

# ACADEMY SPIRIT

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Photo courtesy NASA

Col. Benjamin Alvin Drew, Jr.

## '84 grad on Aug. 7 space shuttle crew

By Butch Wehry  
Academy Spirit staff

A 1984 Academy graduate was among the Space Shuttle Endeavor's astronaut crew that arrived at the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral, Fla., earlier this month.

"It was the same as every time I'd first see any aircraft that I was going to qualify on," said Col. Benjamin Drew, an Endeavor mission specialist. "It was beautiful and exciting to behold — I got to enjoy a few brief moments of awe before getting on to the busy work and detailed preparations for flying."

Mission specialist is a catch-all title for a number of disciplines. It covers flight engineer duties on launch and re-entry, space walking, remotely operating the mechanical arm to deploy and retrieve payload bay stores, performing ship engineer maintenance and fabrication duties on orbit, medical officer duties and load mastering.

"No one MS does all those tasks, but the duties are spread among the four or five mission specialists that fly each mission," said the colonel from Washington, D.C., who majored in physics and astronautical engineering at the Academy.

He remembers a major from the Academy Physics Department counseling him, just after basic cadet training in August 1980, on the merits of a physics degree.

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Photo by Danny Meyer

## Destination: Jacks Valley and "2nd Beast"

Led by (front row from left) Brig. Gen. Susan Desjardins, Commandant of Cadets; Brig. Gen. Dana Born, Dean of the Faculty; and members of the cadet cadre, and the Academy Class of 2011 marches approximately three miles from the Terrazzo to a tent city in Jacks Valley, Monday, to begin the field training portion of Basic Cadet Training. Ten squadrons of 1,280 basic cadets, are participating in BCT which started June 28 and ends Aug. 4. Besides living in a tent city, the field portion of BCT includes assault, confidence and obstacle courses, first aid training, the leadership reaction course, weapons drills, physical fitness activities, inspections and more to develop physical abilities, teamwork and leadership potential.

## Multi-million dollar contract in place

By Ann Patton  
Academy Spirit staff

CH2M HILL Academy Services, Llc. has been awarded the contract to provide civil engineering and cadet support services to the Academy.

The contract covers a one-year base and six, one-year options. It has a potential value of more than \$150 million.

The Englewood, Colo., company is a CH2M HILL-led joint venture with KIRA, which provides similar services at Fort Carson.

Gary Craft, CH2M HILL's senior vice president of government facilities and infrastructure, said it is a valuable

opportunity for the company.

"We look forward to expanding our support for the Academy and its critical mission, and participating as a member of the Academy and Colorado Springs' communities. We want to work with our new partners to make sure they are the model Air Force installation," he said.

Connie Carmody will serve as CH2M HILL program manager for the contract.

"The Air Force is a valued client, and we're excited to be partnered with them to make this go well," Mr. Carmody said "We expect it to be very successful for both of us."

The door to submitting proposals

opened January 16 and closed July 2. Eight proposals were received.

Jan Christensen with the Academy logistics division's contracting branch said the basis for choosing the contractor was based on published criteria. Personnel organization, program management, approach to performance and facility support, and the approach to the transition to new requirements were among the criteria.

The Air Force executive office for combat and mission support at the Pentagon made the final decision on who received the contract.

"They [CH2M HILL] had the

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## Shuttle

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“During the course of the conversation, he mapped out with uncanny prescience the career path option that I would eventually take — up to and including the possibility of becoming a shuttle astronaut,” said Colonel Drew. “Being 17 and impressionable, I believed him.”

The Air Force helicopter pilot flew in Operations Just Cause and Desert Shield. He was commanding Hurlburt Field’s 413th Flight Test Squadron in 2000 when he received word that he would complete astronaut candidate training in 2002 and work in support of fielding the international space station.

“Test Pilot School was the best preparation for this job,” he said. It requires operating in unfamiliar and sometimes hazardous environments where the hazards are unknown or not

well defined,” he said. “The discipline and methods, drilled into us are still the well that I draw from when I face novel situations in spaceflight preparation.”

Each mission specialist has a piece of the mission, but every piece is critical to the overall mission.

He joined the Endeavor effort in late April.

“Some duties have direct effect on mission success — most visible are the space walks and mechanical arm tasks,” said the astronaut who has traveled far after his Academy days. “Others are less visible, such as lumping supplies across to the space station or wiring up the backbone of the computer network, but they enable the critical tasks to succeed or cause them to fail. Our missions are expensive and crammed, and that means that any non-critical duties just won’t make it on to the manifest.”



Photo courtesy NASA

The crew members of Space Shuttle Endeavor pose for their official portrait. Pictured from the left are Mission Specialists, Richard A. (Rick) Mastracchio and Barbara R. Morgan; pilot, Charles O. Hobaugh; commander, Scott J. Kelly and mission specialists Tracy E. Caldwell, Canadian Space Agency’s Dafydd R. (Dave) Williams, and 1984 Academy graduate Benjamin Alvin Drew Jr.

## Contract

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strongest technical proposal and are rated with significant confidence in past performances,” Mr. Christensen said.

“They also had the lowest overall evaluated price.”

The two main functions of the contractor are facility maintenance and supporting the cadets.

Cadet support includes setting up athletic fields, preparing arenas, ensuring lighting and electrical requirements are met and graduation set-up.

The contractor will also be responsible for managing squadron events, retirement ceremonies and snow removal.

Fairchild, Vandenberg and Sijan

Halls will have CH2M building managers.

The transition between the departure from the Academy of J&J Maintenance of Austin, Texas, begins Aug. 1.

CH2M HILL will assume full operations Sept. 1.

J&J employees on the Academy have begun filling out applications for employment with CH2M HILL.

“We will make every effort to keep J&J employees who meet our skill requirements,” Mr. Carmody said.

“We’ll work as fast as we can to get that settled.”

The global engineering, construction and operations company provides services for public and private clients.

It posts \$4.5 billion in revenue and focuses in the areas of transportation,



**CH2MHILL**  
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water, energy, environment, communications, construction and industrial facilities.

CH2M HILL is employee-owned through a broad-based employee ownership plan. It has more than 19,000 employees in regional offices around the world.

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CH2M HILL the largest employee-owned company in the engineering and construction industry and the top ranked company in the Rocky Mountain region.

KIRA, Incorporated, in joint venture with CH2M HILL, provides base operating support services, construction, renovation and maintenance services of facilities on government installations.

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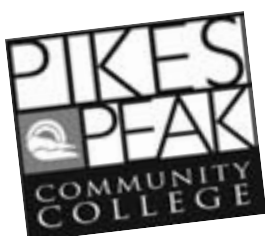
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