

Membership Growth for Enlisted Airmen, a Beta Test in progress in the Alamo Chapter from CMSgt Katie McCool

We last told you about the effort underway at the Alamo Chapter reaching out to enlisted airmen interested in AFA. 28 enlisted members from Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland met at the first meeting. The hour long meeting was focused on information. AFA magazines were passed out along with hand-outs from the National membership committee detailing AFA benefits. Katie McCool presented a slide show on AFA and detailed a course of action. All members at the meeting were encouraged to return to their unit, research AFA, and decide if they are willing to become a member and support this beta-test. A committee was formed to organize a mixer that will be open to the entire JBSA community, with CMSAF (ret) Jim Finch as the requested guest speaker.

At the last meeting, there were 55 enlisted AFA members in attendance. They asked questions about AFA and offered to volunteer in AFA areas like CyberPatriot. Katie thought having a CMSgt lead the meeting was very helpful but was most encouraged about the discussion that happened when enlisted members came to the meeting. Everyone was introduced at the meeting and she made sure they knew that they will have a role in AFA. She observed that the people who attended are craving that environment - they want to belong, meet people, and learn more about AFA. She emphasized outreach, volunteering, and giving people small jobs and trusting them to be able to do them. She feels the program is on the right track and that there is so much opportunity for involvement, particularly if we trust our AFA members to do the tasks assigned to them.

Katie's outreach is working and having a positive influence on our enlisted AFA members. Their efforts will:

- Increase AFA enlisted membership
- Provide an avenue for enlisted members to discuss issues affecting them directly.
- Provide an avenue for professional development and networking.
- Coordinate quarterly activities that combine enlisted with "big" AFA.