



HIGHLIGHTING:

## TEAM EGLIN'S SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER

By Natalie Dozier 96 FSS Marketing

Elaine LaJeunesse, Team Eglin's School Liaison Officer (SLO) who services total force members, has a clear passion for ensuring that military kids get the best possible education. As the SLO, she helps each military family that comes through Eglin in finding the right schools and programs to meet the family's educational needs.

LaJeunesse is the vital communication and support link between installation leadership, military families, schools and surrounding communities. She advocates, advises and promotes communication between local K-12 schools in Okaloosa, Walton, Santa Rosa, Escambia and Bay counties and the families she assists.

"I promote parental involvement in their children's education," she said, "and I identify barriers to academic success and develop solutions, in partnership with local schools and the military-connected families, to overcome the obstacles and support successful educations and school transitions."

LaJeunesse encourages all of her families to "contact your SLO before you go!" Once an

incoming family connects with a sponsor, she recommends researching local schools and requirements by looking at the websites for the Florida Department of Education, the respective school district and the schools within that district. She emphasizes the importance of reviewing the accountability and academic grades for potential schools. In addition to informing families about public school options, she assists families in learning about private, home and other available schooling options.

LaJeunesse recommends that parents familiarize themselves with the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3). MIC3 was created to remove barriers to educational success that are imposed by the frequent moves and deployments that military families experience. The focus is on enrollment, placement, attendance, eligibility and graduation, and the goal is to make transitions between states as smooth as possible.

When it's time to leave Eglin, she introduces outgoing families to one of 83 other SLOs in the Air Force or to a SLO in a sister service. She ensures that the military families she assists

are connected and cared for throughout their time in service by providing a "warm hand-off" to wherever the families are going.

"Military kids bring a diversity of experience and knowledge to their social environments. Empowered by their resiliency, courage and adaptability, these kids overcome adversity and positively impact their surroundings," she said. "Our kids serve, too!"

Throughout April, schools and organizations on and off base celebrate "Month of the Military Child" with special activities, programs and events that highlight the sacrifices and contributions made by military kids around the world. It's something LaJeunesse and 96 Test Wing leadership care deeply about—recognizing and honoring the service of military-connected kids.

For more information or assistance, LaJeunesse encourages families to reach out to her directly. The SLO office is located in Suite 252 (2nd floor) of Bldg 210 on Van Matre Avenue. To set up an appointment, please call 850-882-4319 or email [elaine.lajeunesse@us.af.mil](mailto:elaine.lajeunesse@us.af.mil).