

2023 Marine Corps Executive Forum



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WASHINGTON – The U.S. Marine Corps Communication Directorate hosted the Marine Corps Executive Forum (MCEF) around the National Capital Region on Friday, August 25. MCEF is a day-long program providing civilian leaders and business executives an opportunity to experience the Marine Corps firsthand, learning the immense capabilities of the individual Marine – an honorable, courageous, and professional warrior who’s committed to serving the Nation and its citizens.

“The values of honor, courage, and commitment, not to mention the courtesy, professionalism, and confidence just shine through the Marines,” said Andrew Simpson, owner and CEO of Players Fitness and Performance. “I really can’t tell who’s the higher-ranking Marine versus who’s just getting started because you all carry the same demeanor and embody the same values.”

Since 2006, the program has exposed civilian leaders from across the U.S. to the Marine Corps’ operational capabilities, current programs, and future initiatives. During the program, participants are provided an inside look at the Marine Corps lifestyle and partake in activities, becoming immersed in the culture while engaging with Marines.

Upon arrival, participants toured various locations, learning the history, role, and capabilities of the Corps, as well as getting to know the Marines. The forum included a tour of the Pentagon with an open discussion with Marine Corps leadership on the Corps' key issues and priorities, a live-fire demonstration at the Weapons Field Training Battalion in Quantico, an MV-22 Osprey familiarization flight, a tour of the National Museum of the Marine Corps, and attendance at an Evening Parade at Marine Barracks Washington – home of the Silent Drill Platoon and the Marine Corps Drum and Bugle Corps.

According to Jessica Easley, a program manager with Mcleod Centers for Wellbeing, she recognized the Marine Corps' significant value in the qualities and specific characteristics exhibited by those recruited into its ranks.

Easley continues to explain that amidst talking with other civilian business leaders attending MCEF, these factors underscore the desire to have a person with such attributes working within their organizations. Furthermore, Easley explained that the presence of Marine Corps experience on an individual's resume would be someone she would want to hire immediately. The principles and values of a Marine resonated strongly with Simpson as well.

"I've already been sending my team messages about leadership and things that I've learned today," said Simpson. "I will be taking back the core values you all have. Today, I've seen how those values truly shape your culture, and it's trickled down to each Marine. It seems to me that principle alone is going to be invaluable to our organization and team."

Ultimately, MCEF is an opportunity to strengthen the connection between Marines and civilian leaders from business, academia, sports, community, and faith-based organizations

throughout the country. Before today, many MCEF guests have not had the chance to meet or engage with Marines. Therefore, this day presents a chance for Marines to reach the civilian populace and is crucial to the Corps' relationship with the American Public. It grants the opportunity to demonstrate that the Marine Corps is comprised of everyday individuals, each with their own unique story, filled with the drive to be a part of something bigger than themselves.

"I've always had such a great respect for the military, especially the Marines, because of their courageousness and how they hold themselves as individuals and as a group," said Easley. "After going through this experience, I can't wait to go home and share all of this with people in my community because these are the kind of people that I'm so glad are our 9-1-1 response who are going out, saving us and taking care of our country."

The MCEF has concluded for the 2023 season, but interested individuals are still encouraged to apply for next year's forums, slated to begin in May 2024.

For more information and to apply or nominate a civilian leader for the program, visit www.marines.mil/Community/ and click on Marine Corps Executive Forum under the Community tab to download the application or nomination package.