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Daughter of AFTAC SNCO named Youth of the Year

By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – Her megawatt smile is so genuinely infectious that one can't help but smile back when she flashes it. And when she does, it gains the attention of adults and children alike.

Most likely, it also played a contributing role into her recent selection as the 2016 Boys & Girls Club of America Youth of the Year for Patrick AFB. For the past four years, 15-year-old Anjali S. Williams has been volunteering her time at the Patrick AFB Youth Center, working closely with the children and staff who work and play there daily.



The BGCA program recognizes the extraordinary achievements of teens who embody the values of leadership, academic excellence and healthy lifestyles. It also recognizes the impact teens have on the lives of other young people.

Anjali is the daughter of Master Sgt. Shebon Goldsboro, a Cyberspace Operations flight chief for the Air Force Technical Applications Center here. Leading up to her selection, the teen spent a good deal of her time organizing various events such as beach clean-ups, youth dances and childcare programs, plus she served as a mentor to other teens against suicide. Additionally, she spent her time at a local farm grooming horses and cleaning out stalls. She assisted the base's Hispanic Heritage and Black History Month committees at their respective celebrations, by serving food and refreshing the buffet line. And after all that, she still found time to be a member of the TenTones Top Show Choir, a highly competitive choral group, as well as a member of her school's esteemed book club.

The Satellite High School freshman was in shock when she learned she had been selected as Patrick's Youth of the Year.

"Honestly, I couldn't believe it, and I just kept smiling and laughing a lot!" said Anjali. "I also excessively thanked everyone for selecting me!"

In conjunction with her selection, the 45th Space Wing Commander, Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, Brevard Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Desmond Blackburn, and Brevard County School Board Chairman Andy Ziegler met at Patrick's Shark Center to sign a memorandum of agreement between the base and the school district. The agreement is designed to address the transition of military dependent students in a way that models and exemplifies partnership, flexibility, inclusiveness and information-sharing for all schools that serve military dependent students.

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“Students (like Anjali) are why we exist,” said Blackburn. “With 73,000 of them here in Brevard County, it’s difficult to meet each one, but I’m doing my best to spend whatever time I can with them. Spending time with our babies is the highlight of my day.”

When asked if he had any words of wisdom for Patrick’s rising star, Blackburn said, “Never stop working hard to achieve your dreams. When faced with an obstacle, don’t let discouragement waylay what you believe you can accomplish. Learn from, and take responsibility for, your mistakes in life, but don’t let them define who you are.”



Anjali was asked to witness the general and the superintendent sign the agreement, making it official.

“I was really nervous to be around people in such high positions,” she said, “and it was also very exciting at the same time. I’m so happy I got to be a part of it.”

When she’s not volunteering her time at the Youth Center, Anjali enjoys playing the ukulele, singing, making art and designing outfits. She also sits on the Southeast Air Force Teen Council, where she participates in monthly teleconferences to offer feedback, ideas and programming suggestions to the council.

Throughout the journey, Anjali’s mom encouraged her daughter to pursue her dreams and never give up. “I have always told her to be true to herself and never sacrifice who she is or what she likes to fit in with others. Her inner beauty will make a believer out of anyone,” said Goldsboro.

Patrick AFB Chief of Youth Programs, Nathalie Wilson-Velthof, is one of Anjali’s biggest cheerleaders who has seen the teen in action.

“This is an incredible opportunity for Anjali,” said Wilson-Velthof. “She certainly captivated everyone here at the Youth Center with her poise and communications skills, and she definitely has a great future ahead of her. We wish her the best of luck as she competes at the higher level!”

According to the BGCA, six teens, including five regional winners and a military winner, advance to the National Youth of the Year competition for a chance at a scholarship of \$25,000, renewable up to \$100,000 for four years and goes on to represent all Boys and Girls Club youth as the National Youth of the Year.