BAE SYSTEMS BOOSTS CHARITY FUNDRAISING TO SUPPORT DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

Saturday 24 June, 2023

The Ulysses Trust, a charity that supports adventurous activities for the UK's Volunteer Reserve and Cadet Forces, has today reached two significant milestones. First, with renewed support of BAE Systems, the Trust's New Horizons fundraising campaign (launched in 2020 to meet the growing need for support for cadets) has crossed the £2 million threshold. Secondly, The Ulysses Trust has now supported more than 3,000 expeditions.

BAE Systems has pledged to provide grants totaling £100,000 over three years to support the Ulysses Trust, with a donation of £50,000 awarded on the eve of Armed Forces Day 2023 at the RAF Club in London. This was presented by BAE Systems' Sir Andy Pulford to The Ulysses Trust Chair, AVM Nick Kurth. This donation highlights BAE Systems' ongoing commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, The Ulysses Trust and the nation's cadets. The funds provided by BAE Systems will be used by The Ulysses Trust to award grants to Army, Sea, and RAF Air Cadet units across the UK, enabling young people to participate in adventurous activities such as sailing, trekking, climbing, and canoeing.

Since its establishment in 1992, The Ulysses Trust specifically focuses on ensuring that cadets from disadvantaged backgrounds benefit from such opportunities to develop characteristics such as leadership, confidence, teamwork, initiative, self-discipline, and judgment.

BAE Systems' Sir Andy Pulford said, *"BAE Systems is extremely proud of its relationship with the Ulysses Trust and is delighted to be able to continue supporting, through the Trust, the important work of the cadet and reserve forces organisations in the United Kingdom."*

The Ulysses Trusts' Chair, AVM Nick Kurth CBE FRGS said, *"I am delighted that this important partnership between BAE Systems and The Ulysses Trust continues; it will provide much needed assistance to the UK's young people at a time when things are very difficult for a number of households. The Trust wants to be in a position such that these life changing opportunities are not denied to individuals on grounds of cost."*

The Trust's fundraising campaign target is to raise £2.5 million for cadet expeditions. Despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trust has made significant progress with the help of donors like BAE Systems. The launch of the campaign coincided with the start of the pandemic when lockdowns blighted many young people's social and educational development. Challenging pursuits in the great outdoors do much to compensate for this. For individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, these expeditions hold the potential to be life changing. The cadet movement itself has also faced difficulties during the pandemic, with training being heavily restricted and recruitment becoming impossible. As the cadet movement works towards regeneration, it is essential to offer exciting and challenging programmes that can attract newcomers, with expeditions playing a crucial role.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the Ulysses Trust has awarded grants to 74 expeditions in the UK and overseas, benefiting 2,141 cadets. The on-going cost-of-living crisis, however, has made it challenging for many families to afford basic household bills, let alone covering the costs of dependent children participating in expeditions. The Ulysses Trust's support of cadets is therefore more important than ever, and the social impact of BAE Systems' commitment should not be under-estimated.

An example of one of the many cadets supported by the Trust is Cadet L Cpl Nicola Chumber from Pioneer Academy CCF who went on an expedition to Snowdonia in 2022 supported by The Ulysses Trust, *"I have learnt not to be afraid of trying new things and to challenge myself further. I went out of my comfort zone and did things that I thought I would never do... I have gained skills such as self-commitment, confidence, willingness to try new things, taking risks, taking on different challenges and greater responsibility."*

The Ulysses Trust welcomes applications from cadet, reservist and university officer units seeking financial assistance for their own expeditions. The Trust also welcomes donations to help support others to benefit from these life-changing experiences. Find out more or make a donation via www.ulyssestrust.co.uk

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