



DEOMI

DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE



NEWS RELEASE



The Master's Workshop, located at 2525 Lipscomb Street in Melbourne, recently visited DEOMI and other units located on Patrick Air Force Base. Children attending the Workshop range in ages from five years to 15 years and gain much in character development from community involvement in the program. (Photo by Michael Marks, DEOMI).

By Christopher Calkins
Chief, DEOMI Public Affairs

MESSAGE RECEIVED: PUTTING WORDS INTO ACTION!

June 22, 2017

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – Ms. Janet Marks (above top left in photo) had one wish when her Melbourne-based “Master’s Workshop” group brought about 40 children to spend the day with the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) and other 45th Space Wing units recently.

Provide positive messaging. Please!

Since July, 2004, we have managed to maintain a secure and safe haven for at-risk kids,” said Marks, “and we believe our kids can gain much in character development from community involvement in the program.”

During the tour, the students heard from a group of joint-service faculty and watched mission videos from DEOMI, the 45th Space Wing and the 920th Rescue Wing, all before lunch.

In the afternoon, the children were treated with visits to the 45th Space Wing Chaplain’s Office, the 45th Space Wing Fire Department and the Wing’s K-9 Demonstration Team, led by Tech. Sgt. Dwight Veon, (above).



Air Force Maj. Donna Smith, (below) who along with Army Sgt. Thierry Kengne-Ouafo, played key roles in the planning and execution of the tour, immediately connected with the children in the opening session held in the DEOMI Auditorium.



“It was incredibly awesome, and awe-inspiring, to have fellow DEOMI staff share a little of their history and thoughts about being in the military.

Air Force Maj. Cathleen Snow, Army Sgt. 1st Class Quincy Arnold, Navy Chief Petty Officer Daryl Richardson, Jr., Air Force Master Sgt. Martha Johnson, Air

Force Senior Master Sgt. Julianna Fleming, Navy Lt. Erica Harris, and Marine Capt. Joseph Forbes each had a story to tell and a message to share,” she said.

“The children were able to see and learn from example that it doesn’t matter where you come from, what you look like, and no matter your age, you can succeed in accomplishing your dreams,” she said.

“What The Master’s Workshop and Sgt. Kengne-Ouafo are doing with these children is nothing short of extraordinary. We have been blessed by the presence of these children and we can only hope that we have been a blessing to them,” said Smith.

Kengne-Ouafo was born and raised in Cameroon and has served in the Army for six years after earning a double major at Penn State University, and graduated while still learning English, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management and Marketing.

“When I first joined DEOMI in October, 2016, I read their mission statement which is to “Deliver and Develop Human Relations Education, Training, Research, and Innovative Solutions to Enhance Total Force Readiness,” he said.



“So I took this opportunity to represent what DEOMI is teaching here at the Institute and put that philosophy to work in the community where it’s most needed.

“I was introduced to Miss Janet in March of this year. Since then I have been going there every Tuesday from 5 – 7 p.m., and other times when possible,” he said.

“My only goal there is to work with these children, doing what I can to develop them educationally -- and maybe most importantly - - leading them toward positive dreams,” he said with conviction.

Janet Marks, above with Kengne-Ouafo, feels blessed the Army Sergeant found her Master’s Workshop and was thrilled with the way she and her kids were received.

“What a great trip. What a great experience for our kids,” she said.

“To be honest, I just can’t put into words how grateful we are for this opportunity and just how perfect the messaging was at each and every stop we visited,” she said.

“There were times when I thought they were reading my mind because many of the same messages were repeated time and time again to an audience that really needs personal, authentic and positive feedback ...”

“You can be anything you want to be. You don’t have to stay in one place; it’s a great big beautiful world out there. Do well in school. Don’t let anyone dictate your future. Stay away from drugs. You are in charge of YOUR life. The only person who can stop you – is you.”



“I have just two words for everyone who played a part in this great event for our kids,” she said.

“MESSAGE RECEIVED!”