

The United States Air Force Academy Band

The United States Air Force Academy Band proudly represents the Air Force Academy as the leading educational institution developing and inspiring air and space leaders of character with a vision for tomorrow. As one of eleven Air Force bands, the Academy Band maintains a rigorous performance schedule in support of Cadet and Air Force troop morale, recruiting and community outreach. For over 50 years, the Academy Band has used the power of music to inspire Air Force personnel and the nation they serve, produce innovative musical programs and products, and communicate Air Force excellence to millions around the globe.



The USAF Academy Band appears on behalf of Lieutenant General Michelle D. Johnson, Superintendent, USAF Academy. All performances are free and open to the public.



THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY BAND

Lieutenant Colonel Donald E. Schofield - Commander

WILD BLUE COUNTRY



Wild Blue Country

Versatility, broad repertoire, and show-stopping professionalism enable Wild Blue Country to support every Air Force mission, from local and international community relations to recruiting and deployed troop support. A favorite in country music circles, Wild Blue Country has regularly been featured on the Grand Ole Opry and television shows like Nashville Now and Opry Back Stage. They have appeared with country recording artists such as Charlie Daniels, Conway Twitty, Boxcar Willie, Hank Williams, Jr., Louise Mandrell, Reba McEntire, Roger Miller, Ray Price, “Whispering” Bill Anderson, Mickey Gilley and Brent Mason just to name a few. Wild Blue Country has also appeared live on “Good Morning America” with special guest Ronan Tynan as well as many other TV and radio shows around the country. As a favorite of military and civilian audiences alike, Wild Blue Country continues to captivate and entertain audiences through their worldwide appeal.



Commander and Conductor



Lieutenant Colonel Donald E. Schofield Jr. is the Commander and Conductor of the USAF Academy Band, Peterson AFB, Colorado, assuming command in July, 2012

Lt Col Schofield is a native of Atlanta, Georgia, and earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of Georgia, a Master of Music degree from Louisiana State University and is currently a candidate for the Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in Music Education from Boston University. He has studied performance and conducting with Dr. Dwight Satterwhite, Professor Frank Wickes and Dr. David Randolph. Prior to joining the United States Air Force, Lt Col Schofield was a successful teacher in the public schools of Georgia. As Director of Bands at Effingham County High School, he brought its 300-member marching band and wind ensemble to national recognition through awards at both the national and regional levels. He has conducted ensembles ranging from professional symphony orchestras to elementary school bands across the United States and Puerto Rico and continues to be an active clinician and arranger.

Commissioned in 1997, Lt Col Schofield was assigned to The United States Air Force Band of Flight, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, where he served as both Commander and Deputy Commander. In 2001, Lt Col Schofield was hand-picked to become the tenth director of The United States Air Force Strolling Strings and Chamber Orchestra, where he led performances across the United States, the White House, the Pentagon and the National Cathedral before international audiences. Selected to command The United States Air Force Band of Mid-America in 2004, he performed for Presidents George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George H. Bush and Jimmy Carter and conducted international broadcasts reaching over 50 million viewers. In 2007, Major Schofield was chosen to command the United States Air Forces Central Command Band, leading overseas performances for United States and coalition troops in Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa and 11 other Southwest Asia countries in direct support of operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

In 2008, Lt Col Schofield assumed command of The Band of the United States Air Force Reserve and has performed internationally with such artists as Kid Rock, Little Big Town, Lee Ann Womack, Chris Daughtry, Gabrielle Iglesias, Carlos Mencia, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Lonestar, Wynonna Judd, Naomi Judd, Amy Grant, Diamond Rio, the Miracles, Lee Greenwood, Gary Morris, Take 6, Brian McNight and Gordon Goodwin. Making their debut in the White House in 2011, the Band of the Air Force Reserve was requested by name to perform for President and Mrs. Obama. Under his leadership, The Band of the United States Air Force Reserve performed 400 times each year and in 2009 reached an international audience of 100 million viewers.

Lt Col Schofield has been recognized twice for his musical leadership by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences as a two-time Top Four finalist for a prestigious Emmy Award. The “Holiday Notes from Home” production was broadcast to 177 countries worldwide, all United States embassies, and all ships and submarines at sea and was broadcast across the country to 60 million homes.

The United States Air Force Academy

When it comes to choosing a college, options seem almost endless. For the highly motivated high school graduate who is looking for something more from their college experience, The United States Air Force Academy is easily the first choice.



At a time when options are wide open, those who consider bigger goals, deeper learning, time-honored character development and possibly, a more rewarding future, choose to attend one of the most prestigious educational institutions in the world.

The Academy offers a world-class education, the opportunity to fly, and a guaranteed career right out of college. Many cadets create professional relationships that last a lifetime. It is true that there is no financial cost to attend the Academy, but there is a hefty price tag. Academy cadets pay for their education with sweat, hard work, early mornings, and late nights. They are held to the highest standards, without exception, and upon graduation are required to serve at least five years as a leader in the United States Air Force.

With that price comes an experience that can't be found anywhere else. Air Force Academy cadets are surrounded by other young Americans who are pushing themselves to the limits, developing strength and character and discovering the qualities that make great leaders.

Air Force Academy Band Information

Key Personnel

Lieutenant Colonel Donald E. Schofield—Commander/Conductor
Captain Dustin M. Doyle—Flight Commander
Chief Master Sergeant Mark A. Burditt—Band Manager
Mr. Randall A. Doersch—Director of Operations

Contact for More Information

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Personnel



Master Sergeant Stephen L. Brannen, *guitar and group leader*, hails from Nashville, Tennessee. He currently holds a degree in Recording Industry from Middle Tennessee State University. Stephen has also attended Northeast Louisiana University at Monroe and the University of Texas at Arlington. He has studied with Charles Postlewaite,

Steve Owen and Rick Hayden. He originally entered the Air Force in March 1989, and was stationed at Scott AFB, Illinois, and Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. He separated from the Air Force in 1994 and became a guitarist at Opryland USA located in Nashville, Tennessee, until 1997. He rejoined the Air Force in November 1999, as a member of the Heritage of America Band, stationed at Langley AFB, Virginia. He became a member of The United States Air Force Academy Band in January 2002, and is currently the guitarist for Wild Blue Country, Concert Band, and Marching Band.

Master Sergeant Chris Gaona, *drums*,

earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Percussion Performance from the University of Colorado in Boulder. His principal percussion teachers include Doug Walter, Chris Hanning and Dr. John Davis. Chris has performed with many jazz greats to include Sammy Nestico, The New York Voices, John Hollenbeck, Shelly Berg, Marcus Roberts, Jon Hendricks and Diane Schuur. Chris joined the Air Force Band of Mid-America in 1996 and has been with The United States Air Force Academy Band since July of 1999. Sergeant Gaona is a member of the Marching Band, Concert Band, and Wild Blue Country.





Technical Sergeant Jeff S. Valentine, *steel guitar*, is a native of Denton, Texas. He studied jazz at the University of North Texas where he played lead trombone in the One O'clock Lab Band under the direction of Neil Slater from 2001 to 2003. As a member of the One O'clock Lab Band, Sergeant Valentine had the privilege of performing with

Bob Brookmeyer, Maria Schneider, Dick Oatts, Chris Potter, Jiggs Whigham, Bill Reichenbach, and Bill Watrous. During his tenure at UNT, Jeff was a member of the award winning jazz trombone ensemble, Slide Tradition. Sergeant Valentine has played on cruise ships and has done extensive freelance work in the Dallas area. He joined The United States Air Force Academy Band in 2003 on trombone and currently plays trombone in the Marching Band, and steel guitar for Wild Blue Country.

Staff Sergeant Nicholas R. Daniels

is a vocalist for the United States Air Force Academy Band at Peterson AFB, Colorado. He joined the Air Force as a C-5 Aircraft Loadmaster in October, 2003 with the 9th Airlift Squadron. After being stationed at Dover AFB, Delaware for 6 years, he cross-trained onto the C-130J aircraft at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas. After completing a successful audition in January 2012, SSgt Daniels joined the USAF Academy Band in April of that year. He currently performs with Wild Blue Country, Concert Band, and the Marching Band.



Airmen First Class Jared M. Andrews, *bass*, hails from Perry, Georgia. He is a graduate of Florida State University where he earned a Masters of Jazz Studies. While at Florida State he was a member of the FSU Jazz Orchestra and University Symphony Orchestra. Along with his performing duties at FSU Airman Andrews also directed FSU Jazz Ensemble III and the Raa Middle School Jazz Band. He has studied with Rodney Jordan, Donovan Stokes, Marcus Roberts and Paul McKee. Airman Andrews has had the opportunity to perform on stage with Chuck Israels, Martin Bejarano, Walt Weiskopf and Kevin Norton. He joined The United States Air Force Academy Band in 2012, where he plays bass with Wild Blue Country, and sousaphone in the Marching band.

