

The image is a blue-tinted promotional graphic for the 2017 NASCAR Las Vegas recruiting event. It features a background of a race track pit area with a man in a racing uniform and a woman in the foreground. A large white play button is centered over the image. The text 'LAS VEGAS RECRUITING NASCAR 2017' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font on the left side. There are also logos for 'Fresh Florida' and 'EXIT' visible.

**LAS VEGAS
RECRUITING
NASCAR
2017**



BEHIND THE BADGE

ABOUT US

Behind the Badge is a digitally published, bi-monthly magazine catering to the recruiting community. It is an official publication of the Air Force Recruiting Service Public Affairs Office.

SUBMIT

Behind the Badge welcomes submissions from all recruiters and those working in the field. Photos, videos, story ideas, commentaries, suggestions and criticisms are all welcome, although publication is not guaranteed.

**To submit, email us at:
afreshqpa@us.af.mil**

Submission deadline for next issue:
March 29, 2017

INSIDE THIS EDITION

ON THE COVER



The 368th Recruiting Squadron F-Flight “High-rollers” out of Las Vegas revved up excitement for the Air Force when they hosted a NASCAR event March 10-12 at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Featuring guest appearances by Lt. Col. William Parker of the 368th Recruiting Squadron, Maj. Gen. Glen VanHerck, commander of the U.S. Air Force Warfare Center at Nellis Air Force Base and Command Chief Master Sgt. Charles Hoffman, also from the U.S. Air Force Warfare Center. During the event, 11 DEP members swore in and attendees were treated to a flyover of two F-15s and two F-22s out of Nellis. The event was broadcast nationally on Fox and live through the Fox Sports Go app.

Special thanks to Tech. Sgt. Roberto Salinas-Jimenez of the 368th Recruiting Squadron for putting this video together.

ALSO INSIDE

From the Editor

How to Navigate BtB

Photo Pages

Recruiting Through History

On This Day...



FROM THE EDITOR



MELISSA WALTHER

Before I was in kindergarten, I had a life-size coloring book of Revolutionary War heroes. George Washington was in there, as was the Marquis de Lafayette and others. But the one I remember the most was Deborah Samson.

For those of you who don't know, she dresses up like a man, took her brother's name and fought in the war, getting injured several times and eventually honorably discharged when her true identity was revealed.

And as you may recall, I was obsessed with Top Gun as a child and wanted to be a fighter pilot. I knew there were no women fighter pilots, but it honestly didn't occur to me that it actually wasn't possible. I mean, Samson did it in her day; why not me? (I was something like five years old, cut me some slack).

I was 11 when Jeannie Leavitt became the first fighter pilot in the Air Force, and even though my career aspirations had changed, it was still a big deal. My family never told me "you can't do that because you're a girl," but by that time in my life, I had certainly heard it.

But as time went on, I got older, and more and more of those barriers were broken. Women can now serve in combat. STEM fields are recruiting more women. More hold political office. And sure, there are things that still need work, but the amount society has changed in my lifetime alone, gives me hope.

In the last 100 years, we've gone from being property of our husbands and fathers, to be married off at their discession, to earning the right to vote, entering the workforce, serving in the military (openly), politics, STEM fields, combat and more.

Can you believe the Air Force Academy didn't accept female cadets until 1980?

So during this women's history month, take a moment to thank your mothers and grandmothers, appreciate the hard work of your wives and girlfriends, and be sure to tell your daughters to aim high.

-Melissa

HOW TO NAVIGATE BEHIND THE BADGE

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CONTENTS

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IN YOUR OWN WORDS

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL

Chief Master Sgt. Christopher D. Simpson

It sounds so simple: say what you mean. But all too often, what we try to communicate gets lost in translation, despite our best intentions. We say one thing, the other person hears something else, and misunderstandings, frustration and conflicts ensue. Fortunately, you can learn how to communicate more clearly and effectively. Whether you're trying to improve communication with your spouse, kids, boss or coworkers, you can improve the communication skills that enable you to effectively connect with others, build trust and respect, and feel heard and understood.

Communication is about more than just exchanging information. It's about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. Effective communication is also a two-way street. It's not only how you convey a message so that it is received and understood by someone in exactly the way you intended, it's also how you listen to gain the full meaning of what's being said and to make the other person feel heard and understood.

More than just the words you use, effective communication combines a set of skills including nonverbal communication, engaged listening, managing stress in the moment, the ability to communicate assertively, and the capacity to recognize and understand your own emotions and those of the person you're communicating with.

Effective communication is the glue that helps you deepen your connections to others and improve teamwork, decision making and problem solving. It enables you to communicate even negative or difficult messages without creating conflict or destroying trust. People often focus on what they should say, but effective communication is less about talking and more about listening. Listening well means not just understanding the words or the information being communicated, but also understanding the emotions the speaker is trying to communicate.

There's also a big difference between engaged listening and simply hearing. When you really listen—when you're engaged with what's being said—you'll hear the subtle intonations in someone's voice that tell you how that person is feeling and the emotions they're trying to communicate. When you're an engaged listener, not only will you better understand the other person, you'll also make that person feel heard and understood, which can help build a stronger connection.

Keep stress in check! To communicate effectively, you need to be aware of and in control of your emotions. And that means learning how to manage stress. When you're stressed, you're more likely to misread other people, send confusing or off-putting nonverbal signals and lapse into unhealthy knee-jerk patterns of behavior. In many cases, how you say something can be as important as what you say. Speak clearly, maintain an even tone, and make eye contact. Keep your body language relaxed and open.

Lastly, direct, assertive expression makes for clear communication and can help boost self-esteem and decision-making. Being assertive means expressing your thoughts, feelings and needs in an open and honest way, while standing up for yourself and respecting others. It does not mean being hostile, aggressive or demanding. Effective communication is always about understanding the other person, not about winning an argument or forcing your opinions on others. Express negative thoughts in a positive way. It's OK to be angry, but you must be respectful as well. We must also learn to say "no." Know your limits and don't let others take advantage of you. However, look for alternative solutions so everyone feels good about the outcome.

Chief Master Sgt. Christopher D. Simpson is the squadron superintendent of the 364th Recruiting Squadron, Sacramento, California.





MARKETING OUTSIDE THE BOX

MAKING TECH WORK FOR YOU

If the Marines, Army and Navy are the “brawn” of the armed services, the Air Force is the “brain,” and recruiters are using theirs to reach potential recruits in innovative ways.

“We’re supposed to be the ‘high-tech’ branch, so it makes sense to do something like this,” said Capt. Marcus Catchpole, a recruiter with the 367th Recruiting Squadron. Catchpole brings his own 3-D printer to recruiting events to make “SPIs before their eyes.”

“I print little 3D F-16s, and people love it,” he said. “It really brings a crowd and gives us an opportunity to talk about some of the cool things the Air Force has to offer. Although I do have to print the majority of them at home before the event, since it takes so long.”

Unique promotional give-aways can be a great way to get people to your booth once they’re at an event, but sometimes getting them in the door in the first place can be difficult.

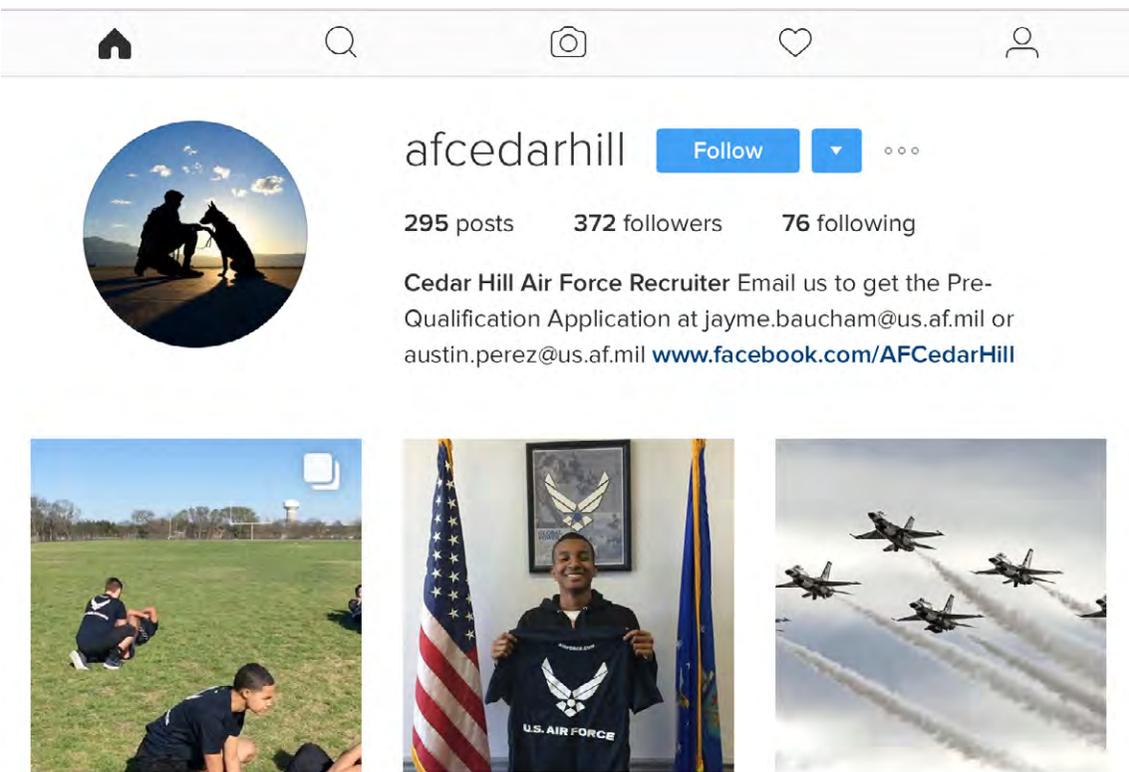
That’s where social media comes in, and staying ahead of the curve is important.

“The biggest thing with using Instagram or any social media outlet to advertise has been the money aspect,” said Tech. Sgt. David Hutson, 344th Recruiting Squadron Training NCO. “If you go through a marketing agency, there are going to be advertising fees and other fees that boost the cost up. If you manage it yourself, it will be a bunch of transactions at a low cost.”

Hutson’s unit has recently experimented using Instagram to reach a different audience, and has been seeing a lot of success with the “DIY” approach. He said the platform is useful for reaching a younger audience.

“It’s something that is going to need to be managed, and requires attention to make it a hit,” he said. “This won’t be for someone who isn’t willing to take time out of their day to update the page to show new, trending, updated information.”

Whether it’s managing a new social media account or printing 3D SPIs, it all comes down to putting in the time.



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APRIL 26	MAY 3
MAY 10	MAY 17
MAY 24	MAY 31
JUNE 7	JUNE 14
JUNE 21	JUNE 28
JULY 5	JULY 12
JULY 19	JULY 26
AUGUST 2	AUGUST 9
AUGUST 16	AUGUST 23
AUGUST 30	SEPTEMBER 6
SEPTEMBER 13	SEPTEMBER 20
SEPTEMBER 27	OCTOBER 4
OCTOBER 11	OCTOBER 18
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