



Cadets and the CAP Public Affairs Program



Commanders and PAO's everywhere are always looking for help in the Public Affairs area and cadets are always looking for a way to have an impact and be involved in the success of the squadron in a meaningful way.

Becoming a part of your squadron's Public Affairs program is a win-win for everyone.

You (the Cadet) Bring

Enthusiasm – A cadet's boundless excitement for the missions of CAP.

Energy - Cadets bring a youthful energy and willingness to go the extra mile.

Technical Knowledge - Cadets bring an expertise with modern technology and techniques to aid in telling our story. Give them a camera, a computer and let them go!

A Fresh View - Cadets may take a different view of things and this view (which we may not see) allows them to find unique stories and special moments that we may miss.

The Cadet Needs

Guidance – Cadets need to know what is expected, a role model to look up to and a

guide to help them avoid mistakes.

Sometimes a cadet needs to make mistakes to learn but don't we all. 😊

Technical Knowledge – While the cadet might possess the technical expertise to create a video or a website they may lack the organizational skills or the writing ability to allow them to better tell the story.

The PAO can help this cadet by mentoring him and giving the cadet challenging writing assignments.



Parameters – We all need guidelines to carry out our jobs. Give the cadet specific tasks and timelines and get out of the way.

In most of the Cadet Program things are laid out in black and white terms. But in between there is a world of gray out there.

A PAO can help a cadet PAO by showing him these areas, why they exist and how he can operate in this new world.

Validation – of the quality of their work.

Our work improves if we hear the good, the bad and how to make the work better.

Motivation – There is nothing like seeing your by-line on an article or webpage or on a tag-line for an image. This is validation that “my work was good enough to be seen by the world.”



Respect – of the fact that the cadet knows what he is doing and is not a “kid” but a “peer.” He also needs to know that his work is of value to the squadron.

Start small.

You may really get enthusiastic and want to take on the whole big project at once. Resist this urge.

Do pieces of a project to prove to you and to your PAO that you can do it.

Then ask for something bigger like part of the squadron website or the newsletter or a technology (the whole web site, video, podcast) project to complete.

Get involved as a PAO for a squadron activity.

Take pictures and write a story for CAP Online News or the Wing Website or NCR News about your squadron or an event your squadron was involved in.

Apply for duty as an Encampment PAO.

This experience is the best training for a CAP PAO. There cadets do it all, photography, video, web sites, newsletters and writing.

Encampments are designed to be cadet focused and led by cadets with senior member mentoring.

This is the essence of the leadership laboratory.

Emergency Services

Cadets over 18 can serve as Mission Information Officers. It does not get as real as a SAR or DR Mission.

Staff Positions

A proven cadet can be appointed as an Assistant PAO for the squadron, group or wing.



In this role a cadet (officer ideally) can be the de-facto PAO and still be in compliance with duty assignment policy as outlined in CAPR 52-16.

The cadet will have a real and challenging role that can have a big part in the success of the squadron.

Conclusion

Cadets can be a wonderful addition to the Public Affairs Team.

Cadets are technically savvy, smart and enthusiastic.

With the right guidance and motivation cadets can accomplish miracles.

Cadets can deliver real results!