

Cadet of the Year



Recognized by the Air Force Association, the CAP Cadet of the Year must demonstrate outstanding leadership in CAP as well as academic excellence. The nominee must have earned the Amelia Earhart Award and be a current CAP member. The Cadet of the Year receives a one-year membership in AFA and a commemorative plaque.

Being chosen as the 2003 Cadet of the Year by the RiverCity Cadet Squadron (Evansville, Ind.) was only the beginning for **Cadet Colonel Kate A. Whitacre**. Since then, she has developed into the quintessential Civil Air Patrol cadet, with accomplishments ranging over a broad spectrum — aviation, academics, the arts, sports and community involvement. C/Col Whitacre joined CAP in 200, steadily advancing in rank and winning awards, culminating with the General Carl A. Spaatz Award, the highest for a CAP cadet. With equal relish, she went after her pilot's license, which she attained in 2008. In fact, in June of that year she became the only CAP cadet pilot in Indiana. For CAP, she has participated in four REDCAP emergency services missions, is a certified radio operator, has served as a ground team member and has worked from the air as a CAP pilot, mission observer and mission scanner. In her community, she has worked as a volunteer for the Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity and the Muscular Dystrophy Association Telethon. Currently a student at Indiana Institute of Technology, C/Col Whitacre boasts a 3.9596 cumulative grade point average as she pursues a biomedical engineering degree with a minor in mathematics. In addition to a four-year academic engineering scholarship, she also was awarded a band scholarship and has excelled musically. She plays the French horn and mellophone, won the Indiana Tech Band Warrior Award in 2008 and was named band team captain for the 2008-2010 school years. Likewise, she has varied interests in sports. In 2007, she was the Indiana state champion for archery and ranked 20th in the nation. Also a champion ice skater, she skated on the Ice Skating Institute national champion synchronized skating team. She even holds a first degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do. C/Col Whitacre has been recognized by name in a resolution of the U.S. Congress, received a congressional nomination to the U.S. Naval Academy, has been nominated to the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service and is under consideration for a research internship at the National Institutes of Health. Her career goal is as patriotic and ambitious as the rest of her endeavors: She wants to work with prosthetics to serve America's veterans.