

1 March 2026

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Reyes

212th Fighter Squadron

9800 Falcon Way

Buckley SFB, CO 12345

Dear Lieutenant Colonel Reyes:

My grandfather flew F-4 Phantoms out of Da Nang in 1969, and growing up, his stories were the bedtime stories in our house instead of fairy tales. He passed away when I was fourteen, but not before taking me to my first airshow at Buckley, where I watched an F-16 from the XXXth run through its display and decided, right there in the bleachers, that I wasn't going to be satisfied hearing about fighters secondhand for the rest of my life. Visiting the squadron this winter and talking with several of your pilots about the mission only confirmed what I decided as a kid: the XXXth is exactly where I want to build a career.

I've spent the years since that airshow building toward this application on purpose. I graduated from Georgia Tech with a degree in Aerospace Engineering, and in my off time I've logged more than 100 hours toward my private pilot certificate and instrument rating, including solo cross-countries into unfamiliar airspace and my first real taste of actual instrument conditions. My day job as a systems engineer on a satellite guidance program has sharpened the same precision and composure under pressure that flying demands. A bad call on a launch day doesn't get a second try, and neither does a bad call in the pattern, so I've learned to build in the redundancy and discipline that both jobs require.

Flying well is only part of what a fighter squadron needs, and I think my background outside the cockpit matters just as much. I spent four years as an NCAA Division I athlete, which taught me how to perform under pressure as part of a team long before I ever touched a control yoke. For the past several years, I've also served as a Cadet Flight Officer with Civil Air Patrol, where I lead ground school instruction for more than 20 cadets and help coordinate search-and-rescue exercises with local emergency management. Leading people who are counting on you, and being led by people who expect your best, is second nature to me at this point, and I think that matters just as much to a squadron as raw stick-and-rudder skill.

I know a lot of applicants will walk into your boardroom with strong scores and flight hours, and I've worked hard to be one of them. What I hope sets me apart is that I've wanted this specific squadron, flying this specific airplane, since I was a kid in the bleachers at Buckley, and I've spent every year since building the technical background and leadership experience to back that dream up. I'd welcome the opportunity to interview with your board and am glad to make the drive up from Denver whenever it's convenient. You can reach me at (555) 555-5555 or david.scott@fake.com.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

David R. Scott