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The Winchester DoD STARBASE Program has been a huge success and made an incredible impact on STEM education for students in the region. In the past year, the DoD STARBASE staff has exceeded the required 28 weeks of instruction and provided 35 weeks that reached more than 730 students. Of those students, more than 70% came from Title I schools with at-risk populations, English was the second language for 9% of the students and 51% of the students were female. Students who attend the Winchester DoD STARBASE Program average a 30-point increase between the pre-test on the first day and the post-test on fifth and final day of instruction.

The outreach program by the Winchester DoD STARBASE staff further increases the impact and has reached another 400 students. Our staff participates in STEM nights at school, conducts special single day training programs and teaches lessons at our own Youth Camp and Commonwealth ChalleNGe program for at-risk teens.

Our faculty has become widely recognized for their expertise in instruction methods and techniques for STEM education. They were invited to teach a professional development program on "Inquiry-based learning, science best practices" to elementary teachers in Clarke County, Va.

The faculty has also taken advantage of the many subject matter experts in the area and brought them in as guest speakers for each class. These guest speakers included a retired Air Force pilot, retired Air Force engineer, Army Corps of Engineers, a veterinarian, a doctor, a civil engineer, a police detective and health care representatives. The program also has formed a great partnership with the Virginia National Guard Soldiers at the Cherry-Beasley Readiness Center where they teach the DoD STARBASE classes. Soldiers provide facilities tours, talk about their military service and the types of careers offered by the military.

I could not be more proud of the quality of instruction, the professionalism of the staff and their dedication to promoting STEM education to the students in the area. I hope every effort is made to continue to fund this program for many years to come.



Caption:

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Name: Major General Timothy P. Williams,

Title: The Adjutant General of Virginia

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