

CAPital School Program



Photos by Sr. Mbr. Kamme Bond, New Mexico Wing

CAP, National Guard Help Students Succeed at Sierra

1st Lt. David Braddi of the New Mexico Wing's Las Cruces Composite Squadron, cadets Chiane Bond and Alex Antholzner of the Sierra Middle School Cadet Squadron and Capt. Brian Morrison of the Rio Rancho Falcon Composite Squadron maneuver a glider on the airstrip.

By Kimberly Wright Harper

The slogan of Sierra Middle School in Las Cruces, N.M., is "Sierra means success." Unfortunately, despite her enrollment in Sierra's sought-after magnet program, Chiane Bond wasn't finding much success. She was

facing expulsion from the program because of her poor grades. Then she discovered the school's CAP program.

"The Sierra Middle School Program helped me with my grades," said Bond. "When I started in the program, I was a straight-F student. But today I have become an almost

straight-A student in all of my classes. I was amazed at how much the program helped me."

Currently, more than 80 students are participating in the program, held during school hours as an elective class supported by the volunteer efforts of CAP members Capt. Deborah Martin and Sr. Mbr. Kamme

Bond. Two New Mexico Wing National Guard noncommissioned officers work with the students on physical fitness, leadership and military drill, and a CAP volunteer teaches aerospace education five days a week.

“They came to us a number of years ago, and we decided to work together, with excellent results,” said Lt. Col. Claude Luisada, group commander of the New Mexico Wing’s school program, which is tied to the New Mexico National Guard’s Counterdrug Task Force Program titled Reconnecting Youth.

The organizations first joined forces at Van Buren Middle School in Albuquerque, N.M., a school classified as at-risk because of the number of students coming from economically disadvantaged and single-parent families, and the prevalence of drugs in the neighborhood.

At-risk students are statistically more likely to have academic and behavioral problems, according to the U.S. Department of Education. But, thanks to the CAP cadet program’s leadership and citizenship training, students learn to rise above obstacles in their lives.

Based on the success at Van Buren, the program was brought to Sierra two years ago, where, according to officials with the Las Cruces Public Schools, 57.5 percent of the student population is classified as economically disadvantaged.

The impact of the CAP program on students is hard to miss. Kamme Bond said she noticed a remarkable change in her daughter. “Chiane

expressed interest, so I sent her there because they did free after-school tutoring. Immediately, she started showing improvement in her classes due to the fact Capt. (Deborah) Martin, the unit commander, and the sergeants would make sure she had her homework turned in and done correctly, and they tutored her, making sure she understood the work. Chiane also started making friends in CAP, something she had not been good at before. Chiane fell completely in love with CAP. I did also.”

“It has a very profound effect on students,” said Luisada. “Even within a couple of months, their behavior changes.” The students stay off of drugs and out of gangs, show more respect to themselves and others and develop a better work ethic, with a subsequent improvement in grades, as the program requires at least a C average.

“My favorite part of the pro-

gram is being able to learn how to fly the gliders out at the Las Cruces airport,” said Chiane. “I have been doing that for a couple of months now.”

“I find it extremely gratifying that these students are being inspired by the CAP cadet program to flourish as students, citizens and human beings,” said New Mexico Wing Commander Col. Frank A. Buethe. “Their maturity reflects positively upon themselves and the CAP cadet program in the eyes of their community, school and families.”

New Mexico has a proud school program heritage. The first CAP-sponsored middle school program was formed in 1991 at Wilson Middle School, just outside the gates of Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque. According to Maj. Warren Johnson, who launched the program, this initiative was expanded to touch the lives of



Sierra Middle School in Las Cruces, N.M., boasts a CAP cadet squadron of more than 80 students.

Photos by Sr. Mbr. Kamme Bond, New Mexico Wing

“more than 200 students with two in-class programs and three after-school programs” thanks to the support of a plethora of agencies, including Kirtland AFB, the New Mexico Air National Guard, several veterans organizations, the Albuquerque Police Department and local high school JROTC programs.

Johnson’s lengthy, unpaid service in this program was recognized with C-SPAN’s Teacher of the Year award and a commendation in the U.S. Congressional Record. In addition, the students distinguished themselves by earning more than 25 \$10,000 scholarships to the New Mexico Military Institute and by

sweeping the National History Day Contest. Many of the cadets joined local CAP units, four earned glider wings and some also served as pages in the New Mexico Legislature.

Sierra Middle School counselor Kristin Knight said the CAP program helps students focus on what’s important.

“There is a natural pecking order among this age range,” she said. “When a student is not popular, it is generally due to something out of their control such as height, weight, socioeconomic status or perceived attractiveness. In CAP, a student’s rank is established by knowledge, skill, hard work and determination

— all things within a student’s control. How rewarding to know one can be high in the pecking order for things that are important and meaningful, such as leadership and goals.”

Thanks to the CAP program and the influence of CAP volunteers working in these schools, students like Chiane have a source of inspiration in their lives. “I now want to go into the Air Force, because I like Civil Air Patrol so much,” she said.

“CAP has changed my daughter’s life and my life drastically!” said Kamme Bond. “I couldn’t ask for anything better to happen to her.” ▲

Homeschooled Cadets

Families Across America Turn to CAP for Leadership Skills

By Lenore Vickrey

Cadet 2nd Lt. Tina Davis was homeschooled all her life, and while she valued the experience and her parents' decision to teach her at home, she still "wanted to belong to something, to have a mission, to have friends with the same goals."

Living on an island in rural Maine, she didn't have the usual opportunities for interaction teenagers in public or private schools take for granted. Plus, "I



Cadet
2nd Lt.
Tina Davis

had this crazy idea I wanted to fly," she recalled. When she heard about Civil Air Patrol, she found what she was looking for. Sharing a ride with her cousin and fellow homeschooler Cadet



Cadet Capt. Dustin Corey, 18, of the Alabama Wing's 117th ANG Composite Squadron, said being homeschooled provided him the opportunity to earn his solo wings and a flight scholarship. He recently earned a private pilot's license.

2nd Lt. Elise Pusey, she joined the Downeast Patrol Composite Squadron in Trenton, Maine.

Davis went from being a shy, reserved teenager to a self-confident young adult who now teaches fellow CAP members with confidence. She

is deputy cadet commander of her squadron and the recipient of numerous honors and recognitions, including the 2006 Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer Award.

"CAP has benefited me in countless ways," she said. "Academically, it has given me self-discipline, study skills and perseverance. Also, I learned how to communicate and work with people my own age. I'm part of a team, which is really what I wanted in the first place."

Davis is one of an estimated 1.7 million homeschooled students in the U.S., a figure that is growing at a rate of 7 to 15 percent every year, according to the National Home Education Research Institute. That's about one in 33 school-aged children. Parents who choose to teach their children at home do

"The relationship between CAP and homeschoolers is a win-win situation for everyone. Homeschoolers tend to bring an independent focus to their pursuits, which benefits CAP. But it's a reciprocal relationship. CAP gives us as much as we're willing to put in. . . . The Civil Air Patrol can use our independence, but tempered with an emphasis on a team effort."

Cadet 2nd Lt. Tina Davis, Maine Wing

so for different reasons, but many are dissatisfied with public or private schools where their children may be taught values counter to their own.

Homeschooled families across the nation have found a welcoming environment in CAP. Often, parents join along with their children. Tom and Brenda Reed of Maryland joined the Carroll Composite Squadron after two of their three children got involved. Interestingly, though, they were an Air Force family and their initial introduction to CAP came from a newspaper article.

CONFIDENCE, CHARACTER, LEADERSHIP

“CAP was a perfect fit for our homeschooling program,” said Brenda. Their son, Jake, and daughter, Jennifer, were involved in recreation league sports, but needed an outlet for leadership development and growth. CAP gave them that and more.

Jake recently earned his Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Award and was the squadron’s cadet commander. He organized and commands the Maryland Wing drill team, and has held many offices in the wing’s Cadet Advisory Council, in addition to being on the Tri-Wing Encampment staff.

“CAP has developed him into a well-rounded person,” said his mother. “He has confidence in what



Members of the Kawaguchi family participate in a Veteran’s Day Parade in Washington in 2003. Cadet Col. Paul Kawaguchi, left front, holds the squadron banner; his sister, Cadet 2nd Lt. Maria Kawaguchi, is behind him with a rifle. Also pictured, far left, is Cadet Maj. Neil Kawaguchi. The Kawaguchis are all members of the Washington Wing’s Tri-Cities Composite Squadron.



The Unrue brothers, Sam, Jon and Matt, recall a milestone moment. The five-year-old caricature Jon is holding was drawn after he took his first powered glider flight with CAP. Jon is a cadet major and Sam and Matt are sergeants in the Kansas Wing’s Emporia Composite Squadron.

he is doing and easily talks to people, whether formally or informally.”

Jennifer, now a college sophomore, is a cadet captain. “CAP

helped her develop her interest in computers by allowing her to be the cadet Web site officer for the Tri-Wing Encampment for three years in a row,” said Brenda. “I credit CAP with her remarkable improvement in public speaking, confidence and the ability to deal with tough situations.”

Their father, Tom, has served as cadet deputy commander and Brenda, formerly the squadron public affairs officer, is currently wing administrator.

“CAP has given us an outlet that we can work in together as a family,” said Brenda. “We are achieving many individual goals, and are spending a great deal of time together in the process.”

In Nebraska, the family of 1st Lt. Doug Tweedt has had a similar CAP experience. Their oldest son, Eric, was the first to join CAP, and his father joined soon afterwards. Six months later, Eric’s sister, Lauren,

joined. She has earned the Gen. Billy Mitchell and Amelia Earhart awards, and she wants to earn her Spaatz Award before leaving for college. Younger brother Ryan is now a member, too. He has been on an orientation flight in a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter with the Nebraska National Guard.

“One activity our whole family has been involved in is the International Air Cadet Exchange program,” said Tweedt. “We have been a host family for visiting cadets for four out of the last five years.”

1st Lt. Deborah and Capt. Brian Kawaguchi have homeschooled their five children in Washington, with the heart of their teaching being the development of godly character. When their children reached their teens, they required them to participate in an outside activity.

“Though our initial involvement in CAP was to aid our son Paul’s future Air Force career, three of his four siblings joined, too,” said Deborah. “We chose to take part in CAP jointly, to support one another and maintain family unity. We wanted our children to learn how to interact with people outside our family, to build the skills needed



Cadet Maj. Lauren Tweedt, third from left, front, and Cadet 2nd Lt. Eric Tweedt, third from left, back, join other cadets participating in a 2006 International Air Cadet Exchange orientation flight in which two F-117 stealth fighters were refueled in the air. The Australian cadets are in yellow, Canadian cadets are in red and a Japanese cadet is in white.

when transitioning out into the world and to serve their community and country.”

The service aspect also appealed to Cadet 2nd Lt. Elise Pusey of Brooklin, Maine. “Serving my country has always been very important to me,” she said. “One of the primary things that attracted me to CAP was the emphasis on service, and the dedication to excellence which I witnessed in my fellow cadets.”



Cadet 2nd Lt. Elise Pusey

Some CAP squadrons are almost entirely made up of homeschooled students. In Birmingham, Ala., Cadet Capt. Dustin Corey’s squadron consists of about 70 percent homeschoolers, he said, “which gives us the ability to go out and do color guard and other functions outside of normal school hours.”

FLEXIBLE HOURS AID INVOLVEMENT

The flexibility of homeschooling hours is a boon for CAP involvement.

“We can spend more time on CAP activities that are important to the boys,” said Shelley Unrue, whose three sons, Jon, Sam and Matt, are active in the Kansas Wing’s Emporia Composite Squadron.

“For instance, the Emporia squadron recently won the state color guard competition. Jon coached and Sam and Matt were rifle guards. The Tuesday before the competition we took a holiday (for color guard study and practice) that lasted until the next Tuesday,” she said. “That’s a luxury not available to their public and private school counterparts in CAP.”

Cadet 2nd Lt. April Bartlett of

the Oklahoma Wing's Will Rogers Composite Squadron said home-schooling taught her independence and allowed her "the time to participate and represent CAP in activities public school cadets were not able to attend due to their schedule. Homeschooling also let me customize my classes to focus on my goals."

Her CAP experiences taught her the leadership skills she needed to get promoted at her part-time job. She said one of her most rewarding experiences was CAP's Cadet Officer School, where she learned to "think outside the box."

"The atmosphere of COS was



Cadet 2nd Lt. April Bartlett, right, and her parents, 1st Lt. Nancy Bartlett and 2nd Lt. Tom Bartlett, all with the Oklahoma Wing's Will Rogers Composite Squadron, participated as a family in the 2005 Tinker Air Force Base Aerospace America Air Show.



Homeschooled twin brothers Cadet Lt. Cols. Trent Schill, left, and Noah Schill of the Vermont Wing's Burlington Composite Squadron display the Gen. Billy Mitchell awards they received in 2005.

one of being treated as an adult and being held accountable for our decisions and our actions. We were not looked down upon or babied like many people our age often are," she said.

Students are often able to incorporate CAP into their academic curriculum. Cadet Lt. Col. Trent Schill and his twin brother, cadet Lt. Col. Noah Schill, used their CAP resources to help complete an English assignment. Their task was to write a manual, and they put together a 40-page squadron handbook.

"In it we gathered together

resources and information we thought would be beneficial to new cadets," said Noah. "Since we had only been in the program about six months, we were able to put in everything we found to be valuable."

Cadet Capt. Dustin Corey of Birmingham was able to count his CAP experience as aerospace science credit for high school. Now a student at a junior college, he has earned a flight scholarship, which he is using at the Birmingham Flight Center, where he recently earned his private pilot's license.

Because homeschooling extends beyond academics, CAP is a natural part of homeschooled students' education. "In that respect, CAP has been tremendous in helping me build a strong foundation of character and integrity," said Pusey. "CAP has given me the confidence and skills required to speak publicly, to teach and to lead." ▲



Maryland Wing Cadet Col. Jake Reed receives the Mary Feik Achievement Award from Col. Mary Feik.

“Civil Air Patrol is important to our family because it underscores many of our values — integrity, self-discipline, leadership and respect. We’ve homeschooled all of our children, and CAP has been an excellent bridge between their home training and their adult lives.”

1st Lt. Deborah Kawaguchi, homeschooling mother of five, Washington Wing

The Civil Air Patrol's School Enrichment Program is "building a better tomorrow one student at a time."

This motto describes a new CAP program thriving in 13 wings as elective classes or after-school programs in 67 schools. Last year, the enrichment program touched the lives of 2,047 children from sixth through 12th grades. And, at the end of fiscal year 2006, 20 new programs were initiated, reaching 534 more cadets. These programs are complemented by a pilot program for grades K-5 launched in Philadelphia, and a curriculum for nationwide implementation is being developed for this age group.

"The earlier we can get our young people to set goals, a mission and a direction in life, the better it's going to be for them," said Susan Mallett, CAP's SEP manager.

The program is made up of four parts — aerospace education, physical fitness, character education and leadership training.

"In order to maintain America's air and space superiority, it is important we prepare our young people to bolster the aging workforce of the air and space industry by introducing them to aerospace topics," said Mallett. "The program's character education curriculum helps students overcome negative influences in their lives, exposing them to positive role models, and leadership training encourages them to uncover their hidden potential.

"The physical fitness component of the enrichment program," she added, "is necessary to develop a healthy



Susan Mallett, CAP's School Enrichment Program manager, and Russ Billings, a CAP aerospace educator from Michigan, discuss new educational programs during the recent CAP-hosted National Conference on Aviation and Space Education held in Washington, D.C.

physical and mental lifestyle for our future society.

"Principals are seeing improvement in attendance, discipline and respect for self and others. Thus, all-around school achievement improves," said Mallett of the program

"We're seeing more and more of our young people in the enrichment program who have been lost and didn't know where to go, weren't doing well in school and weren't conforming to what they needed to do," said Mallett. "When they became a part of the SEP, they found it was possible to become a leader, and have become leaders,

and it has turned their lives around."

CAP is working to secure grants and other forms of assistance for program needs, such as instructors, guest speakers and free flights for students. Mallett said she also plans to promote CAP's top-notch MARS (Making Aerospace Real for Students) curriculum and to increase the number of CAP Aerospace Education Members "so we'll have more advocates for this program."

Long-range, CAP envisions an SEP program in all 50 states, reaching students in grades kindergarten through college in all educational settings.

"We have a long way to go and a short time to get there, but we have a lot of enthusiasm building throughout our volunteer corps," said Mallett.

"The miracles happening out there are awesome," she added. "What people are accomplishing on a shoestring budget and with very little extra time is just phenomenal, so I know with the proper funding and attention given to the program, there's nowhere to go but up." ▲

School Enrichment Program Lights the Way for Youth

By Kimberly Wright Harper



Elementary school students have embraced lessons in character and leadership as part of a pilot CAP program at Creighton School in Philadelphia.

In the inner city of Philadelphia, where gangs are commonplace and student discipline in school is a major challenge, one school is beating the odds with the help of Civil Air Patrol.

By Lenore Vickrey

Creighton School has partnered with the Pennsylvania Wing to pilot a kindergarten through fifth grade pre-cadet school program. The brainchild of principal Capt. Katherine McKeller-Carter, the program started three years ago with 15 cadets. It now includes students in grades 6, 7 and 8, and this year was extended to the younger students in K-5.

Pilot CAP Program

Pennsylvania Wing's Inner City Partnership Blazes Trail for Future



Capt. Reginald McDonald, the Pennsylvania Wing's School Enrichment Program coordinator, explains the significance of his uniform decorations to Imeera Barton. McDonald said CAP gives students the courage to dream.

The program has become so popular that parents are moving into the area so their children can attend Creighton and participate, said Capt. Katherine Smith, deputy squadron commander and a teacher in the program.

"We teach character, leadership and responsibility. The students love the program. We hold them to very high standards to do what they've not been challenged to do in the past," she said.

A visitor to the CAP classrooms would easily notice there is something different about these Creighton students. When the principal is about to enter a classroom, the children in the younger grades are brought to attention by their student leader with a sharp "Captain on deck!" The pre-cadets stand up straight and tall in their CAP attire as they salute the principal (their "captain").

In class, K-5 students learn the four tenets of the CAP program: character, leadership, aerospace and fitness, which are fully integrated into the curriculum. They wear either a CAP pre-cadet crew shirt or a physical training sweat suit. While they do not progress in rank, as do regular cadets, they are nonetheless prepared to enter sixth grade with a strong background knowledge of CAP

customs because they are mentored by their CAP counterparts at the middle school level.

Older students serve as mentors

With the younger students, aerospace education starts early. One group might be working on building a model of the Hubble satellite, while another works on a model airport or paper airplanes. "I'll ask them to draw me an airplane, to use their imagination," said Capt. Reginald McDonald, Pennsylvania's middle school initiative coordinator and adviser to the Pennsylvania Wing's CAP School Program. "I tell them, 'Dare to dream, because if you stop dreaming, progress stops.'"

In grades 6, 7 and 8, the older students start their day with a morning inspection, and then lead the school and the local community in the raising of the flag and Pledge of Allegiance. They also take responsibility for teaching and working closely with the pre-cadets, teaching them cadences, and keeping them in line as they go to the school lunchroom and playground.

"Each of the younger pre-cadets has an Air Force or Army cadence they sing," said McDonald. "I taught it to the older cadets, and they taught the kids. I've told them what they do in uniform is going to affect what that little child sees and does."

The discipline and responsibility built into the program is working. CAP students are less likely to get into fights, they are more respectful of each other and more responsible at home.

"When they see their friends getting ready to get into a fight or conflict, they will stop them," he said, "and they are more willing to tell us what's going on. There is a general air about them; they take constructive criticism, and they are able to be corrected." It wasn't that way just three years ago.

When the CAP program started, principal McKeller-Carter remembers the first students who participated took ribbing from their classmates. "The other kids would tease those in CAP about their uniforms," she said. Not any more. The next year, more cadets were



Seventh-grader Gloria Santiago has gained the strength through CAP to rise above peer pressure.

brought into the program until it was taken into sixth, seventh and eighth grades. Then last year, the K-5 students joined in to make it a CAP Academy.

“Now everyone wants to be a part of it,” she said. “It’s that elitism they feel. The teachers have all joined

CAP as senior members and even parents have joined.

“The students have to keep their grades up and their attendance up. We keep telling them they are the only pilot program like this in the nation. Failure is not an option,” she said.

The “orderly, organized climate” of Creighton has caught the eye of higher-ups in the school system. Wendy Shapiro, regional superintendent for the North Region of Philadelphia schools, said the program’s success has convinced officials to have CAP programs in at least two other schools. “And we are looking to move it into one of our high schools,” she said.

The educators are “as excited as the cadets and junior cadets,” said Pennsylvania Wing Commander Col. Al Applebaum. “The K-5 pilot program will allow CAP to reach more young people and engage them in positive, patriotic programs that will provide enrichment. Character development, leadership training and aviation: This combination cannot be beaten.”

Parents, students sing program’s praises

Parents like the changes they are seeing in their children who are involved. Brenda Tejire’s children, ages 7 and 11, “are more responsible, they’re energetic about projects, and it keeps them very interested,” she said. “They get home, their homework gets



Students gather in an orderly manner in front of the school to participate in a morning program. CAP has instilled in the children a sense of self-control that has improved Creighton’s educational environment.

done. I can’t even explain it.”

Nubia Santiago’s daughter, Gloria, is a seventh grader who was shy and insecure before becoming part of the CAP program. Now she’s developing leadership skills that have helped her in many ways.

“I’ve learned discipline. I’ve flown in a plane. I’ve had a lot of opportunities you wouldn’t normally have if you weren’t in CAP,” said Gloria. “If you were in a regular class, it would be crazy and hectic, but now everyone’s on point and it’s neat and everyone is cooperating together. Everyone knows what they’re supposed to do and they do it.”

Gloria, 12, has some older friends who are gang members, but she encourages them to leave that lifestyle. “I tell them: ‘CAP will help you in the future; with gangs you will end up in jail. A CAP scholarship will get you through college. Life will be better. Gangs may seem cooler, but you’re wasting your life.’ ”

If principal McKeller-Carter had her way, her entire school of 900 students would be involved in CAP.

“Our kids are learning things they’ve never learned before. I wish you could see their faces when they come back from their orientation flights. That’s something I could have never offered them,” she said. She’s also taken students camping at Fort Indiantown Gap, and most have never been camping before.

On days off, instead of taking a vacation, students want to do CAP activities and physical training at the nearby naval base. “You can’t pay for that kind of responsibility from a child,” she said. ▲



Creighton School’s partnership with Civil Air Patrol has changed the lives of students from kindergarten through eighth grade.