

2020 National CAP ACE Collaborative Point of Light Program:

THRIVE, CAP and the AFA

Ms Joy Millay, THRIVE

Col Brian Schmuck, CAP

Col (ret) Mark Brugh, AFA

Mt Vernon, IN

What do three unique organizations share that allows kids to SOAR? The CAP ACE program! **THRIVE**, a tuition-free after-school program for K-8th grade youth joined hands with the River City Cadet Squadron in the IN Wing of the CAP. Rounding out the three-bladed prop is the IN P-47 Memorial AFA Chapter 141. Read on to find out WHY this is a special high-flying award program this year and how it is impacting the students.

Lt Col Brian Schmuck (CAP), the GLR Asst DCS/Emergency Services; IN Wing Chief of Staff for Missions; and Asst AEO for the River City Cadet Squadron (GLR-IN-220) began visiting Mt. Vernon area schools and teaching aviation lessons in 2018. This volunteer effort turned into a formal commitment in the fall of 2019 to volunteer as an ACE instructor at the community's THRIVE after-school program for the entire school year. Lt Col Schmuck did not come alone.

With him, he brought Capt Michael Schultheis, River City Commander, and River City cadets: his daughter, C/CMSgt Rylee Schmuck, and C/Amn Ava Kincade.

THRIVE Ex Director, Joy Millay, eagerly accepted the alliance with the CAP, and she joined as a CAP AE member, as did her staff, Ms Jessica Volz and Ms Eily Toon. To get the staff revved up about a new aviation program, the staff was able to take their Teacher Orientation Program (TOP) flight with Maj Ronald Sedam (GLR-IN-181).



Ms Jessica and Ms Eily take CAP flight

A special treat for THRIVE Ex Director Millay, was a former THRIVE student- now a THRIVE volunteer- who joined the River City Composite Squadron, C/Amn Ethan Schneider. Ms Millay thought Ethan would enjoy the CAP cadet program, so she began taking him to meetings. He loved it and joined!. He is a perfect example of the ACE program introducing young people to the CAP cadet program!

Ms Millay said of Cadet Schneider, "You are a good example of THRIVE's core values: trust, honesty, respect, integrity, vision, and excellence. We are proud of you and look forward to all your continued accomplishments."



Ms Joy Millay, THRIVE Ex Dir, with
CAP C/Amn Ethan Schneider,
former THRIVE student.

When Lt Col Schmuck found that the AFA was a sponsor of the CAP ACE program, he reached out to Col (Ret) Mark Brugh, of the IN P-47 Memorial AFA Chapter 141, and asked for support, which came in the form of ACE shirts being purchased by the AFA chapter and a loyal volunteer in Col Brugh.



Thanks to the P-47 Memorial AFA Chapter (Col Brugh, far right), all THRIVE students received ACE program shirts.

[Read full nomination for this awesome program HERE!](#)

Most of the students were in grades 1 and 4, so those are the grade levels on which the ACE instruction focused, but all students were involved. Besides the ACE lessons, the CAP and AFA volunteers brought in CAP STEM Kits, such as the Flight Simulator and BeeBots early coding kits, and gave students instruction on flight and coding.



Col Brugh and Capt Schultheis work the flight simulator, while C/Amn Kincade worked the BeeBots.



C/MSgt Schmuck set up an obstacle course to demonstrate how the DDR fatal vision goggles simulate being impaired with drugs or alcohol.

C/MSgt Schmuck was awarded the CAP Achievement Award for her work in the community, including her work with THRIVE. (Presented by Maj Ron Reid, Group XII Commander.)



Lt Col Schmuck said of his reason in selecting THRIVE for his volunteer service, "The mission, goals, and values of THRIVE are similar to CAP, so this was a natural fit. I enjoy being able to teach and have an impact on the lives and outlooks of young people. To be able to mentor someone young, there's no better way to spend your time, in my opinion."

THRIVE is a tuition-free school program for elementary and junior high students in Mount Vernon, IN, focused on helping children reach their highest potential and be their truest selves. THRIVE is hosted every weekday at First United Methodist Church at Wesley Hall, and, it seems to be making a difference with the students, and the parents are enjoying seeing their children so excited about an after-school program!



This stellar collaborative program embodies everything the CAP ACE program intends to do: connect schools, CAP, and the AFA and introduce CAP's cadet program to youth via exciting aerospace-related STEM programs!
THANKS to the "THRIVE Dream Team" that made this program a National Collaborative Point of Light!

THRIVE ACE Video

[Balloon Hovercraft Video](#)

[How An Airplane Moves Video](#)

[Lt Col Schmuck's YouTube Channel](#)





