

## **Observation Post: News: Raise GT score with college prep class**

**Raise GT score with college prep class** – Story by Lance Cpl. Lauren A. Kurkimilis

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Every Marine is held to a set of standards, physically and mentally. Every unit is responsible for ensuring their troops are physically fit and can meet certain standards. However, it is an individual Marine's responsibility to seek higher education and intellectually develop themselves.

The Combat Center's Base Education Office, in conjunction with Copper Mountain College, provides military members and their families a way to improve their academic skills through the Military Academic Skills Program.

"MASP was originally a means whereby Marines could raise their GT scores to allow them to change military occupational specialty or to improve their chances for promotion," said Randy Fischer, MASP English teacher. "But in recent years the overwhelming majority of our students are those who are separating from the Corps or those who want, while still in the Corps, to begin college work and feel the need to brush up on their basic skills."

The class has recently grown in popularity and in some cases they have had to create a waiting list for the next class, Fischer said.

"I decided to take it because I'm going to go to college," said Cpl. Paul M. Childers, field radio operator, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment. "I went through the application process and got accepted, so I just wanted to get back into the school mindset. I needed a refresher after being out of school for four years." The class is completely free-of-charge. The only thing you'll have to spend is time and energy toward learning. The course is four weeks long, and classes run Monday through Friday in Building 1526. "Math is held in the morning from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m., and English is in the afternoon from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.," Fischer said.

To sign up, you'll need to obtain a contract from Copper Mountain College Base Programs Office in Building 1526 that will need to be signed by your command, giving you permission to be absent from work to attend the classes.

"As far as the Department of Defense is concerned, the entire parameter is pre and post," said Fischer. "They want to see a dramatic improvement between a test taken in the beginning of the course and a similar test taken at the end, and we achieve that."

The program accepts students with high school level academic skills down to elementary school levels.

"The average improvement in scores is really significant, in fact it's dramatic," said Fischer. "They'll jump typically three, four and five grade levels along the course of this class. Our goal is to get them up to 12.9, which is the first year of college."

MASP teachers are highly qualified and curriculum caters to a wide spectrum of learning levels and styles.

"We are all adjunct teachers, which is to say that we are contracted by Copper Mountain College to come out here and teach the Marines," Fischer said. "The teachers vary in teaching styles, and we are all required to have a Master's Degree." "The teachers are all different and very personable," Childers said. "They all have different ways of teaching, which for me was good. I can sit there and listen to them. They're interesting and intelligent, which helped me a lot."

For more information contact CMC Base Programs Office at 830-6133. The next orientations for upcoming classes will be held on May 14, 2012.