



Civil Air Patrol

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Winchester Composite Squadron

News Release

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Virginia Wing Cadet Soars at National Flight Academy

Winchester, VA – “I am very grateful to the Civil Air Patrol that they allowed me to attend this flight encampment in my final summer as a cadet,” said Cadet Captain Israel Groves, Cadet Commander at the Winchester Composite Squadron. “Getting to experience the flight academy will be a memory I am sure I will treasure the rest of my life.” Groves was also selected to participate in the International Air Cadet Exchange program and was destined for Singapore until the H1N1 virus caused the cancellation.

The Flight Academy which was held in Fort Pickett, Virginia, is specifically designed for cadets who want to learn to fly. Participants receive formal ground instruction and cockpit time with a certified flight instructors; the low instructor-to-student ratio provides opportunities for mentoring and individual attention. NFA also provides many participants the opportunity to solo.

The flight academy is one of 30 National Cadet Special Activities sponsored by CAP this summer. These activities allow cadets to hone their skills in a variety of areas, including search and rescue, flight and emergency services, science, leadership fundamentals, citizenship and military courtesies, and to explore aerospace technology and aviation careers. In 2008, 1,064 youth participated in CAP-sponsored summer activities.

Groves was recently invited to be a keynote speaker at a Homeschool Showcase. During his speech he reflected how his parents taught him the value of working hard and being dedicated to what is right. “Everyday of my life I have been surrounded by people, my brothers and sisters, my mom and dad, who are rooting for me to succeed.”

When asked to reflect on his time in the Civil Air Patrol, Groves was quick to talk about his proudest moment, the day his parents brought him to his first meeting. “I will never forget the thrill of that day. It was something that we had been discussing and I in particular had been dreaming about for months.” Pulling out his wallet, Cadet Captain Groves smiled and said, “My CAP membership card is one of the best things I carry in my billfold.”

“Citizens Serving Communities; Above and Beyond”

“Cadet Captain Groves has been an invaluable member of our squadron,” said Lt Colonel Charles Gittins, squadron commander. “His leadership, motivation and drive to succeed have been a very positive influence for our younger cadets. They are able to watch Cadet Groves and see the wonderful opportunities CAP will provide to those who apply themselves to succeed in the cadet program. Cadet Groves’ success in achieving his solo flight certification at the National Flight Academy is an important first step in his progress to earning his pilot’s certificate and we hope to help him achieve that goal here at the Winchester Composite Squadron with assigned CAP aircraft.”

“The Civil Air Patrol has afforded me opportunities for exploration, growth and development in so many areas that I'm not sure how I would have gotten otherwise,” Groves continued. “Where it seems like so many young people are out searching for meaning and direction in life, the Civil Air Patrol opens the doors for kids to make real contributions. CAP challenges it's members, trains hard, works hard, but in the end you have the satisfaction of seeing the difference your life makes as a volunteer. What could be better?”

The Civil Air Patrol is the official Auxiliary of the United States Air Force, and conducts over 90 percent of the nation’s inland air and ground search and rescue operations for the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center. In addition, they provide aerial imagery, damage assessment, communications relay, and limited cargo haul support to Federal, State, and local officials. They maintain a vibrant cadet program focused on developing the nation’s emerging leaders, and strive to develop a better understanding of aviation and space exploration contributions to society.

The Winchester Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with members from the surrounding counties. Resources include qualified ground and air crews, CAP aircraft, ground vehicles and communication equipment, distributed across the Greater Winchester Area for immediate deployment. CAP volunteers also perform homeland security, disaster relief and counterdrug missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. The squadron also performs other community service such as providing Color Guard for ceremonies, sports events and parades, help at community events and with parking control at festivals. The Squadron also educates groups and schools in drug free activities for a better way of life.

For Winchester Composite Squadron inquiries, please contact the Lt Colonel Charles Gittins, Commander at 540-662-9036, e-mail cgittins@aol.com or Major CJ Muncy, Deputy Commander of Cadets at 540-551-9968, or e-mail cjmuncy@earthlink.net.