



Eyes on the Sky



Old Town High School JMG student Clara Trefts (middle row, 5th from right) and her fellow Naval STEM campers.

Back when she was a freshman, Old Town High School (OTHS) JMG student Clara Trefts wasn't sure what she wanted to be after high school. As a child, she had toyed with the idea of being a veterinarian or an artist, but it wasn't until a trip with a friend to Disney World during seventh grade that she found her true passion.

"It was the flights there and back that made me fall in love with flying," she says. "For a while after the trip, I kept seeing planes and wishing I could be in one, but it wasn't until the end of 9th grade that I thought I could pilot them."

She joined OTHS's JROTC, and from there her interest - in both becoming a pilot and in joining the military - grew. This past summer she has had two opportunities to gain some valuable career experience while also having fun and traveling.



Clara Trefts at ACE Camp in Eddington, Maine.

Trefts' JMG Specialist, Bryan Murphy, has his students do a lot of career exploration as part of the curriculum. When he found out that Trefts was interested in becoming a pilot, he put her in touch with Dave Hickey, a colleague who had been a colonel in the Air Force. First Murphy and Trefts e-mailed Hickey for more information about the military, then Trefts and Hickey talked a bit on the phone about her career goals, and finally Hickey prepared a packet of information for Trefts that showed her the pathways to achieving her goals.

"Clara is a very driven student," says Murphy. "This past year, she put a lot of time and energy into making the STEM Camp and ACE Camp a reality. Dave Hickey created a timetable with suggestions on how best to get into a military academy/the field of aviation. She followed that advice, used class time, and after school time wisely. Her hard work and commitment is paying off."

Hickey advised her to get her private pilot's license before joining the military and encouraged her to do some internet research on free flight schools. While she was doing that she stumbled on the second of her two summer opportunities.

The first summer experience Trefts participated in was the United States Naval Academy's Summer STEM program in Annapolis, Maryland. STEM stands for science, technology,

engineering, and math, and the students participating in the program got a lot of exposure to all four.



Preparing for flight time at ACE Camp.

Trefts was able to receive financial assistance, both for the fee for the program and for her travel expenses, which enabled her to participate. She attended the program from June 17-21 with about 200 other 11th graders from around the U.S. Highlights included a tour of the Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., three days of STEM modules and presentations at the Naval Academy, and an open house and demonstrations. Trefts' favorite part of the experience was the assigned engineering projects.

“We were asked to build a car out of basic materials such as paperclips, CDs, rubber bands, etc.,” she says. “That car had to travel exactly 10 feet and then launch a ping pong ball as far as possible. Another project was to make a maze for a bug bot toy that involved collecting as many points in a minute as the group could.”



Flying at last!

The second summer program that Trefts participated in was Aviation Career Education Academy (nicknamed ACE Camp), an overnight program for 30 students aged 13-17 who have a strong interest in pursuing a career in aviation. The camp was held from July 28 to August 3 and hosted by the Katahdin Area Council Boy Scouts of America at Camp Roosevelt in Eddington, Maine (near Bangor). During the week of camp, Trefts and the other participants received classroom lessons on camp safety, aviation history, theory of flight, basic aerodynamics, introduction to aircraft, and spatial disorientation, took tours of local airports and aviation museums, flew on a KC-135 refueling mission and on a UH60 Blackhawk helicopter low level training mission, created and launched model rockets, met and spoke with pilots, did career planning, and also did some recreational activities such as hiking and swimming.

When Trefts returns to school in the fall, she will be a junior. She plans to continue with JROTC. “My goal is to be the Alpha Company Commander,” she says.

Something's Growing at Rose Gaffney

Build it, and things will grow. Well, with a little help from the JMG students at Rose M. Gaffney School in Machias, that is...

Eight years ago, the Machias Memorial High School (MMHS) Entrepreneurship class built a greenhouse on lawn space shared by the two schools. When the students graduated, however, the greenhouse became unused space. Four years ago, Rose Gaffney JMG students began planting a school garden on the lawn near the greenhouse.

“In the winter of 2012 I started working with a volunteer, Taylor Weiss, from FoodCorps,” says Rose Gaffney JMG Specialist Shannon Micklus. “Taylor comes into my classroom twice a month and teaches lessons about how to garden and the kids do a lot of hands-on work in the garden.”



According to their website, "FoodCorps is a nationwide team of leaders that connects kids to real food and helps them grow up healthy. We do that by placing motivated leaders in limited-resource communities for a year of public service. Working under the direction of local partner organizations, we implement a three-ingredient recipe for healthy kids. Our Service Members: teach kids about what healthy food is and where it comes from; build and tend school gardens; and bring high-quality local food into public school cafeterias."

Through her connection to FoodCorps and the Farm to School program (part of Washington County One Community) Micklus was made aware of grants available to make improvements to the greenhouse and garden. Micklus received help gathering information and writing the grants, and in early August she learned that her class had been awarded both the Community Transformation Grant (CTG) and Maine Ag in the Classroom grant. The grant money will pay for a new polyfilm cover to be put on the greenhouse, to renovate the greenhouse interior, which will allow for extended food production, and to purchase gardening tools and supplies.

"We have not grown anything in the greenhouse yet," says Micklus, "but these grants will make that possible. We are planning on creating a piping system that will go under raised beds and use the heated air from the greenhouse to warm the soil. This will allow us to extend our growing into colder months."

She continues, "We plan on planting fresh salad greens and other vegetables to give to our school food service program, which feeds both the elementary school and the high school. We have also developed a community partnership with EBS Building Supplies. My students did a poster project on their manager, Brent Hartford, and he has been helping us ever since. He gives us discounts on supplies and donates supplies when he can."

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