

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Anne Murata, Director of Marketing  
808-441-1013; 808-375-9577 (cell)

[Anne@PacificAviationMuseum.org](mailto:Anne@PacificAviationMuseum.org)

Laurie LaGrange  
Ontai-LaGrange And Associates  
808-375-9335 (cell)  
ontai@pixi.com

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**Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor Brings Middle School Students from Virginia and Japan Together For “Discover Pearl Harbor” Youth Program**

PEARL HARBOR, HI – On December 7, 1941, Ford Island transformed into a major battlefield as bombs dropped during the Pearl Harbor attack. On March 27, 2018, Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor on Ford Island served as a gathering place for two middle schools, located almost 7,000 miles apart and 77 years ago, would likely have considered each other enemies of war.

The Museum’s “Discover Pearl Harbor” multi-day youth program hosted students from Rocky Run Middle School (Fairfax County, Virginia) and Tezukayama Middle School (Osaka, Japan), where they participated in hands-on aviation-related STEM activities, learned about the history of Pearl Harbor, and most importantly, came together to explore the themes of reconciliation and peace.

For Jamie Sawatzky, Rocky Run’s social studies teacher and a 2012 Virginia Regional Teacher Of The Year, this experience served as the perfect complement to his school’s history curriculum. Sawatzky has made it his mission to engage students with hands-on lessons that let them interact with the past in hopes of inspiring their future.

In addition to STEM activities and a historic tour of the Museum, Rocky Run students visited historic World War II sites, including the USS *Bowfin* and the USS *Arizona* Memorial, and spent two nights

onboard the USS *Missouri*.

“We are extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to bring these schools together in friendship,” said Shauna Tonkin, Director of Education, Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor. “Not only did these students learn about the history of WWII and the role science and technology played during this era, but they learned the importance of peace, gaining a better understanding and respect for cultures that are different than theirs.”

During 2017 alone, Pacific Aviation Museum’s education programs reached nearly 40,000 students. In addition to Discover Pearl Harbor, the Museum also offers school/ youth Field Trips; Barnstorming Tours; STEM camps; Scouting Programs; and public programs, using the Museum’s historic hangars as a backdrop for real-life learning. For more information on these programs, go to [www.pacificaviationmuseum.org/education](http://www.pacificaviationmuseum.org/education) or call 808-445-9137.

Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. Its mission is to develop and maintain an internationally recognized aviation museum on Historic Ford Island that educates young and old alike, honors aviators and their support personnel who defended freedom in The Pacific Region, and to preserve Pacific aviation history.

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