CFC Opens Door for Federal Employees to Shape EW's Future Through AOC Foundation

Military personnel and federal employees now have a quick and direct way to invest in the next generation of electromagnetic warfare professionals.

New in 2025, the **AOC Foundation** is a participating charity in the **Combined Federal Campaign**. This marks the first time active duty service members and federal employees, including contractors and retirees, can directly support the Foundation's scholarship, education, and leadership development programs through the annual charity drive. The CFC runs through December 31, and allows participants to contribute through convenient payroll deductions.

The timing couldn't be more crucial.

As AOC Board Regional Director Mark Schallheim says, "EW is critical to controlling the battlefield of today. We have to get the next generation ready for the fight. The AOC Foundation's scholarships, grants, and support for schools and students will encourage the future leaders of EW internationally."

Schallheim's four decades of CFC participation, dating back to the 1970s during his time as a civilian engineer and program manager in the US Navy, has given him unique insight into both the program's impact and now the growing urgency of early education, training, and leadership development in the EW community.

A Legacy of Giving Made Simple

For many federal employees, the CFC has long provided a

convenient way to support causes close to their hearts. Keith Everly, who served in the Air Force for nearly 30 years, remembers when CFC participation became second nature.

“There’s always been the option to give to charity and make it easy through the paycheck deductions,” he says. “With the CFC, you think about it once, and then you can do good throughout the year.”

Everly’s experience highlights one of the CFC’s greatest strengths: its ability to make charitable giving both easy and personal. During his time at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, he even helped coordinate CFC campaigns and witnessed firsthand how the program evolved to allow more targeted giving.

“That was incredibly beneficial because you could target where your money went to something that fit your values,” Everly recalls.

The AOC Foundation’s entry into the CFC comes at a pivotal moment for the electromagnetic spectrum community. With rapid technological advancement and an evolving threat landscape, the need for EW professionals has never been greater. For Schallheim, working on behalf of the AOC Foundation to support students through programs like the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) has been particularly inspiring.

“These ingenious efforts by students surprise me all the time. I wish I had the talent they have,” he says of the young minds he’s encountered. “These kids could go anywhere and do anything, but we need them in EW.”

Expanding Impact Through Strategic Investment

The Foundation’s participation in the CFC will expand its ability to support STEM education, research, and career and leadership development initiatives. Everly, a long-time AOC member who champions the Foundation’s work, emphasizes the

comprehensive approach being developed: “We’re trying to build up a portfolio of ways to donate so we can expand scholarship access, educational support through grants, STEM activities at chapters and nationally, community education, and other pilot projects.”

This expanded capacity will enable the Foundation to support everything from university research partnerships to museum exhibits that introduce the public to the world of electromagnetic warfare. The Foundation will follow precedents from local chapters like the AOC Kittyhawk Chapter’s donation to the University of Dayton of laboratory hardware that allows students to “build and test in one semester.”

“This sort of direct support of research projects at the university-level exemplifies the kind of hands-on learning opportunities the Foundation aims to multiply in the coming years,” Everly said.

Most importantly, the Foundation’s enhanced funding capabilities will support sustained engagement with emerging talent. As Schallheim explains, “Once we make contact with students, we want to stay connected to them and provide mentors and support throughout their educational development.”

AOC’s events and professional development programs are also a part of this long-term commitment to education and are crucial to the EW community as it nurtures its future leaders.

An Invitation to Invest in Tomorrow

The Foundation’s CFC participation represents more than just another charitable option – it’s an investment in national security, technological advancement, and the continuation of critical capabilities that protect our nation.

As Schallheim says, “For AOC and the AOC Foundation, it’s important to look at our future – and that’s what we’re doing.”

With the 2025 CFC, federal employees can ensure that future is bright, capable, and ready for the challenges ahead.

“The CFC’s convenience is incredible. It makes giving easy, “Everly says. “That said, even for those not in the federal workforce are eligible to give through the CFC can and should give to the Foundation because they’re going to be doing great things in the future.”

PLEDGE TO GIVE TO THE AOC FOUNDATION TODAY!

Make your Combined Federal Campaign pledge today and support the AOC Foundation. Visit **givecfc.org** and select **CFC code 72037**.