bachelor's degree in business.



Jordan Alana VanWinkle is a senior at Sulphur Springs High School. As an active member of the FFA, Jordan has served as the Area VI FFA Association 1st Vice President, Ford Leadership Scholar, Paris District FFA President, Texas FFA Foundation Ambassador, and Sulphur Springs Chapter President. Jordan is currently leading a community service project, in partnership with her internship at the Hopkins County Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Services Office, to build a greenhouse with sustainable crop production systems for incarcerated individuals in the Hopkins County Trustee Program. She also co-hosts and produces an ag advocacy podcast called "The Agricultural Connection" where she tackles local ag issues and hot topics.

Jordan will attend Texas A&M University - College Station, to pursue a major in Agricultural Communications and Journalism and Agribusiness with the ultimate goal of becoming a lobbyist on behalf of the Texas Farm Bureau.



Jim Bowie High School Future is Bright! More to Come!

Simms has ideas to expand their programs; Dana O'Neal says: Students will start with block programming of drones and continue on to Python text coding. would like to start this program in the middle school with the block programming so that when they get into high school, they will be able to advance to the text coding. I have already discussed the CyberPatriot programming with our E-Sports coach. We are planning to partner together to coach 2 teams next year in this Air and Space Force coding competition. Finally, I saw this sign at a local restaurant and thought it would be appropriate.



Your schools can do this too!

Check out the opportunities and ask us for help!

CyberPatriot is the Air & Space Forces Association's National Youth Cyber Education Program, created to inspire K-12 students toward careers in cybersecurity or other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines critical to our nation's future. The CyberPatriot Programs are: <https://www.afa.org/cyberpatriot/>

The **StellarXplorers** Space STEM Program, created by the Air & Space Forces Association (AFA), inspires K-12 students toward careers in aerospace, aviation, and other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines critical to our nation's future.

<https://www.afa.org/stellarxplorers/>



Civil Air Patrol Cadets of the Year

Each receiving \$300 Toward Uniforms



TX 354 Cadet of the Year: C/2d Lt Carson Romine



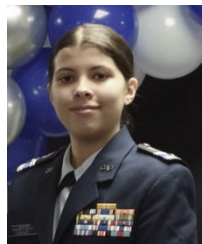
C/2dLt Carson Romine has been an active member of Lakeshore Composite Squadron since joining in May of 2021. Lt Romine is well respected and looked up to by his peers. An example of perseverance as well as a formative model of the core values, Carson's continual progression and engagement in the program is testament to his dedication. He is currently serving his second CAC term, is our Deputy Commander for Operations, Cadet Emergency Services Officer, and unit color guard commander, but he eagerly steps in where needed. Whether helping a cadet with a uniform issue or congratulating them on a job well done, Carson will often be found encouraging, helping, and mentoring his peers. His latest staffing at TXWG winter encampment is a perfect example of his humbleness and his heart for servant leadership. He was selected as 1st Sgt, but due to his recent promotion to 2d Lt, he had to step down. With few open staff positions left, he was moved to mess staff. Some may have thought this position below them and inadequate for their leadership and experience, but Carson took this position with grace and full willingness to serve where he was needed. Before encampment ended, I received feedback on his exceptional performance in his position of handling special dietary needs, some of which inattention could have been deadly. This feedback resulted in him receiving an Achievement Award. Wanting to serve others has led him down a path in the medical field. He graduated MOTS in 2024 and very soon after, he achieved his Emergency Medical Responder certification. 2d Lt Romine is an exemplary cadet and young man that I am happy to have represent Lakeshore Composite and CAP. It is my pleasure to recognize C/2dLt Carson Romine as Lakeshore Composite Squadron's AFA Cadet of the Year.

TX 645 Cadet of the Year: C/Maj Micah Rychlik



The Sulphur Springs Composite squadron of the Civil Air Patrol selects the cadet who has shown the most growth and maturity as our AFA Cadet of the Year. This past year our team saw the transformation of a young cadet into a dynamic leader. Cadet Major Micah Rychlik attended numerous state and national level activities including Leadership, Powered Flight, and Emergency Response training. Additionally, he took the position of Cadet Commander within the squadron. Maj Rychlik joined CAP in 2019 and has become a great example of what a Civil Air Patrol Cadet is. His future plans show the invaluable opportunities this program provides to today's youth by allowing them to interact with community and area specific leaders.

TX 645 Cadet of the Year: C/2d Lt Sabrina Graham

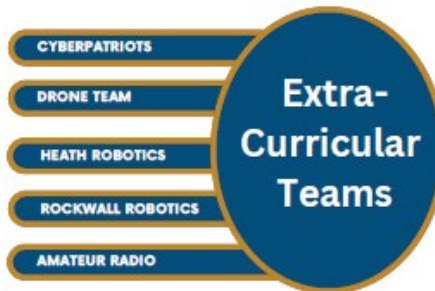


C/2d Lt Sabrina Graham has demonstrated leadership qualities since she entered the CAP Cadet Program in November 2022. She has served as the Cadet Advisory Council Representative for two terms and has recently been appointed as the Cadet Commander of TX 645. For the past two years she has participated in the CyberPatriot competition and successfully led the senior team this past year. She has attended Space OPS National Cadet Special Activity and been accepted to Cisco Advanced Camp this coming year. Cadet Graham has staffed at Wing Encampments and led several special interest activities within the squadron. For the majority of her cadet career, she has exhibited excellence academically as well and entered college two years early. TX 645 is proud to put forward this outstanding cadet as our AFA Cadet of the Year.



DR. GENE BURTON COLLEGE AND CAREER ACADEMY

AFA SPONSORED TEAMS



DR. GENE BURTON COLLEGE AND CAREER ACADEMY

STEM DEPARTMENT

The STEM Department consists of five teachers instructing over 800 students in five different program of studies. In all, the STEM department offers 20 different classes for students to explore. All five teachers also coach one or more of the five different extra-curricular teams offered at the Academy.



AIR & SPACE FORCES ASSOCIATION'S

CYBERPATRIOT

THE NATIONAL YOUTH CYBER EDUCATION PROGRAM



CLASSES



CYBERSECURITY

Foundations of Cybersecurity
AP Cybersecurity I
AP Cybersecurity II



COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

Honors Computer Science
AP Computer Science Principles
AP Computer Science A
Computer Science III
Practicum in Information Technology



ENGINEERING FOUNDATIONS

Principles of Engineering
Engineering Design and
Presentation I
Engineering Design and
Presentation II
Practicum in Engineering



UNMANNED DRONE

Introduction to Aerospace and
Aviation I
Introduction to Unmanned Aerial
Vehicle
Practicum in Manufacturing



ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION

Principles of Manufacturing
Robotics I
Robotics II
Manufacturing Engineering Tech I
Manufacturing Engineering Tech II
Practicum in Manufacturing

