

Mile High  
Chapter 127  
NEWSLETTER  
2024



**AFA** AIR & SPACE  
FORCES  
ASSOCIATION

## JUNIOR ENLISTED BASIC PAY INCREASE

Video Link - [Click Here](#)



## BUCKLEY SFB OPERATION FUTURE FORCES

The Mile High (Mile High Chapter) showing up and representing for a tremendous event supporting military children.



## 18<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MILE HIGH CHAPTER CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Huge success in raising over \$8K. This will allow us to provide \$1.5K to the Wounded Warrior Project and further support other charities.



# YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

## Write your Congressman or Senator

One very important position we are supporting is for increased pay for junior enlisted military members. We know how important sufficient pay is to establish and maintain productive lifestyles, especially for junior enlisted members. The House and Senate have varying concepts for increased compensation. Please see attached is a paper prepared by our AFA Legislative staff and planned for delivery to key members of the House and Senate.

We need your help to disseminate our AFA support message for increased pay for junior enlisted military members. Request you tailor the attached cover letter to introduce our support concept. Send the cover letter and position paper to your Representative and Senator to express the critical need for increased pay for junior enlisted members. You may find the easiest way to send this information is through the elected member's webpage. Of course, if possible, schedule an in-person meeting with your elected officials and their staffs.

With your help, we can make a difference in the lives of our junior enlisted members. Sufficient pay supports recruitment, retention, job satisfaction, and overall mission effectiveness.

**Airmen Committed to Excellence**







On Saturday, April 13th, from 0900 to 1430 hours, Operation Future Forces 2024 welcomed over 90 children from Buckley Space Force Base at the Buckley Youth Center. The children underwent an in-processing session to receive their military gear, took part in a swearing-in ceremony with the base commander, and attended basic training and technical school sessions in preparation for their upcoming humanitarian mission. The event featured static displays, offering a day filled with camo-themed activities and a delightful lunch for all participants to enjoy and connect over. Following the activities, the children returned to the Youth Center to a hero's welcome, greeted by their families with signs and flags. Each child was presented with a certificate during a completion ceremony to mark their achievement. Operation Future Forces '24 included various technical school stations, boot camp activities, physical training sessions, flag folding, saluting drills, facing movements, and obstacle courses. Volunteers from different departments including the military family readiness center, youth center, AFA Mile High Chapter 127, Buckley medical staff, USO, EOD, security forces, civil engineers, fire department, Marines, Airmen, Guardians, Buckley's Benefiting Families Foundation and many more, contributed to the success of the event. Additionally, attendees witnessed a demonstration by the base honor guard and security forces K9 unit.





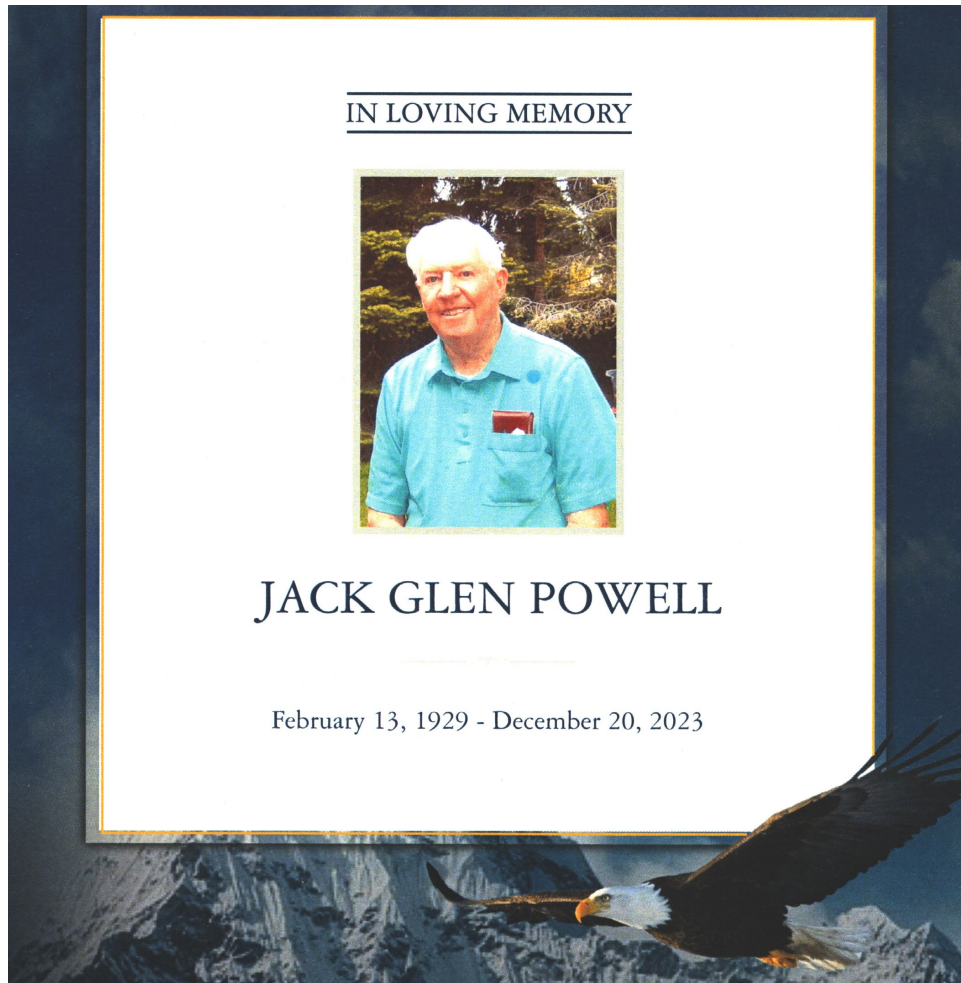


### **Colorado Smooths Military Spouse Credentialing**

Colorado Governor, Jared Polis, on 17 April signed into effect House Bill 24-1097, extending the certification and licensure of military personnel and families assigned to Colorado. This bill makes changes to Colorado's occupational credential portability program. In addition to military spouses currently covered by the program, the bill allows Gold Star military spouses, dependents of military members, and spouses and dependents of other qualified service members, who are licensed, certified, registered, or enrolled in a profession or occupation and in good standing in another state or United States territory, to be credentialed in Colorado. It removes the current 3-year limitation and non-renewal provision, and extends the allowance to obtain a renewable, 6-year credential while in Colorado. Finally, the bill waives the application and renewal fee for Colorado credentials.

Eligibility for the program includes spouses and dependents of Armed Forces Reserve, Ready Reserve, National Guard members in Colorado relating to the spouses and dependents of military members and other qualified service members serving in the United States uniformed services. The current state to practice must endorse the member to become licensed in the same profession or occupation in Colorado. The bill becomes effective September 1, 2024.

# Condolences



## **Stalwart AFA Member “Flies West”**

Jack Glen Powell passed away peacefully on 20 December 2023. Born in Las Animas, Colorado, 13 February 1929, Jack graduated from high school in 1947, attended the University of Colorado (Boulder) for a business degree, and entered the Air Force in 1951, serving for four years and separating as a staff sergeant.

Jack’s service to the nation didn’t end there. He applied his degree in business and accounting to Air Force Finance, serving as auditor and compliance officer until his retirement in 1988. During and after his time as an Air Force civilian, Jack actively supported the mission and values of the (then) Air Force Association (AFA). He served as Mile High Chapter president, Colorado State president, and vice president of the Rocky Mountain Region. At the national level, Jack served on the Audit Committee, ensuring AFA maintained the integrity expected of a non-profit charitable organization. To many AFA members, Jack was a mentor and stalwart supporter of its mission to support Airmen (and now, Guardians), their families, and their mission to defend our Nation.

Jack was remembered fondly by members of his family, neighbors, and friends in a memorial service on 26 April at St Andrews Presbyterian Church. Jack is survived by his wife, Joy; his son, Mark; Mark’s two daughters; and one great-granddaughter, which Jack got to hold just before his passing.

# Seeing Our Future

Under unexpectedly rainy and cold skies, nearly 700 Arnold Air Society and Silver Wings members, along with the Board of Trustees and many distinguished visitors, traveled to San Diego, California for SanDCON, the annual gathering for these AFROTC-affiliated services organizations. The weather didn't dampen any

enthusiasm for the event, it just changed the scheduled pool party into an indoor dance for the cadets and students.

The attendees experienced an amazing array of guest speakers throughout the event, including Joanna Doolittle, granddaughter of Gen Jimmy Doolittle; Robert Arnold, grandson of Gen Hap Arnold; Gen John "Jay" Raymond; Group Captain Pete Warmerdam, Air Attaché, Royal Air Force; Col Corey Ramsby, AFROTC/CC; Mr. Larry Litton, Office of the Secy of Defense, Ms. Vanessa Wyche, NASA Director Johnson Space Center; Ms. Heidi Grant, Boeing CEO for Defense, Space & Security, and General Jackie Van Ovost, US Transportation Command/CC. After each guest speaker, the lines were long, standing at the microphones on both sides of the room, as the cadets and students came up with question after question until time ran out for each session.



Perhaps, most importantly, is to mention all AAS and SW members are Air & Space Forces Association members. The interaction these cadets and students had with our AFA members gave them an opportunity to spend time with a diverse group of attendees from all over the country, including the AFA Vice Chair of the Board (Field Operations), Chris Canada; AFA Vice Chair of the Board (Education), Stephen Gourley; West Area Director, Bobi Oates; Colorado representative, Linda Aldrich; and a contingent from the Cardenas (San Diego) AFA Chapter, led by Mr Dick Jeffreys. Both Mr. Gourley and



Ms. Aldrich are on the AAS/SW Board of Trustees. Stephen was key to the AFA-sponsored luncheon, at which he presented AFA Life Memberships to outstanding AAS and SW members. Stephen was also a



featured speaker at the Space Domain Panel along with Gen Raymond, Ms. Wyche, and astronaut Colonel (ret) Mike Fincke.

Special recognition was given to long serving Arnold Air Society and Silver Wings Executive Director, Daniel P. Woodward and Co-Director, Maggie Woodward. They have devoted a goodly portion of their retirement years after active duty to building the sponsorship and membership of AAS and SW. The incoming Executive Director is newly retired Brig Gen Jimmy Canlas.

Interacting with these cadets and students was a gift and an inspiration because attendees were able to see who would be the future leaders of the military and of our country. The doors that are opened to these young guests through their interaction with AFA leadership is what the mission is all about, as our members shared how they advocate, educate and support this newest generation entering active duty and the civilian community.

## Presidents Corner:

Though we have not put out a newsletter in quite some time, the Mile High Chapter continues to thrive! What's been happening in 2024. As always, our Executive VP, Neil Burroughs has been attending the monthly Wings Over the Rockies – Exploration of Flight fly-ins where we meet potential AFA members and spread the good word of AFA STEM programs and the Mile High Chapter. To find out more about Wings Over the Rockies – Exploration of Flight and the breakfast fly-ins at the Centennial Airport you can visit their website: <https://explorationofflight.org/>. We've been very busy attending JROTC awards ceremonies at Skyview and Aurora Central High Schools. Several of the chapter members along with our 2022 State Teacher of the Year attend the very well put together Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon. A couple of our chapter members traveled up to DET to speak to cadets prior to being commissioned. We funded 10 junior enlisted members to attend the Inaugural Buckley Ball. After a rainout last year, we were able to hold our 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Mile High Chapter Charity Golf Tournament, which was a great success. We've also been partnering with Buckley's Benefitting Families Foundation on several events to include, the very successful, Operation Future Forces. This organization is doing great things and we are happy to work with them to make things happen. Check out their Facebook page...see the amazing things this group is up to: <https://www.facebook.com/buckleysbff>. This is just a snapshot of what's been going on in 2023...so yes, we have been busy! I should mention we were the 2020 DW Steel AFA Chapter of the Year, so we are an organization getting things done! Lastly, I'd like to invite everyone to join us at our monthly meetings held each 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at 3:30 p.m. at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce (610 S Abilene St Ste B) or via Zoom (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82814062951?pwd=bDR0aExObXoyYk9lVmt2OG9EMmw0QT09>). We are in the market for new ideas as to how to better serve our military and veteran population, so I hope to see some new faces over the coming months!

## 18th Annual Mile High Chapter Charity Golf Tournament

We had another amazing day of golf! The weather was beautiful and the Spring Valley GC staff, from the pro-shop to the kitchen, helped us host another stellar golf tournament. The tournament kicked off with a shotgun start and ended with a luncheon/awards presentation. A special thanks goes out to the Airmen and Guardians from Buckley Space Force Base that volunteered and contribute to our success. We couldn't put on this great event at the level that we do without the generous support from all of our amazing and steadfast sponsors. A big thank you to Liteye, Tensley Consulting, Colorado Realty Now, Everwatch, City Light & Power, Intellic Integration, Kearney & Company, D.A. Davidson and Bent Barley Brewing. We raised money to support the AFA Wounded Airmen & Guardians Program, programs to support the Buckley SFB Airmen, Guardians and their families as well as the many veteran programs we support throughout the year. Again, a heartfelt thanks to all that came out to support our tournament.



Chapter President, Cliff Klein, with the winning foursome



Thank you to our Sponsors! We couldn't have done this without your support.



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Intellic Integration



Always Ahead

**Congressman/Senator** \_\_\_\_\_

July \_\_\_, 2024

Address

Washington, DC

**Re: H.R. 8070 – Junior Enlisted Basic Pay Increase**

**Dear Congressman/Senator** \_\_\_\_\_

The Air & Space Forces Association (“AFA”) is deeply concerned about the level of compensation paid to our service members, especially junior enlisted personnel.

Military recruiting has suffered significantly over the past two years, and one clear factor is pay. Our nation’s armed services are not competing effectively against civilian employers that are increasingly offering competitive pay without the 24/7 commitment and potential risks to life and limb we ask of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Guardians, Coast Guardsmen and Marines. Consider these two examples:

- At Wal-Mart, America’s largest private employer, associates now earn \$17.50 an hour on average.
- Amazon, the nation’s second largest, reports average pay for customer fulfillment and operations roles now exceeds \$20.50 per hour—up more than 50% in just five years.
- Allied Universal, the third biggest private employer in the U.S., pays security guards an average of \$17.50 per hour.

Unlike military members, all these employees are eligible for overtime. Not so our military members, who volunteer to serve their country and risk life and limb for less than \$20 an hour throughout their first two years in uniform—including all pay and allowances. In fact, their hourly rate is often far less, when considering that military duty often demands troops work 50-, 60, or more hours per week.

America must do better for its troops! H.R. 8070, the House version of the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization bill, addresses this problem by raising the pay for junior enlisted members by 15 percent. This targeted pay adjustment ensures a competitive wage from the moment a volunteer enters the military. We urge its full consideration in the Conference.

As you know, 15 states now mandate a minimum wage of at least \$14 per hour, and eight require at least \$15 per hour. The District of Columbia sets the minimum at \$17.50. Our troops deserve more than minimum wages.

Before she retired earlier this year, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass challenged the House Quality of Life Panel in testimony: “We must adequately compensate our service members and care for their families, to be able to recruit and retain the talent our Air Force needs to maintain our advantage in the future.” Her counterpart, Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force John F. Bentivegna, went a step further, noting that the Guardians of the Space Force won’t stay in uniform without fair compensation: “The competition for space-



competent talent requires us to take a deeper look into targeted ways in how our service compensates Guardians as it pertains to recruitment and retention.”

AFA recognizes that such a substantial pay increase carries with it significant future costs and implications in terms of cost and budgetary impact. Yet this is a pay now or pay later decision. The decision to forego extra pay for junior enlisted threatens to exacerbate an already challenging recruiting environment, which in turn will increase what the Pentagon must spend to attract each recruit.

Money invested in our troops pays dividends in the quality and retention of those who serve our nation. Accordingly, the AFA respectfully recommends the Conference adopt a pay increase of 19.5% for junior enlisted personnel and 4.5 percent for all other ranks.

As always, the AFA deeply appreciates the consideration you have afforded to our organization’s views.

Sincerely,