IDI Fall 2024 Contest Rules

The competition is open to ***all Department of the Air Force personnel as well as current students of Air Force PME programs (US DoD personnel and international military personnel).*** Both uniformed and civilian personnel of the USAF and USSF are encouraged to participate. Essays may be Air University academic work,. **The competition opens on 16 September 2024. Submissions are due by midnight on 16 December 2024.** Winning articles will be announced in **February 2025** and published in the Air University online journal *Wild Blue Yonder* thereafter.

Prompt:

The Air Force is adopting In-Place Combat Wings, Deployable Combat Wings, and Combat Generation Wings as units of action, and is implementing an Air Staff (A-Staff) structure within each wing's command layer. Write an essay on how the Air Force can effectively organize, train, and equip wing commanders and their A-Staff personnel for distributed control of airpower operations.

- What authorities and capabilities are required to allow Commanders and A-Staffs at these echelons to establish/conduct distributed control and fight within their AOR?
- How, (if at all), will the composition and authorities of the A-Staffs be structured differently between the three types of Wing missions?
- What are the necessary command relationships between units of action and the Air Force forces service component and functional air component commanders?
- What doctrinal, operational, combat support, and C2 changes will be needed to support this new construct?

Prizes:

- TOP Essay Prize – $1,000 and LeMay/CC Coin, published on *Wild Blue Yonder*
- 2nd and 3rd Place Prize - LeMay/CC Coin, published on *Wild Blue Yonder*

Submission Guidelines:

- Essays must reference at least one USAF Operational Doctrine. [U.S. Air Force Doctrine > Home (af.mil)](af.mil)
- Essays must be greater than 1500 words and less than 3000 words not including footnotes, headers, title, or author's bio.
- Your essay should be clearly focused. Establish the focus by providing a thesis in the first paragraph.
- Your essay should be well structured and developed using a logical, orderly progression of writing. For example, a paragraph with a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and ending in a concluding sentence is one model to follow.
- A note on support/citations: authors may refer to themselves in the first person (*e.g.*, "I could not put down the book"), but personal and professional experience are no substitute for external citations.

- Your audience does not necessarily share your opinion, background, and knowledge base; write in a well-reasoned supported manner.
- Finally, prose is important. Clarity, concision, and directness at the sentence level ensure even the most complicated ideas are presented in an accessible way. Avoid jargon.

Use of AI Tools for essay creation:

- Contestants are permitted to use AI tools to assist with writing the essay. It may be useful to use AI tools to assist with research, rephrasing, citations, and summaries within individual paragraphs. However, using an AI to write the entire essay is not recommended, as AI writing tools generally produce poor papers that do not answer the prompt or meet the requirements in the submission guidelines.

Style Matters:

- Please use AP Style for the *content* of your piece; that is, for matters including abbreviations, capitalization, forms of address etc.
- Your article should use the Chicago Manual of Style for *formatting* and *citations*. Begin each new paragraph without indenting the first sentence. Use footnotes only—do not use endnotes. Do not include bibliographies or works cited listings.
- Use one space only between a punctuation mark that ends a sentence and the first word of the next sentence. All punctuation goes within quotation marks in accordance with AP Style.
- Default to standard American English for spelling and punctuation.
- Avoid hyperlink citations.

Submission Details:

- Simultaneous submissions are acceptable. The LeMay Center wishes to encourage Airmen and Guardians to write.
- We will accept *only first-publication articles* (previously published articles will not be accepted). Work submitted for academic requirements that is not officially published elsewhere IS acceptable.
- In addition to your Word attachment please include a brief biographical statement (*e.g.* "Maj Jones is an air mobility pilot and currently a student at ACSC."). Include your current commander's name, unit, and email address. Please also provide links to your Twitter handle and your LinkedIn profile, if applicable.
- Authors requiring official review before an article can be published should secure permissions prior to submission.
- If you create any custom images, figures, or tables for your article, please attach separately the highest possible quality of image for our use. Give credit for any images you do not create.
- **Submit papers, bios, and commander contact information via the submission tool at www.auix.org.**