



# NEWS RELEASE

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**

## **HEADQUARTERS STANDARD SYSTEMS GROUP**

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**Release No. 03-05-15**

**Release Date: May 8, 2003**

## **AUM answers call from SSG programmers**

By Belinda Bazinet  
SSG Public Affairs

**MAXWELL AFB, GUNTER ANNEX, Ala** – Standard Systems Group called in Auburn

University at Montgomery to help airmen improve their programming skills.

“Our airmen were graduating from tech (technical training) school without the leading edge technology skills needed for SSG,” said Master Sgt. Kevin Costelloe, NCO in charge of the students, said. “We partnered with AUM to quickly get them up to speed. It is so exciting and possibly the first program of its kind in the Air Force.”

The SSG students agree. Amn. Jacob Viator, who had no prior programming experience other than technical training school, didn’t expect to go to school fulltime. “I think the training is great. I’m really enjoying it, and learning a lot.”

The 5-month program, administered through AUM’s Department of Information Systems and Decisions Sciences, was customized in preparation for opening SSG’s Java Center of Excellence. The Center substantially improves the way the group delivers software solutions to the Air Force.

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***AUM answers call from SSG programmers***  
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“This program was born out of our desire to strengthen and standardize training given to our computer programmers,” now retired Chief Master Sgt. Gilbert Duenas, former superintendent of the Software Development Division, said. “From the very beginning we met with the teaching staff to identify effective teaching methods.”

The result combines lecture and lab work in a condensed program that will be offered to 64 programmers. Each student is required to take five courses; the curriculum includes college credit of an object-oriented design fundamentals course, two courses in programming languages and two courses in Oracle database.

“This emersion training will take a four-month course and shrink it into about three weeks,” Costelloe said. The trainees are considered full time AUM students and will earn 15 credit hours. Eventually, all new enlisted computer programmers will go through this training

Professor (Dr.) Ava Horn is impressed with the students. “The discipline in this group and the way they work together is exciting to see. SSG trainees take it serious and the students are motivated to excel,” she said. “There is a symbiotic relationship between AUM and these young people.”

The courses will be a major step in ensuring that the Air Force programmers are prepared to provide dependable, reliable software support that could make a difference to U.S. troops in contingency situations.

“This program will pay long-term dividends to SSG. It is a calculated investment in the future of the group,” Duenas said. “We are postured to succeed in the future and to respond to our continuously changing technology.”