



**18th Engineer Brigade
United States Army
Unit 29060
APO AE 09081**

PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
RELEASE: 2011-05-19**

May 19, 2011

18th Engineers support Adopt-A-School program

Story by Spc. Aislinn M. Amig, 18th Eng. Bde. Public Affairs

HEIDELBERG, Germany – Up until a few weeks ago, many Soldiers from the 18th Engineer Brigade, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, thought they may have been smarter than a fifth grader. They are familiar with the popular television show and usually know all of the answers. That was until they began volunteering at the Heidelberg Middle School as part of the Adopt-A-School program.

Soldiers assigned to the unit began visiting the school on a weekly basis since early March to provide extra teaching assistance to the faculty while interacting with the students.

The program was developed to enhance the student's learning environment and improve their quality of education by drawing on the resources and expertise of the Army.

Single Soldiers sometimes miss the comforts of home and family and enjoy spending time with children. When they heard about the Adopt-A-School program, many were excited about the opportunity to help children both educationally and socially while showing off their various talents. As it turns out, the students in Glenda Johnson's sixth grade class had plenty of knowledge to share with them.

"Most of the time the kids end up teaching me a thing or two about math," said Spc. Daniel Rubio, a transportation specialist for 18th Eng. Bde. from Southampton, N.Y. and whose strengths are in the world of science and history. "It's fun. I'd really like to get the chance to do science experiments with them sometime."

Not every experience at the school is strictly educational though. A lot of the students are dealing with frequent moves, deployed parents and stressors within the military community. They just need someone to talk to or share their stories with.

"He was good company," said Hunter Sheppard, a sixth grade student from Brandon, Fla., referring to his mentor Sgt. Richard Boudreaux, a technical engineer specialist with the 18th Eng Bde. from New Iberia, La. Sheppard said he enjoys the opportunity to concentrate and do his homework over his lunch period so that he can relax and read books after school.

"I found that if I can provide a time for my students to do their homework during the day, over their lunch period, getting homework turned in on time isn't a problem," said Johnson, a native of St. Simons Island, Ga.

So while it may be easy for the school faculty at the Heidelberg Middle School to witness the benefits Soldiers bring to their students, what few people experience are the benefits the children have on the hearts of the Soldiers.

“They love it!” said Johnson. “I saw one of my students smile for the first time this year when she was interacting with the Soldiers. This program does wonders for the kids’ self esteem.”

“This shows the community that we care about their children and their futures,” added Rubio.



Spc. Daniel Rubio, a transportation specialist with 18th Engineer Brigade, from Southampton, N.Y., assists Hannah Cornish, a sixth grader at Heidelberg Middle School and daughter of Jeffery Thomas, with her algebra homework during the Adopt-A-School program, April 20. Soldiers from the 18th Eng. Bde. have partnered with HMS to assist the students with their studies and provide them with mentorship. (Photo by Spc. Aislinn M. Amig, 18th Eng. Bde. Public Affairs)



Sgt. 1st Class Alejandro Deprat, the Equal Opportunity Advisor for 18th Engineer Brigade, from Houston, Texas, works on completing algebra equations with Tomi Pollard, a sixth grade student at Heidelberg Middle School and son of Angela Salvi, April 20. Soldiers from the 18th Eng. Bde. routinely visit the school to assist students with their assignments and provide mentorship as part of the Adopt-A-School program. (Photo by Spc. Aislinn M. Amig, 18th Eng. Bde. Public Affairs)



Spc. Aislinn Amig, an 18th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs Soldier, works with Robin Cole, a sixth grade student at Heidelberg Middle School and son of Sgt. Bradley Cole on completing algebra equations as part of the Adopt-A-School program, April 27. Soldiers from the 18th Eng. Bde. partnered with the HMS, and routinely visit the school to assist students with their assignments and provide mentorship. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Alejandro Deprat, 18th Eng. Bde.)



Sgt. Richard Boudreaux, a technical engineer specialist with 18th Engineer Brigade from New Iberia, La., helps Ireland Moss, a sixth grade student at Heidelberg Middle School and daughter of Pamela Moss, with a homework assignment as part of the Adopt-A-School program in early April. The 18th Eng. Bde. has partnered with HMS as part of the initiative to improve the students' quality of education by drawing on the resources and expertise of the Army. (Photo by Glenda Johnson, Heidelberg Middle School Faculty)