

Presidential Volunteer Service award recognizes selflessness

By Dan Bowen, CFAY Public Affairs

Military service members, civilians and their families know a thing or two about volunteering; they understand what it means to serve the greater good. They understand the beauty and value of service. They understand what Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American philosopher, poet and essayist, meant when he said, "It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."

It was with this understanding in mind that former President George Bush created the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation in 2003. The council intended to find ways to recognize the valuable contributions volunteers are making everyday. According to www.presidentialserviceawards.gov, "The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation created the President's Volunteer Service Award program as a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service."

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) thanked its volunteers in the C-2 auditorium by awarding 41 youth sports coaches with the Presidential Volunteer Services Award April 2.

CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed was the guest speaker at the ceremony and spoke about just how valuable each volunteer's service is to the community. "We could not operate Yokosuka without you; it would cost more than \$3 million a year," said Weed. "So the mere fact that you're here today, that you've been able to contribute, is important."

According to Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Youth Sports Manager Isaiah Mincks, with more than 500 children participating in each sport offered by MWR, it would be impossible to coach all of them without the support of the community.

"We run a pretty comprehensive youth program with sports offerings throughout the year. Organizationally, we have paid staff to organize the teams and do administrative work; however, the coaches, the volunteers, are the ones... teaching and honing skills," said Mincks. "Without the volunteers to coach those kids, we just couldn't do it."

The awards were divided into three categories: bronze, silver and gold. Bronze Award



Recipients of the Presidential Volunteer Service award line up for a photo with CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed following the awards presentation in the CFAY headquarters C-2 auditorium April 2. The award program serves as a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service.

Photo by John Sullivan

recipients performed between 100 and 249 hours of service, Silver Award recipients performed between 250 and 499 hours, and Gold Awards were presented for volunteering more than 500 hours.

For more information on volunteering as a Youth Sports coach, contact MWR Youth Sports at 241-2952.

Financial workshop teaches youth how to save, prepare for future

By Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs

Yokosuka Middle School (YMS), Alpha Kapa Alpha Sorority Inc. and Yokosuka Community Bank teamed up, March 30, to hold a financial workshop that merged elements of the Military Saves Campaign and Month of the Military Child.

"Children from 6th-grade to 8th-grade were given the opportunity to come and learn about personal finance and saving, and the importance of saving," said YMS Student Council President Kaitlin Donegan.

During the workshop, YMS students were given two lessons to increase their knowledge of managing money.

"Today's lessons were 'Random Spending,' and 'Planned Spending,'" said Community Bank Banking Center Service Representative Verna Bannis.

According to Bannis, in "Random Spending" students rolled dice, or spun a "spinner," to determine how much, simulated, money they were budgeted. Where as with planned spending they had a, simulated, income from which they had to determine how much they wanted to save and how much they wanted to spend.

"If you're just randomly spending, you're not paying attention to meeting your goals," said Alpha Kapa Alpha Sorority Inc. Psi Beta Omega Chapter Vice President Leslye Green.

Alpha Kapa Alpha Sorority Inc. is an organization that aims to empower communities through service initiatives and progressive programs, according to its Web site.

The activities were able to spark and hold the interests of the students in attendance, which helped to instill knowledge of financial management.

"I saw a lot of people who were really into it," said YMS Student Council Treasurer Katherine Mason. "So, I think it helped a lot.

Learning the basics of managing money at an early age is important, to help ensure that youth become more financially savvy.

"I think it's very vital," said Bannis. "With the economy [being] what it is, I think it's very vital that each child should know how to save money and save it wisely."

Green agreed, because not only is the economy in bad shape, there are some companies that prey on people who are not experienced with managing money.

"Credit card companies are like vultures and they attack that young, immature mind that is not as moneywise, and were trying to instill that into them at an early age, so they can make wise choices with their money," Green said.

During the workshop two students won \$50 savings bonds, and at the end of the workshop, students were given piggy banks that contained \$5 to help encourage them to save.

Edwina Smith assists a student during the Financial Workshop held at Yokosuka Middle School March 30. The workshop merged elements of the Military Saves Campaign and Month of the Military Child to teach youth how to save.

Photo by Alex Council



Far East association attends Shunko Gakuen graduation ceremony

By Ronald Inman,
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Far East Public Affairs

The latest chapter in a story that spans 65 years was recently written when members of Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Far East Inter-Cultural Association (ICA) and representatives from the Naval Pacific Meteorology and Oceanography Center (NPMOC) visited Shunko Gakuen Children's Home to support the school's graduation ceremony March 12.

The NAVFAC Far East ICA was specifically established to support Shunko Gakuen, where more than 80 children live together in the facility located in Koyabe, Yokosuka City.

The longstanding supportive relationship with the school was born in 1945 when Seabees supported orphans who disembarked at Seaside Park (the current site of Japan Railways Yokosuka station) after their repatriation from China and Southeast Asian countries, and were the school's first students.

"The significance of today's graduation ceremony cannot be overstated," said NAVFAC Far East Commanding Officer Capt. Robert McLean during his

congratulatory speech to graduates. "Today marks the first important steps of your professional life in successfully completing the requirements for graduation from junior high and high school. I congratulate each of you on a job well done."

In Japan, the education system is comprised of six years of primary school, three years of junior high school, three years of high school and two or four years of college. Schools typically hold graduation ceremonies during the month of March. This year, 11 Shunko Gakuen students graduated from junior high school and high school.

"Four of them are leaving the facility for employment, and, or continuing education," said Daisuke Muraida, NAVFAC Far East ICA vice president. "Seven students will remain at the facility to continue their education at public high school. Most of them have spent more than 10 years at Shunko Gakuen. We wish all of them continued success in the future."

During the ceremony, McLean presented small gifts to each graduate, and 20,000 yen scholarships were also presented to those who are continuing their education. ICA brought cakes decorated with cherry blossoms and congratulatory messages to share with the students and staff.