

**To:** USAFA AOG BOD, CEO, BOV Chairman and Vice Chairman

**Subject:** Self-inflicted Scandal and Recommended Solution

I speak as a graduate and former president of the Class of 1973.

A recent article published in the Armed Forces Press (<https://armedforces.press/spouse-of-usafa-aog-board-chair-accosts-other-board-members-in-angry-fit/>) shined a light on a self-inflicted scandal at the US Air Force Academy. The scandal represents a visceral sense (outright hostility) of contempt toward fellow graduates (some retired general officers, no less) who hold a different view of the AOG and circumstances. Transparency can bring shame and guilt, but it can also inspire redemption and transcendence.

SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats) analysis can be applied here and shows that an understanding of weaknesses can become strengths. Threats can also inspire opportunities.

**What is the weakness in this scandal?** An unhealthy **lack of trust in and accountability** to the graduate community.

Evidence?

- Some graduates became concerned that the AOG leadership supported a divisive political idea—diversity, equity, and inclusion—at the Academy. With the urging of about 150 graduates who signed a letter to the Board to present such concerns, the Board granted time on their agenda on May 12, 2023. Instead of professionally responding to the presenters (a retired lieutenant general and a retired colonel) regarding recommendations offered, they were labeled as untrustworthy and dishonest. Moreover, directors were told not to communicate with these graduates.
- To “upgrade” the board culture with graduates committed to representing the voice of The Long Blue Line, a Unity Slate of five graduates ran a campaign on transparency and unity. Sixteen candidates on the ballot also included the outgoing board chair and other incumbents running for reelection. The Unity slate was elected in its entirety. All incumbents running for reelection were defeated. In addition, the Unity Slate advanced amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws. Seventy-six percent of those voting approved the amendments.

How to convert the weakness to a strength?

- The new board needs to demonstrate that it represents the graduate community, which demands transparency (priorities, goals, etc.) and accountability (keeping communication channels open for feedback, ideas, questions, concerns, etc.).
- Agendas, notices, and minutes need to be public, comprehensive, and timely.

**What is the threat?** Actions to maintain and secure power over the AOG.

Evidence?

- The elected Unity Slate issued three letters to the Board requesting that any appointment of new directors should take place after the new board members are installed. The main issue involved the election of a new chairperson. By appointing new voting directors, the incumbent directors were able to “stack the deck” to ensure that a Unity Slate member would not be elected as the chairperson.
- Despite these letters, two voting directors were appointed, and they voted for a non-Unity Slate director—essentially protecting the status quo **despite the graduate community voting for a change.**
- Unity Slate members have presented their concerns in various forms of communication—emails, discussions at board meetings, etc. The vitriol manifested in these discussions (e.g., verbal assaults by a board member’s spouse; attacking a visiting AOG member in BOD meetings) represents an ideology/attitude that threatens the vitality of a functioning board. The CRT/DEI ideology is divisive and coercive. That is evidenced by the fact that a director’s spouse (a retired colonel no less) demanded at functions surrounding a BOD meeting, that two retired general officers resign and accused them of being racists, after being duly elected by the graduate community.

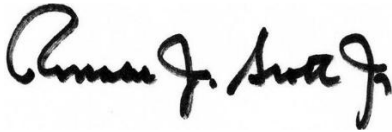
How to convert the threat to an opportunity?

- In our education and training as commissioned officers in America’s armed forces, decorum is critical. There is never any excuse for an officer, active duty or retired, to publicly assault another individual, let alone a superior ranking officer. **Question-do we as civilians still wear our rank?** While both civilians and retired officers exercise common duties as citizens, there is a distinction. **That distinction is the oath of office, which is a lifetime duty.**
- This situation could have been mollified had apologies been expressed/exchanged immediately following the encounter. This did not happen, and no apology has been given. Thus, at the very least, that officer should publicly apologize to the individuals he assaulted. If he elects not to apologize, then he should be banned from the AOG.
- The Board chair witnessed at least one incident of verbal assaults from her spouse and did nothing. Silence in such a situation suggests concurrence. She should apologize and resign as a director. The toxic and dysfunctional environment currently surrounding the AOG Board will not improve until there is a change in top leadership.

- The above actions would signal to the graduate community that honor, transparency, and accountability matter.

In closing, graduates have a moral obligation to “bear true faith and allegiance” to the Constitution, and by implication, to the American Creed. This is what we swore to support and defend.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald J. Scott, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Ronald J. Scott, Jr., Ph.D.  
Colonel, USAF, Retired  
USAFA Class of 1973  
Class President, 2013-2023