

EXEMPLARY INDIVIDUAL PROJECT/PROGRAM – K-12

Andie, the Thunderbird, Mail Service - Alaska

NAMES OF PARTNERS

Eielson Air Force Base | Fairbanks North Star Borough School District

Anderson Elementary School

Military-connected students have challenges and opportunities that revolve around transitions, deployments, etc. Anderson Elementary School's staff has created a positive school environment for military-connected students. Andie, the Thunderbird, Mail Service is a school-level project that has the military student at heart!

Anderson Elementary has many projects for military-connected children: lunch bunches, welcome to school positive picketing, etc. The Andie's Mail Service project benefits all students, especially the student whose parent is deployed. It shows a high level of commitment among the school staff for all children. With added school spirit, Andie, the school mascot, delivers personal letters to students from their deployed parent – it's priceless! The student is asked to come with Andie and the school counselor to a private area. While the letter is being read to or by the student, whichever the student prefers, Andie hugs, holds, and/or fist bumps to show his support.

The project is in line with the Anderson Elementary School's Guidelines for Success: SOAR - Safe, On Task, Awesome Attitude, and Respectful. With the deployed parent letters, the student feels safe and the parent usually reminds the student to do well in school. Students have an awesome attitude because it feels good to hear from their parents and respectfully write a return letter to the deployed parent.

Congratulations!

OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL PROJECT/PROGRAM – K-12

Cougar Cub Recycling Program - Texas

NAMES OF PARTNERS

Joint Base San Antonio | Fort Sam Houston Independent School District

Fort Sam Houston Elementary School | Brooke Army Medical Center

Lincoln Military Housing | Parkwood Housing | JROTC Cole High School

JBSA-Fort Sam School Liaison Office

In August 2019, Fort Sam Houston Elementary School decided to start a recycling program for our students that would educate both our families and community about the importance of recycling. Initially, we researched ways to introduce and sustain an effective recycling program. We found and embraced the established PepsiCo Recycling program.

We have used their challenge format to build a program that both educates and instills habits that lead to recycling for all of our 782 students and their families. A part of this challenge, we reached out to establish partnerships within our community. Fort Sam Elementary School has partnered with Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), Lincoln Military Housing (LMH), the Cole High School JROTC department, Parkwood Housing area, and the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston School Liaison Office to promote recycling on our campus and in our community.

Through these partnerships, we have established relationships through our community that have proved to be beneficial to all. Our efforts over a mere six months, generated 1.2 million pounds of recyclables that will not go into the landfill. Beyond this, our students and their families attended and supported activities at the LMH Housing Office and at BMAC. Our students have partnered with the JROTC and the SLO for ceremonies, classes, career fairs, and community events. While our cause began as a simple effort to guide students toward better recycling habits, it evolved into team building and relationship strengthening throughout our district and our community.

Congratulations!

EXEMPLARY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP – K-12

DoDEA & Suffolk Archives **“I Have Three Homes-Life as an American Military Child in Suffolk” - England**

NAMES OF PARTNERS

DoDEA West Lakenheath Complex Schools | Suffolk County Council Archives

Royal Air Force Lakenheath | Performance & Pen

To embrace and celebrate our differences, a partnership was formed between DoDEA Lakenheath complex schools and Suffolk County Council Archives. The goal of the partnership was to give voice to our military-connected third culture kids in order to celebrate them, their thoughts, and their present life experiences. The partnership directly benefited hundreds of DoDEA students from Kindergarten through Grade 12 and strengthened the community between teachers and local resources by building bridges through storytelling.

This inaugural project developed into a traveling exhibition entitled, “I have three homes – Life as an American military child in Suffolk” which showcases military-connected student work. The exhibition has been hosted by both the RAF Lakenheath Hospital and Army and Air Force Exchange, allowing our students to share their voices with thousands of community members. Before this exhibition is permanently archived, it will travel to all DoDEA Lakenheath complex schools, tour the local community near RAF Lakenheath, and be part of the opening exhibition, entitled the “Friendly Invasion” at the Suffolk County Council Archives new building in Ipswich, The Hold, where the British local public will be welcomed to meet our military-connected students living in the United Kingdom (UK). In addition, the Archives developed a virtual display which connects with multiple audiences. The benefit of this partnership surpassed what all the participants initially thought possible. It shows great evidence of sustainability and depth in future endeavors, as well as string possibilities for replication in communities in the US and at military bases worldwide.

Congratulations!

RECOGNIZED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP – K-12

Innovating Academic Excellence through Partnership - Florida

NAMES OF PARTNERS

Eglin Air Force Base

Okaloosa County School District

Eglin AFB School Liaison Office

Established in 2017, Team Eglin and Okaloosa County School District’s “Innovating Academic Excellence Through Partnership” program impacted 32, 000 throughout over 55 schools. The goal of the partnership was simple – maximize innovation at every possible level to produce academic outcomes that are outstanding in every way.

In October 2018, Hurricane Michael devastated our local region, disrupting the lives of Tyndall Air Force Base family members. A Disaster Task Force was formed and facilitates the healing and restoration assistance to over 2,500 military families for a two-year period. The partnership also proved vital in assisting families with transition, school enrollment, registration, records management, and school supply distribution.

When COVID-19 hit, they were able to transition 4,500 students to online education within two weeks and prepared a question and answer flyer for those families undergoing a move (PCS) and caught in the middle of a transition.

Congratulations!

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP – K-12

Maxwell-River Region Partnership for Educational Excellence - Alabama

NAMES OF PARTNERS

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base | Autauga County Schools | Elmore County Public Schools
Montgomery Public Schools | Pike Roads Schools | Department of Defense Education Activity
Montgomery Chamber of Commerce | Alabama Military Stability Foundation
MGMWERX | Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission

The goal of the Maxwell-River Region Partnership for Educational Excellence is two-fold. First, to identify and implement near-term ways to provide military-affiliated families with more high-quality public education options for their children. Second, to serve as a catalyst and facilitator for sustainable public education approaches that will benefit the entire River Region. From the onset, we realized these objectives could only be achieved in partnership with the community. Representatives from across our installation have come together with local schools. Non-profit organizations, community leaders, and other stakeholders to work collaboratively for the past 18 months.

The Maxwell-River Region Partnership for Educational Excellence focuses on the 3,000-plus children of active duty parents. It also helps thousands more children whose parents serve in the US Air Force Reserve and Alabama Air National Guard. Further, our events have attracted attendees from dozens of school districts surrounding the state's other installations. This was made possible due to the support of local universities, non-profits, and elected officials. We have also benefitted from the assistance of national organizations and advice of peers at comparable installations.

Initial outcomes include out-of-district enrollment policies that provide military families with additional high quality options; more flexible athletic eligibility rules; greater awareness of/compliance with the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children; and easier access to the region's best public schools. We are proud of our accomplishments thus far, committed to this approach for the long run, and confident that the best is yet to come!

Congratulations!