

TOP NEWS

Nominate Outstanding Leaders for the WEST 2026 Awards

Nominations are now open for the Emerging Leadership Award and Distinguished Young Professional Award. Submit your nominees by August 30, 2025, and help us recognize the rising stars shaping the future.

Entrepreneur Spotlight

As Founder & President of Ace Business Development, Cameron Eck provides government contractors a cost-friendly alternative to hiring a full-time business development team. Specializing in capture, proposal writing, agency relationship-building, strategy, networking and advisory, Ace offers a complete package of fractional services — helping primes win more contracts and subs become more marketable in the GovCon space. Whether you need expert support on key bids, representation at conferences, a long-term growth strategy or all of the above, the Ace team is ready to assist.



CHAPTER SUCCESS STORY

Forging Connections: Emerging Leaders and USAF Leadership Unite Over Mission, Mentorship and Yo-Yos



On March 10, 2025, at the AFCEA New Horizon's Conference in Newton, MA, the Lexington-Concord Emerging Leader program hosted a networking reception for government and industry. USAF Maj. Gen. Anthony Genatempo, who was then serving with the USAF Cyber and Network Directorate at Hanscom AFB, attended the event and took the time to engage directly with the Emerging Leaders. Conversations covered a wide range of topics, from discussions on the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC) to a more unexpected topic—his favorite yo-yo brand!

Since this event, Maj. Gen. Genatempo has retired from active service. We thank him for his years of dedicated service and wish him well in his retirement. Events like these provide Emerging Leaders with valuable opportunities to build relationships with senior leaders and expand their professional networks.

EMERGING TECH

Small Drone Revolution

by James D'Amico, Chapter Engagement Subcommittee Member, ELAC

The world has observed the ever-growing use of small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) over the past decade. From applications in agriculture, logistics and media, to the now vast range of military uses, their popularity has surged. Small drones are not a new concept; they have existed for decades, originating in the hobbyist and RC (radio-controlled) communities. As government needs emerged, the ease of use and affordability of these systems have driven rapid technological advancements in the unmanned sector.

In recent conflicts, drones have been deployed by the tens of thousands. On the battlefield, their various roles—ranging from surveillance to munitions delivery and electronic warfare—have proven invaluable. For years, it has been understood that human lives take precedence over hardware, and drones allow soldiers to be kept out of harm's way more often. International conflicts have provided significant lessons in the effective use of drones for survival. The popularity of these systems has led to commercial and federal integrators racing to develop and field the next generation of commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) drone systems. Many innovative solutions are being built and deployed, and federal contracts are increasingly supporting large-scale drone implementation. Software companies are exploring security measures and swarm technologies. As the industry recognizes the permanence of drones in both commercial and defense sectors, growth is accelerating at an unprecedented pace.

Looking ahead, the market must learn from both domestic experiences and overseas conflicts. Price will be a major factor in achieving the deployment rates necessary for success. Affordable, modular, and easily assembled systems will be key. One of the most notable developments is the adoption of technology and skills from the hobbyist first person view (FPV) drone community. In many cases, military forces are hand-building drones from the ground up, directly tying into the question of cost-effectiveness—should governments purchase ready-made systems or build them in-house? Drone crashes are inevitable, so in-field repair capabilities and readily available hardware are essential. Supply chain stability will play a critical role in success, making domestically produced components—such as flight controllers, radio receivers and T-motors—an important priority. Bringing production and skillsets back to the United States will be crucial for maintaining a competitive edge.

The future of drones holds endless possibilities. The advancements achieved so far are remarkable, and the potential for further innovation is even greater. Many envision a future where the United States leads the global drone market—perhaps even to the point where everyday tasks, like mail delivery, are handled by drones.

EL REC CORNER

Books

Leaders Eat Last by Simon Sinek

Summary: Simon Sinek explores how great leaders build trust and inspire cooperation by putting their people first. Drawing from military and business examples, he explains why psychological safety leads to high performance.

Radical Candor by Kim Scott

Summary: Learn how to be a boss who gives direct, honest feedback while still showing that you care personally. It's a game-changer for anyone managing teams.

Podcasts

The Daily Stoic by Ryan Holiday

Summary: Ancient wisdom for modern leadership. Short, practical episodes on resilience, decision-making, and staying grounded—perfect for busy tech leaders.

WorkLife with Adam Grant

Summary: Grant, a top organizational psychologist, takes you inside workplaces to explore how to make work not suck—covering creativity, communication, and leadership.

Disruptive by Design Podcast



Summary: Tune in as SIGNAL Media speaks with leaders across industry, the military and academia as they share their experiences being 'Disruptive By Design,' and navigate the tech world of information technology, military systems and intelligence. What would these Emerging Leaders have to say to current leaders and to others in their fields about the challenges of advancing technologies and systems for a near-peer environment. How has AFCEA or other professional associations helped their careers? What is next for these movers and shakers?

MEME MOMENT



Leadership:
"Let's pivot the strategy."

Tech team:
"Again?"