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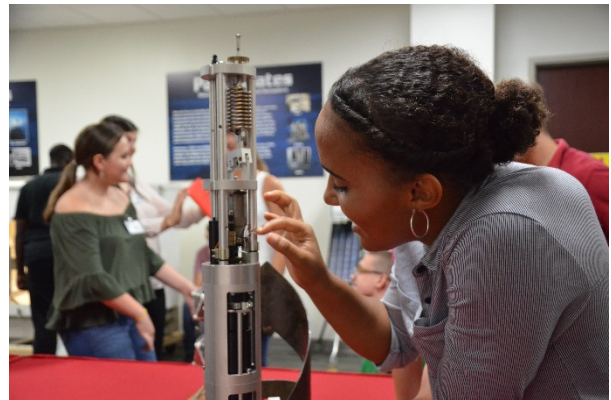
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### Melbourne High School Jr. ROTC visits to treaty monitoring center

*By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs*

**PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** – The goal of the Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps is to instill values of citizenship, service to the United States, personal responsibility and a sense of accomplishment. One of the ways it achieves that goal is when a detachment schedules a field trip to a military base.

Florida Junior ROTC Detachment FL-011 accomplished just that when a group of 127 students from Melbourne High School made a trip to Patrick AFB April 28. One of the stops on their tour was Air Force Technical Applications Center, the Department of Defense's sole organization responsible for monitoring nuclear treaties.



Escorted by retired Lt. Col. Robin Athey and retired Master Sgt. David Greene, Mel High students were greeted by the center's command chief, Chief Master Sgt. Michael Joseph, and other members of Joseph's staff. After posing for a quick group photo in front of AFTAC's historical lobby mural, the cadets received the AFTAC mission briefing delivered by Capt. Reggie Luper, a space operations officer and member of the Commander's Action Group. From there, the students were escorted to the center's Heritage Room, a showcase of AFTAC's 70 year history of long range detection, where AFTAC's legal advisor, David Charitat, gave a brief overview of AFTAC's storied legacy.

Stephanie Salonen, a 12th grader and a 4-year Jr. ROTC participant, was quite impressed with the tour. "A few years ago we came to Patrick for a summer camp program, but we didn't get to visit AFTAC," she said. "So coming here today was a brand new learning experience, and I'm realizing how cool it is to work here. I want to join the Air Force after college to become a flight nurse, so opportunities like this are really exciting for me. I'm having a great time!"

Donna Crews, Stephanie's mom, accompanied the group on the trip. "I am beyond proud of Stephanie's accomplishments and the things she's worked so hard at," she said. "Her twin sister Samantha is also here today, and the two of them have spent the last four years excelling in everything they do. While I believe their dad and I have raised them in a structured environment at home, the Jr. ROTC program has put it into perspective for them, and when they get to visit places like AFTAC, it gives the cadets the chance to see that it's all not fun and games – this is real world stuff."

She added, "Colonel Athey and Sergeant Greene are an incredible leadership team, and we can't thank them enough for making this trip happen for the kids. AFTAC is an amazing place!"

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## 2-2-2 JROTC

This is the third Jr. ROTC visit AFTAC has hosted this year, with a fourth one on the horizon in June. Joseph, who has pushed hard to have cadets visit the treaty monitoring center, believes the program offers an invaluable glimpse into what the Air Force – and more specifically – what AFTAC can offer a graduating high school senior.

“What I try to impart on the students who come to AFTAC is pretty simple: you don’t have to be an active duty Airman to be a part of the Air Force,” the command chief said. “Our unit is made up of both military and civilian personnel – about a 60-40 split – and we are always looking for bright, motivated, intelligent and dedicated citizens to become part of our unique organization. I hope each cadet leaves here with a greater understanding of what we do, and how much we need the youth of today to pursue STEM fields of study. Our future relies on them.”



For more information about AFJROTC, visit their web site at <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Holm-Center/AFJROTC/>.