

Published on *DoD STARBASE* (<http://dodstarbase.org>)

[Home](#) > Tanner Kellogg

My name is Tanner Kellogg, and I believe that attending DoD STARBASE when I was younger helped shape my life as well as the course of my education and career. I attended STARBASE Kansas at McConnell AFB in Wichita, Kansas. It was a one week day camp during the summer of 2001, and I was 9 years old. I had just finished 3rd grade at Woodland Health and Wellness Magnet Elementary School.



In DoD STARBASE, I remember that we learned about aircraft, the fundamentals of flight, and that we toured a hangar where we were allowed to board a B-1 bomber. I even got to sit in the cockpit, and they took photos of me. The thing I remember the most was building and launching rockets. We built the rockets from scratch not prepared kits and were able to design them any way we wanted. We put our names on them so that we could find them again after we launched them. Making them was fun, but the real excitement came when we launched them. Some went pretty straight, others spiraled upward, and sometimes a rocket engine had to be replaced because it would not fire. All the kids, parents, and instructors would point to where the rocket went, and we would have to squint to see some that seemed to just disappear into the sky. I really enjoyed that very much and thought it was so cool that I begged my parents to buy us a rocket launcher after DoD STARBASE was over so that we could keep launching rockets. They did, and each of us had our own rockets that we launched over and over again.

That summer, we moved across town, and I attended 4th grade at McLean Science and Technology Magnet Elementary School where I continued to develop my interest in flight, in particular, space. We would frequently go to the Kansas Cosmosphere where I met several different astronauts and attended a Mars Camp where we simulated being astronauts on Mars. I got a poster of all the NASA rockets, which my parents framed and hung in my bedroom. I would study the rocket names and sizes and began to dream about becoming an astronaut. For fifth grade, we moved to Maryland, because my mother got a job with NAVAIR. When I was 13, our parents took my brother and me down to Florida to see the launch of a space shuttle, and we walked around the Rocket Garden where I saw many of the rockets that had been on my poster. I sat in a simulated Apollo capsule and told everyone then that I was going to be an astronaut. To this day, I still have every intention to be up in space and maybe even become the first person to step foot on Mars.

As a freshman in high school, I joined the Air Force Junior ROTC (AFJROTC) program. I remained with the AFJROTC program all four years and advanced to the top rank of Cadet Colonel where I had supervisory responsibility over 100+ cadets. The leadership training received from my Boy Scout Troop, leadership conferences, and other leadership-building programs enabled me to handle this responsibility very well, and I knew that I would definitely pursue a career as an officer in the military. I wanted to be a pilot and then move on to become an Astronaut, but my visual acuity was not at the necessary level. I decided to major in Aerospace Engineering anyway because it is what I have loved since my youth and my days in DoD STARBASE. I am now in my fourth year at West Virginia University with one more year to go before graduation because rigorous engineering programs combined with college level ROTC often require five years for completion of a Bachelor's of Science degree in engineering. Between being an Eagle Scout, my years with the AFJROTC program, and maintaining good grades, I have been fortunate to have had all my college expenses paid for by the Air Force and two other scholarships.

I have just recently been accepted for an internship at the Patuxent River Naval Air Station as an Engineering Trainee Intern. I begin this job next week and will be working during school holidays, summer breaks, and after graduation until I go Active Duty with the Air Force and am assigned my first duty station. I am thrilled to be able to work in my field during these breaks in my education and to be exposed to another branch of the military and their Naval aviation program.

I was fortunate to have parents who encouraged my interest in science and engineering and who provided some wonderful opportunities for me in my youth, but I may not have followed this path if I had not first been excited and inspired by it at a DoD STARBASE program. I appreciate how it developed my curiosity, inspired me to follow through with my education, and confirmed in me the commitment to serve my country with a career in the military. I would like to thank Colonel Ed Flora and the DoD STARBASE instructors, as well as the military for sponsoring and supporting a program like this, which I believe changes young people's lives. It certainly changed mine.



[1]

Name: Tanner Kellogg

Academy: STARBASE Wichita [2]

Source URL: <http://dodstarbase.org/alumnus/tanner-kellogg>

Links:

[1] <http://dodstarbase.org/sites/default/files/styles/large/public/alumni->

profiles/Tanner%20Kellogg%20Pic.%203.JPG?itok=rZEJW8w-
[2] <http://dodstarbase.org/academies/starbase-wichita>