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Thousands take part in annual Safety Fest

PENSACOLA, Fla. — Naval Aviation Schools Command (NASC) and Naval Air Technical Training Command (NATTC) hosted their eighth annual Safety Fest in the NATTC Charles Taylor Hangar April 17, encouraging students and staff to talk about safety issues both on and off base.

The NASC Safety Officer John Prince organized the event and said it usually attracts up to 4,000 people.

“It gives the students and staff from the training commands a chance to talk about safety topics,” said Prince. “During a safety stand down, we can only cover so much in the time we have.”

Safety stand downs periodically cover major safety issues, usually occurring before long weekends or holiday breaks. This event takes place during the normal training day and addresses more in-depth safety concerns.

Displays included on-base programs from the commands and the Fleet and Family Services Center (FFSC), as well as emergency services like the Florida Highway Patrol.

"We had 30 presenters covering everything from disaster to fire prevention to health and wellness. It gives us a wide variety," said Prince.

Some of the booths featured demonstrations, including a beer goggles walk, which simulate vision problems when drunk, and a firefighting simulation. According to Prince, the goal is to demonstrate safety in a way that better engages the young military members.

"Our students now learn in a more interactive manner. By getting here and using the motorcycle trainer, the fire trainer, and visiting the booths, they get hands-on experience," Prince said.

The annual event gives the newest military members an opportunity to see many of the support programs established to support them.

"By bringing the safety issues out we can expose Sailors and Marines and their families to safety issues before they become a problem," said Paul Maxwell, the education service facilitator for FFSC. "I've attended every year I've been at NAS Pensacola. Every year it gets better."

FFSC set up four booths for this event, addressing issues of suicide prevention and awareness, sexual assault prevention and response, new parent support and home visitation, and family advocacy. FFSC offers these programs year-round to serve military members and their families. Maxwell engaged participants at the suicide prevention and awareness booth.

"It is an important event to be able to make service members aware of the possibilities of getting injured during the 100 days of summer. Accidents can happen," said Maxwell.

The Safety Office at NASC hosts the Safety Fest every year, inviting local businesses and organizations to join military-related organizations in their effort to promote awareness of safety issues. NASC is an initial training site for enlisted and officer aviation training for the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and international partner nations.

For learn more about Naval Aviation Schools Command visit <http://www.netc.navy.mil/nascweb/> .

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By Ensign Jason Buckley, Naval Education and Training Command Public Affairs

