

#ProjectNext

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COHORT 5 TEAM: REVOLVING DOOR International Relationships or Partnerships.

We found that there's much pollution out there, there are islands of all the plastics, and that's not good for the US or any nation. And so, if we can mitigate those kinds of issues off coastal territories, we can build rapport and build a relationship not grounded in the military. It's grounded in more a humanitarian aspect or green space. So there are ways we can partner using some of the military's capabilities but do it in a non-military fashion, which lends itself to rapport, building, and relationship building with nations that aren't directly in line with our military jobs but be done at the same time.

Personal AHA Moment:

The most significant piece for me is challenging how I learned to think throughout my adult life. Giving additional context for how that looks, feels, and works are essential. Another piece is the vocabulary it gives you; if I can communicate to someone using words they understand in a meaningful way, and we have that ability to communicate with an aim towards innovation, it furthers that. It increases the understanding that we have of the words that we use. When we can share on that level, it builds understanding and a deeper connection toward innovation.

Team AHA Moment:

I was hesitant to approach partnership and partner capacity building from a military perspective because that's not my job. As we learned, **it's not in conflict with what they asked to do; it's not taking away from what the state department does or other partner-building capacity entities.** We can do it in a mutually beneficial way. I thought it was a huge moment for me to take away the stovepipe thinking that I had and use it in a way or adapt my mindset to say there's a broader approach to this that I'm not considering, and for my team and myself, that was the aha moment.

What's Next After Project Mercury:

As the **ROTC detachment commander, all of my seniors have gone through a variety of innovative curriculum geared explicitly towards undergraduate students.** We are on our third cohort going through that. We are transitioning right now from the seniors going through to the juniors going through. **I am also a coach for CHILS.** Going through the process and championing ideas is crucial for them to understand and do. So, the fact that they're giving that opportunity while in their fellowship as part of their developmental education is essential and good for future Air Force leaders. I'm excited to be helping them along that journey, and I think it's really good that we're doing this.

How do you use the skills learned in Project Mercury today?

In the program I'm running right now, I don't focus so much on commissioning, which is the end goal for most people. **I focus on being a contributing member of society.** One of the most significant skill sets is that I want a young leader to be able to take an idea and make it happen. Part of that is acknowledging that it's not always easy, that there are roadblocks in the way, and that we need to be resilient with our ideas and understand how to get to know and still ask for that same thing skills without pitting one side against the other. The most important and exciting thing is that they can take something and make it their own.

Dream Job:

I like working with people. I like leading. I like efficient things and acknowledge that innovation could be more efficient. But, I like looking for efficiency in something, to make process improvements, **so if I had to pick my dream job, it would be consulting. Going into companies and saying this is the leadership tweaks you need to allow people to find their best selves and pull as much from people as possible.** Whenever you give people much space to make decisions for themselves, they provide you with everything they can, in the capacity they can, and watching that happen is fun. . If I got to do anything in the whole wide world, I think that would be it.