

“Own The Ground You WALK On” Workshop
MacDill AFB – May 11, 2010
Event Report

Attendees: Deb Kloeppe, Christina Cummings, and Emily Burton

The “Own The Ground You WALK On” workshop presented by Deb Kloeppe, was a huge success. Angie Fields of the Airman and Family Readiness Center introduced MSCCN to kick off the workshop. Deb then introduced Emily Burton (asking her to share her personal story), Christina Cummings, and MSCCN’s special guest, Carmenza Jaramillo-Akers of the University of Phoenix, whom Deb made an honorary spouse for the day. With the small turnout of 11 spouses, the workshop quickly converted from a presentation for 65 participants to an intimate and highly interactive discussion.

Deb got started right away by asking every participant to tell the group, without thinking, to tell her their dream. By doing this exercise we learned that the room was filled with a former business owner, a lawyer, many with a Bachelor’s degree and higher. There were many big dreams mentioned but there was a common thread connecting them all and that was to help others and/or help the community locally or globally to be a better place.

The workshop broke away as we were invited to sit in on the Commander’s Briefing for a group of incoming Airmen and their families. An overview of MacDill AFB including the services provided was given. Later, approximately 20 Airmen and a couple spouses took up our invitation to join our group for lunch.

Coming back to the workshop we dove into several different topics including the keynote address. Deb explained the hula hoops on the table and asked each of them to take a moment to think about who’s “in” and who’s “out” of their hula hoop. Individual attention was given to the spouses as group brainstorming sessions came into play when questions about applying to jobs and networking opportunities for some spouses in specific fields. Angie Fields later joined the discussion when the topic of interviewing came up, giving great advice about going to the company the day before to observe the employees and their culture.

Overall, you could see that the workshop had touched lives and made a difference in those who attended. Deb closed the workshop by explaining the importance of having a business card and an elevator speech. Deb had everyone fill out their business card, ensuring that the correct pieces of information were included. She then followed up with the elevator speech, giving an example of why it is so important. From that point, she gave the floor to each of the participants to say their elevator speech, which some did with great emotion.