



# NEWS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Civil Air Patrol National Conference draws 800+ to Orlando for training, focus on future path

**ORLANDO, Florida** – More than 800 Civil Air Patrol members will convene this week from **Aug. 27-29** in **Orlando, Florida**, for the organization's [2015 National Conference](#), devoting several days to training, networking and focusing on the U.S. Air Force Auxiliary's path for the future.

"I hope our members' experiences in Orlando provide them with inspiration, enthusiasm and a renewed commitment to serving their communities and our nation," said **Maj. Gen. Joe Vazquez, CAP national commander**.

The conference at Walt Disney World's Swan and Dolphin Resort will culminate with a banquet **at 7 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 29**, featuring a keynote speech by U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. [Bradley A. Heithold](#), commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field, Florida. The command is the Air Force component of U.S. Special Operations Command, which provides Air Force special operations forces for worldwide deployment and assignment to unified combatant commanders and includes about 19,000 active-duty, Reserve, Air National Guard and civilian professionals. Heithold's staff assignments include positions on the Air Staff and a unified command staff. Previously he was vice commander of the Special Operations Command.

### National Awards

Also **Aug. 29**, top CAP members will be honored for their service during an **Awards Recognition** ceremony set to begin at 8:30 a.m. Those being recognized include **Cadet Col. Benjamin C. Jakeman of the Colorado Wing as Cadet of the Year** and **Col. Steven W. Kuddes of the Nebraska Wing as Senior Member of the Year**. Several CAP units will also be honored, including the **California Wing's Fresno Composite Squadron 112, selected as the 2014 Squadron of Distinction**.

### Cadet Day

In addition, **Aug. 29** will feature **Cadet Day** activities for CAP's younger members, highlighted by a visit to the Orlando Support Center and "JetBlue University" facility of the activity's sponsor, JetBlue. Participating cadets will get hands-on experience in flight simulators and will also hear speakers from JetBlue, including commercial pilots, airline personnel, mechanics and engineers.

### Former National Commanders

Eight former national commanders are scheduled to attend the conference – **Brig. Gens. Hal Du Pont of Vero Beach, Florida**, who served in that position from 1970-1973; **Howard Brookfield of Whittier, California**, national commander from 1982-1984; **William Cass of Seminole, Florida**, 1984-1986; and **Richard Anderson of Woodbridge, Virginia**, 1993-1996; and Maj. Gens. **Richard Bowling of Knoxville, Tennessee**, 2001-2004; **Dwight Wheless of Monteo, North Carolina**, 2004-2005; **Amy Courter of South Lyon, Michigan**, 2007-2011; and **Charles Carr of Columbus, Ohio**, 2011-2014. A **Town Hall Meeting** with the eight is set for 10:30-noon **Friday, Aug. 28**. In addition, **Anderson** will be inducted into the **CAP Hall of Honor** as the 35<sup>th</sup> person so honored during the next night's banquet.

## Learning Labs

In addition, some 60 [learning labs](#) are planned for **Aug. 28-29**. The seminars, led by CAP National Headquarters staff and other experts, will focus on such topics as finance, communications, safety, logistics, aircraft operations, professional development and leadership, fundraising, recruiting and retention, the chaplaincy, government relations, CAP history, information technology cadet programs, aerospace education and public affairs.

## Preconference Workshops

**Nine [preconference workshops](#)** will be offered **Aug. 24-27**. Those sessions, customized to fulfill members' professional development needs, include a Cessna G1000 Ground School; a class on Geospatial Information Interoperability Exploitation Portable go-kits, which feature self-contained communications equipment and other hardware that allows for real time or near-real time full-motion video; examinations of fundraising and government relations; and two-day sessions aimed at public information officers, public affairs officers, inspectors general and leaders of cadets.

#CAPNC15

*Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with 58,000 members nationwide, operating a fleet of 550 aircraft. CAP, in its Air Force auxiliary role, performs about 85 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCC with saving an average of 70 lives annually. Its unpaid professionals also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. The members play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to more than 24,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet programs. Performing missions for America for the past 73 years, CAP received the Congressional Gold Medal in 2014 in honor of the heroic efforts of its World War II veterans. CAP also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit [www.capvolunteernow.com](http://www.capvolunteernow.com) for more information.*

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