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## King of Jordan surprises students in Hobart

*Students from across the U.S. and Jordan who were attending a leadership program in Hobart, OK, met Jordan's King Abdullah II on Wednesday.*

By Brandon Goodwin

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HOBART— Students from all across the United States and Jordan gathered in Hobart on Wednesday for a leadership session and were surprised by a visit from the King of Jordan.

King Abdullah II made the unofficial trip to speak with the students who are part of the Four Star Debate program, formed by retired Gen. Tommy Franks, a close friend of the king.

In brief remarks, the king spoke about the importance of education as a key to produce positive change.

In particular, the king cited examples of the “Arab Spring,” the democratic movement driven by youth leadership that is sweeping through the Middle East. The movement toppled regimes in Egypt and Tunisia.

Noor Masannat, a Jordanian student from Amman, said she was a fan of the king.

“Everyone in Jordan loves him,” Masannat said.

She said while many other Middle Eastern countries were going through revolutions, nothing severe happened in Jordan.

Masannat, a student at King's Academy, said Abdullah visits her school frequently and gives speeches to the students about improving themselves through academics.

The king also remarked about the importance of leadership, something Franks focused on in his speech to the group earlier that day.

Franks, a four-star general and former commander of the U.S. Central Command, said that all 44 students in the audience had received great honors, but with those accolades come opportunities to excel further.

“Along with great opportunity comes great responsibility,” Franks said. “Those who step up to that responsibility gain reputations for being patriots, servants, leaders.”

He continued by giving examples of his reactions during the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. He said he was in Greece at the time of the attack when his boss, Donald Rumsfeld, called and asked him a tough question.

“He said, ‘What are you going to do about it?’” Franks said.

Franks said as the students grow older and take leadership roles, they will be faced with harder and harder questions.

“At some point, you, as a leader, are going to answer a question like that,” he said.

The six-day program brings students to Oklahoma Christian University to speak with leaders from across the state and world and to hold a debate at the end of the program.

On Wednesday, the program took the students to Hobart to listen to the speakers and tour the General Tommy Franks Leadership Institute and Museum and the Kiowa County Historical Museum.

Broken Arrow High School student Heath Rosenberger said the program gave him opportunities to meet leaders like Gov. Mary Fallin for the first time.

The 16-year-old rising junior said meeting Franks was a special opportunity.

“When I’ve talked to him, he feels like he’s your grandpa.”

Cameron West, a 17-year-old from Mona, Utah, said he found out about the program from older students on his debate team.

“I figured coming here that debate was going to help me with leadership,” West said. “But with all the speakers that have been speaking about character and teamwork, it’s exactly opposite.”