



Published on *DoD STARBASE* (<http://dodstarbase.org>)

[Home](#) > Hill Starbase Academy Opens Doors

---

## Hill Starbase Academy Opens Doors

Science and Technology Academies Reinforcing Basic Aviation and Space Exploration, or Starbase, was launched at Hill Air Force Base with an official ribbon cutting June 29.

"Bringing Starbase to Hill Air Force Base has been a dream of Ms. Judy Maughan for several years," said Col. Sarah Zabel, 75th Air Base Wing commander at the official opening. "After continuously advocating for this program, Hill Air Force Base received approval May 2011. It took the diligent efforts of Maughan and her staff, members of the Ogden Air Logistics Contracting, and the 75th Air Base Wing to bring us where we are today."

As a mentor to the Hill AFB program, Ronda Cole, of the Kirtland AFB, N.M., Starbase program explained: "It's a great program because it gives students the opportunity to apply science, technology and math so that when they go back to their school, they can say, 'Oh, yes, I remember how this worked on my CO2 car or my robot or in manufacturing a piece that I designed on the computer.' And now, it's more relevant for (the student) to study those things in school, too."

The Starbase Academy incorporates hands-on, project-driven learning. A few of the activities that they do are design objects that a 3-D printer can construct from composite materials, work on robots, learn geo caching, and design ways to protect "Eggbert" from being hurt in a crash landing of a model space shuttle.

Judith Maughan, school liaison and education coordinator, said, "I think it is the hands-on, project-based learning that makes it so exciting for the students."

She is excited about the project's completion after having overcome challenges in getting the academy up and running. Maughan wondered at times, if Starbase would get there, but the excitement of everyone involved was contagious.

Frances Bradshaw, Starbase director said, "The contractors and base engineers were thrilled and they kept saying, 'Can we come back and look at it when you're up and running?'"

Bradshaw explained how this curriculum makes it easier for students to learn when the math, science and engineering are all interrelated. "It's actually targeted at students that wouldn't consider science, technology, engineering and mathematics as even something that they would want to pursue in junior high or high school," she said.

As most teachers understand intuitively it's when the spark of interest and understanding gets lit, then the drive for curiosity and creativity really unleashes students' own learning.

The Hill AFB Starbase Academy has four teachers who teach 6th-grade students who attend

with their teachers. They are: Kim Miller, Alison Sturgeon, Timeka Holmes and Rusty Custer.

Most students will attend five Mondays, five Tuesdays, five Wednesdays or five Thursdays in a row. However year-round students come in a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday format in a one-week schedule staying a little longer on each day.

Starbase Academies are very popular, said another of the mentors for the program, Kathy Brandon, of Barksdale AFB, Shreveport, Louisiana: "It is not something that is just for the person who is going to be a scientist or for those of us who are destined to be engineers. We all use engineering every day. Math affects everything in our life in everything we do. We use the tools of technology. We all have to understand the concepts of science and so this is for everyone."

Brandon added: "If you are going to become a hairdresser you are going to have to understand chemical processes just like a person who works in a research laboratory. The understanding and the skillset that you get from STEM studies is critical for everyone."

Both mentors say that in surveys conducted with the students in attendance they typically answer that "Today was my favorite day," and "Make it longer," in response to what can be done to make the program or experience better.

The Starbase Academy is in Building 460 near Runway Ruby's. For more information about the program contact Frances Bradshaw at 801-586-7494.

By Mary Lou Gorny  
Hilltop Times Editor  
July 5, 2012

<http://www.hilltoptimes.com/content/hill-starbase-academy-opens-doors> [1]

---

**Source URL:** <http://dodstarbase.org/articles/hill-starbase-academy-opens-doors>

**Links:**

[1] <http://www.hilltoptimes.com/content/hill-starbase-academy-opens-doors>