Opportunities abound with Teen, Youth Club membership

Story and photo by Jeffrey C. Doepp, CFAY Public Affairs

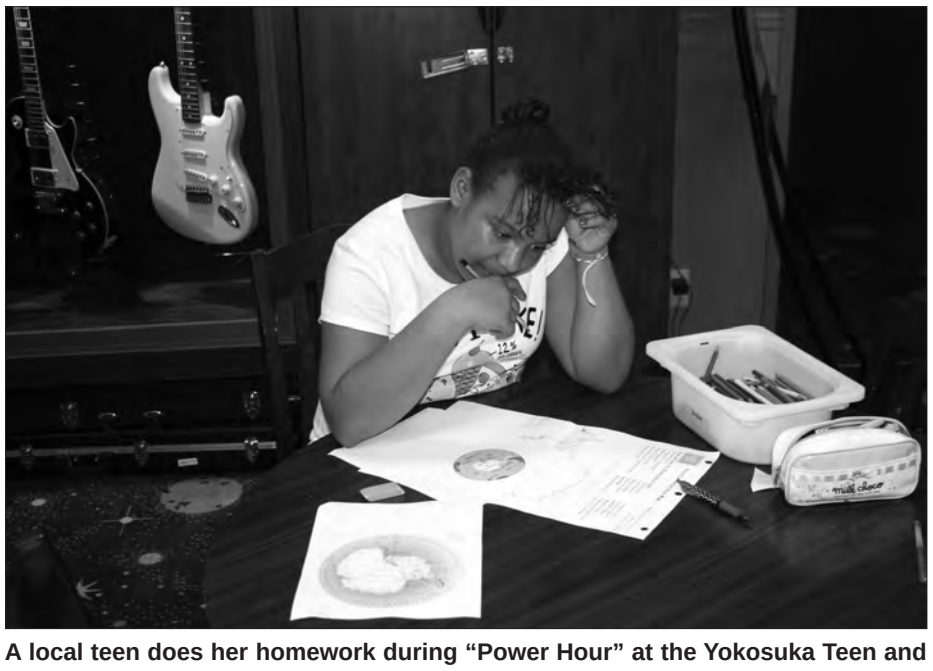
Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Teen and Youth Club offers local teens and youth fun and educating activities after school.

According to MWR Teen and Youth Club Coordinator Lee Leach, the Teen and Youth Club is an open recreation program that serves youth from fourth through 12th grade.

This program is part of all naval facilities around the world that have families living on the installations. It utilizes the resources from its own MWR Child and Youth Program staff, the Boys and Girls Club of America and the 4-H Club organization.

"When you put all those things together, what you have is a very well rounded, well thought out program that is going to serve youth after school, during the summer, on weekends and holidays," Leach said. "By joining the Teen and Youth Club, participates can enjoy the many benefits of membership such as increased engagement in school and learning, increase in positive character traits and civic engagement, improved healthy habits and decision making skills."

For parents considering having their child become a member of the Teen and Youth Club, Leach placed emphasis on the quality of care and attention children receive.



A local teen does her homework during "Power Hour" at the Yokosuka Teen and Youth Club after school Sept. 9. The Yokosuka Teen and Youth Club is located between Nile C. Kinnick High School and the George I. Purdy Fitness Center.

"One of the most important things about the Teen and Youth Club is that it is a safe and positive place for kid to be at," Leach said. "Parents can have peace of mind knowing that there is a helpful and caring staff here all the time."

According to international researcher findings published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, teenagers who join youth groups and clubs lead happier lives and are less likely to drink or smoke.

Although teens may be exposed to more peer pressure, the finding shows teens were also more socially able and likely to be physically active. And, the benefits increased the more groups that they joined.

The study also pointed out that teens were also a fifth more likely to eat fruits and vegetables regularly.

With an MWR Teen and Youth Club on Yokosuka base and its Negishi and Ikego housing detachments, opportunities abound for teens and youth, according to Leach.

"We have a Teen and Youth Club here in Yokosuka, Ikego and Negishi, and membership is free. All you have to do is fill out a program registration packet and you're in," Leach said. "There is a new Teen and Youth Club being built now in Ikego and we hope to be opening it up soon."

Some of the opportunities of a Teen and Youth Club membership include participation in various educational activities such as "Power Hour" and sporting activities such as surfing, snorkeling, skate camp and bowling.

"There are five core program areas that we focus on: the arts, health and life skills, character and leadership development, education and career preparation, and recreation and fitness," Leach said. "There is also a sixth category known as digital, which is basically technology intertwined within each of the other five areas."

According to Leach, MWR offers this program because it's a necessary and critical program to the Yokosuka community.

"We are called Morale, Welfare and Recreation and morale is right in front for a reason," Leach said. "That is where we come into play with a dedicated facility with a staff dedicated to working with your child or teen. When we talk about an OCONUS (outside the continental United States) location like CFAY, it matters more than anywhere else."

Current members are required to have their membership documentation updated every year. Updated registration packets are due by Sept. 30.

Those who do not update their registration paperwork by that date will lose their membership and will not be allowed to participate in Teen and Youth Club activities or visit any Teen and Youth Club facilities until they re-register.

For more information about MWR Teen and Youth Clubs or to become a member, call 241-2098, visit one of the Teen and Youth Club facilities, the Yokosuka Youth Sports Office, or go to http://mwryokosuka.wordpress.com.

New ONR policy equalizes opportunities for contractors

From Office of Naval Research Corporate Communications

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Office of Naval Research (ONR) published new guidance Sept. 15, aimed at preventing conflicts of interest among companies competing for business with the science and technology organization.

"This new set of guidelines levels the playing field for the contracting community when it comes to doing business with ONR," said Mark Bennington, ONR executive director for acquisition management. "We've adopted the very best practices across all the services to properly align with Department of Defense rules regarding organizational conflict of interest."

"The new policy is effective immediately and is expected to ensure fair competition for companies selected to perform research and development (R&D) as well as systems engineering and technical assistance or other support services," Bennington said.

The guideline covers three broad organizational conflicts of interest categories: impaired objectivity, biased ground rules and unequal access to non-public information.

Each category creates considerable work for both ONR and the contracting community to identify and resolve conflicts. The labor burdens generated by conflicts may include ensuring that companies provide impartial advice and do not use their influence to set ground rules for other government contracts.

The organizational conflict of interest rules are also intended to protect against contractors taking advantage of non-public information to gain an unfair competitive advantage for a potential contract.

The increase of corporate mergers and acquisitions in recent years has resulted in more frequent and potential risks of exposure to organizational conflict of interest situations. A company performing contracted R&D for ONR may, for example, acquire another firm that already provides in-house support services, potentially creating an organizational conflict of interest.

Organizational conflicts of interest more commonly arise when an R&D company wishes to expand by providing in-house contractor support services. The potential for organizational conflicts can also emerge when an existing support service contractor wishes to compete for scientific research funding.

In an effort to reduce the likelihood for conflicts to occur, ONR has educated its program officers to increase their awareness of potential organizational conflict of interest activity. The new policy also encourages companies to identify their status as either an R&D performer or as a support services contractor prior to submitting proposals.

ONR provides the science and technology necessary to maintain the Navy and Marine Corps' technological advantage. Through its affiliates, ONR is a leader in science and technology with engagement in 50 states, 70 countries, 1,035 institutions of higher learning and 914 industry partners. ONR employs approximately 1,400 people, comprising uniformed, civilian and contract personnel, with additional employees at the Naval Research Lab in Washington, D.C.

To review the policy, visit http://www.onr.navy.mil/About-ONR/compliance-protections/Organizational-Conflicts-Interest.aspx.