



# Best Alive! Newsletter



## The Newest Faces of Det. 875

Cadet Freeman

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We have all heard about these new faces around the Detachment and have seen them at many labs and PT sessions. However, not many people really know who these two new faces are. SSgt Cross is from Nashville, Tennessee, and has served for more than six years in the Air Force. She was excited to hear she was coming to Virginia Tech. In fact, she volunteered for the position as a new aspect to her career. While being an NCO for the detachment, SSgt Cross is enthusiastic about the networking opportunities of the job and getting to work with, and motivate, so many

new people. She mentions that one of her biggest hobbies is nutrition and exercising. If anyone ever needs advice, SSgt Cross loves to offer guidance in these two areas! It could be as easy as an email or stopping by the NCOs office to ask.

SSgt Wingate is just as friendly and willing to help. She is from South Carolina and has served in the Air Force for more than nine years. At first, SSgt Wingate was not excited about coming to Tech. However, ROTC and Blacksburg are starting to grow on her! She is most excited about getting to watch all her hard work, and the

hard work of the other Cadre and NCOs, come to fruition as cadets graduate and become the future of the Air Force. Some of SSgt Wingate's hobbies include music, dancing, and Zumba. Oh, and anything

purple! Be sure to stop by the NCOs office and introduce yourself and get to know your new NCOs!

## Passing on the Knowledge: Conflict Management

Cadet Ragan



dent leaders, or mentors, who promote academic growth for other students. Cadet Venkat got involved in the program through a third-year mentor who asked for his help leading a small group discussion on conflict management. Eager to extend his briefing skills beyond the Air Force classroom, Cadet Venkat stepped up to pass on his knowledge.

When going over the points of his brief, Cadet Venkat highlighted areas such as recognizing conflict and dealing with conflict. He pointed out that the small group had a common mentality that problem solving was getting your subordinates to do what you want them to do. Cadet Venkat responded to this misconception by explaining how “solving conflict is not all about what you desire, but about the win-win.” Furthermore, Cadet Venkat emphasized the importance of knowing your people in order to achieve that desired outcome.

Going through an ROTC program, sometimes we forget how the concepts that become common knowledge to us might not register as easily to our civilian counterparts. While not everyone is going to know the significance of Operation Rolling Thunder, it's important to instill conflict management skills in students who aspire to take on leadership roles in the private sector. Rather than keeping valuable lessons to himself, Cadet Venkat reached out to the Curie and Da Vinci Living Learning Communities to share his knowledge about conflict management.

The Living and Learning Community is similar to a tutoring program, but more interactive because it's built around stu-

Even with a time crunch on his presentation, Cadet Venkat mentioned how this work is natural for him, “I like briefing!” he confidently stated. Overall, cadets are learning real-world, applicable skills that should be shared with others. This experience serves as a reminder of how we shouldn't take for granted the valuable lessons we get to develop us as effective leaders.



## Joint Base Langley–Eustis Visit

Cadet Livingston

On Wednesday, 1 Feb 2017, Detachment 875 had the privilege of traveling to Hampton, Virginia, to tour Joint Base Langley-Eustis (JBLE) to get an up-close view of the everyday operations. JBLE is one of only four joint bases in the world that combines both the Army and Air Force, and serves an important role as the headquarters of Air Combat Command and CENTCOM intelligence operations.

Capt Smythe, a recent graduate of the Corps of Cadets and Det 875, along with the JBLE Public Affairs staff, helped coordinate the visit. The detachment was privileged to have Capt Smythe participate in the officer panel for LLAB last semester. He is currently serving in the 363rd ISR Wing, which provides full-spectrum targeting production and analysis. The detachment toured an intelligence operations floor, where Capt Smythe works everyday, and received a comprehensive brief from the unit commander of their specific mission. Cadets were also received a hands-on demonstration from the Explosive Ordnance Disposal squadron. This was followed by a funeral ceremony demonstration, with the base's own Honor Guard.

The next day began with a brief from

the Airfield Management and Weather Operations NCOs of the 1st Operations Support Squadron. Cadets were shown the comprehensive simulator for the airfield management and then taken to the control tower to watch F-22 Raptors and T-38 Thunderbirds take off for training exercises over the Atlantic.



The final day began with a full 30-minute F-22 demonstration that was viewed right from the airfield. Immediately following, the commander of the 497<sup>th</sup> ISR Group gave a brief of the 480<sup>th</sup> ISR Wing's operation of the Distributed Common Ground System, or DGCS, which conducts imagery, cryptologic, and measurement and signatures intelligence. Within the 497<sup>th</sup> is the 45<sup>th</sup> Intel Squadron, which conducts 24/7 surveillance missions for CENTCOM. They offered an in-depth brief of their mission and showed their facilities, including the live intel floor.

Cadets were able to access the facilities of the base, including the dining facilities and fitness center, as well as enjoy the amenities of Hampton Roads. Col Torrens thoroughly enjoyed the trip, a sentiment echoed by Capt. McGan.



## Slam Dunk Service for Others

Cadet Richie

On February 3rd and 4th, 2017, Squadron 2 and members of Squadron 1 participated in the Special Olympics Southwest Regional Basketball Tournament. On Friday, the Air Force cadets went to Cassell Coliseum and McComas Hall to set up the event to ensure the main attraction on Saturday went smoothly. On the day of the tournament, the cadets participated in the Volunteer 2 Cheer

headed the volunteering opportunity by communicating with the program manager, attending planning meetings, and managing the 30 cadet volunteers and photographers. Cadet McKay enjoyed his time helping out at the event saying, "The energy was great and I think the athletes really enjoyed the atmosphere." He also noted the immense work and appreciation that went into the event, "The tournament was very official, with scoreboards, cameramen, and even appearances from Buzz Williams and the VT cheerleaders."



program. They acted as the "home team crowd" and celebrated with many of the athletes as they cheered them on through their many victories. Cadet Carson McKay spear-

Special Olympics Virginia is a program that organizes events to include all people of ages and abilities. The Corps of Cadets and Det. 875 have a long history of supporting its various events, such as raising funds for the Polar Plunge. Cadet McKay was grateful that he was able to reach out to others during the Southwest Regional Basketball Tournament, "This was just another great opportunity to get out and connect with people." It is important to Det. 875 to learn that serving our country means also supporting those in our community closest to home.