



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams, CSJFTC Public Affairs
Children who attended the Kid’s Annual Training at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center had the chance to watch the M1A1 Abrams main battle tank show off its capabilities at the Mobilization And Training Equipment Site (MATES) June 25.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kenny Hatten, CSJFTC Public Affairs
Marching in formation, the “Rifles” head toward the control tower at the Camp Shelby Air to Ground Range in order to get a better view of the aviation assets scheduled to fly over during Kids AT 2013.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kenny Hatten, CSJFTC Public Affairs
At left, Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Mario Estevane, a rescue swimmer with ATC-Mobile, demonstrates rescue equipment for Kids AT campers at the Air Guard Day event on the Camp Shelby Air to Ground Range.

KIDS

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“Jayhawk” Search and Rescue helicopter and Air Force F-16 fighter jets conducted a fly over, with the helicopter landing for campers to explore and get an opportunity to meet the aircrew.

“I feel really good about coming out to help with the Kids AT here at Camp Shelby,” said Petty Officer 2nd Class Mario Estevane, a rescue swimmer with Coast Guard Aviation Training Center – Mobile. “This is a great opportunity to teach the kids about our equipment, show what our capabilities are and spread the word about what we do as Coast Guard Aviators.”

Additional aviation assets were there to showcase their skills for the campers, including the 238th Air Support Operations Squadron from Meridian, the Combat Readiness Training Center, 209th Civil Engineer Squadron and 255th Air Control Squadron all from Gulfport.

“We’ve been doing Kids AT for several years, and we always try to come out and support the event because it gives us a chance to bring out equipment like thermal imagers, laser marking devices and radios to show the kids a little bit of what we do as Forward Air Controllers,” said Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Tim Mills, of the 238th Air Support Operations Squadron. “The kids

love it, especially the thermal imagers and gear displays, and I hope we can keep this great program going in the future.”

Special guests attending during Aviation Day included Deborah Collins, wife of Mississippi Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Augustus L. Collins.

“The children are the best part of these summer camps, and I love being here with them,” said Collins.

Each year, the Kids AT summer camps require intensive planning and preparation, and it’s the job of the coordinators, staff and volunteers to make things happen.

“Part of my job is to coordinate this camp. We do retreats throughout the year and other events. We plan child and youth military activities throughout the year,” said Jan Reeves, Mississippi National Guard Child and Youth Coordinator. “This camp takes about five months to plan. It’s a process, but I plan it, the volunteers carry it out and they have done an amazing job, because everything went smoothly.”

Reeves said that the camps and other events are a great way for National Guard members and their children to share a little of each others’ experiences.

“The camp gives them a chance to go home and talk to their parents about what they have learned here,” she said. “It gives them a chance to connect with each other; their parents went through basic training so it gives them something to share and talk about.”



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