

# HEADQUARTERS NM-51<sup>st</sup> AFJROTC SQUADRON



The GREAT Academy Charter High School  
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87109

8 SEP 2011

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Parents/Guardians

**FROM:** Senior Aerospace Science Instructor / The GREAT Academy

**SUBJECT:** AFJROTC Information Letter

We have a unique program offered by Albuquerque Public Schools to all high school students. This program is Air Force Junior ROTC (AFJROTC) or Aerospace Science, and it has been a part of the Del Norte High School curriculum for over 40 years. Interestingly enough, I have found that many parents are unaware of its purpose or its benefits.

First, let me dispel the most prevalent misconception about Air Force Junior ROTC: **THERE IS NO MILITARY COMMITMENT UPON COMPLETION.** Your son or daughter is not obligated to enter the Air Force or any other branch of military service after graduation.

What is the purpose of AFJROTC? The primary objective of The GREAT Academy (Del Norte) AFJROTC program is to provide to the community a nucleus of capable and involved citizens. The GREAT Academy students can attend on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 7:30am - 8:50am. This is accomplished by exposing, developing, and nurturing such qualities as patriotism, loyalty, honor, self-reliance, self-discipline, leadership, and management skills. How can this be done? As an example, leadership and management skills are practical endeavors, and no matter how much one studies them, one must be placed in a position of responsibility to develop these skills. The Junior ROTC program is designed to provide, at progressive levels, challenges and responsibilities. The Corps is operated completely by the cadets. They organize, write and implement directives, convene boards for cadet promotions and disciplinary actions, plan and coordinate all extracurricular activities, and raise the funds to pay for most of their functions.

In addition to development of personal attributes, Aerospace Science is an academic course that earns one or two graduation credits per year. The curriculum is designed to introduce the student to a various aspects of civil, industrial, and military aerospace. Since the curriculum also includes a survey of aerospace industries, classroom study is augmented by visits to such places as Kirtland AFB, Air Force Research Laboratory, National Weather Center, and other related agencies. Recently added in the 2010-2011 year was the International Cultural Studies course of instruction. In our increasingly global market system, awareness of the cultural norms and values of different people world-wide is a superb tool for success.

Besides the benefits of the Junior ROTC program, more tangible rewards are possible. Each year five cadets who have displayed three years of military and academic excellence may be nominated for the United States Air Force Academy. When, and if a unit is rated with outstanding status (our unit achieved this rating for seven consecutive years), an additional three cadets may be nominated to each of the military academies.

Each military service also offers four-year scholarships to several hundred colleges and universities. These scholarships include full tuition, the cost of books and lab fees, and a \$200 per month stipend. Over 6500 students are maintained on scholarship throughout the nation by the Air Force, the same number by the Navy, and even more by the Army. With the cost of a college education in the vicinity of \$50,000 per year, ROTC scholarships are worthy of consideration.

The price of education is only one of many issues that high school graduates will face. The overcrowded job market has directed and will continue to direct many students into the military. The influx into the military has resulted in each branch becoming increasingly selective. The Junior ROTC program not only enhances entry, but each cadet who enters the military and has completed three years of high school JROTC is immediately advanced two stripes (with the exception of the Marine Corps which offers a single stripe advancement). The commensurate pay increase for an additional two stripes is approximately \$450/month.

The Air Force does set enrollment standards. To be eligible for membership and to continue in the AFJROTC Program, each cadet must:

- A. Be enrolled in and attending a regular course of high school instruction.
- B. Be a citizen of the United States (or possess a green card).
- C. Be at least fourteen years of age.
- D. Be of good moral character.
- E. Be physically fit to participate in AFJROTC training.
- F. Be selected by the Senior Aerospace Science Instructor with principal's approval.

In addition, all cadets must maintain a passing academic average, must sustain an acceptable personal appearance, and must wear the uniform as required (A minimum of once per week.).

All uniform items are to be provided by the Air Force at no charge. The cadet is responsible for professional dry cleaning of all dark blue items and laundering of the light blue shirt on a routine basis and upon its return at the end of the year. If the uniform is not clean on a uniform day, then points will be deducted. Students may have to buy their own boots, shirts and hats. All other related items are provided for free.

The popularity of the Aerospace program is evident by the nationwide increase in enrollment. As indicated by the goals and benefits of the AFJROTC program, it should be evident that it is a student-centered education program. I assure you that we are completely committed to the success of each cadet. If further information is required, please feel free to call MSgt Patrick Edmonds or myself at 883-7222, ext. 230 or my cell at (808) 772-1027.

Mark E. Andersen  
Col., USAF, (Ret)  
NM-051 Senior Aerospace Science Instructor