

# Air Force Association Membership Benefits for Young Professionals

By Karen Harrison

1. **Air Force Expertise:** Most young professionals have little knowledge of the Air Force (AF) when hired. The Air Force Association (AFA) allows you to meet and collaborate with individuals who will greatly expand your AF expertise.
2. **Air Force Contacts:** As a member of AFA you vastly expand your professional network. Not just with your peers, but highly experienced retired, active duty and reserve AF personnel. As a young consultant, introductions with retired and active duty Airmen are invaluable.
3. **Industry Networking:** AFA utilizes not just AF personnel, but also industry professionals. Chapter events include defense industry professionals from different companies. Rarely does a young consultant have an opportunity to make such relevant contacts from different companies.
4. **AFA Recognition/Awards:** AFA takes notice of young members who show initiative supporting their chapters. Receiving an award from a respected professional organization like AFA is a great way to differentiate yourself from your peers.
5. **Community Fundraising/Involvement:** AFA is active in a various community fundraising events. Members can suggest specific events and organize the chapter's involvement while giving back to the community.
6. **Event Planning Expertise:** Each chapter event requires coordination from multiple AFA members. The ability to organize and execute professional events is a relevant skill in any career field.
7. **Leadership Demonstration:** AFA presents a unique opportunity for young professionals to demonstrate their leadership competencies in an environment their corporate leadership will notice.
8. **Air Force News/Updates:** As a member of AFA, you are surrounded by individuals who can give you the insider's perspective of what's going on in the AF. You hear how Airmen feel about recent events, policy changes, etc.
9. **Communication Experience:** AFA teaches its members how to coordinate the chapter's activities remotely. Members will immediately become versed in new professional collaboration tools.
10. **Fun!** The AFA social engagements are simply enjoyable. AFA is a great organization with members who are great people. The social engagements are very fun and entertaining!

Overall, you won't have a negative experience while being part of this organization. You enjoy spending time giving back to the Air Force and your community while expanding your expertise as a young professional.