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# Guard Kids Spend Week At STARBASE Austin

STARBASE Austin held its fifth annual weeklong summer camp for children of Texas Military Department employees at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas, last August. STARBASE is a Defense Department-funded program that brings children onto military installations, like Camp Mabry, to have fun with the STEM disciplines of science, technology, engineering and math. "It's so exciting just to see our kids come over and have an opportunity to grow and learn," said Sgt. 1st Class Marcel Ruales, a logistics noncommissioned officer with the Texas Joint Counterdrug Task Force.

STARBASE brings math and science to life for students by giving them real-life technological problems to solve, said STARBASE instructor Laura Badkoobeh. "One of the things we say at STARBASE quite often is 'hands on, minds on,' and what that means for students is that they're getting their hands dirty, working and learning together in science, technology, engineering and math," Badkoobeh said. The first engineering challenge they faced this year was to build a bridge out of lasagna. "Our students start out doing Operation Bridge Quest," said Emily Bell, STARBASE Austin's program specialist. "The students have an urgent mission to build a bridge for the town of Water's Edge so that they can get food and water within 10 days." Schools from all across Central Texas send students to Camp Mabry year round to attend STARBASE. Williams said STARBASE serves an important role in the community by working with school districts to offer learning opportunities that some districts cannot easily provide on their own.

Article By Sgt. Michael Gile

Full article at: [http://www.nationalguardmagazine.com/publication/index.php?i=435054&m=&l=&p=1&pre=&ver=html5#{%22page%22:66,%22issue\\_id%22:435054}](http://www.nationalguardmagazine.com/publication/index.php?i=435054&m=&l=&p=1&pre=&ver=html5#{%22page%22:66,%22issue_id%22:435054}) [1]

Posted: October 2017

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