



# The Sijan Sentinel

Volume 4 – 2025

November 2025

**WELCOME TO AFA  
SIJAN CHAPTER #125**



**President: Dave Geuting  
Vice President: Aaron Prupas  
Secretary: Gayle Divine  
Treasurer: Bruce Hall**

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Fellow Members,

It was a great honor to be elected Chapter President. As I assumed the position on October 1, I could not help but dwell a little on the responsibility that comes with the job. Not only do I have the daunting pressure of leading the Chapter that bears the Sijan name, but I also have the duty to continue the legacy of great leadership demonstrated by my predecessors.

On that note, let me start this first Message from the President by thanking my immediate predecessor Caty Rozema. Caty took over the Chapter at a difficult time in our history and made it her mission to not only keep it alive, but also to make it thrive. This involved quite a bit of personal interaction with military and corporate leadership to mend rifts in relationships. Caty sacrificed her personal and family time to ensure that happened. For that; and for her constant upbeat, optimistic spirit; the Chapter will forever owe her a debt of gratitude.

I want to continue that optimistic spirit of my friend and to make our Chapter better than ever. This will involve re-establishing ourselves as a leading service organization within the Colorado Springs community. However, to accomplish this, I need help. I need our membership to get back involved with Chapter activities and I need our corporate partners to renew their memberships and sponsorships. Four or five board members cannot do everything. It will take a team to reach our goals.

Please join me as we end 2025 and begin 2026 in making the Lance P. Sijan Chapter the best chapter in AFA and a leader in Colorado Springs.

Respectfully,  
Dave

DAVID C. GEUTING, Colonel, USAF (ret)  
President  
Lance P Sijan Chapter 125  
Air & Space Forces Association (AFA)  
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**You're already a part of the team. Find out how you can become involved.**

- **Contact Dave or any Sijan board member for more information on chapter needs.**
- **Drop in to our 4<sup>th</sup> quarter birthday party at The Hub, have a piece of cake and chat with us about upcoming activities and ways you can participate.**
- **Visit our website, check out upcoming activities and events, and be sure to register.**

## HONORING OUR VETERANS

Your Lance P Sijan chapter is once again honored to sponsor the annual Veteran's Day Parade in downtown Colorado Springs on Nov 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am. The parade will travel north to south along Tejon Street from St. Vrain to Vermijo.

In addition to the parade, we will salute our veterans by joining the In Their Honor Salute from the Springs flag project. This project will plant 1,111 American flags, each with an honoree's name on it, throughout Downtown.

We invite you to represent the AFA and our Sijan Chapter by sponsoring a flag and uniting with the Colorado Springs community to line the streets on Nov 8<sup>th</sup> for the parade.

To learn more and sponsor a flag visit:

[ITHVeteransDayParade.com](http://ITHVeteransDayParade.com)

A promotional poster for the 'Salute from the Springs' flag project. The background features a scenic view of a snow-capped mountain range under a blue sky with light clouds. In the foreground, numerous American flags are planted in a grassy field. The poster text is centered and includes the title 'SALUTE FROM THE SPRINGS' in large, bold, black letters with a white outline and a star. Below the title is the tagline 'ADOPT YOUR FLAG ★ HONOR YOUR HERO'. The main text describes the project: 'Thousands of flags will fill Downtown this November, honoring our Veterans and Active-Duty heroes. Sponsor a flag bearing your honoree's name and service—each one supports the In Their Honor Veterans Day Parade.' It lists 'FLAGS ON DISPLAY: November 1-11' and 'PARADE DAY: November 8, 11 AM Downtown Colorado Springs HONOR YOUR HERO TODAY!'. A QR code is provided for more information. At the bottom, it says 'SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT ITHVETERANSDAYPARADE.COM to sponsor a flag and learn more about how you can be part of this citywide tribute.' The footer features a logo with a mountain range and a star, with the text 'In Their Honor Veterans Day Parade' below it.

**SALUTE FROM THE SPRINGS**  
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In Their Honor Veterans Day Parade

## HONORING OUR VETERANS

The Sijan Chapter of the Air & Space Forces Association is proud to be a sponsor of the **2nd Annual Colorado Springs Latino Veterans Profiles in Valor Awards Dinner**, on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at the DoubleTree by Hilton. This powerful evening honors the extraordinary courage, sacrifice, and service of Latino Veterans from El Paso County—leaders whose impact extends far beyond their military careers into their families, churches, and communities. The guest speaker this year is Jose Sarduy, U.S. Air Force Academy graduate, combat veteran, and nationally recognized comedian. His unique story of service and resilience will add both humor and inspiration to the night. We invite you to join us for this special evening.



# PROFILES IN VALOR AWARDS DINNER

**NOVEMBER 13**

**6pm - 9pm**

**DoubleTree Hilton Hotel**  
**PURCHASE TICKETS AT:**  
[cshispanicchamber.com](http://cshispanicchamber.com)



GUEST SPEAKER

## JOSE SARDUY

**CUBAN PILOT + BROKEN ENGLISH**



Jose Sarduy's comedy specials are audience favorites! Born in Cuba and deported due to his father's political prisoner status, Jose grew up in the U.S. with a quirky Cuban family that taught him to laugh at life. A U.S. Air Force Academy graduate, aviator, and veteran of Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, he uses his incredible life story—dodging enemy fire, military service, and growing up Cuban—to deliver hilarious, heartfelt comedy. Jose's accomplishments include winning multiple comedy competitions and being featured on CNN, CBS, Fox, NBC's "Last Call with Carson Daly," and co-hosting NUVO TV's "Stand Up and Deliver." His ability to make even life's hardest moments hysterical has made him a global sensation. When not performing, he trains the next generation of pilots in Texas.

### **Celebrating the Warriors of Air & Space**

*Contributed by Linda Aldrich*

Colorado AFA chapters sent out a “Know Before You Go” for the Annual Awards Banquet on August 23rd that stated “this is not intended to be a quiet event! Please cheer loudly for your nominees!” That’s exactly what happened. The event opened with announcement of the top three nominees in each military and civilian category as they entered the banquet hall to the sound of air horns, bells, cheers and pounding on the tables.



This widely attended annual event brings together corporate sponsors with senior military leadership all for the purpose of recognizing the Active Duty, Guard and Reserve Airmen, Guardians, Cadets and Civilians in Colorado units that continue to make our Air & Space Forces the greatest in the world! The Heritage Eagle Bend Golf Course in Aurora, Colorado provided a scrumptious Italian buffet leading up to a spot-on talk on leadership and mentoring by Robert (Rob) Devall, retired Chief Master Sergeant with nearly 30 years of service in the Air Force and currently Director of Military Affairs for the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.



Then it was time for the main events, leading off with recognition of outstanding AFA Volunteers from the four Colorado Chapters. Those recipients are now the proud owners of engraved pen sets, beer mugs, AFA shirts and jackets as well-deserved appreciation for their hours of service. And we didn’t forget to honor our Colorado Chapter and State Teachers of the Year, the leaders in encouraging STEM excellence for our Colorado students!

All military and government civilians were presented with certificates for their top nomination, and the winner in each category received a beautifully carved wooden coin tray inscribed with their name and the title of the award.

The evening culminated with the announcement of the Colorado AFA Member of the Year from Mel Harmon Chapter, Pueblo, Colorado, Mr. Mike Sumida. Mike is well known for his advocacy in schools for establishment of Stellar Xplorers and CyberPatriot teams, as well as being a docent at the Weisbrod Aircraft Museum and the AFA presence on multiple city committees.

To say the evening was a success would be understatement. Colorado most definitely succeeded in Celebrating the Warriors of Air & Space in their continuing service to ensure dominant U.S. Air and Space Forces.



## OUT AND ABOUT WITH SIJAN



### **AFA National Convention**

*Contributed by Linda Aldrich*

The 2025 Air & Space Forces National Convention, the first to be fully hybrid (in-person and virtual), wrapped up on Sunday, 21 September 2025. Feedback from the field indicates that things went well this year with the hybrid model. There had been concern that adding virtual Delegates would reduce the number of in-person Delegates possibly leading to the end of an in-person National Convention. As it turned out, in person attendance in 2025 actually grew a little. The in-person attendance at the 2024 National Convention was 158 Delegates and even with the option of full virtual attendance this year, the 2025 National Convention reported having 162 in-person Delegates at the start of the business session on Saturday afternoon. Thanks to all of you who participated either at the Gaylord or from home!

In the business sessions, the debate over the resolutions was lively as anticipated. Resolution 1 (Additional Directors) and Resolution 2 (Self Nomination Process) passed by narrow margins—reflective of good discussion on both sides. Resolution 3 (Membership in Chapter and State Organizations) passed with no controversy. Mike Sumida from Colorado Mel Harmon Chapter did a great job on the panel discussion about Chapter Success and Failure, using the example of the Weisbrod Aircraft Museum and student talks as examples of how to communicate about the importance of air power, AFA, and National Defense.

The Saturday night banquet was great fun with Mike Sumida making multiple trips to the stage for the National Exceptional Service Awards for Heritage, AIMS and Aerospace Education Excellence/Small Chapter. Once again Mel Harmon took home the National recognition as Outstanding Small Chapter of the Year. Stephen Gourley, Mile High Chapter, took the walk up for the Chapter to receive the National Exceptional Service Award for United Forces and Families. All our Colorado Chapters were recognized with Aerospace Education Achievement Certificates. A very special moment was the recognition of Stephen Gourley for Distinguished Sustained Aerospace Education with the Buck Buckwalter Award. Colorado received National recognition as the most Outstanding State organization, an award that highlighted our Chapters and how each Chapter in Colorado is unique. Our individual National Exceptional Service Award winners, Kenn Bowens (Mile High) and Mark Maryak (Mel Harmon) will receive their awards at Chapter events.

Our 51st Chair of the AFA Board of Directors, Bernie Skoch, wrapped up his three-year term in grand style at the National Convention in September. Bernie has done an outstanding job of leading the Board of Directors and the Association. This year's national election slate of AFA Officers and Directors was voted on and approved by our Delegates, which means there is a new Chair of the Board of Directors (AFA's top position by governance and protocol). The Central Area Director was re-elected to serve a second three-year term, and two new Directors-At-Large will start three-year terms on the AFA Board of Directors. These new and returning members of our Board of Directors are Chair of the Board of Directors: Kathleen Ferguson; Central Area Director: Janelle Stafford; Director-At-Large: Dwyer Dennis; and Director-At-Large: Wes Hallman.

In addition to the enjoyment of the recognition received by Colorado, the National AFA Convention is motivating and educational, reminding everyone of the valuable contributions AFA volunteers make for advocacy, education and support to our Amazing Airmen, Guardians, and their families.

## OUT AND ABOUT WITH SIJAN



Left: Caty shows off cake at our 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter birthday party at The Hub. Meanwhile, General Shaw was playing guitar in Space Jam during the party and stopped by to share a piece of cake with us! You never know who you might run into so be sure to check out our next party!

Right: Dave attended the Space Force OTC graduation ceremony as part of the AFA F2 Program. He is pictured with Captain Parker, the OTC POC.



## COMING UP!

### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Our Fourth Quarter Birthday Party is coming up soon. Make like the fall leaves and drop on into The Hub at Peterson on Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup> between 4:30 and 6:00 pm. Enjoy a slice of cake courtesy of the Sijan chapter while you unwind before the holiday craze begins.

Come celebrate our AFA community at the Sijan Quarterly Birthday Party and Member Mixer!

# We Are Thankful For You!

Swing by, say hi, and grab a slice of cake on us!  
The bar will be open for drinks and dinner.

Date: Thursday, 20 Nov  
Time: 4:30 - 6:00 pm  
Location: The Hub at Peterson SFB

Everyone is welcome!  
Have a 4th quarter (Oct/Nov/Dec) birthday?  
Enter a raffle for birthday prizes!

Questions? Email Jennifer at [LancepsijanAFA@gmail.com](mailto:LancepsijanAFA@gmail.com)



## COMING UP!

Are you **Team Naughty** or **Team Nice**? Can't decide? No problem. Your Sijan chapter is leading this year's Aerospace Community Joint Holiday Party and we're inviting everyone to come. This promises to be an evening filled with music, cocktails, food, and fun! [Register by December 15<sup>th</sup>](#).

PS – Grinches are welcome too!



Remember to visit our [website](#) for details on all of our upcoming events or email us at [LancePSijanAFA@gmail.com](mailto:LancePSijanAFA@gmail.com) if you have questions. Your participation in these activities and events is a fantastic way to support our local Air & Space Forces community!

- 31 Oct, 9:00 am: Space Force OTC Graduation, AFA pins presented by Sijan President
- 8 Nov, 11:00 am: Colorado Springs Veteran's Day parade, Downtown
- 13 Nov, 6:00-9:00 pm: Profiles in Valor Awards Dinner, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- 15 Nov, 11:00 am: Colorado State AFA quarterly business meeting, Academy Hotel
- 20 Nov, 4:30-6:00 pm: Q4 Birthday Party/Member Mixer, The Hub at Peterson
- 2 Dec: Operation Homefront Military Child of the Year nominations due
- 18 Dec, 6:00-8:00 pm: Joint Holiday Party, Doubletree Hotel

### Lance P Sijan Chapter Monthly Leadership Meetings

Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of Month, 5:00PM, Visit our [website](#) to confirm date/time and for in-person location and online link. These are our regular business meetings, but all are welcome to listen in. It's a great way to learn more about what's happening inside Sijan and find out about volunteer opportunities.

## MILITARY CHILD OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

Air & Space Forces children are the least represented for these awards. We have so many outstanding and worthy students in the Colorado Springs area. Wouldn't it be amazing to have the Sijan chapter and Colorado Springs represented at the gala in DC in 2026? Help us identify and nominate outstanding Air & Space Forces youth in Colorado Springs for this prestigious award. Nominations are due Dec 2. Scan the QR code or visit [operationhomefront.org/mcoy](https://operationhomefront.org/mcoy) for details.



**Help us find  
Operation  
Homefront's next  
award recipients!**



For more information,  
scan the QR code or visit  
[operationhomefront.org/mcoy](https://operationhomefront.org/mcoy)

### WHAT

Operation Homefront's Military Child of the Year Awards celebrate and recognize the tremendous achievements of outstanding military children.

### WHO

Each year, hundreds of military teens (ages 13–18) are nominated by a parent, teacher, mentor or guardian. Candidates for the Military Child of the Year Awards demonstrate resilience, strength of character, and the ability to thrive in the face of the challenges of military life.

### WHEN

The Awards Gala will be held in Washington, D.C. on April 23, 2026 during the Month of the Military Child.

### RECIPIENTS

Military Child of the Year Award recipients receive a \$10,000 cash award, a laptop computer, and are flown with a parent or guardian for a 3-night stay in Washington, D.C.

**Nominations accepted  
September 3 to  
December 2, 2025**

## OPPORTUNITY CORNER

### Become a Community Partner!

“Becoming a Community Partner is a great way to get your business involved with your local Air Force and Space Force community! For more than 40 years, businesses have been joining the Air & Space Forces Association to support both AFA National and local AFA chapters.

Not only does a Community Partner receive all the benefits of an AFA membership, such as a variety of product and service discounts, insurance programs, and much more, but the partner will also receive a wooden plaque with a date medallion and a window decal. These will show customers and clients that your business supports our troops!”

Category One (CP I) \$90.00 annually - Business can designate one person to receive AFA Membership and enjoy all benefits thereof.

Category Two (CP II) \$180.00 annually - Business can designate two people to receive AFA Membership and enjoy all benefits thereof.

Want to know more? Check out <https://www.afa.org/membership/community-partners>

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!** Do you like golf? Birthday parties? Races? Ball games? Corn hole? *Send us a note, stop by an event, or join us for our monthly leadership meeting.*



**VOLUNTEER!** Whether one hour one time or one hour a week, your AFA Sijan Chapter has opportunities for involvement in multiple areas. Areas of most need are in support of veterans and government outreach, community partnerships, and programming/events.

## CHAPTER AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

- To contact us or to be added to the Lance P Sijan chapter distribution list, please email us at: [lancepsijanafa@gmail.org](mailto:lancepsijanafa@gmail.org)
- To update your contact information, email National AFA at [membership@afa.org](mailto:membership@afa.org). Note that the chapter cannot change your email, mailing address, or other contact information. It must be done on your National membership profile.
- To join or renew your AFA membership, visit [www.afa.org](http://www.afa.org)
- For details on AFA member benefits, visit <http://www.afa.org/afa/memberbenefits>

Make sure you continue to receive our communications. You don't want to miss out on \$1 ice cream sundaes, free birthday cake, or any of the other exciting events we have in the works. Update your contact information today. Email National at [Membership@afa.org](mailto:Membership@afa.org).

While we can update our mailing list, Sijan representatives cannot update your official AFA contact information. You must contact National.

Do you know someone who would like to know about our events but isn't a member yet? We're happy to add them to our mailing list. Have them send a request to us at [LancePSijanAFA@gmail.com](mailto:LancePSijanAFA@gmail.com).

### CONTACT US!

**Sijan Chapter**

**Website:**

[www.lancepsijanafa.org](http://www.lancepsijanafa.org)



**AFA National Website:**

[www.afa.org](http://www.afa.org)

#### Email

[lancepsijanafa@gmail.com](mailto:lancepsijanafa@gmail.com)

#### Mailing Address

Air & Space Forces Association  
Lance P Sijan Chapter #125  
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The AFA is an independent, nonprofit, civilian education organization promoting public understanding of aerospace power and the pivotal role it plays in the security of the nation. AFA publishes Air Force Magazine, conducts national symposia and disseminates information through outreach programs. It sponsors professional development seminars and recognizes excellence in the education and aerospace fields through national awards programs. AFA presents scholarships and grants to Air Force active duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members and their dependents, and AFA awards educator grants to promote science and math education at the elementary, secondary, and high school level. Nationally, AFA has more than 100,000 active members. The AFA National Website is [WWW.AFA.ORG](http://WWW.AFA.ORG)

The Lance P. Sijan Chapter is one of the largest chapters in AFA, with nearly 3000 members. The Sijan Chapter, one of four AFA Chapters in Colorado, primarily focuses on support to the Colorado Springs area, including Peterson SFB, Schriever SFB, Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, and the USAFA. The AFA Sijan Chapter is proud of our rich heritage and strong support for the Colorado Springs Air & Space Forces community. We pride ourselves on active support to the local Colorado Springs "Air & Space Forces Family," providing approximately \$40,000 and thousands of volunteer hours in support annually!