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# Monthly School Liaison Newsletter

June 2026



Ahoy, from the heart of the Monterey Peninsula in Steinbeck Country—where ocean breezes meet educational opportunities, and community is our compass. As your Navy School Liaison Officer, I'm here to help you navigate the ever-changing waters of local school systems, connect with resources, and support your family's unique journey. Whether you're new to the area or a returning armed forces member, this newsletter is your monthly port of call for updates, insights, and answers.

Let's set sail toward success—together!

And here is the news for this month. . .



*Congratulations*  
**CLASS OF**  
**2026**

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## La Mesa Elementary and Homeschool Students Explore STEM at First Green Golf Field Trip

On May 14, 69 students from two fifth grade classes at La Mesa Elementary School, along with a five homeschool students, participated in this year's STEM First Green Golf Field Trip at Naval Support Activity Monterey's Monterey Pines Golf Club. Led by Golf Superintendent Blake Hertzog, the experience highlighted STEM concepts through golf course management and environmental stewardship.

The students engaged in hands-on learning stations supported by NSAM MWR Golf, CYP, CYES, and dedicated volunteers. Additionally, students were able to cycle through stations which explored a variety of topics, such as turf management, irrigation systems, soil composition, and the equipment used to maintain the course.

Activities also incorporated math and engineering concepts, such as calculating square footage for fertilizer and water usage, as well as the science and precision behind putting.

Special thanks to Blake Hertzog and all the Monterey Pines Greens Team: Tom Laycock, Michael Oblander, Patrick Stone, Thomas Guzman, Ramiro Garcia, Ryan Ayres, David Rojas-Herrera, as well as Neil Larkin, MPGC head golf professional, and Tivi Latu, MPGC pro shop manager.

Appreciation also goes to CYP Teen and Youth Sports Director, Chris Condit, School Liaison, J. McKenzie, Marketing Specialist, Katelyn Rodriguez, and Community Recreation Director, Henry Chu for their efforts in organizing and facilitating the event.

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## La Mesa Elementary and Homeschool Students Explore STEM at First Green Golf Field Trip (cont.)

A heartfelt thank you to our incredible volunteers: Vince Ferrance (Tehama GC), Michael Knoll (Del Monte GC), Rob Esposito and Ruben Martinez (Pacific Grove Golf Club), Nick Pusek (Monterey Peninsula CC), Paxson Swartz (Pebble Beach Golf Links) and Perry Tarsitano (Wilbur Ellis Company). Additionally, gratitude is extended to La Mesa fifth-grade teachers Allison Cresap and Tracy Gordo, as well as the parent field trip chaperones who helped make this experience enriching for all the students.



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## NSAM'S CYP Military Youth of the Year: Laura Medous

On Tuesday, May 26, Laura Medous was formally recognized as the NSAM Military Youth of the Year at the annual Monterey Peninsula Unified School District Awards Ceremony. She was presented with a certificate and received personal congratulations from each member of the school board, as well as the district superintendent.

Laura is no stranger to this honor, having also been selected as NSAM Military Youth of the Year last year. Her continued recognition reflects her exceptional character, leadership, and dedication to others.

So why Laura? What makes her so special?

Laura leads with maturity well beyond her years, demonstrating purpose, integrity, and compassion in everything she does. Whether in the classroom, her community, or mentoring younger students, she inspires others through both her actions and example.

A proactive and empathetic leader, Laura creates opportunities to make a difference. As a Taekwondo instructor at Monterey Bay Taekwondo Academy, she mentors students in confidence, respect, and perseverance. At Monterey High School, she serves as an MAOS Ambassador, strengthening peer engagement through communication and outreach. As Keystone Club President at the Navy Teen Center, she has led inclusive events and helped her peers complete over 100 hours of community service this year.

Laura's achievements are equally impressive. She earned her Black Belt Certification through the Kukkiwon World Taekwondo Headquarters and was recognized at the state level for excellence in team training. Internationally, she earned 1st Place in a French Theatre Competition in Belarus as a lead performer and is trilingual in Russian, French, and English.

Maintaining a 3.8 GPA while balancing academics, leadership, athletics, and service, Laura exemplifies excellence in all areas. Most importantly, her compassion and commitment to uplifting others set her apart.

Laura Medous truly embodies the spirit of Military Youth of the Year—service, leadership, and the power to make a lasting difference.

Please join us in celebrating the 2026 NSAM Military Youth of the Year, Laura Medous.



*NSAM MYOY (L-R), Proud parent, Mr. Medous, Laura, Chris Condit, CYP Teen/Youth Sports Coordinator, and J. McKenzie, NSAM School Liaison, at the MPUSD School Board Student Awards Night on May 26, 2026.*

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## Anchored4Life: Building Leaders and Strengthening Our School Communities



Anchored4Life, a program founded to support military-connected students through transitions and challenges, continues to make a meaningful impact at George C. Marshall Elementary School and Monte Vista TK-8 School. While rooted in supporting military families, the program enriches the entire school community by promoting leadership, connection, and a strong sense of belonging for all students.

At both schools, Anchored4Life clubs create inclusive spaces where students build friendships, grow as leaders, and welcome new peers—ensuring that every student, especially those experiencing transitions, feels seen, valued, and supported. These student leaders play a key role in fostering a positive school climate grounded in kindness, respect, and peer connection.

At George C. Marshall Elementary School, Assistant Principal Amanda Kort, along with Club Advisors Andrea Balestrieri, Claire Fuerst, Kellie Ventimilia-Vincent, Jessica DeGroot, and Petrea Brown, have cultivated a thriving program that prioritizes student voice and connection. At Monte Vista TK-8 School, Assistant Principal Tierney Wessel and Club Advisor Petika Barber have championed the Anchored4Life mission, creating a welcoming environment where all students can thrive.

We extend our sincere gratitude to these dedicated administrators and advisors whose leadership is making a difference every day.

Looking ahead, we are proud to announce that Anchored4Life will return to La Mesa School next year, led by Assistant Principal Susie Shin and staff leaders Torrey Barlow and Veronica Stillinger. Their leadership will continue to expand this impactful program and strengthen support for students and families across the community.

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## Military Child Education Coalition Corner

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) has released its schedule for June and July Parent Webinars, offering valuable resources for military-connected families. Dedicated to supporting these students, MCEC works to educate, advocate, and collaborate to address the unique educational challenges tied to military life.

This month's webinars cover a range of essential topics, including building strong military families, fostering great reading habits, and helping children improve communication while minimizing conflict.

Visit the [\*\*MCEC Parent Webinar page\*\*](#) today! To catch up on past webinars visit the MCEC YouTube Channel. Here you will be able access past Parent Webinars and gain valuable insights at your own pace. Don't miss out!



## Other Important MPUSD & NSAM Dates

### Summer Break

- June 8 - August 4

### Tech Connection Summer Camp

- June 8 - August 4

### MPUSD School Board Meetings

- June 23 - 6:30 PM | 540 Canyon Del Rey, Del Rey Oaks

### Federal Holiday - all CYP Facilities Closed - June 19

### NSAM CYP Back-to-School Orientation & School Supplies Giveaway

- Friday, July 17 | 12 PM - 3 PM | Fleet and Family Support Center

### First Day of School

- **Pacific Grove USD:** Wednesday, August 5
- **Monterey Peninsula USD:** Wednesday, August 5
- **Carmel USD:** Thursday, August 6

Check your child's school website for more information on pertinent dates during the summer.

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## Ready for 2026-27? Early Enrollment for New TK-12 Students Is Now Open!

**Online Registration is CURRENTLY OPEN for:**

### **2025-2026**

- New Registrations & 2025 - 2026 Confirmations

### **2026-2027**

- Kindergarten and TK students coming from MPUSD Preschool
- All new TK-12 students, or students not enrolled in an MPUSD school during 2025-2026

*Thank you for reading!*

#### Contact Information

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<u>Youth Sponsorship</u>	<u>School Liaison officer</u>
<u>Tech Connection Teen &amp; Youth Center</u>	<u>Child Development Center</u>