

**Alumni Profile for Sophia Vasiliadis**



*2nd Lieutenant, United States Air Force*

Sophia attended The Nysmith School from preschool through second grade.

**My life since Nysmith:**

After Nysmith I started attending public school in Northern Virginia, which included Forest Edge and Colvin Run Elementary Schools, Cooper Middle School, and Langley High School. While at Langley, my grandfather, who had served as a fighter pilot in the Air Force during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, encouraged me to apply to the Academy. So, after high school I attended the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO. I originally applied to the Academy because of my grandfather; however, I decided to stay at the Academy and commit to my original five (now ten) years of service for one big reason; and that was, and still is, the people. At the Academy I was surrounded by people, all from different backgrounds, but also with so much in common. Almost everyone was extremely motivated, intelligent, and selfless. The Air Force community has become such a large part of my life, I cannot imagine what it would be like not be in the service.

I graduated with a B.S. in Operations Research in May of 2015 and commissioned as a second lieutenant in the US Air Force. For the last year I have been at Sheppard Air Force Base, TX. I am currently a student pilot in the Euro NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program, and upon graduation in February, plan to become a pilot in the US Air Force. I do not know where I will be stationed next or what airframe I will be flying, but I am excited to find out!

**How Nysmith impacted my life:**

Because of my five years at Nysmith I was able to get into a GT (gifted and talented) program in elementary school, which I believe set me up to do well in school, ultimately opening up the opportunity to attend the Air Force Academy.

**Advice I would give to current students:**

The only advice that I would have for current Nysmith students and parents is to work hard and keep your options open about what you want yourself (or your child) to do in the future. I never in a million years would have predicted that I would end up in the military, and even though I wouldn't want to change anything now because it all worked out for me, it would have been nice to learn about it earlier on.

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Sophia was too modest to include this but we think it's awesome: during her last semester in the Air Force Academy, as a senior cadet 1st class, she was appointed the Cadet Wing Commander, where she led the entire student body of 4000+ students -- a remarkable achievement. Her command lasted through her 5/28/15 graduation.

**UPDATE:** On January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Sophia got the F-22 Raptor assigned to her. She will go through training in Panama City, FL, and then, hopefully, Langley AFB in Norfolk, Virginia. The F-22 is only in Hawaii, Norfolk, Alaska, and Panama City. On Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, Sophia received her wings!

**Fun Fact #1:** According to Lockheed Martin, the F-22's maximum speed is 1,498 mph with a range of 1,839 miles. It can get up to Mach 2!

**Fun Fact #2:** The F-22 Raptor has been in service for the past 11+ years and [Sophia is one of only FIVE female pilots ever to fly it!](#) We could say "the sky's the limit" with Sophia, but maybe it's not!