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February 13, 2012

Ball

## BALL

Naval Air Facility (NAF) Atsugi hosted its inaugural Father Daughter Ball on base at the Officer's Club, Feb. 10.

Fathers and daughters were encouraged to attend and participate in the night's festivities intending to highlight the importance of the relationship between a father and daughter.

The event was brought together by the McLaurin family after having experienced the benefits in their family after Cmdr. Matt McLaurin and his daughter Corynn attended a couple of balls back in the states.

"We really wanted to bring the idea of the father daughter relationship to the base," said Corynn, "Especially with the dads being gone a lot in the military to make sure that relationship stays strong."

"I know in my experiences," said Corynn. "It has been really important to have my dad and have a good relationship with him."

The Ball received a positive and overwhelming response.

“Our hearts are hurting a little,” said Courtney McLaurin, Matt’s wife, “Because, well yes, it is a success but then again how much of a success is it when we have to turn people away from something like this.”

Courtney said that they regretted having to turn away over 60 people because of space capacity and funding in which they could only accommodate around 100 people.

“Atsugi Enlisted Spouse Association (AESA) has really been wonderful,” said Matt. “AESA has stepped up said that for next year and beyond they would like to help out and be the sponsor for us.”

Only because of AESA and their timing and excitement for the ball that the McLaurin family was able to move forward with the event, said Courtney.

The night started off with fathers and daughters having their picture taken together.

Some girls didn’t have a father to attend with them and were brought by a mentor or in the case of one nine year girl, her thirteen year old brother escorted her.

Deiondre Simmons, 13 year old brother to 9 year old Jordyn, said it felt great being at the Ball because people came up to him and gave him compliments about how most brothers wouldn’t do something like this for their sisters.

Matt and his daughter Corynn each gave a speech giving their points of view of the importance of maintaining a strong relationship.

Matt touched on how while deployed he tries to make time to call Corynn and help her with her homework over the phone. While home, they take the time to have father daughter dates where they just spend time talking about the books they are reading together and other topics.

Matt then led the fathers in reading a covenant to their daughters.

The covenant stated that the fathers promise before God to be their daughters' authority and protection in the areas of faith, purity, integrity and character.

The covenant continued with, fathers will be true in their own lives as men, husbands and fathers. Fathers will be men of faith, purity, integrity and character as they lead, guide and pray over their daughters and families and will be the spiritual heads of their homes.

The daughters then signed their own name as witnesses to their fathers' covenant.

The fathers presented their daughters with a white rose and toasted to the strengthening their relationships.

Dancing finished off the night.

"My favorite part of the night was spending time with my daughter and dancing," said Michael DeFamio, as his four year old daughter, Rebecca, echoed him about dancing with her father.

“Our plan is to continue this on and definitely do this next year,”  
said Matt.