

Spirit of '76 - 50th Reunion Class Gift

We have raised over \$3.4 million of our \$5 million goal, and we want to thank all our classmates who have already made their pledge or gift to our class project. Without your early and generous support, we would not have been able to begin construction of the Echelon project last spring. For those who have not yet made a pledge or gift, please consider making a pledge or gift in the weeks ahead, for we still have 30% to go to reach our \$5 million goal. ***We also have \$203,622 in remaining in match funds to pair with the next \$203,622 received in pledges and gifts, which will double the value of these pledges/gifts to \$407,244.***

Typically, most classes announce their class gifts sometime during the year of the reunion, with fundraising and project completion years later. Our 50th reunion class gift will be much different, for we raised sufficient funds to begin construction last spring, with estimated completion in early summer. We will cut the ribbon for this magnificent project and present it to the Academy at our reunion! “The Spirit of '76 Echelon.....A Tribute To The Long Blue Line” is one of the most significant and iconic gifts any class has ever given to the Academy, and we have already raised pledges and gifts from 404 classmates of over \$3.4 million of the \$4 million budgeted for this project.

All dollars raised above the amount required for the Echelon project will fund the “Gone but not Forgotten Endowment,” supporting the families of deceased graduates as they navigate the endless details leading up to the final celebration of life for a member of the Long Blue Line. We plan to raise an additional \$1 million or more for the Endowment, for a total of \$5 million.

For a detailed description of the Echelon project, including progress photos, click onto our class reunion website, usafa.org/76-reunion, and then click on the “Class Gift” tab. The website contains a wealth of information about our class gift and how to pledge, along with many nostalgic photos of our cadet years, and posts from several of our very esteemed classmates. Please give this website a thorough checkout!

- The Spirit of '76 Echelon kiosk will include a plaque listing the names of every classmate who donates to the project (\$76 minimum), and we hope everyone will be on this list.
- Names will be displayed with no differentiation, regardless of amount pledged or donated, and listed in the order we receive pledges and donations.

- 31 May 2026 is the cutoff to be on this plaque at the ribbon cutting ceremony, although we will be able to continue adding names for another year after the dedication, as new pledges and gifts come in.
- You can make your pledge for up to five years (example: a \$7,600 pledge of \$1,520 per year for five years)
 - ***We will keep all pledge and donation amounts confidential.***
- Our reunion website has detailed instructions on how to pledge or donate through the Air Force Academy Foundation (usafa.org/76-reunion). There are many ways to give:
 - You can pledge and donate by credit card or check.
 - The Air Force Academy Foundation staff are readily available by phone or email to assist in transferring appreciated stock assets and required minimum distributions (RMD) from your 401K or IRA.
 - Most of us will have IRS-required RMD payments beginning at age 73.

Your decision to pledge or donate to our class gift is a personal decision, and we want to make clear that the amount you decide to give will remain strictly confidential and under the administration of the Air Force Academy Foundation. For those who have already participated, thank you for your generous support. For those who have not yet made a pledge or donation, we hope we can count on you to participate and help us reach our \$5 million goal!

Most important, please plan to attend our 50th Reunion!

The Spirit of '76 lives!

Wes Stowers

Fundraising Committee Chairman