Local, international CAP cadets visit 4th FW

By Tech. Sgt. Tammie Moore, 4th Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published July 29, 2010



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SEYMOUR JOHNSON AIR FORCE BASE, N.C. – Staff Sgt. Thomas Cunningham explains the capabilities of the GBU-12 bomb unit to members of the Civil Air Patrol International Air Cadet Exchange program during a base tour here July 29, 2010. The cadets from Australia and Canada participated in the tour with the Goldsboro CAP Composite Squadron Unit NC 126. Sergeant Cunningham is a 4th Maintenance Group load crew team chief. (U.S. Air Force photo/Robin Demark)

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SEYMOUR JOHNSON AIR FORCE BASE, N.C. -- Members of the Civil Air Patrol Goldsboro Composite Squadron Unit NC 126 along with CAP guests from Australia and Canada participated in a base tour here as part of an annual International Air Cadet Exchange program July 29.

The program helps to foster international understanding and goodwill among young people who have an interest in aviation, said 2nd Lt. George Wolfe, Unit NC 126 commander. "Adults and cadets from all around the world go to other countries to see the lifestyle and programs of other cadet organizations."

This was the first time many of the foreign CAP cadets have been on a U.S. Air Force installation. During the tour they were able to get an up close look at the KC-135 Stratotanker and F-15E Strike Eagle.

Canadian Air Cadet Heather Ho joined the CAP as part of a senior course to meet other people from other countries and explore world cultures.

"Visiting the control tower was my favorite part of the tour, it was a very meaningful experience," she said. "It showed me how everything works together and showed a lot of team work."

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Australian Air Force Cadet Thomas Olden joined the CAP to gain a worldly experience of military aviation.

It was great going in the tower to see how everything works together and how Seymour is an effective air force base, he said. His favorite part was seeing the different military aircraft at SJ and comparing aircraft specifications between U.S. and Australian aircraft.

The CAP was originally formed in 1941 as an avenue for civilian pilots to assist with the war effort. These civilians served as couriers, ran border patrol missions, provided antisubmarine patrols and even sank two U-boats. After WWII ended so did CAP member's role in direct combat activities. The group's new mission became providing emergency services, aerospace education and the management of a cadet program.

"The Civil Air Patrol is a great opportunity to give meaning and direction to a group of young people with daily training and real life experiences," Mr. Wolfe said.

The program is open to youth age 12 and older, who are at least in the sixth grade.

"There are numerous activities for cadets," Mr. Wolfe said. "We have a rocket program where they actually build rockets and launch them in competition with others cadets from around the state. All cadets get orientation flights in a real aircraft. The syllabus provides for the cadet to actually get practical hands on piloting experience and learn about the principles of flight."

Youth also have a chance to participate in various summer camps usually held on military installation with training supplemented by servicemembers.

Cadets who apply themselves can learn to fly an aircraft or glider at one of the summer camps, Mr. Wolfe said. There is also a summer camp each year where cadets learn various skills in a military style setting.

In addition, cadets have an opportunity to learn emergency services skills and practice them in exercise events.

They actually camp out and perform simulated rescue and recovery, living in the outdoors with minimal equipment and survival gear, Mr. Wolfe said. "There are no pop-up tents and the family SUV to fall back on at the end of the day."

Adult CAP members assist with numerous aerospace activities such as taking cadets on field trips plus visits to schools and various organizations to share the CAP story and recruit new members.

The emergency services program is always open for help with exercises held in various location around the state, Mr. Wolfe said. This is the type of activity that is for the outdoors person. There are also professional development courses and training open to adults.

The Goldsboro Composite Squadron meets from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the Goldsboro Airport.

For more information about the CAP Goldsboro Composite Squadron, visit www.civilairportrol.com or e-mail George@carolinaoverheadoors.com.

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