Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

SEAHAWK 海鷹 UMITAKA

Serving Yokosuka Base for more than 50 years

Vol. LXI, No. 11 www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka March 19, 2010

Navy College promotes higher learning at Education Fair

Story and photo by Dan Bowen, CFAY Public Affairs

The Navy College Office hosted its Spring Education Fair on board Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) in the red brick area in front of the commissary March 11.

Nile C. Kinnick High School Sophomores Akari Yarell and Coco Still, speak with representatives from the University of Maryland during the Navy College Office Spring Education Fair March 11.

Counselors from Navy College, Navy College Program for Afloat College Education (NCPACE), local schools and many other programs brought their resources, expertise and enthusiasm for education, enabling residents to take a break from shopping and explore the numerous educational opportunities offered on the base.

"We have 21 schools out here, three of which are the local schools, University of Maryland, Central Texas College and the University of Phoenix," said Navy College Education Services Specialist Jon Way. "We're looking to get Sailors and family members interested in taking college courses and continuing their education."

The benefits of attaining a college degree are vast and not limited to raising one's earning potential. In fact, according to www.college.gov, a college degree not only enables individuals to turn their passions and interests into lucrative careers; but also, increases their chances of employment by 50 percent while significantly improving the likelihood of their children, and even their children's children, attaining a college education as well.

According to Way, his main focus at the fair was communicating to Sailors and family members how important it is to get started on their college education before they embark on a new career, whether in the military or not.

"Don't wait until you're getting ready to retire or getting out [of the Navy] to get a degree because…it takes time," said Way. "Wherever you're at in your career, start now and start planning ahead, so by the time that you do get ready to transition, you have a degree or certification in hand to help you with your next step in life."

For members of the community who were deployed or otherwise not able to attend the education fair, there are a number of ways for them to get help in furthering their education. Sailors can speak to their command education service officers, go to www.navycollege.navy.mil or visit the Navy College Office.

The Navy College Office is located on the third floor of the James D. Kelly Fleet Recreation Center and is open Monday through Friday.

MCPON Rick West underscores importance of NMCRS fund drive

Story and photo by MC1(EXW) Jennifer A. Villalovos, MCPON Public Affairs

The annual Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) fund drive kicked off March 1, throughout the Navy, and the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) would like to stress how important this long-standing, nonprofit, charitable organization is in helping Sailors, Marines and their families during a time of need.

"The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is such a wonderful organization that is truly there for our Sailors and Marines," said MCPON (SS/SW) Rick West. "I want to emphasize the importance of contributing to this year's fund drive. This is truly about Sailors and Marines helping their own."

In 2009, the NMCRS received $10.1 million in donations from active duty service members, and $2.5 million from retired Sailors and Marines. This past year, NMCRS assisted 91,418 Sailors, Marines and their families with financial support, which is up 17 percent from previous years. Additionally, NMCRS also provided more than $47.4 million in interest free loans and grants.

The NMCRS offers the Quick Assist Loan (QAL) program, which is an alternative to high interest loans (payday lenders) that charge an average of 273 annual percentage rate. It is designed for Sailors and Marines who need help through payday. The QAL program accounted for nearly one-fourth of all the financial assistance provided last year.

NMCRS has more than 3,600 trained volunteers in 250 offices around the world, including registered visiting nurses. These nurses are available at no cost to the service member or their families to make home, clinic or hospital visits. They are currently following more than 750 combat-wounded service members and their families and made 9,338 contacts over the past year.

"It's important that we continue to support and communicate about programs and support services such as the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society to all of our shipmates and their families. I challenge all NMCRS fund drive coordinators to have 100 percent contact with their Sailors and Marines to ensure a successful fund drive. You never know when you might be the one to walk through the door to obtain their assistance," said West.

Other resources the NMCRS offers are: the Budget for Baby program, an informative class that also gives assembled layettes that include terry sleepers, handmade blankets, sheets and more; thrift shops, offering used clothing, uniforms and household items at a low cost; food lockers which provide families with essential items for nutritionally balanced meals when providing funds is not practical; and educational programs offering scholarship and no-interest loans.

For more information on additional services and to find out how to donate, visit the NMCRS Web site at www.nmcrs.org.

"I want to emphasize the importance of contributing to this year's fund drive. This is truly about Sailors and Marines helping their own." – MCPON(SS/SW) Rick West

INSIDE

Blue Ridge arrives in Korea for Key Resolve/Foal Eagle

***USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) arrived in Korea March 5 in support of Commander U.S. 7th Fleet and staff, who are participating in exercise Key Resolve/Foal Eagle.**

Pg. 4

CFAY public works specialist deploys, assists in Haiti recovery

CFAY Public Works Department specialist Damon Lilly deployed to Haiti in support of the Joint Task Force established to begin rebuilding efforts.

Pg. 9