



GENERAL HENRY H. ARNOLD EDUCATION GRANT

in honor of

GENERAL LOUIS T. SEITH



Louis Theodore Seith was born January 17, 1921 in Quincy, Massachusetts. He entered the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York in 1939 and was graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission as second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1943. He attended flying school while at the Academy and received his pilot wings in 1942. For the next 34 years, General Seith served his country as an Air Force officer, culminating in his selection for four-star general officer rank and assignment as Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Powers Europe, Shape, Belgium.

General Seith assumed leadership of the Society in 1978 and in just over a dozen years masterminded unprecedented change in Society operations. His success in reorienting the Society was evident by a swift rise in disbursements, the introduction of new programs, and the modernization of policies and procedures. By 1990 Society emergency assistance disbursements had grown to \$19 million reaching over 28,000 Air Force people annually. During his tenure, 312,548 persons received over \$171 million in emergency assistance.

Equally impressive was General Seith's emphasis on increasing the educational assistance available to Air Force members and their families. In 1977, the Society's education offerings consisted of an internally managed, low-interest loan program, which made \$2.2 million available to Air Force families. General Seith recognized that Society assets were becoming inadequate to meet rising college costs and took the initiative to establish two new student loan programs offering wider assistance to the entire Air Force community. Since 1979, more than 71,000 Air Force members and their families have received AFAS sponsored Guaranteed Student and Parent Loans totaling \$153 million. In 1988, he also created an Education Grant Program to further assist Air Force families cope with rising education costs, an overwhelmingly popular and needed initiative which quickly matured into a \$4 million a year program of direct benefit to 4,000 sons and daughters of Air Force members.

Emergency assistance and educational assistance statistics during the last decade stand in silent testimony of General Seith's leadership. This perpetual grant was created in his honor upon his retirement from the Society in 1991. General Seith died in Virginia on March 6, 2007.