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Message from the Director

Welcome to the AFCP Program Fall Newsletter

Fall is always a busy time, and the Air Force Community Partnership (AFCP) Program has many exciting developments to share.

First and foremost, the Department of Defense and the Department of the Air Force (DAF) are thrilled to welcome new leaders who emphasize the importance of collaboration. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III has laid out his top three priorities. One of those priorities is to “Succeed through Teamwork.” As Secretary Austin states, “Protecting the United States of America requires teamwork at every level: state, local, tribal, and federal.” Meanwhile, the DAF is fortunate to have a new civilian leader, Secretary Frank Kendall, stepping into his role. Secretary Kendall believes that “America has an enormous strategic asset in our... partnerships.” Both leaders have emphasized the importance of utilizing collaboration as a force multiplier as the DAF seeks to build and maintain our competitive edge, and the AFCP Program stands ready to support them and their priorities.

Like many of you, we are glad that we are able to start traveling again. AFCP Program staff were at the Association of Defense Communities’ (ADC) Reconnect event this summer, where it was truly wonderful to see friends and colleagues again. Our staff will likewise be at the International City/County Management Association annual conference, which will be 3-6 October in Portland, Oregon; and ADC’s Installation Innovation Forum, which will be held 1-3 November in San Antonio, Texas. You can read more about upcoming events in this newsletter.

As in-person meetings pick back up, now may also be a good time to consider doing a refresh meeting between installation and community stakeholders. The most enduring successes are built on holistic, long-term working relationships – and many of us were forced to put those relationships on hold over the past year and a half, or focus solely on combating the virus. If you would like to take this opportunity to reinvigorate or refocus your relationships, the AFCP Program staff would be thrilled to facilitate a meeting with your installation and community.

In the meantime, we have three partnership spotlights to highlight in this edition: Luke AFB is helping young people with disabilities gain meaningful skills and employment; the United States Air Force Academy’s first intergovernmental support agreement; and Joint Base Charleston’s developments as they continuously work side-by-side with their local stakeholders. We are also excited to share insights from Col. (Ret.) Karen Magnus, Mission Sustainment and Community Partnership Officer at Westover ARB, in our Ask the Expert section.

As always, please let us know how the AFCP team can support you and your collaborators!

Respectfully,

TERAN L. JUDD
Director, Community Partnership & Mission Sustainment

Partnership Spotlights

Luke AFB Participates in Project SEARCH

A heart-warming collaboration is taking place in Arizona, where Luke AFB and the Western Maricopa Education Center (West-MEC) have teamed up to provide valuable professional development opportunities to young people with disabilities.

By participating in West-MEC's Project SEARCH, the installation places 18 to 26-year-old high school graduates with significant disabilities in internships at various locations on base. The program seeks to give the skills needed for more independent living to people who may not otherwise have the chance to work. During their nine-month placement, interns expand various soft skills such as communication, socialization, and teamwork, while working alongside Luke AFB's Airmen to increase their technical knowledge. As a result, interns increase both their confidence and hands-on work experience.

Project SEARCH graduates have found employment both on and off base, benefitting not just Luke AFB, but Glendale and the greater Phoenix area as well. Furthermore, Airmen and interns both get the satisfaction of forming rewarding relationships with each other. Eight interns are participating in Project SEARCH at Luke AFB for the 2021-22 program year, and the installation looks forward to continuing this important partnership. For questions about Project SEARCH or how to participate, contact Ms. Christine Siddens at christine.siddens@us.af.mil or Ms. Tiffany MacKenzie at tiffany.mackenzie@west-mec.org.



Project SEARCH interns, instructors and U.S. Air Force Maj. Tomika Smith, left, 56th Force Support Squadron operations officer and interim commander, pose for a photo during a Project SEARCH graduation. (Photo courtesy of Luke AFB)

US Air Force Academy Establishes Their First IGSA

The United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) in Colorado Springs, Colorado has made the exciting decision to pursue its first intergovernmental support agreement (IGSA). The agreement will address ongoing and possible future damage to the installation's creeks, wildlife habitat, and infrastructure by making drainage repairs to the Monument Creek Watershed.



An aerial view of the USAFA grounds. (Photo courtesy of USAFA)

USAFA has identified over \$25 million in needed repairs to creeks that have been damaged largely as a result of storm water runoff from new development east of the installation. Extensive channel erosion has degraded the habitat of the federally-protected Preble's meadow jumping mouse, damaged infrastructure, degraded water quality, and affected the natural aesthetics of USAFA.

Monument Creek and its tributaries run directly through the installation and into the City of Colorado Springs. Recognizing that the stability and condition of the watershed has immediate downstream benefits to the entire region, USAFA reached out to the City of Colorado Springs to collaborate on a solution. The City of Colorado Springs is not only the neighboring municipality, but also

has expertise on storm water management and design. In October 2020, USAFA signed a memorandum of understanding with the City, formalizing their agreement to work together to repair the damage on base.

The two parties formed a working group and decided to repair the first damaged section - the Elkhorn Creek tributary of Monument Creek, which runs north of the airfield. Using an IGSA for this project will reduce costs and contracting time, and enhance mission sustainment. USAFA received headquarters concurrence on the IGSA in July 2021. The design for the repair is completed, with work scheduled to begin in November 2021 and projected completion by winter 2022.

USAFA and the City of Colorado Springs continue to collaborate. The City was recently awarded a Department of Defense Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation Military Installation Sustainability Grant to fund a Monument Creek Opportunities Study. The study will identify and prioritize the requirements and costs for the remaining repairs and habitat improvements needed to the creeks on the installation. Based on the results of the study, USAFA and the City will then plan to develop a blanket IGSA to design, manage, and fund the remaining repairs. The blanket agreement would offer cost-savings and flexibility to work on repairs as funding is available.

USAFA and the City of Colorado Springs have done an exemplary job in developing this course of action, and the AFCP Program looks forward to supporting them as they continue to excel.

Joint Base Charleston's Holistic Partnership Program

Joint Base Charleston (JB CHS) enjoys a strong relationship with its neighbors, built over many years and multiple successful collaborations. Among those successes is an arrangement in which JB CHS utilizes an off-base office at the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) Building. This allows JB CHS to hold meetings with local government officials without the challenges of base access. It also puts JB CHS in close proximity to local decision makers. This kind of close working relationship facilitates strong communication on multiple levels. For example, BCDCOG invited JB CHS to the Lowcountry Rapid Transit meeting, South Carolina's first high-capacity mass transit project. During the meeting, JB CHS staff learned about the infrastructure's impact on the Airmen and Sailors that live in the community.

Also held recently was the Lowcountry Defense Partnership meeting, hosted by the Metro Chamber of Commerce. Held once a quarter, this meeting brings community leaders across the Tri-county region together with the JB CHS command leaders to establish and execute mutually-beneficial partnerships. This was a particularly exciting meeting, because it was the first meeting to be held in-person since before the pandemic. It was also the first time the US Coast Guard was present, adding to the synergies between federal entities in the area.

JB CHS has recently welcomed a new community partnership manager, Mr. Luis Marquez, who leads the installation's partnership efforts and serves as JB CHS's AFCP base point of contact (base POC). Mr. Marquez says that connecting JB CHS subject matter experts with local government subject matter experts has been the key to JB CHS' success – and a continuing challenge to developing good partnerships. His supervisor, JB CHS business manager, Mr. Carter Hayes, has extensive experience at JB CHS and understands the importance of network continuity by maintaining and developing new partnerships. Furthermore, Mr. Marquez says he has been fortunate to have outstanding turnover training from his predecessor, Ms. Angela Nartowicz. Mr. Marquez also reports that the City of Charleston's hospitable culture, complete with supportive community leaders, has exceeded his expectations as he has stepped into his new role. And South Carolinians, he says, are welcoming, polite, and military-friendly. "Charleston is an amazing place to be and I enjoy it more and more every day."

The AFCP Program is proud of all that JB CHS and their partners have accomplished, and grateful for outstanding base POCs like Mr. Marquez.

Ask the Expert

Col. (Ret.) Karen Magnus, Westover ARB

Welcome to our "Ask the Expert" section, which features individuals from the DAF and the community who are leaders in the area of partnerships. This edition shines a spotlight on Col. (Ret.) Karen Magnus. Ms. Magnus retired from the USAF in April 2020, and is the former commander of the 439th Mission Support Group, Westover ARB, Massachusetts. She now serves as Westover ARB's Mission Sustainment and Community Partnership Officer.

The AFCP Program have deeply valued working with Ms. Magnus. She has done a stellar job representing Westover ARB. Her background and experience make her a particularly skilled advocate, and her efforts have promoted an understanding of partnerships not only locally, but throughout the entire Air Force Reserve enterprise. Her ability to link mission sustainment to community partnership discussions has been especially helpful.

Read on to learn from Ms. Magnus' unique partnership perspective!

Why did your organization develop an interest in partnerships?

Many years ago, Westover ARB began a long-term partnership with Westover Airport as part of Westover Metropolitan Development Corporation. That relationship has resulted in countless benefits to the military installation over the years, to include a significant reduction in encroachment of the installation perimeter. That successful relationship, combined with the increased emphasis on community partnership activities, and even more recent success with the development and implementation of the IGSA program, has helped us to realize there are many ways we can partner with others. With every year that passes and resources become increasingly constrained, any time we can find partnerships that allow those resources to be shared and more effectively utilized is a win.

What do you hope to gain from establishing a partnership program?

We are still in the infancy of our community partnership program – basically our first year. With an eye to finding opportunities to work with our communities, we are in the process of re-designing how we engage with them. We will be inviting them to begin a regular communication process via partnership meetings with the base to discuss any and all topics of mutual

interest. Two specific partnerships are being explored right now: 1. A partnership with our utility provider, where we would like to develop utility resiliency, including having the capability to island if ever needed; and, 2. A collaboration with the local hospital network, where we would like to develop realistic hands-on medical training opportunities for our medical Reservists.

What has been the most important factor for you as you work to establish a partnership program?

The most important thing has been building durability and resiliency for success and long-term sustainment of the installation's mission and the surrounding communities economic viability in ways that complement rather than compete.

Upcoming Events

International City/County Management Association Annual Conference, 3-6 Oct 2021; Portland, Oregon



Thousands of local government management professionals gather at the annual International City/County Management Association (ICMA) annual conference to share and get new ideas, strategies, resources, and solutions for managing local governments in today's complex environment. This year, the conference will take place 3-6 October in Portland, Oregon. Mr. Judd will participate in a roundtable event focused on how partnerships can facilitate resilience. Learn

more at ICMA's conference event page, <https://conference.icma.org/>

Association of Defense Communities Installation Innovation Forum, 1-3 Nov 2021; San Antonio, Texas

Coming up on 1-3 November in San Antonio, Texas is ADC's Installation Innovation Forum (IIF). IIF is a professional development forum designed to bring together installation leadership with their community counterparts and top industry experts to share ideas and learn about tangible ways to advance innovation at their base and community. Mr. Judd will participate in a session designed specifically for a DAF audience. A number of DAF installations will also participate in breakout sessions throughout the conference. For questions about participating, please feel free to reach out to AFCP Program staff at SAF.IEIM.Workflow@us.af.mil. Details will be announced as they become available on the event page, <https://installationinnovation.org/>.

