



National Collaboration Point of Light Program Award Presented to Triad Team



The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) 2020 *Aerospace Connections in Education (ACE) National Collaboration Point of Light Program* award was bestowed on a triad team: CAP's IN Wing River City Cadet Squadron; the AFA's P-47 Memorial Chapter 141; and the Thrive after-school program in Mt. Vernon, Ind. This new award was created to recognize the exciting collaboration between these three entities of which Thrive students were the benefactors. The K-6 ACE program is designed to introduce students to aerospace-themed lessons focusing on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) topics, character education, and physical fitness.

Thrive, a non-profit organization, serves students from West Elementary School and Mt. Vernon Junior High School (K-8th grade). Thrive Executive Director Joy Millay says that Thrive “seeks to foster curiosity and discovery in our students, because that is how we create life-long learners. The ability to create curiosity is what made our partnership with CAP and AFA so incredibly valuable to our students.”

Strong collaboration included visits from both CAP and the AFA to help teach ACE lessons to the students. “Few moments in life bring teachers more happiness than watching children get excited about science,” said Jessica Volz, a Thrive teacher and ACE member. “The free ACE program allows me to share my passion for STEM activities with our Thrive kids.”

CAP's Lt. Col. Brian Schmuck initiated the partnership program with Thrive, and enlisted the assistance of squadron adults and cadets, as well as Mark Brugh, from the P-47 Memorial AFA Chapter 141. AFA's Chapter 141 sponsored the distinctive ACE shirts for the students and provided engaging flight training using the free flight simulator STEM Kit provided by CAP.

Nationwide, the CAP ACE program reached new records during the 2019-2020 school year, with more than 500 schools, over 76,000 students, and nearly 1,300 teachers from every state and two overseas DoD schools involved. The AFA, as an official supporter of the ACE program, provided national ACE award grants and ACE program certificates for all students.

CAP, as a Total Force partner mobilizing the nation's civilian aviation resources, plays a leading role in aerospace/STEM education, and its members serve as mentors to over 25,000 young people participating in CAP's Cadet Program.

For more information about getting involved in CAP's free aerospace/STEM programs, contact afa@capnhq.gov.



CAP IN Wing Chief of Staff for Missions Lt. Col. Brian Schmuck, with his daughter C/CMSgt. Rylee Schmuck (River City Cadet Squadron), the 2020 Outstanding Cadet NCO of the Year, and Joy Millay, Executive Director of Thrive's After-school Program.



AFA's IN P-47 Memorial Chapter 141 member, Col Mark Brugh, USAF (ret), and CAP's River City Composite Squadron commander, Capt Michael Schultheis, work on a flight simulator with Thrive students wearing ACE shirts sponsored by the P-47 Memorial Chapter.