



## Overcoming Diversity Through Civil Air Patrol

Cadet Capt. Paige Cox smiles confidently in front of her CAP aircraft at the Johnson Flight Academy in June 2021.

**P**aige Cox is a Civil Air Patrol cadet. She has faced numerous challenges, both physically in dealing with cerebral palsy, and socially, where being homeschooled made her feel socially inexperienced.

She learned about CAP at age 8 when her sister joined the local Springfield Composite Squadron. She admired CAP's emergency services and aerospace education activities but was really inspired by the cadet program's youth leadership training.

At 12, Cox joined CAP. Her feelings of inexperience diminished as she progressed through the ranks. Through leadership training she learned to hone her observation skills,

to communicate on a topic in a moment's notice, and to motivate those around her — techniques she uses today. In May 2020, she received CAP's Amelia Earhart Award, earned by less than 5% of CAP cadets. She was getting noticed outside Springfield.

Cox was specifically recruited to be support staff supervisor during the weeklong Illinois Wing Summer Encampment in 2021. The job is hard, unglamorous, and demanding. She accepted, shining in the role and earning "the stick," given to the best cadet staff member at encampment.

When she joined Civil Air Patrol, Cox worried her cerebral palsy would

curtail her participation in CAP activities. Instead, it didn't even slow her down. She completed two cadet encampments and eight orientation flights, graduating from Illinois' Johnson Flight Academy twice after piloting a glider in 2019 and a powered plane in 2021. Flight instructors worked with her to mitigate her disability, ensuring safety while instilling her with confidence. She is a cadet captain and the cadet commander for the Springfield squadron.

How could she do all these things? Because Paige Cox is a Civil Air Patrol cadet.

### Volunteer Members

584 adult members  
471 cadets  
95 aircrew personnel  
692 emergency responders

### Squadrons

34 locations statewide

### Aircraft

9 single-engine  
3 gliders

### Vehicles

16 vehicles

### Interoperable Communications

11 VHF/FM repeaters  
272 VHF/FM stations  
23 HF stations

### Missions

1 disaster relief mission  
1 CAP, Air Force ROTC, and Air Force  
Junior ROTC cadet orientation flight  
mission  
1 other Air Force support mission  
42 training missions

### Significant Event Supported

Wing Summer Encampment  
(Marseilles National Guard Training  
Area)

### Cadet Flying

89 CAP, Air Force ROTC, and Air Force  
Junior ROTC cadet orientation  
flights

### Total Hours Flown

870

### Financial

\$3,763,773 value of wing's volunteer  
hours

### National Commander

Maj. Gen. Edward D. Phelka  
ephelka@cap.gov

### Region Commander

Col. Rose M. Hunt  
rhunt@capnhq.gov

### Wing Commander

Col. Andrew G. Loy  
aloy@ilwg.cap.gov

### Gov. Relations Advisor

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### Wing Info

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### Website

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