



SCHOLARSHIP IN HONOR OF

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LIEUTENANT GENERAL  
JAMES E. BRIGGS

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U.S. AIR FORCE

# Lieutenant General James E. Briggs

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James Elbert Briggs was born in Rochester, New York, on May 5, 1906, the son of Benjamin Robert and Marion Cypert Briggs. He entered the New York Military Academy in 1920 and as an honor graduate, received a Cadet presidential appointment to the United States Military Academy in 1924. He was the Cadet Captain (Regimental Commander) his last year at West Point and graduated 31st in a class of 261 in 1928. He was commissioned a second lieutenant of Field Artillery.

Second Lieutenant Briggs' first assignment was to the Sixth Field Artillery Regiment at Fort Hoyle, Maryland. After spending nine months at Fort Hoyle, he entered Primary Flying School and, in 1930, received his pilot's wings upon graduation from the Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field, Texas.

He reported to the 95th Pursuit Squadron at Rockwell Field near Coronado, California and moved with the 95th in 1931 to March Field, California. In 1934 he attended the 10-month course at the Air Corps Technical School, Chanute Field, Illinois.

From August 1935 to August 1940, he served at Wheeler Field, Oahu, with the 18th Composite Group, as Commander of the 19th Pursuit Squadron, and then with the 1st Pursuit Group, Selfridge Field, Michigan. In 1940 he returned to the U. S. Military Academy as a member of the faculty in the Department of Mathematics.

In May 1942 the then Colonel Briggs was appointed Operations Officer of the Eighth Air Force Fighter Command in Europe and in September 1943 became Air Officer of the European Section of the War Department General Staff.

Colonel Briggs became Deputy Commander of the North Atlantic Division, Air Transport Command, in March 1945, and in December of that year went to Air Transport Command Headquarters as Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans and Chief of Organizational Planning. In April 1946, he became a member of the Central Intelligence Group in Washington, D.C.

Moving to Colorado Springs, Colorado, in August 1947, the Colonel became Chief of Staff of the 15th Air Force, and in April 1948 went to Spokane Air Force Base (now Fairchild AFB) Washington, to assume command of the 92nd and 98th Bombardment Wings. After promotion to Brigadier General in December 1948, he moved to MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, in March 1949 and became Commander of the 306th and 307th Bombardment Wings.

Following the outbreak of the Korean conflict, General Briggs was assigned in August 1950 as Deputy Commander of the Far East Air Forces Bomber Command, based on Okinawa and later in Japan. In January 1951, he assumed command of the FEAF Bomber Command, and in July 1951 was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal after completion of his tour as commander.

General Briggs returned to the United States in June 1951 to become Deputy Commander of the 15th Air Force at March Air Force Base, California. He was promoted to the rank of Major General in Oct 1951 and was reassigned to Washington, D.C. as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Development, Headquarters, USAF. In May 1954, he was named Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and was given the additional duty of United States Air Force Member of the Permanent Joint Board on Defense, Canada United

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States. During this period, General Briggs also was the Air Force Headquarters project officer for the Distant Early Warning Line in Canada and for the USAF bases project in Spain.

General Briggs became the second Superintendent of the United States Air Force Academy on August 1, 1956, when he succeeded Lieutenant General Hubert R. Harmon. He guided the operation of the new Academy during two of its three years at the interim site on Lowry Air Force Base, Denver, Colorado, and led the August 1958 move of cadets and other personnel to the permanent home of the Academy north of Colorado Springs. On August 1, 1959, he assumed command of the Air Training Command, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, and was promoted to Lieutenant General. General Briggs directed the

Training Command's inauguration of the world's first supersonic jet trainer, the T-38. He retired from the Air Force in August of 1963 and resided in Albuquerque, New Mexico, until his death in February 1979.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Medal, General Briggs' decorations include the Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal. He was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Law degree from Michigan State University in 1959.

General Briggs was married to the former Katherine L. Seidel of Rochester, New York. General and Mrs. Briggs are survived by their son, Lt Col James E. Briggs, Jr, (USAF Ret) and his wife, Marge.

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*Dear General Bellis,*

*General Briggs had a great and constant commitment to excellence. It was present in all of his efforts for the U. S. Air Force Academy. He chaired the U. S. Air Force Committee to review and finally approve the first curriculum; generally supervised the construction of its splendid campus and housing; led the march to that campus and those quarters in August of 1958, assuring graduation of the first class from that site; persisted to secure accreditation for its curriculum before the first class graduated; saw a Rhodes Scholarship awarded to a first classman -- and cheered the Academy's first appearance in a Bowl Game, January 1, 1959.*

*Withall, he was an inspiring leader. His memory should prove so.*

*Regards,*



*Robert J. Smith  
Major General, (Ret.)  
U. S. Air Force*

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The Falcon Foundation is a 501(c)(3), non-profit foundation. Its purpose is to provide scholarships to College or Preparatory Schools for motivated young people seeking admission to USAFA and a career in the Air Force.

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