



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE AIR UNIVERSITY (AETC)

29 August 2016

Colonel Bobby C. Woods, Jr.
Director, HQ Air Force JROTC
60 West Maxwell Boulevard
Maxwell AFB AL 36112-6501

Dear AFJROTC Cadets,

I want each of you to know that as an Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) cadet, you are part of something truly incredible! Through AFJROTC, you are learning and will learn important things that will help you be successful in life. Living a life of purpose, integrity, service, excellence, and dedication to serving something bigger than yourself is the path to true success and happiness in this life. Each year, you collectively do hundreds of thousands of community service hours. That is a great example of dedication and selflessness! Your volunteer work and your work in your units is powerful and you should be very proud of all you do in your units, school, community, and nation through that service.

I wanted to personally tell each of you that I am very proud of you! Each year, all 120,000+ of you complete invaluable community service for our nation. As a team, you do over 1.6 million hours of community service each year. In fact, you got very close to 1.7 million hours in 2016. I want each of you to think and talk about the positive impacts in your school, community, and our nation that come from all your hard work. All of you should be incredibly proud of that amazing accomplishment. Also, think about how good it made you feel and the pride you felt to dedicate your time, talents, and hard work toward the worthy causes you selected. There is always a sense of pride and accomplishment when you selflessly do something for others and the result of those efforts make positive impacts in other people's lives. There is nothing more rewarding in life than to give selflessly and see the positive outcomes from your efforts. Well done! This school year the AFJROTC goal is 1.7 million community service hours, and I know you will reach that goal easily.

Now more than ever before, our nation needs you to step up and be humble examples of true character, leadership, and teamwork. I also wanted to tell each of you to stick with this great program because not only will you make great friends and find a place to belong, you will be part of a true team. You will learn important life lessons about how to lead people by example and how to be excellent citizens of character for our great nation.

Have you ever wondered what it takes to be successful in life? I would like to humbly give each of you some points to consider that I hope you will discuss with each other that I have learned in my life and career in the Air Force which have proven true over and over again. These truths are timeless principles and it's now time for me to ensure they get passed to each of you, our next generation of leaders. I hope that these help each of you and challenge you to be the very best that you can be in life. You will be successful in life if you live a life of true character and truthfulness (Integrity), keep a heart of service that considers others before yourself (Service), and if you always do your personal very best at whatever you are doing (Excellence). Excellence is not perfection...but is giving a perfect effort every single time! It is doing your very best, every time.

Being a person of true character who is honest and tells the truth, a person who is trustworthy, dependable, hardworking, humble, encouraging, and a person who genuinely cares for other people are key character traits that highlight true leaders. Each of us should work each day to be a person like that. Of course, none of us are perfect, but we should always try to make the very best decisions we can and avoid the common pitfalls in life that will certainly keep us from achieving our dreams. If you have made some previous bad decisions, put them behind you. Move forward in full commitment to being the person of character you truly desire to be in your heart. We all know the negative things that are no good and lead to no good. Those things can and often do take you off the path to success. I want to encourage each of you to reject those negative attitudes and actions and fully focus on positive things in life that will help you reach your goals. Dream big! Commit to it, be a person of character and hard work and....never quit! Never give up on yourself. You will reach your goals!

By living a life of Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do, you will have a very bright future in whatever career you choose following high school or college, based on your unique talents and abilities. Know that I am personally very proud of each and every one of you! Also know that you have good people in your school, community, and in our nation who truly care for you and want you to do well in life and make great decisions that positively impact not only you, but all of those around you.

I hope each of you have a wonderful new school year. Do your very best and learn as much as possible this year. I hope all of you use this letter to thoroughly discuss with each other what is mentioned in the words above. I look forward to seeing all the incredible things you do all across our nation and overseas. Keep up the incredible work. Well done cadets!

Humbly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby Woods, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

BOBBY C. WOODS, JR., Colonel, USAF