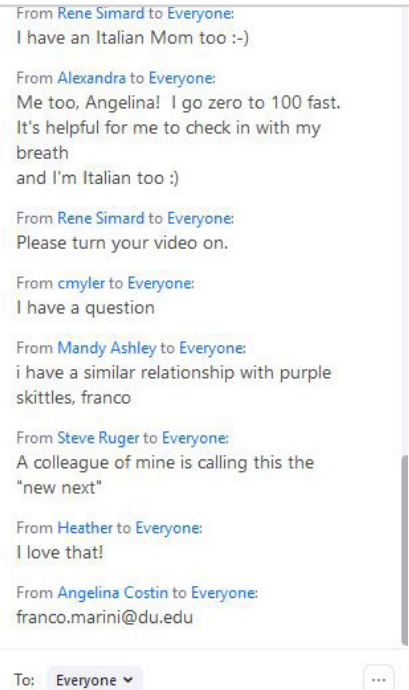




Leadership Aurora class members participate in a special session via a Zoom call on May 21.



## COVID-19 forces class to move to Zoom for special “Effective Leadership in Demanding Times” session

By: **MATHEW WASSERBURGER**

Reverse poetry is a poem that when read from top to bottom has one meaning but when reversed and read bottom to top has a different or opposite meaning.

An example is Jonathan Reed’s famous reverse poem “Lost Generation” which shows a depressing outlook on society when read forward but a much more positive message when read backwards. A reverse poem is intended to remind us that with a change in attitude, things or events are not as bad as they might seem.

With the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to socially distance, Leadership Aurora Class of 2020-21 was required to delay some of the most anticipated site visits and interactive experiences like Military Day and Police and Fire Days. We missed out (for now) on the chance to dawn fire bunker gear, extinguish a car fire, and practice our marksmanship on the police firing range. Yet in its place, we were able to come together over a Zoom conference call and reconnect with one of the first leaders we met in this program, Franco Marini.

On May 21, 2020, Franco Marini volunteered to host a virtual session with the Leadership Aurora Class entitled “Effective

Leadership in Demanding Times”. He started the day by providing seven suggestions that enhance the effectiveness of leadership. These included developing caring communications, emotional intelligence, TAMIC (Transparent, assured, mindful, calm, and influential), modeling, being visionary, taking small steps, and being aware. We then utilized Zoom Break-out Rooms to discuss how we would individually build on these skills and set SMART achievements to get us there.

The next session was on emotional intelligence, and how this is a learned skill we can all practice and develop. Like a reverse poem, Franco noted that it is hard to have emotional intelligence over a Zoom call, since it is harder to read the room when you are not physically there. Yet when viewed from another perspective, Zoom meetings allow a much closer view of everyone’s faces, and you might be able to read an individual’s face and mannerism better in a Zoom meeting than in a large room.

We ended the day with a session on the neuroscience of creating meaningful change. It was great to hear how everyone was trying to learn new skills during this pandemic (like making almond milk and becoming a lawn

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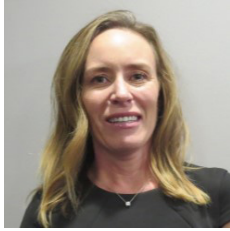
## Leadership of Aurora Class of 2020

**Mission:** To guide participants to conduct as per our identified agreements for the success of the group and to achieve the goals of Leadership of Aurora.

**Agreement:** Be present, Be engaged, Be on time, Be all-inclusive, Be participative, Be respectful, Be Responsible, Be an ambassador of the program, and Have fun!

## President's Corner

On behalf of Leadership Aurora, we are incredibly honored to be a part of such a committed and compassionate group of leaders.



The season we currently find ourselves in can certainly be described as a trying time, unprecedented and unknown. We may not know what lies ahead, but nevertheless, we stand together, united as a community and we look forward to embracing the new "next". Although we have weathered a storm, we will come through stronger and better than ever before. Let us continue to show compassion and care for one another and for our entire community during this time. This is truly a special community to be a part of; a community of world-changers.

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."*

—Margaret Mead

**Karen Lovett**, Class President  
**Jordan Clark**, Class Vice President

## Class member provides updated on Buckley AFB

By: **JOE SIMMS**

As I think about how the COVID virus has impacted Buckley AFB, it sounds corny but I'm reminded of the phrase "The more things change, the more they stay the same."

Buckley AFB, and to a larger extent the entire Department of the Defense, has not had to face an adversary like this since 9/11 but we've been able to carry out our mission essential functions just like we did nearly 19 years ago.

Buckley is a unique base with several 'no-fail' missions, most notably the air and space missions, that must continue no matter the circumstances. While most of the installation assumed a max-telework posture, leadership from the active duty, Guard and Reserve organizations came together to get the mission done while ensuring the safety of each individual.

While alert aircrews had to be sequestered on base to minimize their exposure to others, the space mission identified which mission essential tasks were to continue and how to limit the

number of people on the operations floor. All organizations had to find innovative solutions to a dynamic situation, and I can say thanks to leaders like Col Pepper, we've succeeded in keeping our nation and the Aurora community safe.

Today, each of the big 5 organizations on base are putting together a plan for when we are able to gradually return to the base. Col Pepper has said we will do this cautiously and we may see the surrounding areas open up before we see any changes on base. This is a good sign that we are not in a desperate race to return to the old operations tempo, and it's testament to the outstanding leadership on Buckley AFB that we are able to return to base on our terms.

I've heard politicians and military members say we will come out of this a stronger force, and I truly believe that. During the last two months working from home we've found more efficient ways to conduct business. More importantly we've discovered alternatives to the traditional work environment so we are more prepared to face the next crisis or contested environment.

## MILITARY DAY - APRIL 16

# Class hears from 3 military colonels, 6 airmen for Military Day

By: **ED HAUSCHILD**

This month's Class was the first time a session was done virtually, adding another distinction in making the 2020 class the best class ever.

Despite not being able to be physically present at Buckley AFB, the Chamber was able to get a panel together consisting of the three big hitters from the base.

The panel was made up of US Air Force Colonel Devin "Sultan" Pepper from the 460th Wing, Colonel Micah "Zeus" Fesler from the 140th Wing and Colonel Kelli Smiley from Air Reserve Personnel Center. These leaders spent a few minutes each telling us about themselves as well as their

organizations. The Commanders were able to explain their important missions and how

they impacted National Security Objectives. They also explained what they did for the local community and how important it was to have relationships between the two.

Colonel Pepper was first to brief the class on what the 460th Wing's mission was. He explained the uniqueness of it and explained the space domain. He went into how they used technology in space to track what was going on in the world. He even described how satellites were used to help



Col. Fesler

fight the forest fires that were in Colorado and the west over the last few years. In addition, he answered questions regarding the possible future of Buckley AFB and its involvement with the Space Force.

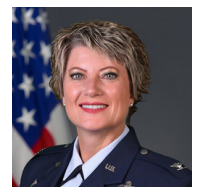
Colonel Fesler was next to let the class know what the 140 Wing did. He explained the defensive and offensive capabilities of the Wing and discussed the roles the Colorado Air National Guard had regarding air power with the F-16s, space missions in Greeley and Colorado Springs as well as a federal mission with the engineers that travel worldwide.



Col. Pepper

He explained the difference between the Air National Guard and Active Duty and how the Guard was comprised of citizen soldiers, individuals that are part of the community and work with the military as well.

Lastly, it was Colonel Smiley's turn to let the class know the important role the Air Reserve Personnel Center (ARPC) played in supporting the Warfighter. In essence, she said her airmen performed human resources (HR) services to all airmen in the Air Reserves, Air National Guard, and Active Duty. Her airmen support



Col. Smiley

**See MILITARY, page 4**



# Medical Center of Aurora CEO Ryan Simpson says “thank you”

Dear valued partners,

The Medical Center of Aurora has experienced an outpouring of love from our community amidst the COVID-19 crisis. I want to extend a personal thank you to all of the local businesses, individuals, organizations, restaurants, churches, and children who have sent letters and donated goods to our hospital. We have welcomed more than 150 deliveries of food and non-perishable items that go directly into the hands of our frontline workers. We feel so fortunate to be surrounded by such a kind and compassionate community.

It's times like these that show what you're made of. At The Medical Center of Aurora and across the Aurora community, what we're made of is incredible people. Passionate people who care without reservation or limits. Courageous people who show up ready to face new challenges daily. People who protect vigilantly, give selflessly and support one another tirelessly.

Today, we celebrate more



Medical Center of Aurora colleagues celebrated Hospital Week 2020 with a generous lunch donation from Golden Flame Hot Wings Aurora.

than 278 inpatients from The Medical Center of Aurora who have recovered from COVID.

We thank all of our colleagues and physicians for their tireless care and commitment to the safety of our patients, each other, and our community. As Nurses Week, Hospital Week, and EMS Weeks are all celebrated in May, it is a special time to show gratitude

to those who are the lifeline of the hospital.

As we continue to address the pandemic, we begin our efforts to thoughtfully reopen hospital services, including procedures and surgery. We do so to meet the needs of our patients, because deferring important medical procedures can result in undue harm. Please know, we are here

and we are ready to serve when health emergencies arise. To learn more about the precautions you can expect when you visit The Medical Center of Aurora, tune into [this video](#) from Dr. Phil Stahel, Chief Medical Officer.

The Medical Center of Aurora is proud to be a healthcare resource for you, your organization, and your loved ones. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have questions regarding COVID-19, our hospital services, or how we can partner together. Alexandra Hoffman, Vice President of Business Development, can be reached via email at [Alexandra.Hoffman@healthONEcares.com](mailto:Alexandra.Hoffman@healthONEcares.com) or 303-873-5591.

Thank you for your support in bringing our hospital positivity during this pandemic. I'd like to share with you a [special patient send-off](#) to highlight the magic that happens every day at The Medical Center of Aurora.

**Ryan Simpson, CEO**  
Medical Center of Aurora

## ZOOM: Powerful reverse poem shared at end of session

### Continued from page 1

whisperer) and modeling the change we want to see in our own lives, workgroups, families, etc. Steve Ruger said that leaders at the City of Aurora were calling this desire to find positive change during the pandemic the “new next”. This Leadership Aurora class has been inspirational in its resilience, flexibility and its ability to manage change, both planned and unexpected. While we lost out on experiencing some hands-on activities with first responders, we learned that we have the leadership skills necessary to define the “new next” when the COVID-19 pandemic is over.

(This is the poem, titled “The Lost Generation” by Jonathan Reed, that was shared during the session):

*I am part of a lost generation.  
And I refuse to believe that  
I can change the world.  
I realize this may be a shock, but  
“Happiness comes from within”*

*Is a lie, and  
“Money will make me happy”  
I tell you this:  
Once upon a time  
Families stayed together  
But this will not be true in my era.  
This is a quick fix society  
Experts tell me  
Thirty years from now, I will be celebrating the  
tenth anniversary of my divorce.  
I do not concede that  
I will live in a country of my own making.  
In the future,  
Environmental destruction will be the norm.  
No longer can it be said that  
My peers and I care about this Earth.  
It will be evident that  
My generation is apathetic and lethargic.  
It is foolish to presume that  
There is hope.*

Now let's reverse the poem:

*There is hope.*

*It is foolish to presume that  
My generation is apathetic and lethargic.  
It will be evident that  
My peers and I care about this Earth.  
No longer can it be said that  
Environmental destruction will be the norm.  
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But this will not be true in my era.  
Families stayed together  
Once upon a time  
I'll tell you this:  
“Money will make me happy”  
Is a lie, and  
“True Happiness comes from within”  
I realize this may be a shock, but  
I can change the world.  
And I refuse to believe that  
I am part of a lost generation.*

## An interview with Aurora Mayor Mike Coffman

By: **STEVE RUGER**

Mayor Mike Coffman, a 56-year resident of Aurora, has been an Aurora small business owner and has served in both the U.S. Army and the Marine Corps. Prior to being elected as Mayor of the City of Aurora, he has held the elected offices of State Representative; State Senator; State Treasurer; Colorado Secretary of State; and as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

### **Describe your biggest accomplishment during your time as an elected official.**

That's a difficult question because I've held so many offices. In Congress, I would say it was identifying the problems associated with why the VA hospital construction project in Aurora, coming up with a solution, and implementing so the hospital could be completed.

The 2012 redistricting moved the 6th Congressional District boundaries north into all of Aurora and much of Adams County so I inherited the Anschutz Medical Campus where the VA was managing a major hospital construction project that was over budget and behind schedule.

In January of 2013, I was sworn into to represent the newly redrawn district and I immediately started looking into the problems at the VA hospital construction project. I soon came to the conclusion that the VA construction management team was not competent in managing the project. The

VA's core competence is in providing health care and benefits to our veterans and not in managing major construction projects.

At that time the VA had four hospitals under construction and each of them were over \$300 million over budget and were several years behind schedule. The Aurora VA construction project was rated the worse among the four of them. While the VA was failing, the Army Corps of Engineers had built similar projects for the Department of Defense that were consistently on schedule and within budget, so I introduced legislation to strip the VA of its construction management authority and permanently replace them with the Army Corps of Engineers. This gave Congress the confidence to fund the cost overruns that accrued under the VA's leadership, or lack thereof, and finish funding the projects under new leadership.

### **What is the greatest leadership lesson you've learned during your time as an elected official?**

The greatest leadership lesson that I've learned as an elected official is the value of the art of listening. By listening you can understand not just what someone's position on any given issue is but how they arrived at that decision and what their framework of beliefs are that led them there. By understanding that, you are best positioned to reach a compromise that still moves competing goals forward.

### **Describe your approach to leading a board**



### **of elected officials.**

My goal is to find consensus, whenever possible, after all voices have an opportunity to be heard.

### **How do you motivate people?**

I have a lot of experience in government and I've learned from my mistakes. I like to sit down with Council Members individually, listen to their ideas, share my experiences in working on their issues and then help them shape their ideas into policies that can be enacted into law.

### **What are your goals after you leave office?**

To become an author and write about my experiences in public life having been in business, the military, and having held offices at the municipal level, the state, and in the federal government.

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## MILITARY: Personnel give various reasons for joining military

### **Continued from page 1**

the force with a variety of services to include retirement processing, pay and other entitlements. She explained how she had airmen working in her section that we also from the Reserves, Air National Guard and Active duty.

After the three commanders gave their briefings, they were gracious enough to take questions from the class. They were kind with their time and thorough with their information. At the end of the session, the

commanders thanked the class for everything and encouraged us all to stay involved, get educated on the benefits for the military and push potential future airmen their way.

Then second half of Military Day was comprised of 6 airmen from the 3 different components. They each were able to give a 2-3-minute speech explaining who they were, where they were from, what their jobs were and why they joined. There were airmen of various ranks, from different places and joined for

different reasons. Reasons for joining included school benefits, wanting to travel, being part of something bigger than themselves, and continuing family service tradition. It was nice seeing the variety of airmen and their stories. After the airmen introduced themselves, they took questions from the class and each one was able to answer if they wanted to. The class was able to get a perspective of service from the young airmen.

While Military Day was limited to an online discussion,

the Chamber did a great job setting it up. The class got to learn about the 460th and 140th Wings and the Air Reserve Personnel Center missions. The class also got to learn more regarding the relationship Buckley Air Force Base had with the local community. Overall, it was a great day. Once things get back to "normal" there might be an opportunity for the class to come on base and get a small tour and see airmen in action. Until then, Cheers!