



Air Force pilot tells students about his road to wings

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APPLE VALLEY

• Focus and hard work, core values and intense training were all parts of the story Lt. Jordan Leicht told students at the Academy for Academic Excellence.

Leicht described one of his proudest moments: Becoming a pilot in the U.S. Air Force.

He spoke to five Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps classes Wednesday at the request of his former teacher and mentor at AAE, retired Col. George Armstrong III.

“I felt like I really owed it to my mentor to come back here and speak,” Leicht said.

The Apple Valley native graduated from AAE in 2002, attended Victor Valley College before graduating from California State University, San Bernardino, all while training in the Air Force ROTC.

Leicht told the students about his experience in pilot training and the benefits of learning to live the core values of the Air Force.

He said he initially wanted to be a fighter pilot, but learned through his years in training that his personality was better suited for a different opportunity: Flying a C-17 cargo aircraft.

He graduated and received his wings last September and finished up C-17 training March 13 in Oklahoma.

“There are really good parts to training, but a lot of really sucky parts,” Leicht told students. “But graduating was the greatest feeling I’ve ever had in my life. Once you get wings, the opportunities are endless.”

Leicht and his wife, Katie, will head to McChord Air Force Base in Washington state in about four months. He says he’ll be assigned 10-day missions every few weeks, working about 120 days per year.

“I’m here as an example, as a guy from the High Desert and a graduate of AAE, that if you stay focused and work hard, you can achieve what you want,” Leicht said to the students.

“I just can’t wait to get up there and really start flying.”



PHOTO COURTESY AAE

USAF PILOT: Former Academy of Academic Excellence student Jordan Leicht speaks to an Air Force Junior ROTC program at the school recently. Leicht is now a USAF pilot flying transport planes.

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