

Way of Life Alumni Newsletter

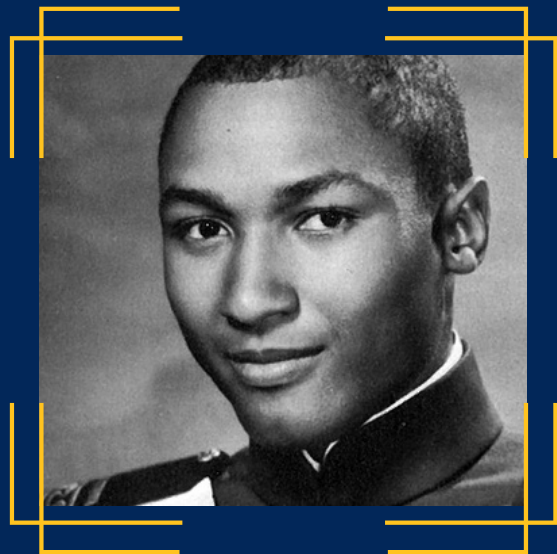


USAFA'S FIRSTS

Can you name all three African-American graduates from the Air Force Academy's Class of 1963? This issue is dedicated to the men who the opened doors for all of us, Charles "Chuck" Bush, Isaac "Ike" Payne, and Roger Sims. The legacy continues.

CHARLES "CHUCK" BUSH

Charles Vernon Bush finished his military career in 1970, but continued his mission to make diversity a priority for the DoD well into his civilian life. His work with the Admissions team on the "Strategic Diversity Plan" in the mid-2000s, and a comprehensive "DoD Executive Diversity Study" in 2008, laid the foundation for a RAND study six years later, entitled "Improving Demographic Diversity in the U.S. Air Force Officer Corps." Both studies assert that "despite the Air Force's efforts to create a force that mirrors the racial, ethnic, and gender differences of the nation's population, minority groups and women are underrepresented in the active-duty line officer population, especially at senior levels." Mr. Bush's work highlighted inequities across the armed forces and led to the reformation of the admissions process at the Academy.



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ROGER SIMS

Roger Sims was USAFA's first Historically Black College/University alumni, too, after studying at Howard University for three years before entering the Academy. After flying missions throughout the Far East, including Vietnam, Mr. Sims went on to work with NBC and CBS as a producer on the Evening News with Walter Cronkite and Sunday Morning with Charles Kuralt. He was nominated for two national Emmy Awards.

COL (RET) ISAAC "IKE" PAYNE

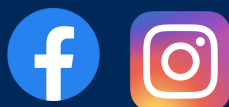
After graduation, Isaac Payne accumulated over 4600 hours of flight time in 35 different aircraft. His distinctive accomplishments earned him several decorations, including the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Purple Heart. His final active duty assignment was Chief Tactical Systems Development, National Security Agency. Ike retired from the Air Force as a Colonel in 1987, going on to work as a Senior Engineer for Advanced Science, Inc. until 1992. While in Basic Training at the Academy, Payne had said to himself, "If anyone can do it, I can do it."



Final Thoughts

How has the legacy of the USAFA Class of '63 influenced your career? Share your thoughts using the hashtag **#63toMe**.

Contact us!



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