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APR 24

- 1 MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD**
- 2 MOMC CALENDAR**
- 3 2024 MILITARY YOUTH OF THE YEAR**
- 6 MOMC YOUTH PROGRAMS**
- 8 FITNESS WITH THE BOYS**
- 25 LIBRARY CALENDAR**
- 26 LIBRARY PROGRAMS**



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## **SALUTING OUR LITTLE HEROES:** CELEBRATE THE MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD AT COLUMBUS AIR FORCE BASE

April marks the Month of the Military Child when the U.S. Department of Defense honors the over 1.6 million children navigating the challenges and unique experiences of military life.

Throughout April, Columbus Air Force Base will celebrate military children and dedicate time to rally support for our youngest heroes!

Youth Programs serves children ages 6 weeks to 18 years at its two locations - the Child Development Center and the Youth Center.

The Child Development Center stands as a beacon of excellence, holding accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) as an esteemed Early Learning Center. The CDC proudly offers comprehensive full-day and part-time enrichment programs tailored to meet the developmental needs of children aged six weeks through five years, guiding them on their journey until they enter Kindergarten.

The Youth Center plays a vital role in fostering the readiness and enhancing the productivity of youth and teens aged 5-18 through its commitment to delivering high-quality programming and creating opportunities for achievement, leadership, and recognition. By aligning with esteemed organizations such as the United States Air Force Programs, Boys and Girls Club of America Programs, and National

4-H Club Programs, youth benefit from a rich variety of experiences and resources that empower them to reach their fullest potential.

The Youth Sports Program at CAFB provides a diverse array of team sports throughout the year, including soccer, t-ball, coach pitch, flag football, and basketball. Accredited by the National Alliance for Sports, the Youth Sports Program at CAFB proudly stands as a designated Better Sports for Kids Program Provider, ensuring top-notch quality and excellence in athletic development for participants.

Andre Logan, the Director of the Child and Youth Programs, underscores the Youth Program's dedication to acknowledging the distinctive hurdles faced by military-connected children, youth, and teens - "Our team focus is on ensuring that families are aware of the full amplitude of support and resources available to serve their needs as they change schools, settle into new communities, and navigate military life in general at Columbus AFB."

To celebrate the Month of the Military Child, Youth Programs has teamed up with multiple FSS Facilities such as Outdoor Recreation and the CAFB Library to create fun, family-friendly activities to celebrate and enjoy time together!

APRIL 2024

# Month OF the MILITARY Child



## AT A GLANCE

- 1 April** Proclamation Signing at 14 FTW Headquarters, **1100**
- 3 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - New Hope Elementary, **1300**
- 3 April** **Paint The Town** - Base decorating w/ Community Action Team
- 4 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - Caledonia Elementary, **1245**
- 5 April** Kids & Kicks Sneaker Ball @ Youth Center, **1830-2130**
- 11 April** Homeschool Day Out @ Youth Center, **1300**
- 13 April** Shark Tooth Creek Trip with Outdoor Rec, **Departing 0800**
- 15 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - Annunciation Catholic School, **1400**
- 17 April** **Purple Up Day** - Wear Purple In Honor of our Military Kids
- 18 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - Caledonia High School, **0920**
- 18 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - Heritage Academy, **1330**
- 19 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - New Hope High School, **0920**
- 19 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - New Hope Middle School, **1000**
- 19 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - Caledonia Middle School, **1130**
- 19 April** **SCHOOL CELEBRATION** - Columbus Christian Academy, **1330**
- 26 April** Rockin The Block @ Venture 360, **1600-1830**
- 26 April** Operation Megaphone - Lock in @ Youth Center, **1900-0700**
- 30 April** Arts Social & Judging with the Library, Blaze Commons, **1600**

1 APRIL 2024 • VOLUME 43 • ISSUE 4

# The Youth Center Times

## NEWSPAPER

KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT YOUTH PROGRAMS!

## MEET BRAYDEN SHIELDS - COLUMBUS AIR FORCE BASE'S 2024 MILITARY YOUTH OF THE YEAR.

Brayden Shields has grown up as a military kid, adapting to constant change. From Texas to Idaho, and now Columbus, his family's presence stretches across the country. Having explored 34 states and immersed himself in their cultures, Shields thrives on the diverse opportunities military life presents. Despite the hurdles of his father's deployment and evolving friendships, he remains resilient. Shields is always going. He is a lifeguard on base, a soccer enthusiast, a homeschooler, and finds joy in fishing, exploring, and working on his truck. Meet CAFB's 2024 Military Youth of the Year!

**Brayden, what does the Youth Center mean to you?**

*As a military kid, the Youth Center holds significance to me by providing a safe space for me to create meaningful connections with kids who share similar circumstances. From bonding over shared interests, hobbies, and experiences to creating lifelong friendships, the Youth Center has been instrumental in my personal growth.*

*I kicked off my soccer career in the Youth Sports Program at four years old and have played all the way up through*

*highschool. Playing a team sport like soccer has taught me about camaraderie and teamwork that I will take with me throughout my life. The Youth Center has also provided me with a bunch of diverse experiences, like Paintball Camp, and participating in the Youth of the Year Program.*

*Over all, the Youth Center has been more than just a physical space; it has been the cornerstone of lasting relationships and cherished memories that have shaped my journey through my childhood so far.*

**What is your favorite memory at Columbus Air Force Base Youth Center?**

*One of my favorite memories at CAFB Youth Center would have to be Paintball Camp at Outdoor Rec's course. We always have a ton of fun on the course and it allowed me to meet friends that I still connect with monthly for Paintball Tournaments and Airsoft.*

*One of the best moments during the camp was when the instructor "coined me" for my dedication in assisting and mentoring the younger participants. This recognition not only affirmed my commitment to always looking out for others, but also solidified the friendships and*



**Brayden Shields**  
2024's Military Youth of the Year

(Shields cont.)

memories that made Paintball Camp an awesome experience.

**Tell me about your goals for the future.**  
I am really excited to attend Mississippi State University this fall and dive into their Electrical Engineering Program. The campus is awesome, and a bunch of my friends are already there, so I am definitely pumped for this new chapter. I call myself a "semi-mechanic." I always have my hands busy, whether I'm working on my dad's old jeep or tweaking my truck. I also participate in Teen Pact Christian Government Camp. It has offered me insight into governance and provided valuable connections with lawmakers. I want a career that is hands-on and makes an impact, and I believe I will find that in the engineering field.

**How has being homeschooled impacted your experience?**

Being homeschooled while moving around with the military has made a real impact in my life. It's been the thing that is constant from one base to the next. My class meets up online every week. We are a mix of civilian and military kids and families. It's awesome to interact with people from all around the country! I get to try out stuff I'd never even dreamed of before.

**Do you have any advice for Military kids?**

My biggest piece of advice for other military kids is make connections. Making connections is important no matter what you're dealing with, but as a military kid, is a game-changer. Don't hesitate or be scared to reach out and make new friends or connections with adults and staff. Moving to new places can be nerve-racking, but it's a whole lot easier once you start putting yourself out there and understand that there are a bunch of people out there who are experiencing the same sort of things you are. Be brave and be yourself!

Throughout his journey, Brayden holds onto the wisdom of staying true to himself and owning his story. Brayden's journey epitomizes the resilience and adaptability demanded by the unique path of military life. Columbus Air Force Base is proud to have such an amazing youth represent its military children.

If you are interested in learning more about the Youth of the Year Program, please reach out to Javalco Johnson at (662) 434-2504.

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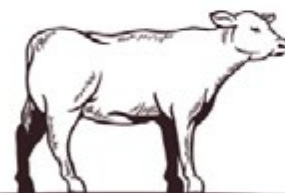
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THE MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD KICK-OFF

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QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL  
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# FITNESS WITH THE BOYS

14 FSS and the CAFB Fitness Center welcome new blood! Solomon Jones III, the new Fitness Director, and Jason Gilmore, the new Intramural Sports Director, are here to enhance CAFB's Fitness programs to the next level! Your dutiful 14 FSS fact-finders asked the boys a few questions to get to know them a bit better before the dumbbells start flying and kettlebells start swinging.



In the Blue Corner, hailing from Maysville, NC: Nutrition whiz and man-with-the-plan, Solomon Jones III!

Solomon is retired Air Force with 20 years and 3 deployments under his belt, as well as an American Military University graduate with a Bachelors of Sports and Health Sciences, and a Masters of Health and Wellness Management. If anyone can help you plan your fitness journey, it's Solomon!

**Q:** Mr. Jones, what plans do you have for the Fitness Center in the near future?

**A:** It's really all about what the community and the patrons want. We're bringing forth all the resources and support that Columbus and its airmen need. It begins with building a solid foundation, and getting our fitness initiatives where they need to be to ensure we're meeting Air Force standards.

**Q:** Are you going to be surveying or asking around the base community to see what programs people are interested in?



In the Red Corner, hailing from Littleton, CO: Tough-guy extraordinaire, Jason Gilmore!

Jason is a retired Deputy Sheriff (21 yrs) that worked K9, SWAT, SCAT, Undercover VICE, Narcotics, and Bicycle. He has also been a Defensive Tactics instructor of Krav Maga, PPCT, FBI, Tricom, and spontaneous knife defense, and a SIU and Field Training Officer. He currently is a Crossfit Level 1 & 2 instructor, and fights in MMA (6-1 record), Muay Thai (14-0 record), and Boxing (2-0 record).

**Q:** Do you have any plans to bring more combat sports to the CAFB Fitness Center?

**A:** We already offer Jiu Jitsu on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We've started spinning up a Boxing Club with a boxing instructor, so you'll see that coming soon. I would like to start hosting Jiu Jitsu tournaments here on base with the Columbus community and beyond. Eventually, I'd like to see a mat room in the Fitness Center so we can see some MMA, Krav Maga, and other combatives to build from.

*[Solomon cont.]*

**A:** Absolutely. We're constantly seeking feedback from our Fitness Center regulars, are conducting surveys via email, questionnaires, and ICE comments. The findings are pushed upwards to leadership. If you have ideas for fitness initiatives, stop by and let us know!

**Q:** Do you have any fitness advice for the Spring?

**A:** It comes down to just being active. I don't just mean physical training either, though that's important, I mean any physical activity. Take the stairs, if you're able. Park further away so you have to walk to your building. Stand at your desk instead of sitting. What I've learned in my assessment of physical health and wellness is that those moments are when fitness happens.

**Q:** Give us a fun fact - what's the heaviest lift you've ever done?

**A:** Hah! Well, I'm only about 140lbs at the moment, but back when I was 160, I was able to bench 300. These days my fitness is focused on healthy eating and nutrition, not so much weights.

*[Jason cont.]*

**Q:** Any fitness advice for the Spring?

**A:** Consistency is king. Regardless of what you're doing or what your goals are, once you start, just don't stop. Even if you fall off a little, make sure to pick yourself back up. Doing a little bit every day is better than doing a whole lot one or two days.

**Q:** Give us a fun fact as well - What's the toughest fight you've ever been in?

**A:** The next fight is always the toughest. By that, I mean it's not that the fight is tough, it's the mental anguish you put yourself through prior to the fight. Fighting itself is easy - you train hard and fight easy. Getting punched in the face never bothered me, and punching someone else in the face never bothered me. The mental strain and the anxiety are such a challenge on your mind for about six weeks leading up to the fight. You're wrapping up your hands and putting on your gloves, and telling yourself "I'm not going out there." You could get knocked out in front of a thousand people - how embarrassing is that? I say all that to say, the toughest fight is the fight with your own mind.

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Stay tuned for future fitness fun as the boys pick up the CAFB pace! For questions, contact the CAFB Fitness Center at (662) 434-2772.

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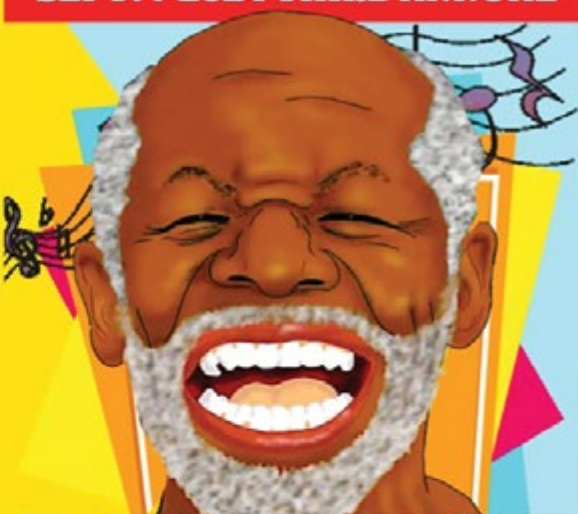
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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Arts &amp; Crafts Center</li> <li><span style="color: black;">■</span> Bowling Center</li> <li><span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Event Center</li> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Kaye Auditorium</li> <li><span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Library</li> <li><span style="color: blue;">■</span> Military &amp; Family Readiness</li> <li><span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> Outdoor Rec</li> <li><span style="color: grey;">■</span> Youth Programs</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">■</span> Fitness Center</li> <li><span style="color: white;">■</span> Wing Event</li> <li><span style="color: red;">■</span> Special Event</li> </ul>	1 MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD PROCLAMATION SIGNING	2 STORYTIME - AUTISM 1000-1100, Library	3 WING NEWCOMERS ORIENTATION 0800-1600, M&FRC PAINT THE TOWN All Day, Base Wide	4 TAP PRE-SEPARATION GROUP COUNSELING 0930-1100, M&FRC TRAINING CLOSURE 1200-1630, M&FRC CAFB BOOK CLUB 1800, Library	5 ASSIGNMENT NIGHT IFF GRADUATION FRIDAY LUNCH SPECIALS! 1100-1400, Event Center SNEAKER BALL 1830-2130, Youth Center	6 STORYTIME - PAJAMA DAY 1000-1100, Library
  <p><b>FAMILY COLOR RUN</b> <b>11 MAY</b></p> <p>SIGN UP BY 6 MAY THROUGH CYPBMS (662) 434-2504</p>  <p>DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE CHILD AND YOUTH PROGRAMS</p>	8 AMF-S 24-08 GRADUATION STORYTIME - CHICKENS 1000-1100, Library	9 YOUTH ADVISORY CLUB 1530, Library	10 TRAINING CLOSURE 1200-1630, M&FRC CAFB YOUTH BOOK CLUB 1800, Library HOMESCHOOL DAY OUT 1300, Youth Center	11 GPT 24-08 GRADUATION UPT 24-07 GRADUATION ASSIGNMENT NIGHT FRIDAY LUNCH SPECIALS! 1100-1400, Event Center	12 SHARK TOOTH CREEK ADVENTURE 0800, Outdoor Recreation STORYTIME - PLANTS 1000-1100, Library CAFB HALF-MARATHON 0800, Event Center	13 SENIOR TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WORKSHOP   0730-1600, M&FRC
	15 STORYTIME - ELEPHANTS 1000-1100, Library	16 ROCK PAINTING 1500, Library PURPLE-UP DAY All Day, Base Wide	17 SMOOTH MOVE 1000-1100, M&FRC TRAINING CLOSURE 1200-1630, M&FRC CAFB BOOK CLUB 1800, Library	18 FRIDAY LUNCH SPECIALS! 1100-1400, Event Center	19 HISTORICAL KENTUCKY TRIP   Departing 0800, Outdoor Recreation	20 STORYTIME - LOOK ALIKE DAY 1000-1100, Library
	22 BUNDLES FOR BABIES 0800-1600, M&FRC STORYTIME - ASTRONAUTS 1000-1100, Library	23 TAP PRE-SEPARATION GROUP COUNSELING 0930-1100, M&FRC WING NEWCOMERS ORIENTATION 0800-1600, M&FRC	24 TRAINING CLOSURE 1200-1630, M&FRC CAFB BOOK CLUB 1800, Library	25 IFF GRADUATION FRIDAY LUNCH SPECIALS! 1100-1400, Event Center ROCKIN' THE BLOCK 1600-1830, Venture 360	26 STORYTIME - HORSES 1000-1100, Library COUNTRY NIGHT 1800-2200, Event Center	27 OPERATION MEGAPHONE 1900-0700, Youth Center
	28 STORYTIME - RABBITS 1000-1100, Library THE WORLD IS MINE - JUDGING 1600, Library	<p><i>The Youth Center is now offering Guitar Lessons and Dance Classes! Contact Tijuana McDonald at (662) 434-2504 for more information.</i></p>		<p><b>MOMC SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS:</b> New Hope Elementary, 3 Apr 1300 Caledonia Elementary, 4 Apr 1300 Annunciation Catholic, 15 Apr 1400 Caledonia High School, 18 Apr 0920 Heritage Academy, 18 Apr 1330 New Hope High School, 19 Apr 0920 New Hope Middle, 19 Apr 1000 Caledonia Middle, 19 Apr 1130 Columbus Christian, 19 Apr 1330</p>		<p><b>YOUR REFRIGERATOR FRIENDLY MONTHLY CALENDAR!</b></p>

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- Arts & Crafts
- ATM Machine
- Auto Skills Hobby Shop
- Auto Weight Scale
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- Base Exchange
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- Coffee House on 5th CAFB
- Event Center & The Overrun Lounge
- Commissary
- Gas Station
- Human Resources Office
- Hunt Housing
- Kaye Auditorium
- Library
- Magnolia Inn Lodging/TLF
- Medical & Dental
- Military Personnel Flight (ID Cards)
- Print Shop
- Recycling Center
- Resale Lot

**FITNESS & RECREATION**

- Alpha Warrior Tent
- Archery
- Baseball Fields
- Basketball Courts
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- Independence Pool
- Nature Trails
- Outdoor Grills
- Outdoor Recreation
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**KIDS**

- Child Development Center
- Youth Center
- Freedom Park



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**SATURDAY, MAY 18TH, 2024**

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APRIL  
april

LIBRARY CALENDAR

- 2 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** AUTISM
- 4 APR 1800 | BOOK CLUB: *The Yellow House* by Sarah Broom
- 6 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** PAJAMA DAY (WEAR YOUR PJs!)
- 9 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** CHICKENS
- 10 APR 1530 | YOUTH ADVISORY CLUB
- 11 APR 1800 | YOUTH BOOK CLUB: *Divergent* by Veronica Roth
- 13 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** PLANTS
- 16 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** ELEPHANTS
- 17 APR 1500 | ROCK PAINTING
- 18 APR 1800 | BOOK CLUB: *The Yellow House* by Sarah Broom
- 20 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** LOOK ALIKE DAY
- 23 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** ASTRONAUTS
- 27 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** HORSES
- 30 APR 1000 | **StoryTime:** RABBITS

- Educational
- StoryTime
- Arts & Crafts


GIVE US YOUR  
FEEDBACK!



All month, your Library will be offering Mother's Day Card making supplies! Come hand make your own cards for mom!

Questions? Contact Dr. Europonda Stone at  
(662) 434-2934 for more information






# CAFB BOOK CLUB

**4 & 18 APR - 1800 @ YOUR LIBRARY**

Where avid readers and book enthusiasts come together to dive into captivating stories and engage in thought provoking discussions!



We're reading *The Yellow House* by Sarah M. Broom. Please bring your own copy!

AGES 12-17

# CAFB YOUTH BOOK CLUB

**11 APRIL & 9 MAY | 1800 ONLY 10 SPOTS AVAILABLE!**

THE FIRST BOOK WILL BE *DIVERGENT* BY VERONICA ROTH

# MOTHER'S DAY CARD MAKING

APRIL 1-30 FOR ADULTS

\*DURING REGULAR LIBRARY HOURS WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
YOUTH PROGRAMS

**THE LIFE OF A MILITARY CHILD**

**MOMC ART EXHIBITION**

# JUDGING TO TAKE PLACE

**30 APRIL AT 1600 AT THE BLAZE COMMONS**

AGES 6-17

# youth advisory club

**10 APR - 1530 @ YOUR LIBRARY**



Join the Library's Youth Advisory Club and be part of a group of enthusiastic young people (ages 6-17) who collaborate with the Library to **shape and enhance programs and services!**

FREE EVENT



# ROCK PAINTING

**APRIL 17 | 1500-1600 @ Your Library**

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INDEPENDENCE POOL  
OPENING WEEKEND

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PARTY

FRIDAY 24 MAY

Contact Andrew Pace, Program  
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26**  
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