Civil Air Patrol was honored to host a team of Project Mercury innovation facilitators at the 2023 Winter Command Council. The team conducted an innovation workshop, led by Dr. Ethan Eagle, lead Project Mercury innovation workshop coach, as part of Project Mercury's collaboration between the U.S. Air Force and the Innovatrium. Members of the Command Council spent their time analyzing problem statements collected from grassroots members during an earlier walking brainstorm activity. The workshop provided an opportunity for a full-circle innovation exercise, where those member brainstorming inputs were synthesized and presented to the most senior leadership for analysis and action.





Lt. Col. David Dlugiewicz, the Ohio Wing vice commander and a member of the JanEX Innovation Team, expressed excitement about the opportunity to bring Project Mercury facilitators to work with CAP leaders. "This abbreviated workshop accomplished two exciting goals," he said. "The Project Mercury facilitators introduced tools for innovative thinking that can be reused at the local level. It also gave a voice to the average members' insights on the CAP experience and demonstrated leadership's commitment to addressing them."

Maj. Marybeth Slocumb of the Minnesota Wing, a grassroots CAP member who participated in the walking brainstorm event and is currently participating in Project Mercury Cohort 9, expressed her excitement about the elevation of the brainstorming inputs to command level action. "I've had a truly productive experience working with Project Mercury as a participant in their certification course, and love that our commanders were introduced to the utility of creative conflict to drive innovation and find creative solutions," she said.

The innovation work will continue with commanders participating in follow-on activities designed to find solutions and act. For more information on innovation at Civil Air Patrol, contact the JanEX Innovation Team at innovation@capnhq.gov. You can also get more information on Project Mercury at Home - Project Mercury.