



Civil Air Patrol

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Winchester Composite Squadron
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News Release

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CAP SUPPORTS DDR AT ROCKETRY CHALLENGE

May 15, 2010- The Civil Air Patrol's Middle East Region, Virginia and Maryland Wings, and predominantly by the Winchester Composite Squadron from Winchester, Virginia, represented the Civil Air Patrol's National HQ Aerospace Education and Drug Demand Reduction Programs at this year's Team America Rocketry Challenge (TARC).

The Civil Air Patrol's Drug Demand Reduction instills an aggressive, positive, drug-free attitude in Civil Air Patrol members, Air Force families, Department of Defense civilians, and school-age children through a comprehensive program that promotes;

- Civil Air Patrol as a positive community service lifestyle.
- Encourages youth to remain in school.
- Focuses on drug abuse education, prevention and awareness.
- Provides positive activities as an alternative to drugs and gang violence.

Members from the Middle East Region HQ and the Virginia Wing and Maryland Wing HQ spoke with hundreds of people as they visited Drug Demand Reduction and Aerospace Education displays set up a short distance from the rocketry challenge launch pad. Visitors to the display were greeted by cadets and senior members with the same message, the Civil Air Patrol striving to be a leading force in America's drug demand reduction strategy.

Captain Walt Murphy, Assistant Drug Demand Reduction Coordinator for the Middle East Region and Drug Demand Reduction Administrator for the Maryland Wing said, "DDR at the Team America Rocket Challenge is a first step to teaching our youth that in order to reach your goals and dreams it requires positive steps in your life. It becomes overwhelmingly difficult to reach those goals and dreams when you let drug use push you into a negative direction."

As with last year, CAP members again met a very special guest, the Secretary of the Air Force, Michael B. Donley, who not only took the time to thank everyone for their efforts but also presented two Air Force Challenge Coins to cadets Sierra Baumhoefner and Eric Arnesen of the Winchester Composite Squadron for their efforts in promoting a drug-free life style. Besides using these coins for challenging, they are also used as rewards or awards. They are used as a tool to build morale. In the context as they are used by the modern U.S. military, the tradition probably began amongst Special Forces units during the Vietnam War. The tradition spread through the Airborne community, and by the early 1980s also into the 75th Infantry "Rangers." As officers were reassigned as their careers progressed, they carried with them the tradition of awarding a unit coin for acts that were worthy of recognition.

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Visitors to the DDR display were invited to go through an obstacle course using Fatal Vision goggles designed to impair vision as if the wearer was under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. The visual impact of watching people use these goggles and try to perform the simplest was funny to some and sobering to others. When each person removed the goggles at the end of the course they were asked if they would drive car in the condition just experienced or would they ride with someone who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The answers always came with a quick shake of the head.

Murphy continued, “The most important thing I take away from an event like this is we get to reach kids from the elementary school age range to the young adults going to college. Before they have been reached by drug abuse, they get to see, while sober, what some of their actions would be like if impaired. They get the problems with perception. Sometimes they get the nausea associated with being drugged or drunk. They get the loss of balance. The difference is this time they can take it off. They can make it stop. The reality of drug abuse is you can’t take that off like a pair of “Fatal Vision Goggles”