

Class of 2021,

Welcome! You're joining 'the long blue line' of Air Force officers at a time of unprecedented uncertainty and risk that will surely impact how the Air and Space Forces execute their vital missions.

You are smart, adaptable, and well-prepared to meet the challenges you'll face. **While the global pandemic is unprecedented in our lifetime, know that U.S. military officers have always, ...ALWAYS risen to meet new and unforeseen challenges and threats,** ... including the 9/11 terrorist attacks, current global pandemic, and recent cyber-attacks.

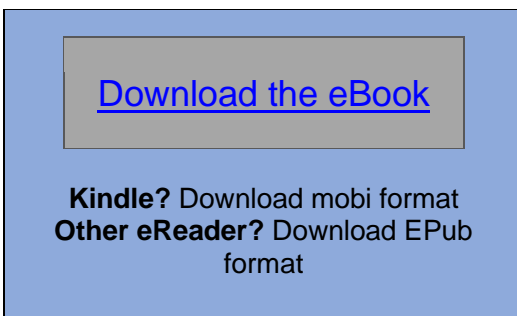
Based on my experiences during a 30-year Coast Guard career I wrote *Unauthorized Progress – Leading from the Middle*, not to challenge authority, but to encourage and inspire each of us to step up, take action, and make a difference, ...to make our part of the world a little better, ...regardless of where we are. Leading from the middle involves focusing on the mission, being proactive, taking initiative, and not waiting to be told what to do when action is needed to solve problems, improve processes, or seize opportunities.

I hope you enjoy the inspiring stories of ordinary people (all public servants, including two stories involving an Air Force Academy graduate and officer) leading when they're not 'in charge' and achieving extraordinary results, and their strategies for success. I also introduce a step-by-step process for leading change from any level, criteria decision makers use to evaluate new initiatives, common reasons initiatives fail, tools you can use for change initiatives, and 12 implementation strategies for leading from the middle - and when to use them.

I'm humbled and grateful for the support of many military and civilian leaders including Major General Donna Barbisch, USA (Retired) and former Coast Guard Commandants, Admirals James Loy and Thad Allen. **In the foreword, Admiral Allen cites a compelling quote from Arthur Ashe, "Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."** I hope you take this opportunity to develop a bias for action as you start your public service careers.

Aim High, Semper Supra, and Go '21!

Geoff Abbott, CAPT, USCG (Retired)



[Download the eBook](#)

Kindle? Download mobi format
Other eReader? Download EPub format