The USAFA Class of 1968 50th Reunion Gift Committee:

Bill Begert, Garry Dudley, Bill Eckert, Gary Hoffman, Bill Maywhort, Steve McPhail, Mike Parkinson, Alan Price

Fellow Members of the Class of '68,

As we prepare to gather for the 50th anniversary of our graduation, it's appropriate to reflect upon how our Academy experiences contributed to our professional careers and personal lives. Although we all arrived with the fundamentals for success, the Academy certainly sharpened those fundamentals with the values of integrity, honor, excellence, brotherhood and service. Our time together changed us and made us different from who we were when we first entered. And so, as we reflect upon our time together, we also look forward to reconnecting with old friends and celebrating the strong bonds that we formed through those extraordinary, life-shaping four years at the Academy.

But at this juncture of our lives, it's also a time to give back to our Academy. As we have done in previous major reunion events, our class has committed to raising funds to meet an Academy need that is not otherwise provided by Government funding – in this case, the endowment of a "margin-of-excellence" additive to the Academy's core curriculum in cybersecurity and cyberwarfare – the USAFA Cyber Competition Team.

As you will see from the attached informational document, your Gift Committee has been through an extensive selection process before settling upon the Cyber Competition Team as our class project. While we assessed several key priorities during this process, we each felt that your preference would be to invest in the lives of the cadets rather than in a physical structure at USAFA. Things age and pass away, but people endure and change the course of history.

As you may already know, the Air Force has committed to place the USAF Cyber Center (known as "CyberWorx") at the Academy, with construction of a permanent facility scheduled to commence in the very near future. In the interim, however, construction of a temporary "CyberWorx" facility is already underway at the library, and the Academy has recently added an academic major in Cybersecurity.

In large measure, USAFA's Cyber Competition Team is not unlike other academically-related teams, such as speech and debate, international law and moot court. Although each of these teams relies upon Government funding for facilities, training and equipment, all of them require private support to underwrite intercollegiate competition. Moreover, this requirement for public-private collaboration mirrors that experienced by West Point's cyber competition team, while the Annapolis team depends *entirely* upon private funding support.

Additionally, the members of USAFA's Cyber Competition Team also provide hands-on instruction to approximately 200 third-class cadets annually relating to cyber operations, techniques, tactics and procedures. Arguably, this process of peer-to-peer interaction serves both to motivate and challenge the younger cadets in ways that a more sterile classroom environment could not. (Certainly, if the large number of cadets competing for selection to the Cyber Competition Team is any indication, it's an unqualified success at the Academy – not to mention the success that it has achieved in intercollegiate competitions throughout the country.)

Lastly, I should emphasize that our principal purpose in writing is <u>not</u> to ask you to financially commit to this project at this time, but rather to provide you a bit of background. (As noted above, the attached document contains a great deal more information as to how and why the '68 Gift Committee reached its decision to select this project from others that the Academy suggested for consideration.) While we're delighted to report that our limited classmate-to-classmate contacts with approximately 10% of our class have yielded 50% of our fund-raising goal, we still have a long way to go. **What we desperately need now, however, are squadron representatives to assist the Gift Committee in the rollout and fund-raising efforts!** If you would be willing to volunteer to reach out to classmates in your graduation squadron, please respond to <u>1968USAFA@gmail.com</u> or to any one of your committee classmates listed below before March 30.

Thank you for your consideration and best wishes from your friends and classmates on the '68 Gift Committee,

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