

## 56th Training Squadron

### Lineage.

Constituted 56th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor)  
on 20 November 1940.

Activated on 15 January 1941.

Redesignated 56th Fighter Squadron on 15 May  
1942.

Disbanded on 1 May 1944.

Reconstituted, and redesignated 56th Fighter-  
Interceptor Squadron, on 14 November  
1952.

Activated on 27 November 1952.

Discontinued on 1 March 1960.

Redesignated 56th Tactical Training Squadron on  
25 September 1979.<sup>1</sup>

Activated on 1 October 1979.<sup>2</sup>

Redesignated 56th Training Squadron on 1 November 1991.<sup>3</sup>

Inactivated on 20 July 1993.<sup>4</sup>

Activated on 1 April 1994.<sup>5</sup>



### Honors.

#### *Service Streamers.*

**World War II American Theater**

#### *Campaign Streamers.*

**World War II Asiatic-Pacific Theater**

Air Combat 7 December 1941 - 2 September 1945

### Decorations.

#### **Distinguished Unit Citations**

Alaska, [June]-4 November 1942

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<sup>1</sup> TAC SO GA-105, 26 September 1979

<sup>2</sup> TAC SO GA-105, 26 September 1979

<sup>3</sup> TAC SO G-12, 1 November 1991

<sup>4</sup> ACC SO GB-93, 29 June 1993

<sup>5</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

## **Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards**

1 July 1980-31 May 1982<sup>6</sup>  
1 June 1984-31 May 1986<sup>7</sup>  
1 May 1987-30 April 1989<sup>8</sup>  
1 May 1989-30 April 1990<sup>9</sup>  
1 May 1990-30 April 1991<sup>10</sup>  
1 July 1994-30 June 1996<sup>11</sup>  
1 July 1996-30 June 1998<sup>12</sup>  
1 July 1998-30 June 2000<sup>13</sup>  
1 July 2001-30 June 2003<sup>14</sup>  
[1 July] 2003-30 June 2005<sup>15</sup>  
1 July 2005-30 June 2006<sup>16</sup>  
1 July 2006-30 June 2007<sup>17</sup>  
1 July 2007-30 June 2008<sup>18</sup>  
1 July 2008-30 June 2009<sup>19</sup>  
1 July 2009-30 June 2010<sup>20</sup>  
1 July 2010-30 June 2011<sup>21</sup>  
1 July 2011-30 June 2012<sup>22</sup>  
1 July 2012-30 June 2013<sup>23</sup>  
1 July 2013-30 June 2014<sup>24</sup>  
1 July 2014-30 June 2015<sup>25</sup>  
1 July 2015-30 June 2016<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> DAF SO GB-117, 22 February 1983

<sup>7</sup> DAF SO GB-275/1987

<sup>8</sup> TAC SO GA-053, 29 August 1989

<sup>9</sup> TAC SO GA-048, 16 August 1990

<sup>10</sup> TAC SO GA-069, 26 September 1991

<sup>11</sup> AETC SO GA-18, 15 November 1996

<sup>12</sup> AETC SO GA-12, 9 November 1998

<sup>13</sup> AETC SO GA-9, 8 December 2000

<sup>14</sup> AETC SO GA-55, 29 April 2004

<sup>15</sup> AETC SO GA-0052, 22 June 2006

<sup>16</sup> AETC SO GA-045, 8 May 2007

<sup>17</sup> AETC SO G-054, 28 February 2008

<sup>18</sup> AETC SO G-071, 3 April 2009

<sup>19</sup> AETC SO G-025, 11 March 2010

<sup>20</sup> AETC SO G-086, 9 May 2011

<sup>21</sup> AETC SO G-171, 17 April 2012

<sup>22</sup> AETC SO G-036, 1 March 2013

<sup>23</sup> AETC SO G-017, 1 February 2014

<sup>24</sup> AETC SO G-029, 8 January 2015

<sup>25</sup> AETC SO G-006, 14 October 2016

<sup>26</sup> AETC SO G-022, 22 March 2017

**Squadron** – 1 Total Aerial Victory Credits. **Squadron Aces:** None.

**Assignments.** 54th Pursuit (later, Fighter) Group, 15 January 1941-1 May 1944. 4708th Defense Wing, 27 November 1952; 575th Air Defense Group, 16 February 1953; 4706th Air Defense Wing, 18 August 1955; 58th Air Division, 1 March 1956; 30th Air Division, 1 September 1958; Detroit Air Defense Sector, 1 April 1959-1 March 1960. 56th Tactical Fighter (later, Tactical Training; Fighter) Wing, 1 October 1979; 56th Operations Group, 1 November 1991-20 July 1993. 56th Operations Group, 1 April 1994-<sup>27</sup>

**Stations.** Hamilton Field, California, 15 January 1941; Snohomish County Airport (later, Paine Field), Washington, 22 June 1941; Harding Field, Louisiana, 31 January 1942 (detachment operated from Santa Ana, California, 28 May-12 June 1942; Nome, Alaska, 20 June-20 October 1942; Anchorage, Alaska, 23 October-21 December 1942); Bartow Army Air Field, Florida, 11 May 1943-1 May 1944. Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan, 27 November 1952; Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, 18 August 1955-1 March 1960. MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, 1 October 1979-20 July 1993. Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, 1 April 1994-<sup>28</sup>

**Aircraft.**

Curtis P-40 Warhawk	1941
Bell P-39 Airacobra	1941-1943
North American P (later, F)-51 Lightning	1943-1944 and 1952-1953
North American F-86 Sabre	1953-1958
Lockheed F-104 Starfighter	1958-1960

**Emblem.** Approved on 9 March 2001.

**Blazon.** On a disc Gules, in horizontal flight two flight symbols fesswise in bend Sable, each emitting a contrail to sinister chief Or, issuant from base a mountainous terrain earth colored Proper surmounting a bezant, all within a diminished bordure Yellow.

Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "56TH TRAINING SQ" in Yellow letters.

Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "FIGHTER ACADEMICS" in Yellow letters.

**Motto.** Fighter Academics.

**Significance.** Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The escarpment refers to the location of the unit. The rising sun signifies the unit's role in training student pilots to qualified status in major weapons systems. The deltas show the high level of training provided by the unit.

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<sup>27</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

<sup>28</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

**Commanders.**

**56th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) 15 January 1941-15 May 1942]**

2d Lt Patrick R. Arnold	15 January 1941
2d Lt Samuel H. Marret	24 January 1941
1st Lt (later, Capt) Robert B. Richard	30 April 1941
Maj Charles M. McCorkle	24 March 1942-15 May 1942

**56th Fighter Squadron [15 May 1942-1 May 1944]**

Maj Charles M. McCorkle	15 May 1942	[Ace][Major General]
1st Lt James K. Dowling	12 June 1942	
Capt William P. Litton	1 February 1943	
Capt (later, Maj) William H. Merriam	16 February 1943	
Maj James G. Curl	4 October 1943-Unknown	
Unknown	26 January 1944-1 May 1944	

**56th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron [27 November 1952-1 March 1960]**

Maj Frank O. Lux (acting)	27 November 1952	
Lt Col Richard D. Creighton	by 1 January 1953	[Ace]
Maj Frank O. Lux	by 30 June 1954-Unknown	
Unknown	1 July 1954-30 March 1958	
Lt Col Alston L. Brown	by 31 March 1958	
Maj Sylvester H. Hendricks (acting)	11 December 1958	
Lt Col Charles E. Rigney	by 30 June 1959-Unknown	
Unknown	1 July 1959-1 May 1960	

**56th Tactical Training Squadron [1 October 1979-1 November 1991]**

Lt Col David W. Spring	1 October 1979 <sup>29</sup>
Lt Col Paul H. Burbage, III	15 March 1980
Maj John D. Holmquist	19 May 1980
Lt Col Charles E. Cotton	30 June 1980
Lt Col Bruce V. Huneke	2 August 1982
Lt Col James C. Kobriger	24 January 1983 <sup>30</sup>
Lt Col David H. Brooks	1 April 1983 <sup>31</sup>
Lt Col Ralph T. Hood	4 October 1984 <sup>32</sup>
Lt Col Randall H. Wiseman	19 December 1986 <sup>33</sup>
Lt Col Jon E. Wilson	20 December 1988
Lt Col Rodney L. Bates	7 September 1990-1 November 1991

<sup>29</sup> 56 CSG SO G-49, 1 October 1979

<sup>30</sup> 56 CSG SO G-2, 24 January 1983

<sup>31</sup> 56 CSG SO G-10, 1 April 1983

<sup>32</sup> 56 CSG SO G-30, 4 October 1984

<sup>33</sup> 56 CSG SO G-10, 18 December 1986

## Commanders. (Continued)

### **56th Training Squadron [1 November 1991-20 July 1993; 1 April 1994-.]**

Lt Col Rodney L. Bates	1 November 1991
Lt Col William Stringer	17 January 1992
Lt Col Stanley Sutterfield	August 1992-Unknown
Lt Col Ronald H. Heyden	1 April 1994 <sup>34</sup>
Lt Col David M. Burnett	6 May 1994 <sup>35</sup>
Lt Col John C. Vignetti	19 June 1995
Lt Col John R. Swarsbrook	15 July 1997 <sup>36</sup>
Lt Col William Gonzalez, Jr.	9 July 1999 <sup>37</sup>
Lt Col Randy A. O'Connor	19 December 2000 <sup>38</sup>
Lt Col Jack D. Patterson, Jr.	18 January 2002 <sup>39</sup>
Lt Col Robert P. Egan	28 March 2003 <sup>40</sup>
Lt Col Richard A. Forster	7 January 2005 <sup>41</sup>
Lt Col Brian D. Neumann	16 June 2006 <sup>42</sup>
Lt Col Doyle C. Turner	16 May 2008 <sup>43</sup>
Lt Col Brian I. Elliot (temp)	18 Dec 2008 <sup>44</sup>
Lt Col Charles J. DeLapp	14 May 2010 <sup>45</sup>
Lt Col Matthew Liljenstolpe	13 July 2012- <sup>46</sup>
Lt Col Michael W. Dunn	3 July 2014. <sup>47</sup>
Lt Col Matthew A. Hayden	1 July 2016-Present. <sup>48</sup>

## Narrative.

The 56th Training Squadron was constituted as the 56th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) on 20 November 1940. Activated on 15 January 1941, it was assigned to the 54th Pursuit (later, Fighter) Group. The group is currently stationed at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, and assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing. When stationed at Hamilton Field, California, the squadron began flying the Curtis P-40 Warhawk. During the year, the squadron converted to the Bell P-39

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<sup>34</sup> [58 MSS SO SO-G-60, 7 May 1992]

<sup>35</sup> 56 TRS SO SO-GF-001, 18 April 1994

<sup>36</sup> 56 TRS SO SO-TS-001, c. 12 Jul 1997, and 56 TRS SO SO-GF-001, c. 18 November 1997

<sup>37</sup> 56 TRS SO SO-GF-005, 30 June 1999

<sup>38</sup> 56 TRS SO SO-GF-001, 19 December 2000

<sup>39</sup> 56 TRS SO SO-GF-005, 16 January 2002

<sup>40</sup> 56 TRS SO 56 TRS G-1, 11 March 2003

<sup>41</sup> 56 TRS SO 56 OG-G-2005-03, 6 January 2005

<sup>42</sup> 56 TRS SO 56OG-G2006-11, 9 June 1006

<sup>43</sup> 56 TRS SO G-020, 15 May 2008

<sup>44</sup> 56 MSG SO G-015, 16 Dec 2008

<sup>45</sup> 56 MSG SO G-005, 14 May 2010

<sup>46</sup> 56 FW SO G-026, 3 July 2012

<sup>47</sup> 56 MSG SO GS-24-14, 3 July 2014

<sup>48</sup> 56 MSG SO G-18-16, 21 June 2016

Airacobra. On 22 June 1941, the unit moved to Snohomish County Airport (later, Paine Field), Everett, Washington. On 31 January 1942, the squadron moved to Harding Field, Louisiana. On 15 May 1942, the squadron was redesignated as the 56th Fighter Squadron. Starting on 28 May 1942, the squadron operated a detachment at Santa Ana, California. While there, it served as part of the Air Defense force for the West Coast. The detachment departed on 12 June and arrived in Nome, Alaska, on 20 June 1942. While there the detachment flew patrols until 20 October, when it moved to Anchorage, Alaska, arriving on 23 October 1942. At Anchorage, the detachment flew patrols until 21 December 1942. Pilots from the detachment were credited with one aerial victory during the defeat of the Japanese invasion of the Aleutian Islands. The detachment then returned to Harding Field until 11 May 1943, when the entire squadron removed to Bartow Army Air Field, Florida. At Bartow, the unit conducted replacement training for North American P-51 Lightning pilots. On 1 May 1944, the squadron was disbanded.

On 14 November 1952, the unit was reconstituted and redesignated as the 56th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron. It activated on 27 November 1952, at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan, assigned to the 4708th Defense Wing. Earlier in the year, the 56th Fighter Wing had inactivated there. Initially flying the renamed F-51, it converted to the North American F-86 Sabre during 1953. On 16 February 1953, the squadron was reassigned to the 575th Air Defense Group. On 18 August 1955, the squadron was moved to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio and reassigned to the 4706th Air Defense Wing. The following first of March, it was reassigned to the 58th Air Division. On 1 September 1958, the squadron was assigned to the 30th Air Division. During 1958, the squadron converted to the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter. On 1 April 1959, it was assigned to the Detroit Air Defense Sector. On 1 March 1960, the squadron was discontinued. Throughout that eight year period, the squadron's main mission was Air Defense of the homeland.

On 25 September 1979, the squadron was redesignated as the 56th Tactical Training Squadron. It activated on 1 October 1979 at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, assigned to the 56th Tactical Fighter (later, Tactical Training; Fighter) Wing. On 1 November 1991, the unit was redesignated the 56th Training Squadron and reassigned to the 56th Operations Group. On 20 July 1993, the squadron was inactivated. While at MacDill AFB, the squadron conducted F-16 academic training.

When the wing moved to Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, on 1 April 1994, the group and squadron reactivated. The squadron continued the same mission after the move. During 1994 and 1995, it also proved academic training to F-15E aircrews. Today, the squadron trains the world's greatest F-16 pilots by providing peerless instruction, virtual training, and training systems management. It also trains pilots to fly the Lockheed Martin F-35A Lightning II, America's newest fighter.

**Locally Updated** 6 September 2017

**Locally Updated by** Rick Grisct