

The
Air and Space Forces
Charity Gala

at Washington Nationals Ballpark

MARCH 25, 2023

Evening Program

Presentation of the Colors and National Anthem

Invocation

Chaplain, Major General Randall E. Kitchens
Chief of Chaplains

Welcome by Master of Ceremonies
Major General Garrett Harencak, USAF, Ret.

Opening Remarks
The Honorable Frank Kendall
Secretary of the Air Force

General Charles Q. Brown, Jr.
Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

General B. Chance Saltzman
Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force

Remarks by
Kaleth O. Wright, CEO, Air Force Aid Society

Air Force Aid Society Impact Video

Recognition of Sponsors and Award Winners

Testimonial Video – Air Force Aid Society Recipient

Break

Raffle Drawing

Closing Remarks by Major General Garrett Harencak, USAF, Ret.

Music by the United States Air Force Band Singing Sergeants
and The United States Air Force Band Max Impact



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC 20330-1000

Greetings,

We are grateful to be joining you for the 20th Annual Air and Space Forces Charity Gala! Over the last two decades, this gala has generated nearly \$10 million in charitable contributions and become one of the largest fundraisers for the Air Force Aid Society—the official charity of the United States Air Force and United States Space Force. We would like to start off by expressing our appreciation and thanks to the team that put together this wonderful event.

Tonight, we celebrate the Air Force Aid Society's work providing emergency assistance, disaster relief, education programs, and community programs to our Airmen, Guardians, and their families around the world. The Air Force Aid Society's purpose, "to help Airmen and Guardians when they need us most," certainly rings true as it provides no-interest loans, grants, and scholarships to our Service members and their families.

We want to thank all of you for joining us this evening and donating to make tonight's event a success. You are critical partners and will be directly providing a positive impact to many service members and their families when they need it most. Every dollar donated, will provide three dollars' worth of support to Airmen, Guardians and their families.

We are so excited to continue working together for the care and support of our Airmen and Guardians for the rest of this year and beyond. Congratulations on a successful year and thank you for your continued support of the Air Force and Space Force!

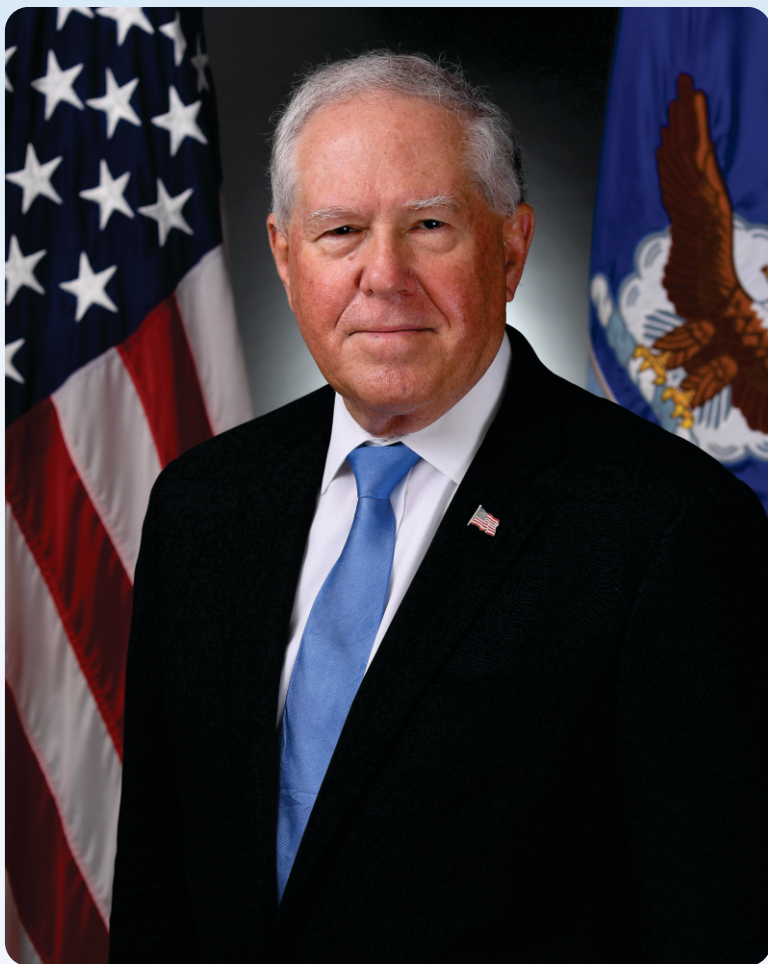
Frank Kendall
Secretary of the Air Force

Charles Q. Brown, Jr.
General, U.S. Air Force
Chief of Staff

B. Chance Saltzman
General, U.S. Space Force
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JoAnne S. Bass
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

Roger A. Towberman
Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force



THE HONORABLE FRANK KENDALL
Secretary of the Air Force



GENERAL CHARLES Q. BROWN, JR.
Chief of Staff, United States Air Force



GENERAL B. CHANCE SALTZMAN
Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force



A grant from AFAS helps a special girl receive much-needed therapy. Nine years ago, Rebecca Sundhagen and her former spouse Lieutenant Colonel Chad Grondahl adopted their daughter, Lauralei, when she was five weeks old. Lauralei was born with a heart defect that would require open heart surgery, and she spent the first two months of her life in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

Over the next few years, Lauralei would have two open heart surgeries, two heart catheterizations and two hospitalizations for pneumonia. She also has a sensory processing disorder, a visual processing disorder, a speech delay, numerous fine motor and gross motor delays and other serious medical conditions.



A Nine Year Old Warrior

Rebecca learned everything she could to help their daughter thrive in spite of all her challenges while also raising their adopted son, Christopher, who had his own “complex medical needs, a long NICU stay and attachment issues,” Rebecca says.

Rebecca only sees the strength in their children as she watches them navigate their challenges. She recalls Lauralei’s second open heart surgery when she was three.

Within 24 hours after the surgery, Lauralei walked the hospital halls in her bathrobe, trailed by her IV pole. She was discharged from the hospital in four days, packing her own bags, “dragging her big red wagon full of gear,” Rebecca says. “She is a survivor and an inspiration.”

Both of the children have benefited from various therapies, such as lessons at a therapeutic riding stable and play therapy. Unfortunately, these programs are not usually covered by insurance.



Rebecca is always looking for sources to help cover the costs of the therapies that her children need. “While I found many ways to reduce our budget, getting my kids the therapy they needed was an area I never considered cutting,” she says.

Rebecca recently reached out to her Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) Coordinator on Schriever Space Force Base for financial assistance options to help with the expensive therapies. The coordinator put Rebecca in touch with the Air Force Aid Society (AFAS), whose mission it is to help Airmen, Guardians and their families.

AFAS provided a no-interest loan, which was later converted to a grant, allowing Rebecca to pay for the listening therapy that was recommended by Lauralei’s occupational therapist. Rebecca hopes that this will assist with their daughter’s array of developmental delays.

“We would never know what potential successes she might experience or gains she could make through her hours of listening,” Rebecca says of the important new therapy that she would not have been able to afford otherwise.

Fortunately, AFAS was able to offer some relief for this mom who has been a tireless advocate for their children for the past nine years. With the therapy grant, “AFAS stepped up for my family in a very surprising and meaningful way,” Rebecca says gratefully.

To the Society’s generous donors, Rebecca is thankful for the assistance and the opportunities they helped to provide because of their support. “It means the world to brave warriors like Lauralei!”



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Sincere thanks to all of our dedicated volunteers who continue to give of their hearts and time to make every Charity Gala a fabulous success for our amazing Airmen, Guardians and their families!



Air Force Aid Society

The Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) is the official charity of the United States Air Force (USAF) and the United States Space Force (USSF). Incorporated in 1942, AFAS meets the unique needs of the Airmen and Guardians by working to support and enhance the USAF and USSF missions.



To our dear friend Pamela Adams Felman.
Always quick with a warm hello, a big hug and a smile of pure joy
and kindness that extended to all she knew.
Pamela shared her love, gifts and talents with family and friends.
She was an important part of the Charity Ball Committee and we shall
miss her dearly. We wish you peace.

Benefiting Airmen, Guardians and their families
through the Air Force Aid Society