

The “Margin of Excellence” and what it means to USAFA Gymnastics

The mission of the United States Air Force Academy is: “to educate, train, and inspire men and women to become officers of character, motivated to lead the United States Air Force in service to our nation.” This mission has a foundation called “The Essence of USAFA” and is built upon eight pillars:

- ***Developing character and leadership***
 - ***Focusing on the Air Force mission in air, space and cyberspace***
 - ***Immersing cadets in a total experience***
 - ***Harmonizing science, technology, engineering and mathematics and the liberal arts***
 - ***Competing***
 - ***Internalizing the Air Force ethos***
 - ***Exposing cadets to professional Air Force culture***
 - ***Building upon the foundation of an exemplary installation***

The Air Force Academy strives to excel beyond the “Essence of USAFA” through a “Margin of Excellence” ideal. Unfortunately, with budget cuts commonplace throughout our government, the USAFA Gymnastics Program has endured significant funding challenges. When looking specifically at the USAFA Gymnastics funding situation, the “Essence of USAFA” budgetary foundation remains solid, but the “Margin of Excellence” funding falls short of the need.

Together, we can eliminate that “Margin of Excellence” funding gap. Through individual and corporate donations to the USAFA Men’s and Women’s Gymnastics Team Funds, the gymnasts can realize their full potential as future Air Force officers. Monetary contributions will . . .

- ***Allow our gymnasts to compete in more dual meets both at home and away***
 - *Our Men’s and Women’s teams have been averaging 9 dual meets per season while the NCAA allows 13 meets per season*
- ***Ensure our Men’s and Women’s gymnastics teams have a full complement of coaches***
 - *Current budgets only fund 2 coaches per team while the need remains 3 coaches per team*
- ***Allow our gymnasts to participate in events that enhance character/leadership development***
 - *West Point’s gymnasts participate in annual visits to Gettysburg and other historic battlefields*
- ***Enable a “future needs” funding capability for the Gymnastics Program***
 - *If equipment needs replacing, supplies run short, or other unanticipated situations arise, the funding requirement could be quickly satisfied*

In today’s fiscal environment, the new reality is that the “Essence of USAFA” budgetary requirements will receive government funding while the “Margin of Excellence” needs will not. Through this Campaign and the USAFA Men’s and Women’s Gymnastics Funds, we can bridge the “Margin of Excellence” funding gap by soliciting donations from individuals and businesses.

Baseline funding or a complete opportunity to attain excellence? Developing leaders of character at the “Essence of USAFA” level or elevating to the “Margin of Excellence” level? Please raise your hand and commit to support our USAFA gymnasts’ professional and athletic development with a donation to the USAFA Gymnastics Team Funds Campaign. With your help we can further enable our cadet gymnasts to realize their true leadership and athletic potential.

