Vision 2020
Our Strategy for Building Exceptional Officers

Air Force ROTC Detachment 842
The University of Texas at San Antonio
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Executive Summary

Detachment 842 is poised for greatness. As the University of Texas at San Antonio rises to tier-one status, this detachment rises alongside it.

We are one of the ten largest detachments in the nation, we produce more minority officers than the average demographic of the Air Force, and have won the “Right of Line” award for best large AFROTC detachment numerous times. And while these honors and attributes are noteworthy, we must not rest on our laurels, but instead, keep driving forward and upward—continually challenging ourselves to excel and to build exceptional officers—not just for the sake of producing officers, but because our country needs great leaders.

We recognize that the United States is blessed with liberty, opportunity, prosperity, security, and much more. However, these qualities are not universal, so we must further recognize their value and cherish them. Additionally, these qualities can be lost, so we must preserve them by living honorably and defending them with our lives. Ultimately, we understand that the lives of our fellow service members and the security of our Nation will depend on our ability to live honorably, lead effectively, and excel at our mission in an agile, dynamic, and violent environment every day, without fail. To that end, our mission is to build exceptional officers who will lead our Air Force and our nation.

The strategy laid forth in this document outlines a path for advancing the program to greatness. It dovetails with UTSA’s framework for tier-one status, and falls in line with the Air Force’s mission of producing leaders of character. To this end, our strategic goals are to:

- Recruit remarkable individuals from all backgrounds.
- Develop cadets to take responsibility of their lives and missions.
- Develop cadets to partner with others for success.
- Develop cadets to be servant-leaders of character and excellence.
- Develop cadets to continually grow in wisdom and understanding.
- Develop cadets to act, adapt, and endure in the face of adversity.
- Commission officers superior in their ability to lead.
In 1776, colonists stood up to tyranny and declared their independence as the United States of America. They composed a constitution that formed a democratic republic, wherein the ultimate power in the country rested in citizens who voted and elected representatives. This was later described by President Lincoln as a “government of the people, by the people, for the people.”
Since that time, the United States has been blessed with liberty, opportunity, prosperity, and security. People are free to choose a profession, a place to live, what they say, and who they worship. They know they have the opportunity to pursue their dreams, to be successful in their endeavors, and that these things will be defended from enemies, both foreign and domestic. However, in the United States, less that one half of one percent of our country wears the military uniform and defends the population. We recognize that someone must continue to defend this country and the qualities that make it great.
The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) was founded on June 5, 1969 and commissioned as a university of the first class. In the early 1980s the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) detachment came into existence as an extension of the AFROTC detachment at Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State) in San Marcos. In 1989, the AFROTC program at UTSA officially stood on its own and became designated at Detachment 842, commissioning three cadets in its first year. Over the years, the program has grown to be one of the 10 largest detachments in the nation. Our enrollment hovers around 200 cadets, and we normally commission between 20 and 30 officers every year. But it’s not just about numbers; the program has also won the “Right of Line” award for best large ROTC detachment multiple times, validating the program’s excellence.

The detachment receives incredible support from UTSA, to include facilities, partnerships, and funding. Aligned under the Office of the Veteran and Military Affairs, the AFROTC program is part of a larger umbrella of military-related organizations at UTSA that focus on training, educating, and supporting veterans, military members, and those wanting to join the military.

The city of San Antonio is deeply rooted in military history. Just some of the notable military personnel who have ties to San Antonio include:

- Admiral Chester Nimitz, who grew up in Fredericksburg, just North of San Antonio.
- General Douglas MacArthur, who graduated as a valedictorian of the Texas Military Institute.
- General Dwight Eisenhower, who was stationed at Ft. Sam Houston multiple times and even coached the St Mary’s football team.
- Carl Spaatz, Curtis LeMay, Billy Mitchell, Jimmy Doolittle, and Charles Lindbergh, who were stationed and trained in San Antonio.
- Theodore Roosevelt, who trained with the Rough Riders in San Antonio prior to the Spanish American War.
- And, of course, we certainly can’t forget the Alamo and the subsequent rally cry that led to victory in San Jacinto and Texas independence.
Today, the military ties to San Antonio are stronger than ever. San Antonio is commonly referred to “Military City USA” due to the large military presence here. The city is home to Joint Base San Antonio, comprising of Lackland Air Force Base, Randolph Air Force Base, Fort Sam Houston, Brooks City-Base, and Camp Bullis. Among the many missions at these installations are:

Lackland AFB: 37th Training Wing (the largest wing in the US Air Force, providing Basic Military Training (BMT) for all new recruits), Air Reserve Command 433d Airlift Wing, Texas Air National Guard 149th Fighter Wing, 59th Medical Wing (home to Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center), 25th Air Force (the Air Force’s premier military intelligence organization),

Randolph AFB: Headquarters Air Education and Training Command (AETC), Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC), Air Force Recruiting Service (AFRS) 12th Fighter Training Wing – provides pilot training on the T-6A Texan II, the T-38 Talon and the T-1A Jayhawk.

Ft. Sam Houston: US Army North (ARNORTH), US Army South (ARSOUTH), US Army Medical Command (MEDCOM)—which includes San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC), US Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM), along with many other units and elements.

Underpinning all of these installations is the 502d Air Base Wing, which provides installation support for all of Joint Base San Antonio.

The connection between UTSA, the military community, and Detachment 842 serve to make the perfect environment for building up Air Force officers and leaders of our country. The synergies this detachment has with its community are second to none and enable us to leverage relationships and resources to afford cadets an experience that truly prepares them for a career in the US Air Force.
Who We Are

We are Detachment 842 at The University of Texas at San Antonio — our nation’s premier detachment. We represent the best of Air Force ROTC. We are Roadrunners.
What We Do

We Build Exceptional Officers.
Why We Do It

Understanding the principles upon which this country was founded, our country’s history, and the face of the world today is foundational to developing our mission and vision for the future. With this understanding, we acknowledge that:

• The extraordinary qualities of the United States are not universal to all countries, so we must recognize the value of those qualities and cherish them.

• Because it is a government of the people and by the people, we the people must be self-governing. We must individually govern ourselves and live honorably, because if we fail in this endeavor, then we will be governed by someone else.

“The only foundation of a free Constitution is pure Virtue, and if this cannot be inspired into our People in a greater measure than they have it now, they may change their rulers and the forms of Government, but they will not obtain a lasting Liberty. They will only exchange Tyrants and Tyrannies.”

- John Adams

“Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom.”

- Benjamin Franklin

“Freedom is in danger of degenerating into mere arbitrariness unless it is lived in terms of responsibleness. That is why I recommend that the Statue of Liberty on the East Coast be supplemented by a Statue of Responsibility on the West Coast.”

- Vicktor Frankl

• There are some people who do not want us to have these qualities, so we must preserve these qualities by defending them with our lives.
The lives of our fellow service members and the security of our nation will depend on our ability to live honorably, lead effectively, and excel at our mission in an agile, dynamic, and violent environment every day, without fail.
How We Do It

Our mission is too important to be conducted haphazardly; therefore, we must be deliberate in our actions. Our plan for building exceptional officers is to:

- **Recruit great people,**
- **develop them into scholar-warrior leaders**
- **who take ownership and engage in partnership,** then
- **commission them as exceptional officers.**
For each line of effort, we have strategic goals that guide our approach to building officers. Each of these strategic goals, in turn, have objectives and actions, and where appropriate, key performance indicators to provide a measurable metric of progress.

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<td>We will send cadets into the AF, superior in their ability to lead.</td>
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1. **Recruit Great People**
We recruit remarkable individuals from all backgrounds.

To commission exceptional officers, we must first recruit remarkable individuals. Though we don’t expect our new cadets to be perfect, we do have high standards, and we are not interested in increasing our production of officers at the expense of quality. Moreover, to recruit great people, we must have the cadre and staff that are of the highest caliber, because they set the example.

**Strategic Goals and Actions:**

1.1 Hire cadre members of the highest caliber.

1.2 Seek out remarkable individuals.

1.3 Increase visibility and understanding of AFROTC in the community.
2. Develop Ownership
We develop cadets to take responsibility of their lives and missions.

Ownership is the idea that a leader must own, that is, take responsibility for, the actions necessary to move forward. It conveys both authority and responsibility. Ownership also entails accepting the consequences of actions taken—actions by the leader and those they lead. A leader is responsible for everything their organization does and does not do. They take pride in trying to solve things at their level; they show initiative and excellence, and they endure to the end. They recognize that they alone are responsible for their success.

Strategic Goals and Actions
2.1 Instill a culture of responsibility.
2.2 Encourage objective self-criticism.
2.3 Increase ambitions for life and career.
3. Develop Partnership
We develop cadets to partner with others for success.

Though leaders alone are responsible for their success, they can’t achieve it alone, they need partners. The simple fact is, leaders can do very little in this life without help from others, nor should they want to. Relationships form the interconnectedness of this world that enable us to accomplish more than we could if we were simply on our own.

Strategic Goals and Actions

3.1 Create a culture of support and mentorship within the detachment.

3.2 Create strategic partnerships with industry, government, community partners, alumni, and within UTSA, that strengthen the well-being of our community and our detachment.

3.3 Enhance cadets’ ability to engage in meaningful partnerships through training on effective communication, relationships, and conflict resolution.
4. Develop Leaders
We develop cadets to be servant-leaders of character and excellence.

A leader is a person who influences and directs people to accomplish an assigned mission. Successful leaders are those who understand themselves, the people they’re leading, and the interaction of their own personality, strengths and weaknesses with those they’re leading. They look to the future, inspire their team, and move forward. The Navy Seal ethos captures this beautifully: “We expect to lead and be led. In the absence of orders we will take charge, lead our teammates and accomplish the mission. We lead by example in all situations.” The following traits and characteristics are core to a good leader: Integrity, Service, Excellence, Professionalism, Vision, Enthusiasm, Action, Delegation, Mentorship, Trust, Balance

Strategic Goals and Actions

4.1 Create a culture of integrity and excellence where cadre and cadets are recognized as servant-leaders throughout the university and community.

4.2 Inspire cadets to have vision, to develop a plan for executing the vision, and to team with others to take action to get there.

4.3 Exude professionalism in all situations.

4.4 Understand the importance of balance in life.
5. Develop Scholars
We develop cadets to continually grow in wisdom and understanding.

A scholar is a person who is highly educated or has an aptitude for study. A scholar thirsts for learning; and their thirst is never quenched. To make informed decisions, leaders must understand the world, both past and present. This learning is never complete, but is continually gained through formal professional education, and informal individual learning. The following traits and characteristics are core to a good leader: Awareness, Inquisitiveness, Organization, Innovation, Critical Thinking

Strategic Goals and Actions

5.1 Develop an environment of curiosity, learning, and growth.
5.2 Improve cadets’ global awareness.
5.3 Strengthen academic aptitude of cadets.
5.4 Increase quantity and amount of scholarships that cadets receive.
6. Develop Warriors
We develop cadets to act, adapt, and endure in the face of adversity.

A warrior is a brave or experienced fighter. As the saying goes, “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.” Therefore, we must each stand up to face our fears and be warriors. The following traits and characteristics are core to a good leader: *Instinct, Courage, Discipline, Adaptation, Fortitude.*

**Strategic Goals and Actions**

6.1 Embolden cadets to try new things, face their fears, and not be afraid to fail.
6.2 Conduct training scenarios that develop grit and endurance.
6.3 Empower cadets to value discipline in their lives.
6.4 Strengthen physical aptitude of cadets.
7. Commission Exceptional Officers
We send cadets into the Air Force, superior in their ability to lead.

Just as forward progress on a football field requires teamwork from all players, so our vision requires multiple people coming together towards a common goal—to commission exceptional officers. We cross the goal when we commission a cadet as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force, superior in their ability to lead.

Strategic Goals and Actions

7.1 Increase retention rates without lowering standards.

7.2 Expose cadets to life in the Air Force, prior to commissioning, in order to enable seamless transition.

7.3 Finalize officer building process through a celebratory commissioning.

7.4 Strengthen ties between alumni and detachment.
Key Performance Indicators

As mentioned previously, each of these strategic goals have objectives and actions, and where appropriate, key performance indicators provide a measurable metric of progress. The performance indicators are as follows:

• Recruiting Excellence
  • Knowledge of detachment vision among cadets
  • Number of targeted recruiting events held
  • Cadre and cadet qualifications
• Ownership & Partnership Excellence
  • Number of volunteer hours at UTSA & community
  • Number of joint activities conducted
  • Number of alumni engagements
  • Amount of alumni giving
  • Program funding (sponsorship, endowment, gifts, etc.)
• Leadership Excellence
  • Field training performance - Number of cadets that graduate as Distinguished Graduates, Superior Performers, or in the Top Third
  • Average National Order of Merit of commissioned officers
• Scholastic Excellence
  • Average GPA of each class
  • Scholarships received by cadets (both by quantity and amount)
  • Knowledge of countries in the world
  • Knowledge of major historical events
• Warrior Excellence
  • Average Physical Fitness Assessment score of each class
• Commissioning Excellence
  • Retention rate
  • Number of officers commissioned
  • Percent of cadets who receive Air Force specialty based on preference
“Best in Blue”

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