

The Power of the Humvee

SCHOOL PROGRAM REVS UP FOR RECRUITING

By Natalya Minkovsky

DID YOU KNOW that Arnold Schwarzenegger was the first civilian to own a Hummer H1, the off-road vehicle modeled on the military's high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV)? Since 1992, when the governor of California—then an actor starring in *Terminator 2*—purchased the vehicle, the Hummer's popularity has grown, and there are now three models on the road.

But the original HMMWV, also known as a Humvee, stands out from its civilian counterpart with unique features you will not see at any car dealership. Ballistics protection? Check. Sixty-inch deep water fording? Check. Blackout lighting mode? Check.

The Humvee's "wow factor" is what inspired SFC Dwayne Barker of the Indiana Army National Guard to start bringing the vehicle to schools. "Here in Indiana, Humvees are one of the coolest things these kids have ever seen," he said. And it opened doors with educators as well. After SFC Barker started bringing the vehicle to automotive technology classes, other teachers began to ask what additional technology and innovation the Guard had to offer their students.

"I'm sure there were other recruiters across the nation doing the same thing," SFC Barker said. "As recruiters, we have to be original and come up with new ways to interact with the students. With a lunchroom setup you don't get the same kind of one-on-one as you do in a classroom."

SFC Barker continued, "The Humvee has been sitting around in motor pools for years, so it was a no-cost way to get students excited and motivated. Once you've been in their classroom and built a rapport, the next time you're at the school you're not a stranger to the students anymore."

SFC Barker shared his successes with other recruiters on his team, including SFC Lloyd Bowers, who is now the School Programs Manager at the Strength Maintenance Division of the National Guard Bureau (NGB-ASM).

"Being in a place where I could influence a program that would benefit recruiters, building a program around the Humvee seemed like the

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>> Debby Jarrell,
Highland Springs Technical Center instructor

perfect fit," SFC Bowers said. "It's not reinventing the wheel. Pretty much every Soldier has used the vehicle. A standardized program enhances what recruiters are already doing, and makes it easier for them to wrap their arms around this tool to which they all have access."



SFC Gregory Spiker (left) and SFC Juan Valdez present the HUMVEE School Program to automotive technology students during the video shoot at the Highland Springs Technical Center.

That is how the HUMVEE School Program, which launched in April, was born. From automotive engineering to vehicle maintenance, the program exposes students at vocational-technical schools, schools with automotive classes and junior/technical colleges to the many career paths offered.

For students interested in vehicle maintenance careers, learning about Humvee history and technology is a unique learning experience. The program also provides students in the National

Automotive Technicians Education Foundation's (NATEF) certification program with hands-on experience in areas including suspension and steering, engine performance, brakes and preventive maintenance.

A recruiter can present the HUMVEE School Program to up to 40 students, with one or more educators in attendance. The length of the presentation can be tailored to the school; NGB-ASM developed lesson plans that cover 45 minutes, 90 minutes and two hours.

Developed with the M998 series HMMWV as the baseline, the program offers recruiters the tools they need to bring a Humvee to a school, demonstrate the vehicle's innovation and technology, and involve the students in hands-on preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS). Classroom materials include a 15-minute video about the vehicle, lesson plans, student manuals, PMCS checklist and certificate of completion.

Also included on the DVD recruiters can order from Mission Zone are a variety of bonus materials for promoting the program to educators, including a preview video, one-page lesson overview, flyer and posters. There is also a program Web site with videos, Flash presentations and downloads.

While developing the program, the Guard shot a promotional video in the automotive technology classroom of Highland Springs Technical Center in Highland Springs, VA. Since the video depicts recruiters presenting the program to a group of students, by participating in the video shoot, the school got a sneak peek at the program. The educators at the tech center, including the instructors, school counselor and principal, watched the filming and liked what they saw.

"The HUMVEE School Program gets students excited about real-world opportunities," said Debby Jarrell, a Highland Springs Technical Center instructor who watched recruiters from the Virginia National Guard present the program during the video shoot.

"It's a really nice way for the students to get engaged, and the teacher can step back and watch other people present a program," said Brad Beazley, career and technical education specialist for Henrico County Public Schools. "It benefits the teacher as well as the students."

For more information about the HUMVEE School Program visit HumveeSchoolProgram.com. **GX**