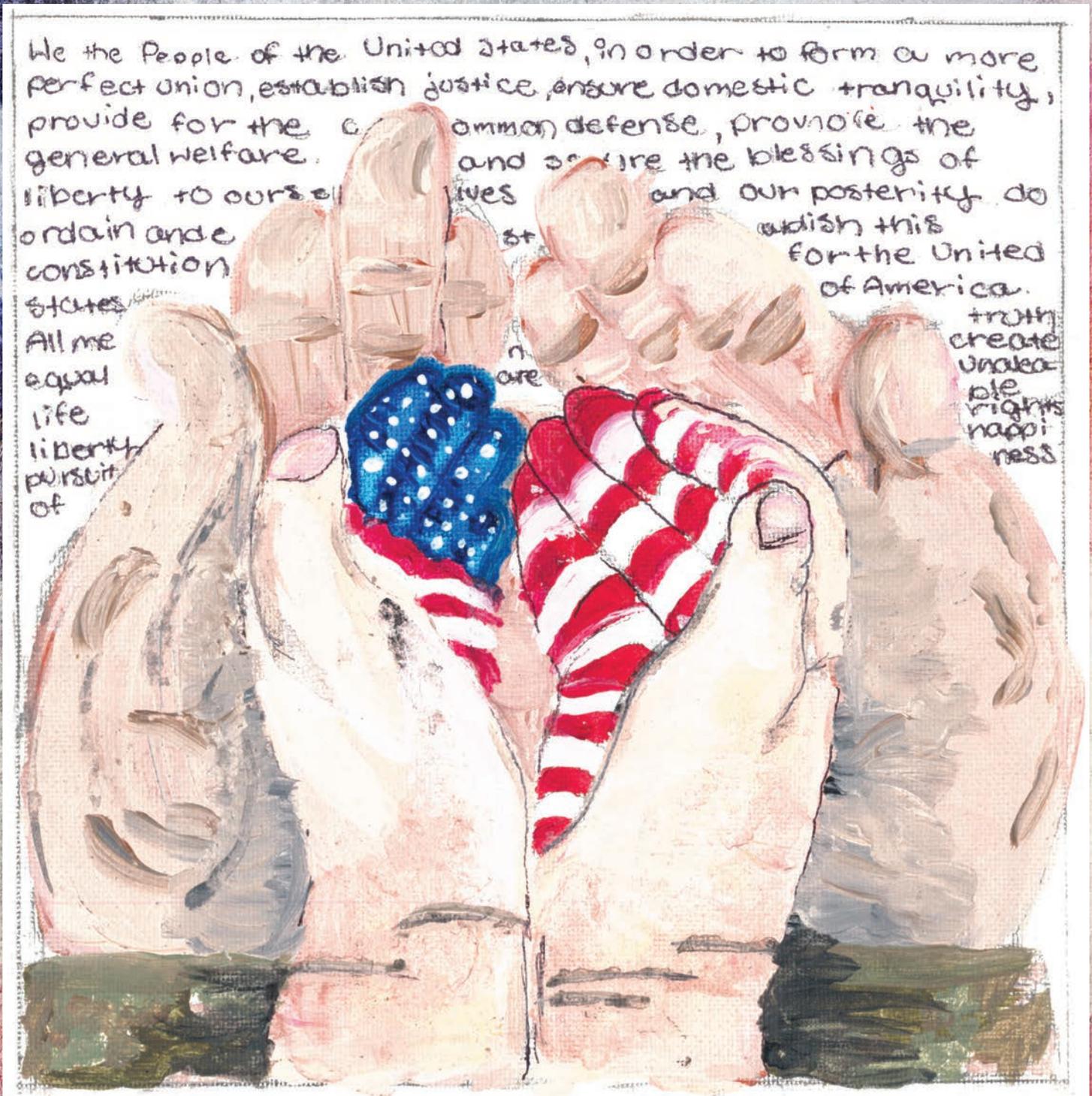


# ON THE *move*<sup>®</sup>

the official magazine of the Military Child Education Coalition<sup>®</sup>





# The Military Child Education Coalition

## VISION STATEMENT:

To serve as a model of positive leadership and advocacy for ensuring inclusive, quality educational opportunities for all military-connected children.

## MISSION STATEMENT:

To ensure inclusive, quality educational opportunities for all military-connected children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition.

## GOALS:

1. Provide responsive and relevant support systems, resources, and products.
2. Expand the MCEC outreach through engagement, advocacy, and partnerships.
3. Execute a strategic communications plan.
4. Build a strong, sustainable, and financially sound organization.

Awarded the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance National Charity Seal - demonstrates MCEC commitment to ethical practices and full accountability



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The Independent Charities Seal of Excellence is awarded to the members of Independent Charities of America and Local Independent Charities of America that have, upon rigorous independent review, been able to certify, document, and demonstrate on an annual basis that they meet the highest standards of public accountability, program effectiveness, and cost effectiveness. These standards include those required by the U.S. Government for inclusion in the Combined Federal Campaign, probably the most exclusive fund drive in the world. Of the 1,000,000 charities operating in the United States today, it is estimated that fewer than 50,000, or 5 percent, meet or exceed these standards, and, of those, fewer than 2,000 have been awarded this Seal.

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### ON THE MOVE

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# tableofcontents

## FEATURES

# 4

### Psychological Relief Work in Nepal

Former military child travels to Nepal to provide psychological relief services to the youth and families there.



# 36

### Their Story, Our Mission: NTS addresses Cyberbullying

A panel of experts weighed in on the concerns, dangers, and results of this imperious form of harassment, relaying the importance of putting a stop to this detrimental practice.



 Denotes Science Advisory Board Member

## aboutthecover:

“Star Spangled Legacy”  
Vanessa, Grade 6  
Virginia Beach Middle School  
Virginia Beach, VA  
U.S. Air Force &  
National Guard or Reserve



*I created this work in dedication to my mother who is an airman. She gives me a sense of patriotism, and I know why I am proud to be an American. Therefore, I titled my work, Star Spangled Legacy, because her legacy will forever be honored by me. When I see this art, I see the hands of a military parent, holding his child's hands. Within the hands of the child is an American flag. This means that military children inherit their parent's legacy of loving America and fighting for our freedom. I am inspired by our nation's flag, and my mother as well as her pride, to be an airman for the United States of America.*

## WHAT ELSE IS INSIDE

### making a difference



- 6 Carol Dweck Revisits the 'Growth Mindset'
- 9 Going for Gold
- 10 Serving Military Kids is a Passion
- 11 MCEC Professional Development News

### inspiration through perseverance



- 13 Making Good Choices
- 14 Working Hard and Taking Names
- 15 New Students Welcomed Here
- 16 Family & Comedy Aid Veteran's Recovery
- 18 Poetry Reflects Family's Experience
- 20 The Pursuit of Happiness
- 22 British Military Lifestyle Rewarding

### what's trending in education



- 26 Six Major Trends in College Admissions
- 28 How Students Perceive Community Colleges
- 30 How Will Our Next Generation Learn Science?



- 33 Roll Out the Welcome Mat
- 34 Make Kindness Go Viral
- 38 Cyberbullies and Our Legal System

### igniting the spark



- 40 Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program
- 42 Speedometry™ Makes Physics Fun
- 44 Sponsors Set Tone

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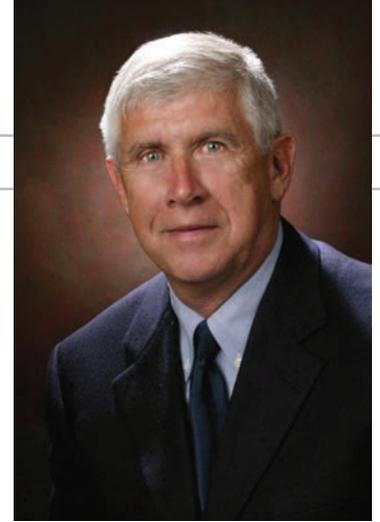
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## THANK YOU »

**After 6 years** as the Chairman of the Board of Directors, General (Ret) Benjamin Griffin, will retire at the end of 2015. General Griffin has played a fundamental role in the continued development and growth of MCEC and the children we serve. His dedication to uphold the mission of MCEC and improve the lives of military and veteran-connected children is both inspiring and admirable. We would like to thank General Griffin for his years of service, both to MCEC and our country. He will be truly missed and we wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.



## The Value of Professional Development

TONI KAY, MEd  
School Psychologist, PSI Associates, Twinsburg, Ohio

On February 5, 2009, Toni Kay attended the MCEC *Living in the New Normal* professional development training in Apple Valley, California. Little did she know that just 2 years later, she would bury her son who was killed while serving in Iraq.

Toni knew her son was stationed at an extremely dangerous base, but it did not make it any less difficult to learn the fate of her child. "When the news comes, it's still difficult to understand the enormity of the loss; not only for myself, but to my family and to our nation," explained Toni.

In a candid letter to Dr. Mary Keller, chief executive officer, Toni explained how the seminar she had taken 2 years earlier affected her. "Your seminar crossed my mind many, many times during the time of intense grief I suffered, as I walked through the experience, and even now as I continue to walk through it." She continued by offering her services to MCEC as not only an experienced psychologist, but as a mother of a son who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT »



Most of us can relate to being new - to a workplace, a neighborhood, or a school - and we remember the mix of feelings that accompany transition. New beginnings are familiar to military kids, and they can come at any time of the school year since military families can receive orders to move at any given time. Being the perpetual new kid brings opportunities to make new friends and learn about new places, but it can also be stressful.

In what we call the “fragile first two weeks,” MCEC works with educators, administrators, parents, and students to encourage a welcoming environment that fosters learning for all students. When a student feels accepted, they are far more receptive to challenging themselves academically. In this issue you can read unique perspectives from students, educators and parents about support systems that help ensure our military kids are college, career and life-ready. On page 4, Dr. Ron Palomares, MCEC Science Advisory Board member and Assistant Professor at Texas Woman’s University, recalls his childhood on an Army post in the Panama Canal Zone and draws from that experience during his relief efforts in Nepal.

Our students also weigh in on setting goals and overcoming challenges (pages 9, 13-15) to become leaders in their school communities. High school senior Sharod Farmer reflects a maturity beyond his years having gone through three deployments with his Active Duty mother, sharing,

*“I learned how to trust others in their own abilities. Being a leader doesn’t mean doing everything for others. You have to leave some responsibility in their hands.”*

We are so very proud to be a part of the collaborative efforts to strengthen support systems for our military and veteran children, offer programs and services to ensure they are ready for life’s next academic steps, and influence policies to ensure their success.

Thank you for joining us on this journey...for the sake of the child.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary M. Keller".

Dr. Mary M. Keller  
President and CEO, Military Child Education Coalition



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Ms. Kirsten White



# Psychological Relief Work in Nepal by a Veteran and Grown-Up Military-Connected



RONALD S. PALOMARES, PHD SAB  
Texas Woman's University  
MCEC Science Advisory Board Member

up with me traveling halfway around the world to provide psychological support to children and families in Nepal who had suffered through two major earthquakes this past April and May? It is because of my MFLC services that I connected with a colleague who now heads a non-profit organization providing psychological relief services around the world (Elisabeth Scheffer & Associates). My colleague was in Nepal soon after the earthquakes for a short period and contacted me to see if I would be available to continue her work. As an Assistant Professor at Texas Woman's University, I had part of the summer free and was soon on a plane to Nepal.

I met with Nepalese students and staff at their schools, as well as families and villagers, discussing

**W**hile growing up on a U.S. Army post in the Canal Zone (Panama), I saw first-hand the poverty and the harsh conditions people in a third world country survive in. But I also learned how people are the same no matter where they grow up or how impoverished they may be. I discovered an overarching goodness in everyone and the desire to help one another, even when our language and cultures were different. My own service in the U.S. Air Force kept me confined to the Midwest, where our ICBMs are located, so it has then become an important part of my professional life today as a psychologist to seek opportunities to support military children and families wherever I can.

That is why I am so proud to be a member of the MCEC Science Advisory Board. It is also why I have periodically served as a Military and Family Life Consultant (MFLC). As a MFLC, I presented on various psychological aspects of the deployment cycle, self-care and resilience during pre- and post-deployment briefings. I was also

given the opportunity to directly support our troops immediately after the shooting in Fort Hood and twice in Germany helping children and families with soldiers deployed.

From my varied and wide-ranging experiences, I have found that the unique

## ...being immersed in different worlds a wide variety of cultural traditions ma

experiences a military-connected child has while growing up on a military base and the "opportunity" to travel all over develops within them a sense of resilience and respect for people of many cultures, experiences and backgrounds. It is not something one is taught in the formal sense of education. Rather, just being immersed in different worlds where the individual hears different languages and sees a wide variety of cultural traditions makes the child more aware and accepting of differences.

So how did these experiences end

resilience and the psychological needs of children. A highlight for me was my work with staff and housemothers of a large orphanage, along with direct services for the children there. Interestingly, I found that many of the key messages I presented were in essence the same as those I shared with military-connected children when working as an MFLC. However, it was all done through translators and I relied heavily on them to help make my messages and examples more culturally and experientially relevant to the Nepalese children, but the

# Child



underlying concepts were the same. However, five weeks alone in a Third World, foreign country where I did not know the language was tough.

youth I knew I was able to cope and continue to work on my mission of helping others. And that was how this once military-connected youth,

of many, many years ago, traveled this summer to Nepal to provide psychological relief services to the youth and families there.

## where the individual hears different languages and sees makes the child more aware and accepting of differences.

I could not drink the water unless it was boiled, slept under a mosquito net, showered with cold water, and relied on my translators for help with most everything. While in the midst of this relief work, I found that I had to call upon on my own resilience skills. I remembered when as a child in a foreign country, my parents helped guide and support me when we traveled off the military installation. However, in Nepal I was on my own. Even as an adult, that can be challenging, but because of my growing up as a military-connected





# Carol Dweck Revisits the ‘Growth Mindset’

CAROL DWECK

Lewis and Virginia Eaton professor of psychology at Stanford University and author of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (Ballantine Books)

For many years, I secretly worked on my research. I say “secretly” because, once upon a time, researchers simply published their research in professional journals—and there it stayed.

However, my colleagues and I learned things we thought people needed to know. We found that students’ mindsets—how they perceive their abilities—played a key role in their motivation and achievement, and we found that if we changed students’ mindsets, we could boost their achievement. More precisely, students who believed their intelligence could be developed (a growth mindset) outperformed those who believed their intelligence was fixed (a fixed mindset). And when students learned through a structured program that they could “grow their brains” and increase their intellectual abilities, they did better. Finally, we found that having children focus on the process that leads to learning (like hard work or trying new strategies) could foster a growth mindset and its benefits.

So a few years back, I published my book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* to share these discoveries with educators. And many educators have applied the mindset principles in spectacular ways with tremendously gratifying results.

This is wonderful, and the good word continues to spread. But as we’ve watched the growth mindset become more popular, we’ve become much wiser about how to implement it. This learning—the common pitfalls, the misunderstandings, and what to do about them—is what I’d like to share with you, so that we can maximize the benefits for our students.

## A growth mindset isn’t just about effort.

Perhaps the most common misconception is simply equating the growth mindset with effort. Certainly, effort is key for students’ achievement, but it’s not the only thing. Students need to try new strategies and seek input from others when they’re stuck. They need this repertoire of approaches—not just sheer effort—to learn and improve.

We also need to remember that effort is a means to an end to the goal of learning and improving. Too often nowadays, praise is given to students who are putting forth effort, but

not learning, in order to make them feel good in the moment: “Great effort! You tried your best!” It’s good that the students tried, but it’s not good that they’re *not learning*. The growth-mindset approach helps



**“The growth mindset was intended to help close achievement gaps, not hide them.”**

children feel good in the short and long terms, by helping them thrive on challenges and setbacks on their way to learning. When they’re stuck, teachers can appreciate their work so far, but add: “Let’s talk about what you’ve tried, and what you can try next.”

Recently, someone asked what keeps me up at night. It’s the fear that the mindset concepts, which grew up to counter the failed self-esteem movement, will be used to perpetuate that movement. In other words, if you want to make students feel good, even if they’re not learning, just praise their effort! Want to hide learning gaps from them? Just tell them, “Everyone is smart!” The growth mindset was intended to help close achievement gaps, not hide them. It is about telling the truth about a student’s current achievement and then, together, doing something about it, helping him or her become smarter.

I also fear that the mindset work is sometimes used to justify why some students aren’t learning: “Oh, he has a *fixed* mindset.” We used to blame the child’s environment or ability.

Must it always come back to finding a reason why some children just can’t learn, as opposed to finding a way to help them learn? Teachers who understand the growth mindset do everything in their power to unlock that learning.

A few years ago, my colleague in Australia, Susan

Mackie, detected an outbreak of what she called “false growth mindset.” She was seeing educators who claimed to have a growth mindset, but whose words and actions didn’t reflect it. At first, I was skeptical. But before long, I saw it, too, and I understood why.

In many quarters, a growth mindset had become the right thing to have, the right way to think. It was as though educators were faced with a choice: Are you an enlightened person who fosters students’ well-being? Or are you an unenlightened person, with a fixed mindset, who undermines them? So, of course, many claimed the growth-mindset identity. But the path to a growth mindset is a journey, not a proclamation.

Let’s look at what happens when teachers, or parents, claim a growth mindset, but don’t follow through. In recent research, Kathy Liu Sun found that there were many math teachers who endorsed a growth mindset and even said the words “growth mindset” in their middle school math classes, but did not follow through in their classroom practices. In these cases, their students tended to endorse more of a fixed mindset about their math ability. My advisee and research collaborator Kyla Haimovitz and I are finding many parents who endorse a growth mindset, but react to their children’s mistakes as though they are problematic or harmful, rather than helpful. In these cases, their children develop more of a fixed mindset about their intelligence.

How can we help educators adopt a deeper, true growth mindset, one that will show in their classroom practices? You may be surprised by my answer: Let’s legitimize the fixed mindset. Let’s acknowledge that (1) we’re all a mixture of fixed and

growth mindsets, (2) we will probably always be, and (3) if we want to move closer to a growth mindset in our thoughts and practices, we need to stay in touch with our fixed-mindset thoughts and deeds.

If we “ban” the fixed mindset, we will surely create false growth-mindsets. (By the way, I also fear that if we use mindset measures for accountability, we will create false growth mindsets on an unprecedented scale.) But if we watch carefully for our fixed-mindset triggers, we can begin the true journey to a growth mindset.

### What are your triggers?

Watch for a fixed-mindset reaction when you face challenges. Do you feel overly anxious, or does a voice in your head warn you away? Watch for it when you face a setback in your teaching, or when students aren’t listening or learning. Do you feel incompetent or defeated? Do you look for an excuse? Watch to see whether criticism brings

out your fixed mindset.

Do you become defensive, angry, or crushed instead of interested in learning from the feedback? Watch what happens when you see an educator who’s better than you at something you value. Do you feel envious and threatened, or do you feel eager to learn? Accept those thoughts and feelings and work with and through them. And keep working with and through them.

My colleagues and I are taking a growth-mindset stance toward our message to educators. Maybe we originally put too much emphasis on sheer effort. Maybe we made the development of a growth mindset sound too easy. Maybe we talked too much about people having one mindset or the other, rather than portraying people as mixtures. We are on a growth-mindset journey, too.

## HOW TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS

### Growth Mindset

What to say:

“When you learn how to do a new kind of problem, it grows your math brain!”

“If you catch yourself saying, ‘I’m not a math person,’ just add the word ‘yet’ to the end of the sentence.”

“That feeling of math being hard is the feeling of your brain growing.”

“The point isn’t to get it all right away. The point is to grow your understanding step by step. What can you try next?”



### Fixed Mindset

What not to say:

“Not everybody is good at math. Just do your best.”

“That’s OK, maybe math is not one of your strengths.”

“Don’t worry, you’ll get it if you keep trying.”\*

\*If students are using the wrong strategies, their efforts might not work. Plus they may feel particularly inept if their efforts are fruitless.

“Great effort! You tried your best.”\*

\*Don’t accept less than optimal performance from your students.



SOURCE: Carol Dweck

*"Because of you I didn't give up."*



**BOULDER CREST**  
RETREAT



# Going for Gold

GABRIELLE STETHM, GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD RECIPIENT

While many are familiar with the Boy Scouts of America and the Eagle Scout Award, Gabrielle Stethem wants everyone to know about the Gold Award; the highest achievement bestowed upon a girl from the Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA).

Gabrielle started Girl Scouts as a Brownie, since she was too shy to be a Daisy. She has always loved being a Girl Scout but there was always one issue for her. "Boy Scouts seems to revolve a lot around the military and Girl Scouts is focused on community and environment," she explained. Gabrielle did not want to be limited in her quest to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, and embarked on a mission to earn the award with a focus on what she holds close to her heart, the military.

In order for a project to be considered for the Gold Award, it has to be self-sustaining, or continue on after the project ends. Gabrielle's project included working with military kids from **Boulder Creek Retreat for Military and Veteran Wellness**, a center to heal military members, veterans, and their families dealing with combat-related stress. "While the veterans and spouses have therapy or activities to help them reach the best life they can have, there's a gap in the activities for the kids, so I tried to fill that for my Gold Award."

Focusing on three different elements, Gabrielle worked to develop fun, engaging, productive activities. Through play, art and games, Gabrielle interacted with the kids. "We talked about feelings a little bit so they can feel more comfortable with the situation they have been put in," described Gabrielle. "We had a lot of fun... but I also wanted these kids to walk away from Boulder Crest knowing that someone acknowledged and appreciated them for sharing their parents with the rest of us."

Gabrielle stressed the importance of military kids knowing and understanding that they, and not just their parents, are special to their country, too. Her project's goal was to ensure that all members of a military family are appreciated and they all have resources to cope. It was important to Gabrielle that military kids felt, "...proud for being a part of their military family. I also hope that my project encourages people to remember the kids of those who serve."





*We'll be highlighting one of our MSTCs in each issue.  
Michael Kersjes is serving our students in Huntsville, Alabama.*

# Serving Military Kids is a Passion for Embedded Consultant

## MCEC Military Student Transition Consultants

(MSTC) serve in school districts as navigators and advocates for military-connected students and their families as they transition in or out of schools.

Before becoming an MSTC, Vietnam Veteran Michael Kersjes dedicated his whole life to serving others. Following the Vietnam War, Michael began a 25-year career working with children with special needs. "Teaching these kids was truly amazing. They kept me so refreshed because of how hard they tried even though they had a disability," shared Kersjes.

A self-described space nut, Michael saw the prestigious Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama as an opportunity for talented kids to attend, and his kids were just that. After convincing the Camp his kids could overcome challenges, Michael was given eight months to get them ready. He trained his students to work together and created a cohesive



team. "We went and never placed lower than 3rd place anything, out of 600 kids," said Kersjes. "It was the first time these kids ever got to be on a team and be accepted." After Michael got back from Space Camp, he started a foundation that sent over 3,000 kids to Huntsville. He also wrote a book, *A Smile as Big as the Moon*, recounting his story of bringing his kids to Space Camp for the

first time, which the Hallmark Hall of Fame later made into a movie. Michael is an MSTC in Huntsville City Schools and uses his knowledge and experience to work with military kids.

Moving and adjusting to a new school can be challenging for military students. Military Student Transition Consultants (MSTC) are here to address your questions and concerns. Your MSTC plays a pivotal role in establishing collaboration among school systems, education agencies, public and private youth services, community groups, and installation resources.

### Military Student Transition Consultants:

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*For more information about MSTCs, visit: [www.MilitaryChild.org/MSTC](http://www.MilitaryChild.org/MSTC)*



New

# Professional Development Certification Program

## Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Texas Receive Seal of Excellence

MCEC announces a new Professional Development Certification Program to assist with the identification and response to the complex needs of military and veteran-connected children.

The program offers a systematic approach to professional development through research-driven strategies addressing the academic, social, and emotional needs of the child. The program consists of three levels of certification: bronze, silver, and gold, which represent increasingly advanced thresholds for professional development.

Jon Charles, Chief Personnel Officer of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America – Central Texas (B&GC-CT), has been instrumental in the professional development of the Central Texas chapter. Charles and his team recently became the first recipients of the MCEC Professional Development Certification Program, meeting all the requirements and guiding principles to receive the Bronze level certification.



student 2 student

A Military Child Education Coalition® Initiative

## Junior Student 2 Student Alumni Furthers Professional Development with MCEC Programs

If you ever wondered about MCEC programs, just ask 21-year-old, jS2S alumni, Tanny Ogungby. As a child, Tanny participated in the *Junior Student 2 Student*® program at Palo Alto Middle School in Killeen, Texas. As an adult and employee of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Tanny continues to expand her knowledge of military and veteran-connected kids through MCEC's professional development programs.

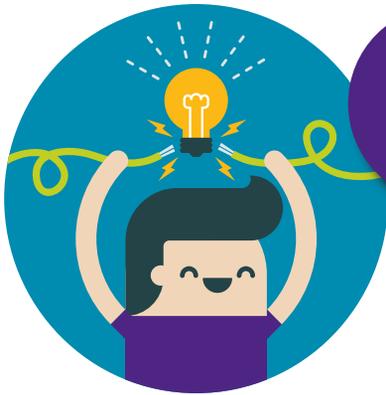
Tanny grew up as a military child with both her mother and stepfather serving in the Army. Attending almost 15 schools by the 5th grade, Tanny was well aware of what it felt like to be the new kid. When she arrived at Palo Vista she was so grateful for the students in the jS2S program for making her feel welcome that she knew she wanted to be a part of the program. Her biggest takeaway from jS2S was being able to be a friend to a stranger.

“At the Boys and Girls Club there are so many military kids and I want to learn how to better support them. Being a military kid and truly understanding how to cater to one, is completely different. I cater to middle school students who go through some of the most drastic changes. I want to help them understand what they're going through and prepare them for the future,” said Tanny Ogungby, who participated in the Supporting Military Children through School Transitions professional development course.

MCEC is glad to be a part of motivating people of all ages!



# Helping Military Children Discover Their



**Online**

**Strength • Potential • Aspirations  
Resourcefulness • Confidence™**

**Register Now  
for this Online Course!**

- January 7-20, 2016
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- March 31 - April 13, 2016

**Sponsored by:  
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Training costs \$67.99 per participant.

Upon completion of the training  
(6 clock hours)  
participants may apply for continuing education  
credits for a fee of \$25.00. CE credit applications  
must be received within 12 months from the  
completion of the training.

For additional information visit:  
[www.MilitaryChild.org/professionals/programs/  
continuing-education-graduate-credit](http://www.MilitaryChild.org/professionals/programs/continuing-education-graduate-credit)



S.P.A.R.C. is an online learning platform which provides participants with the knowledge needed to prepare young people to develop hardiness skills to meet personal and professional goals through identification of their sparks and interests while developing a growth mindset.



## Learning Outcomes:

- Learn what it means to thrive and understand the role of caring adults in helping children reach their full potential.
- Interpret current research on thriving and examine a specific four-step process to help adults support youth.
- Network with colleagues to develop strategies for promoting thriving attributes in children and youth.

**Register here:  
[www.MilitaryChild.org/training](http://www.MilitaryChild.org/training)**

For more information about this training, other professional development opportunities, or support, please contact:

**Joe Clever at (254) 953-1923 ext. 1110  
or [Joe.Clever@MilitaryChild.org](mailto:Joe.Clever@MilitaryChild.org)**

*The Military Child Education Coalition® solely exists to help the military and veteran-connected child thrive in the face of transition and separation.*

**Military Child Education Coalition**  
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# Making Good Choices Wherever She Lands

ALLISON KONDRAT  
S2S President, Belton High School

**B**efore her goals to attend West Point and pursue a career in the medical or criminal justice fields, Allison Kondrat fought her way through emotional and academic challenges, allowing her to emerge as a bright, young, military kid.

Familiar with transitions, Allison moved over six times by the time she was in 5th grade. Rather than allowing the stresses of moving to affect her negatively, Allison saw her transitions as a challenge to better herself and vowed to use her experiences to her advantage. “I always thought - *how is that person going to impact me?* Personally it’s more self-appreciating when you’re in a situation where you have to change so often.”

As a way to integrate swiftly into her new school, Allison joined her local Student 2 Student® program, later becoming the president. Struggling with bullying in the past, Allison knew it was important to try to make friends early on. “It’s not exactly about trying to fit in, but trying to be relatable to someone else. You are trying to figure out who you are – I still am,” said Kondrat.

A challenge for many military students is the difference in academic standards from place to place. After her last move, students in Allison’s new Spanish class were speaking full sentences, something Allison had not been taught in her last school. “Every weekend I would be studying Spanish to make up for the huge gap. The teachers understand you are coming from somewhere else but there is only so much they can do. It took a lot of personal work to even the playing field.” Allison went on to explain that when students come into a school ahead of the game in a subject, they can only go as far as what the rest of the class knows. And when they come in behind, there’s a limit to how far behind they can be. There is no reward for being ahead, but there are repercussions for being behind. Regardless, Allison makes sure that she works for everything she attains. “It’s about how hard you work for it and how much you dedicate yourself to what you’re doing.”

Allison and her parents, father, COL, USA, and former Chief Nursing Officer, Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, and mother LTC (ret), USAR, were overjoyed at the August 2015 news of two females passing



“It’s not exactly about trying to fit in, but trying to be relatable to someone else.”

the elite Army Ranger School. Allison explained the importance in regard to females being a part of the elites is to hold the same standards. “It’s narrow-minded and short-sighted to not include women if they can meet those standards. It should be encouraged.”

Wise beyond her years, Allison continues to use her challenges to her advantage and encourage others to be leaders. She revealed how lucky she was to have people reach out to her throughout the years, even something as simple as inviting her to sit at lunch with them saying, “It’s really special when someone does that for you.” With regard to moving around, Allison intoned, “Although you didn’t have a choice to move, you can make the choices where you land.”



# Working Hard *and* Taking Names

SHAROD FARMER is a senior at Rutherford High School in Panama City, Florida. He balances drawing, playing soccer, running track and field, maintaining his academics in the IB program, and is knee-deep in the college application process in the hope of attending Duke, NYU, Stanford, or Columbia.



As president of his *Student 2 Student*<sup>®</sup> group, Sharod learned how to come out of his shell. “I was really shy before I became president. I wanted to better myself as a leader. I’ve learned a lot of new ways to harness my abilities and lead others,” remarked Farmer. Sharod and his S2S team converted the empty classroom where they held their meetings into a food pantry and a clothing donation room. “There are a lot of kids who come to our school and don’t have these things. This way, when kids enroll in S2S, if they don’t have these things they can find them here.”

A military child, Sharod’s mother deployed three times during his elementary years. “I never had best friends because I was always moving,” shared Farmer. He explained how his friends were also military-connected so they knew what he was going through. “There are kids in worse situations than myself. Some kids would not even eat in the same lunchroom because they didn’t know anyone. I was never that bad,” said Farmer. “That was the

whole reason for joining S2S. If I could help someone not have to go through that, I would.”

After speaking to a guidance counselor about the benefits of S2S, Sharod learned about the *Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program*, an MCEC program established to identify exemplary students

participating in *Student 2 Student*. Sharod was selected to attend the five-day leadership development program at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. “I learned how to trust others in their own abilities. Being a leader doesn’t mean doing everything for others. You have to leave some responsibility in their hands.”

Sharod’s participation in an International Baccalaureate program requires that he take college-level classes throughout high school to earn college credit. “It’s all about time management,” remarked Farmer. Students in the program are also required to do a comprehensive project. When Sharod went to the National Training Seminar in Washington, DC, he sat in on a fireside chat with Alex Sheen, a motivational speaker and founder of the organization, *Because I Said I Would*. Sheen’s speech emphasized accountability. “It took me 300 service hours to complete, but I got Alex Sheen to come present at my school and the surrounding schools,” said Sharod. “The kids at my school got to hear what personal responsibility was – it was great. People like to blame outside factors for their shortcomings. Alex Sheen taught that you need to stop feeling entitled and work for what you want.”

Sharod continues to apply the skills he has learned in leadership and accountability to his everyday life. He is a great example of taking advantage of available resources and remaining open-minded about himself and others.

**“People like to blame outside factors for their shortcomings. Alex Sheen taught that you need to stop feeling entitled and work for what you want.”**

**“I learned how to trust others in their own abilities. Being a leader doesn’t mean doing everything for others. You have to leave some responsibility in their hands.”**



# New Students Welcomed Here

DANA ISLER  
S2S Member, Steilacoom High School



It can be tough for military kids to move and leave friends or to deal with separation from a parent. It can be a test of sorts, too – an assessment of strength, a confirmation of capability, and a demonstration of resilience.

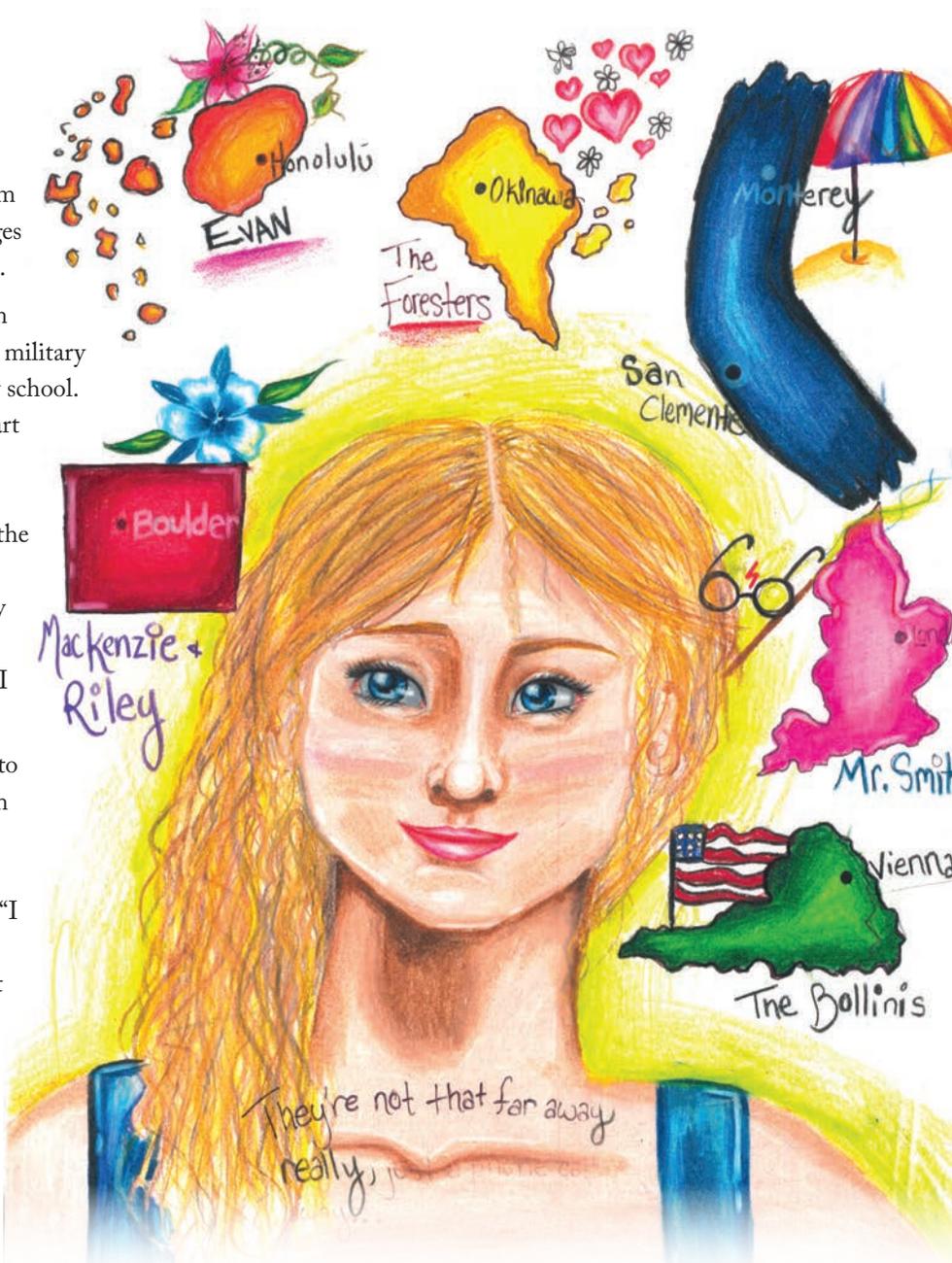


But resiliency involves overcoming challenges, learning how to manage emotions, and utilizing resources. *Student 2 Student*® (S2S™) is a program developed by MCEC that addresses the challenges military and civilian students face with transition.

DANA ISLER, an S2S member at Steilacoom High School, said the biggest challenge facing military kids at her school is transitioning into the new school. Dana explained that eventually students "...start making friends and open up. (But) by the time they open up they will probably have to move again, they will go to the new school, and feel the same way." Dana, involved with S2S for years, said the program gives students an opportunity to feel comfortable, welcomed, and be in an environment they want to be in. "I wish when I moved I would have had S2S," said Isler.

S2S gives transitioning students the resources to be successful in their new schools. The program encourages academic opportunities, while showing students the way and nurturing new relationships. In a candid moment, Dana said, "I probably wouldn't have the motivation to keep my academics up; I would be a totally different person. (S2S) really changed me, and now I want to get involved in everything."

But the merit here goes to the students. It's the students who accept the challenge and step up to the plate in moments of vulnerability. These students are creating their own path, and leaving a trail for others to emulate.



Artwork by Roxanne, Grade 6 • Virginia Beach Middle School, VA • U.S. Marines



# Family and Comedy Aid Veteran's Recovery

SERVING IN DESERT STORM, Robert (Bobby) Henline was already a seasoned war Veteran by the age of 19. He left the military after the war but frequently thought about returning. Over the course of the next ten years, Bobby would get married and have a family, occasionally hinting about returning to serve his nation. As a family, they never quite agreed on his return until September 11th, 2001.

Bobby returned to basic training and deployed to Iraq for his second time in 2003. He would return to Iraq two more times and on his fourth return, said he felt an uneasiness. "I knew it was my fourth time going to Iraq, and I felt like something was different," said Henline. On April 7th, 2007, Bobby Henline became the lone survivor of a roadside bomb attack, burning 38% of his body.

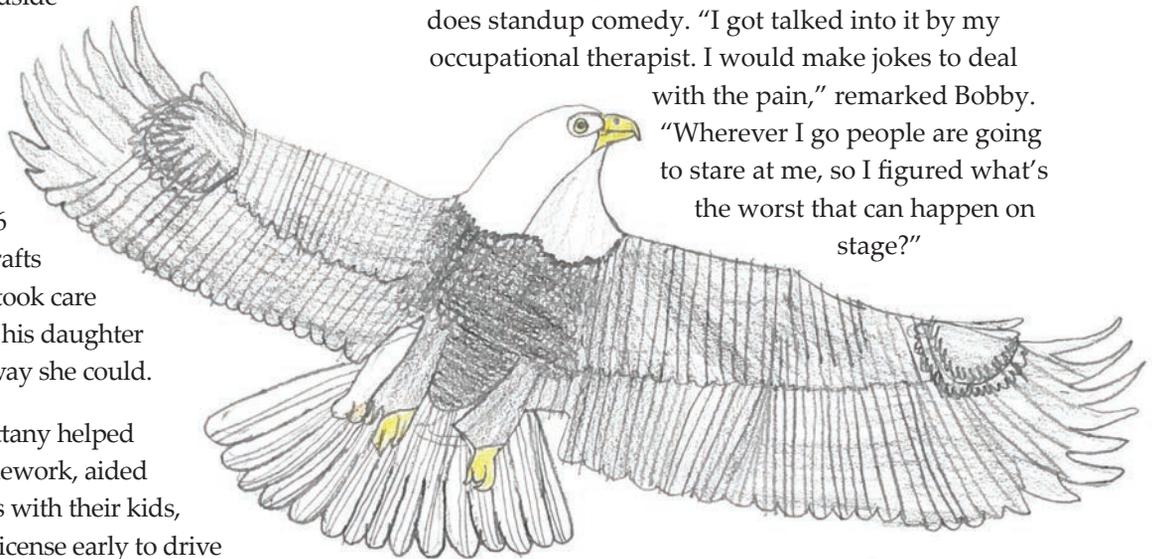
It would take a month in ICU, five and a half months as an inpatient, and 16 months for his skin grafts to take. Bobby's wife took care of him every day and his daughter stepped up in every way she could.

Bobby's daughter Brittany helped her siblings with homework, aided other military families with their kids, and even earned her license early to drive her siblings to school. Brittany became the first recipient of the *Operation Homefront Military Child Award* for her loyalty to her family and service to others.

corner." Bobby relied upon his faith, and that helped him get through his tough first year. "He had a mission for me. It was hard to figure out what that was the first year, but I decided to keep living and see what happens."

Using comedy became a way for Bobby to get through his challenging time. He now attends open mics and does standup comedy. "I got talked into it by my occupational therapist. I would make jokes to deal with the pain," remarked Bobby.

"Wherever I go people are going to stare at me, so I figured what's the worst that can happen on stage?"



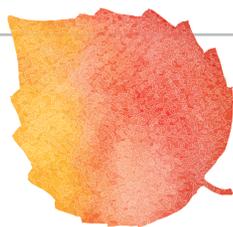
When asked if he ever gets tired of telling his story Bobby said, "No because there is always someone who

## Wherever I go people are going to stare at me, so I figured what's the worst that can happen on stage?

It took Bobby almost three years to fully recover from his injuries. "The doctors said there is no medical explanation for why I am alive," said Henline. "It took about a year after the accident before I finally felt like I was turning a

needs to hear it. If I share my story, I can help others." Bobby Henline is an American hero who never allowed challenges to keep him down. His story will continue to inspire others, and we thank him for his service.

Artwork by Jade, Grade 4 • U.S. Air Force



# I'm from...

GRACE S.  
Age 14, Stacey Jr./Sr. High School

I've moved five times between four states and experienced challenges involving education (being far ahead/behind), having to leave friends, a big issue was continuing gymnastics and finding new gymnastics centers. I overcame a lot of these obstacles just by becoming more outgoing and working harder in school. I also joined different after-school clubs and tried to meet neighborhood kids. I had to go to schools depending on gymnastics centers which caused a lot more school moving. When my father was deployed to Qatar for a year my family communicated by Skype and phone calls. I have three brothers, two older and one younger. My favorite subject is English but I'm well-rounded at all subjects. I play French horn, I was born in California.

I'm in eighth grade and I'm 14, I joined S2S because I know what it is like to be the "new kid" and I'm actually working on trying to bring the S2S program to my new school because S2S helps a lot with briefing kids on how a school runs and what the teachers are like, helps kids to make new friend etc. – it's just very comforting when you're in a new atmosphere. Other things I've noticed is that military kids are different than other kids, usually more outgoing and worldly once they open up, not having lived with and grown up with same surroundings and kids their whole lives. They had to be and sometimes fitting into cliques and friend groups that have been the same for years can be hard and S2S just helps a lot with those issues. I am also in choir in addition to band.



**I'm from Northern California, blustery wine country  
I never visited the coast, only exploring vast redwood forests  
I'm from a family skiing adventure at Lake Tahoe  
And an escapade in Yosemite**

**I'm from scalding Texas summers, crawling with wasps and scorpions  
I'm from uneven bars and high beams, hours of gymnastics practice  
Full of stuffy, chalk-filled air  
I'm from medals and scores on all four events**

**I'm from the frigid winters in Nebraska, snow drifts piling up  
I'm from the constant threat of tornadoes  
And Offutt's Halloween Haunted Hospital  
I'm from spectacular Air Force air shows involving daring feats**

**I'm from July  
Where fireworks are plentiful and Christian summer camps aren't optional  
I'm from September  
Where school and fall begins and I age again  
I'm from January  
Where there are resolutions to come upon  
I'm from May  
Where I prepare to bid farewell to certain friends who will depart soon.**



# Poetry Reflects National Guard Family's Experience

JESSICA THIBODEAU  
Marketing Manager, Military Child Education Coalition

**WHEN IT COMES TO MILITARY FAMILIES**, the whole family serves. Each member takes on a different role and together the family thrives.

Military spouse Courtney Frey understands the unique dynamic of a family who serves. Her husband and son currently serve in the Army National Guard, and her daughter Samantha plans to follow in their footsteps as a counselor in the military. Samantha is currently a junior in high school, a National Honor Society student, and a Project Manager for the Iowa Army National Guard Youth Council.



**Photo left to right:** Specialist Brandin Frey (Samantha's older brother), Amanda Phillips (Samantha's older sister), Courtney Frey, Samantha Frey, Staff Sgt James Frey (Samantha's father), Major General Timothy E. Orr. In front, Governor Terry Branstad.

Courtney and her family have remained strong through SSGT James Frey's deployment and as an outlet she writes about her experiences. Her daughter Samantha was recently awarded the "Youth of the Year Award," by the Iowa National Guard Warrior and Families Office, where she read one of her mother's pieces to the audience. "Not a dry eye in the house," the judge could only mutter, "Yes, Samantha, freedom does not come free."

A powerhouse of a family, Courtney asserted, "It is our mission, as a family, to honor the lifestyle of military life with dignity, pride, and support of all fellow servicemen and women and their families."

## Shiny Medals and Pins Courtney Frey

My father wears a uniform to work; it's camouflage, and his last name is velcro'd to the front right pocket. On the left of his jacket are shiny pins and medals. I've grown accustomed to his uniform because it is a part of who he is.

He makes sure that helicopters, called Blackhawks, fly right and pilots stay alive. He goes to work at 5 in the morning and comes home every day at 4 and has Mondays off. When he comes home from work, he has to take his hat off before he walks through the front door. He always puts it in the same place, on the left edge of the dark mahogany dresser in the room he shares with mom. He likes to cook dinner, and he always cooks in his uniform because he doesn't stop to change clothes. I like to sit on the counter while he cooks, and we talk. My dad always knows what to say to me, no matter what kind of challenge I'm facing. He's at every sporting event, every school activity, and everything I do; cheering me on. He's never missed anything I've done. He is my biggest fan. He is my best friend.

On July 17th of this year, my father put his uniform on again. He stood in the living room with several large bags around him, on the dark green carpet, and he adjusted his medals and he set his pockets straight. My mom and I were very quiet as we watched him. The house seemed to sigh with the weight of what was happening, but my dad stood strong and smiled, "It's time to go," he said.

His uniform looked very different that day.

His medals were extra shiny. His collar was stiff and creased. I couldn't take my eyes off the name badge. That was my last name there. It hit me; a part of me was leaving. My father was going to war.

We loaded the van with his baggage and set out to drive to the airport. I couldn't help but think, as we drove, how unreal it all felt. I couldn't fathom tomorrow... no homemade chicken and dumplings, no counter



talks, no late night jokes... that empty seat in the stands... the missing hat on the edge of his dresser every night. There was no going away ceremony. No big hoorah. I slowly walked behind his uniform as we made our way to the check-in. Had his uniform always looked this way? He is standing at the counter, checking in, and I notice that the bottom of his pants are tucked into his boots and they kind of poof out where the top of the boot meets his calf. I wonder then, for a second, how he does that. He heaves his huge green bag up and onto the little short shelf. I am reminded of how strong he is. My mom isn't saying anything. I watch her, wondering if she's going to start crying.

I show my license at the security clearance. They're letting my mom and I go to the gate with my dad. I look down at my gate pass and think; this isn't taking me anywhere I want to go.

Strangers pass us and tilt their heads and one man even reaches out to shake my dad's hand as he says, "Thank you for your service." This is all going by in a haze, like I'm moving in slow motion. I keep my eyes on my dad's uniform. I don't know why.

My dad, my mom and I are all sitting in plastic black chairs in front of the entry gate, waiting for the airplane. I watch my parents look at each other and feel the sadness. I wish they would say something, but they don't. They just hold hands. I look around and notice a sea of people then, like a painting that's all black with a white dot on it and my dad is the white dot and I wish he didn't have to be.

The lady behind the counter lifts the little microphone to her mouth and says, "Pre-boarding will start now for all military service members wishing to board."

She's talking to my dad.

My mom's lower lip starts to tremble. I still don't feel like this is really happening. Finally, my dad speaks, "Well, I guess this is it." My mom tries to smile but I can tell she's trying hard not to cry when she says, "Let's just get it over with."

He's holding me in his arms now. The fabric of his uniform smells fresh as I take in a deep breath, telling myself to be strong. I notice, as we hold each other, that his hat is in his right hand. I see it shake a little bit. He whispers, close to my ear, "I love you didd's. Be strong."

The back of his uniform was the last thing I watched; as he walked away my ears picked up on the

*He will never say out loud the sacrifice he makes...  
He never asks for gratitude. He never seeks praise.  
He believes in what he does and why he does it.*

swoosh, swoosh of his military pants... each step he took taking him far away from me.

My mother and I didn't cry in front of my father. It was as if both of us made a pact, without actually saying the words, to be strong for him. Yet, as soon as he was out of sight, my mom took my hand and led me to the nearby restroom. We went inside the handicap stall, locked the door, and we cried. After a few minutes and several wads of toilet paper, my mom held my face in her hands and said, "We've got this baby. We're going to be okay. We're going to make daddy proud."

Hand in hand, we walked out of the airport with our heads held high. Every person that I passed – child, mother, grandfather, teenager – I silently thought to myself, *my dad wears his uniform for you*. It gave me a peace, to think that what our family was about to go through wasn't going to be in vain. His uniform took on a greater purpose then, in those moments, of my realizing that he wore it not because he had to; but because it was who he is. He wasn't just wearing it for me.

My mom and I, we've been counting the days for seven months. Seventy-four days left.

I couldn't talk to my dad for a few weeks because he was sent on a mission in Iraq that he couldn't tell me about. I finally got to talk to him on Facebook but he was in a hurry and could only type, "Putting my uniform on; I'm going to work. I love you."

He will never say out loud the sacrifice he makes. He will never tell anyone why he does it. He has a code that he lives by. He never asks for gratitude. He never seeks praise. He believes in what he does and why he does it. My dad wears a uniform. On the right front pocket is his last name. On the left side pocket are medals and shiny pins.

## *I'll Protect You*

Courtney Frey

*He named her Samantha, on the very day that  
she was born,*

*It meant Listener, and for her, he had great  
things in store.*

*Daddy's little girl all wrapped up in pink  
and white*

*precious little image of a daughter born in  
the night.*

*He held her for that first time,  
a promise did he make;*

*Dear daughter, I'll protect you  
no matter what it takes.*

*He held his arms out as she stepped to him,  
he counted A B C's. He prayed every night and  
every day*

*"God, just let me keep her safe, please."*

*He walked with her on her first day of school,  
and every year then next;  
taught her how to ride her bike  
and felt, truly, that he was blessed.*

*Her first heartbreak he consoled her,  
her first dance, he held his breath.*

*And every late night talk into dark hours  
he gave himself in every test.*

*I love you, baby girl, he confessed  
at every chance, and every day;  
I'll always be your daddy  
and I'll protect you along the way.*

*And just like every father,  
the time came for him to prove  
his words would take him far,  
those words, "I'll protect you."*

*Daddy, must you go, she cried  
as he donned his uniform that day;  
called to war, without her knowing why  
it was all that he could say;  
"My job has always been to protect you,  
and that, dear daughter, is what I'm called  
to do."*



# THE PURSUIT OF Happiness

LYNDA MACFARLAND  
Author and advocate for Army families  
and proud Army wife and mom



**MANY PEOPLE** in the United States and many of the western European nations love to celebrate the diversity of all people, and that is a fine thing. But there are three components we all possess that, combined, make us uniquely human and these are the things we hold in common regardless of our differences. I am referring to mind, body, and spirit. The mind includes our intellect, our ability to reason, to create, to feel, and to believe. And that, along with our physical being, our body, which when properly cared for has positive effects on the emotional and psychological parts of ourselves, and with our spirituality, make us who we are.

Spirituality is not about religion. I believe spirituality could be described in the words our Founding Fathers enshrined in our Declaration of Independence as “the pursuit of happiness.”

to say that with the challenges of life, the questions I've asked, and the leaps of faith I've taken, others can relate to in their lives, even if they are not married or military. I would like to share an excerpt from the book with you now. It has to do with questioning, when life doesn't make sense, when what you think should happen, doesn't.

I wrote the following letter to the editor of the *Stars & Stripes* newspaper, European edition several years ago. An editorial had been published by columnist Tom Schaefer questioning the tsunami in

**I URGE YOU TO THINK ABOUT WHAT SPIRITUALITY MEANS FOR YOU. FOR ME, IT INVOLVES PRAYER. FOR YOU IT COULD BE MEDITATION, COMMUNING WITH NATURE; BUT DON'T NEGLECT THAT FACET OF YOUR BEING.**

Happiness is a state of being that includes contentment in our state in life, joy with the good things we experience, possess, or know. Happiness is not just an emotion, not as it is understood in the Declaration, but is an ideal for the human person to strive to attain in his or her life. That pursuit is an “inalienable right,” according to the Founders who signed on. A right is something we all should have because of the dignity of our personhood. And so, on a spiritual, and not a purely intellectual or physical level, each one of us is always trying to find that state of being happy, that spiritual pursuit.

**WE OFTEN INCLUDE “SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL” within the mind/body/spirit model and I believe that's because they are other dimensions of our spirituality.** We are social beings and I think we want to know that somebody is out there who knows we're alive, cares about our triumphs and our setbacks, someone we can talk to who will really listen. Those are basic desires of our human hearts and we all long for them.

For me, my faith sustains me through the challenges of my life, particularly my Army life. And I wrote a book about it: *Drowning in Lemonade – Reflections of an Army Wife*. You might say that it's for a very 'niche' audience: Army wives. But I have

Indonesia around Christmas in 2004 in which thousands lost their lives. He saw it as a “challenge for the faithful.” This is a portion of my response: ...“(the faithful) face earthly experiences armed with eternal realities. While we cannot explain such devastation caused by the tsunami...we know that God is with those affected by this catastrophe. The hands, feet, and voice of our Lord will be known through the actions of the rescuers from so many different places and even from survivors who think of, or thought of, others before themselves. We can be His hands, as well. Our strength as witnesses of the destruction's aftermath is in knowing we are not helpless; we can pray for our brothers and sisters who suffer. Ask God's angels to minister to the wounded, no matter how, until medical or spiritual aid arrives. And when we are “moved with compassion,” as Jesus is so often described in the New Testament, we fall to our knees in prayer for others' well-being, and those prayers have great effect. And, of course, so many will donate money and supplies out of their willing spirits' desire to help. I do not question whether God exists or whether He is all good. I know both to be true. I also know that we are not Home yet, and we need to always look up and out, instead of within, if we



are to find the Creator of the universe. Trusting in Him makes all the difference when tragedies arise, either in our own lives or when we see them in the lives of others.”

With a faith like that, you might assume that I can, with God’s help, sail through any challenge. And yet, a few months later, I would be diagnosed with depression and spend months in therapy with a psychiatrist, taking a small dose of anti-depressant under his supervision during that time. I don’t claim that our lives, emotionally or physically, will ever be perfect but I do believe that things happen for a reason.

Another quote from my book: “Even when I knew I was not alone, that God was with me, I felt little to no comfort through the heavy, ugly oppression that engulfed me. I knew God loves me, but I couldn’t do anything about it.” And by that I mean, I couldn’t rejoice, I couldn’t be productive.

It was my husband who encouraged me to seek behavioral health support. It was out of his love and concern for me. When I finally shared with him how I had been feeling, he was shocked, I would say.

He said that what I described was “alarming” to him. When your husband expresses that kind of concern about your emotional state, it is the wake-up call you need. It was certainly for me, anyway. There was never any concern about what “others will think” or worry about how it might affect his career, (which it didn’t nor would it); his response was “go get the help you need and I’ll support

you no matter what happens.” Just sharing my inner struggle and suffering with my husband was a huge burden lifted, but his compassionate response, and the time I spent with the psychiatrist in Heidelberg’s American Army hospital in the following months was a huge blessing. I very quickly found I was feeling lighter, less anxious, more grateful, more energetic, than I had in a very long time. I would go back occasionally, once I was doing better, to follow up with my doctor and things remained on an even keel for me emotionally. I shared my depression in the book because I want to encourage other people who are close to despair to find a professional to work with them and help get them back to hope and living life again. I have had a mere glimpse into the state of being so hopeless and sad that even a loving family doesn’t give joy anymore, there is no comfort there.

When I hear of someone committing suicide who seemed “fine” and had “so much to live for” – how could they? I remember how I felt right before my husband sent me to get

help. I started to think that my wonderful, loving family would be better off without me – that’s how far I’d sunk. Of course, I know in reality that they would be lost without me! But in that state of depression, everything seems so awful, you can’t imagine being good for anyone. If you are feeling anything like this, please tell a loved one, whether that’s a spouse, a friend, a parent, or a sibling so they can walk with you on your journey back to a productive, positive life.

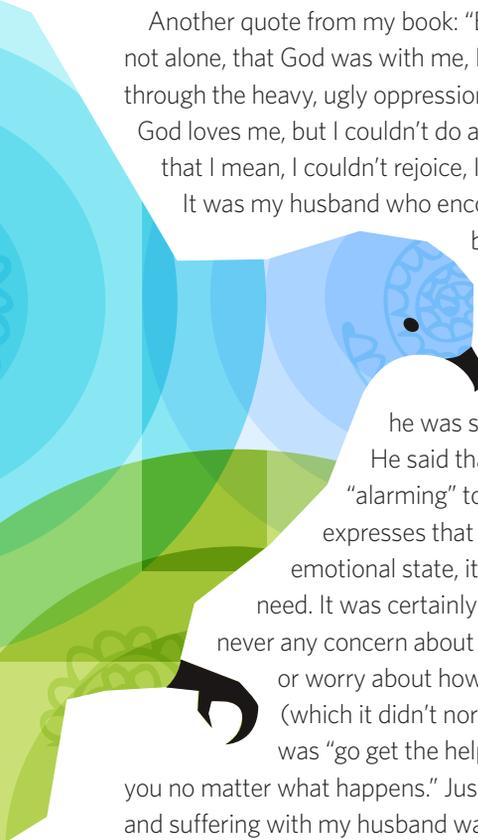
When I said things happen for a reason, I believe that I walked through that darkness in order to be a more compassionate, less judgmental person who could encourage other people who are struggling with Post Traumatic Stress or depression to seek help to get well. I have an empathy I could never have known if I hadn’t gone through depression personally. And so I had to share that in my book. There will always be a stigma attached to behavioral health problems if we aren’t willing to publicly share our own experiences with them.

In 2013 my husband and I found ourselves with our only son deployed to Afghanistan for nine months as a platoon leader. Yes, there was worry, despite my desire to simply trust. I definitely had shaky days where my son’s welfare was concerned, but I firmly placed him back in God’s hand each time. There is a prayer I have often prayed where we say to God, that He “joins us in the laughter and weeps with us in the pain” while we ask Him to remind us that He is always with us, sharing in those joys and sorrows. That’s what spirituality encourages for me: thoughts like these.

**I URGE YOU TO THINK ABOUT WHAT SPIRITUALITY MEANS FOR YOU.** For me, it involves prayer. For you it could be meditation, communing with nature; but don’t neglect that facet of your being. I entreat everyone to give at least as much thought and care to your spiritual life as you do your physical training or nutrition intake, or rest and relaxation.

I beg you to think about your life, your place in the world, and your place in it. If you believe there is a God, do some research into some of the world religions, talk to people of faith whose lives emanate joy and peace to see if you can learn something from them on having a real relationship with God. Whether you believe in God or not, try praying. Prayer is merely talking to God. So, even though it may seem strange initially, try talking to God, talking with God. He is listening and He speaks to us. All the time, I think, He is communicating with us. We just don’t listen very well.

If you are praying or find you can’t do that just yet, but you want someone to pray with you or for you, let me know. It would be my privilege to do so. God bless and thanks for reading.





# British Military Lifestyle Re

**LET ME TELL YOU A LITTLE ABOUT OUR FAMILY.** There's Paul, my husband; he commands one of our four training establishments for our enlisted soldiers. He's been an officer for 21 years and in that time has served overseas in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia and Northern Ireland. We've been together for almost 20 years (married for just over 16), although if you add up his nights away

from home on operations and exercises we have probably spent about 4 years apart. We have two wonderful boys. Maxwell, 11, is at boarding school (he was born while we were in the US - Paul was at CGSC and SAMS in Leavenworth, Kansas) and Nathaniel, 7, who attends a local school (he was, to his disgust, only born in Salisbury, UK). I'm Karen, a primary school teacher, wife, mother and home maker. Being a teacher has enabled me to find employment wherever in the world we've been posted - quite handy really. And finally there's our dog, Doughnut. We love border collies, and Doughnut is our third. Max and Jasper (our previous collies) are sadly no longer with us, but were such a part of the family that we flew them to Kansas; they returned having explored almost as much of the USA as we did!

The one thing that you can definitely say about military family life is that it is never dull. Varied, yes. Exciting, yes. Sometimes challenging, and frustrating on occasion. But never dull. And I reckon that is the same for military spouses the world over; I may be a British camp follower, but I believe I share many joys and challenges with my American counterparts.

So over the next few paragraphs I hope I can share with



**I believe that to enjoy being a military wife you need to have an open mind and both a sense of adventure and humour.**

you some of the joys of our way of life, but also some of the challenges, too. I believe that to enjoy being a military wife you need to have an open mind and both a sense of adventure and humour. Many of my civilian friends looked horrified when I told them we'd just received our most recent orders and that we'd be leaving leafy Surrey (one of the counties, akin to your states) to go to Kuwait in August next year. My news was normally accompanied by a long pause

and then, "How do you feel about that?" Well, in a word we are "excited." What an adventure - new people to meet, new countries to explore. How could we not be thrilled? Though I'll happily admit that what I perceive as thrilling though is not everyone's cup of tea, and many of my civilian friends don't see the opportunities, only the difficulties. Where will you live? What about your job? What do your parents think? You've probably heard the same ones.

# warding for Family

KAREN BLAKESLEY



Both Paul and I are only children. Our parents are elderly and not in good health. It would be wonderful to be closer. I particularly felt the current distance we live from our family hard earlier this year when my mother was diagnosed with cancer for the second time. I so wanted to be there for her, see her, and also support my father. Although the UK is much smaller in size, our road system and congestion mean journeys take much longer than you think. Thankfully my Mum is made of

strong stuff and beat cancer for the second time. This was the one time I wished Paul and I lived closer to family.

Over the years we've been lucky enough to enjoy overseas postings to Cyprus, Germany and America. Maxwell was born during our two years in Kansas and I can honestly say it was my favourite posting. We visited 31 states and made some wonderful friends. Inevitably there will be places you go that you don't enjoy as much. In these instances, I think it is important to find sports clubs, social groups or employment to help you settle. As a teacher I am fortunate to have always been able to find work when I've wanted it. I know many other spouses are not as lucky, it depends on your role. Indeed, it isn't uncommon now for military spouses in the UK to be 'married unaccompanied', where the spouse and children stay in their own home, in one location while the serving member of the family works elsewhere and commutes home when they can. This allows for job security and advancement, an opportunity to own your own home and stability of education for any children.

There are many challenges with military life. Sadly some employers don't see the unique skill set military spouses have in addition to any professional qualifications. Our lifestyle means we are not resistant to change, we are mentally strong and resilient and have a breadth of knowledge and experience in our chosen field that comes from working for different organisations in varied locations. For instance, I have now worked in every school class, Reception through to Year 6 (5-12 year

*continued on page 24*

## We Represent

*We represent the ones who leave and fight*

*For the freedoms we hold dear, our inalienable rights*

*We represent the brave, the strong and the true*

*We represent the red, the white, and the blue*

*We live and move, and move and live*

*To places unknown and hard to forgive*

*We make new memories but when the time is done*

*We pack up all we've got and move on*

*We do this constantly, showing little fright*

*For change is the battle we must fight*

MYA W.

Age 15, Stacey Jr./Sr. High School

I have moved about 11 times in my life that I can remember. My challenges are loss of friends, loss of confidence, and anxiety. My solutions are talking to my parents, kind new people, and God. I joined S2S to help lost kids like me adjust, make a difference in someone's life, to be kind, and make new friends.



## British Military Lifestyle

*continued from page 23*

olds); in village and inner-city schools worldwide, and in wealthy and deprived areas. We can multitask, be a single parent, hold down a job, support other wives and still hold an impromptu dinner party for twelve in the evening. It's also not just professional skills we develop either. Over the years necessity has pushed me to learn skills I may not otherwise have considered. While Paul was deployed I had to fix an inner tube on Maxwell's tyre, maintain the vehicles and house we own.

For me, the challenges of military life are housing and schooling. I do miss my own home. With each move comes the familiar questions: How large is the house? Is it in a good area? What are the local schools like? What state of repair is it in? In the UK the answer to these questions varies greatly and is one of the frustrations that I mentioned earlier. As an example, after phoning in about a corroded radiator recently we had an initial visit from a plumber to confirm that it was indeed corroded and that we needed it replaced! We have now waited for 3 weeks for the radiator to be purchased and now awaiting to time when they can fit it.

As for schooling, well, we are not lucky enough to have an organisation such as MCEC who champion military support programs in schools. Depending where you are posted, you may be in a school of entirely military children or be in one where the military are truly in the minority. The later ones frequently have no concept of how to support military pupils and our unique way of life. One school denied my application to take Maxwell out of school for the day to meet his father when he returned from 6 months in Afghanistan! And on our last move we were not allocated a place for Maxwell in the school opposite where we were living despite there being space available for both boys (only Nathaniel was offered a place). There is a 'military covenant' which should

prevent this from happening although in my experience its implementation can be patchy.

My disillusionment with the "teeth" of the covenant, coupled with the knowledge that Maxwell would change schools every two years, led to our decision to send him, then almost 10 years old, to boarding school. This is not unusual for the British military. We don't have an organisation such as MCEC who offer such fantastic programs as *Student 2 Student*, *SchoolQuest* and transition consultants to assist families. And although our government recently recognised that military pupils need support and offered schools additional

funding for any military pupil in attendance, many schools, unfamiliar with military life, are uncertain how to spend it.

We spent a long while choosing the boarding school for Maxwell. It had to have a family feel as this would be his second home; it needed lots of other boarders around at weekends, plenty of sports available and academic support for him as he is dyslexic. We found all this at Sandroyd in Wiltshire and the military assists us with the costs. He has thrived there. He is in a class of 15, receives one to one support twice a week for his dyslexia and has a wealth of opportunities that he would not have access to in the local



school. He comes home every three weeks for a weekend and his younger brother is keen to join him there when he's older. Nathaniel will be coming with us to Kuwait and is excited to be attending school there; he's looking forward to learning Arabic and enjoying the warm weather.

**I love being a military family.** The comradery amongst spouses, the opportunities to travel and the pride I feel in the job my husband does. The frustrations of the housing system are continually being challenged at every level and with boarding schools we have found a way to ensure our boys have the best possible education no matter where in the world we are posted. **With military life, the joys far outweigh the challenges and I am both proud and happy to be a military spouse.**



# The Journey from "Welcome Home" to Now:

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The Journey from "Welcome Home" to Now is an online learning platform which teaches professionals who support military-connected children and youth the challenges and joys that children face during a time of reintegration.



### Learning Outcomes:

- ▶ Identify potential reintegration stressors and their implications for the child and family structure
- ▶ Differentiate structures that support children and youth during reintegration and those which strengthen or impede the ability to thrive
- ▶ Integrate positive strategies which develop strength in children and youth during the reintegration phase
- ▶ Identify the importance of service and "giving back" in the lives of children and youth as an important trait to develop

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For more information about this training, other professional development opportunities, or support, please contact:

**Joe Clever at (254) 953-1923 ext. 1110 or**  
**Joe.Clever@MilitaryChild.org**

*The Military Child Education Coalition® solely exists to help the military and veteran-connected child thrive in the face of transition and separation.*

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# 6 Major Trends in College and University Admissions

RON BETHKE

eCampus News Assistant Editor, @eCN\_RonB

May 27th, 2015

**Many four-year colleges and universities are seeking to keep application growth on the rise by recruiting a greater number of transfer and international students.**

According to the National Association for College Admission Counseling's 12th annual State of College Admission report, which examines the transition from high school to postsecondary education, many higher education institutions are reaching out to transfer and international students in order to sustain continued growth in applications.

## More international students

Additionally, many institutions are taking steps to enroll a greater number of students from other countries. The fact that 45 percent of private high schools and 4 percent of public high schools actively recruit international students has been a major help, as they often stay in the U.S. to pursue higher education.



## More transfer students

Of the four-year colleges and universities surveyed, 58 percent indicated that the importance of recruiting transfer students will increase over the next three years, while less than 2 percent of schools stated the opposite. While the average acceptance rate of transfer students (62.6 percent) was slightly below the acceptance rate of freshman (64.7 percent) in fall 2013, 54 percent of transfer applicants who were admitted ultimately enrolled, compared to only 33 percent of the admitted freshman.

One of the primary reasons for schools reaching out to these diverse groups (which are featured for the first time in this year's report) stems from the plateau of high school graduation rates in the U.S., which grew for about 20 years before peaking in 2011-12.

**“The landscape of higher education is changing, and that is prompting colleges and universities to look for new ways to serve students,”** said Jeff Fuller, NACAC president and director of student recruitment at the University of Houston.

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## Partnering with community colleges

So how exactly are four-year colleges and universities attracting more transfer students? Allying with community colleges seems to be a major strategy. According to the survey, 80 percent of institutions reported partnerships with community colleges, with an additional 70 percent holding recruitment events on community college campuses.

From a more general standpoint, though, interest in attending college has remained consistent or even grown at a steady pace, in part thanks to the greater attention from transfer and international applicants.

## A boost in online applications

For 10 of the past 15 years, more than 70 percent of colleges reported annual increases in the number of applications they received, a side-effect of the 10 percent increase of freshman who submitted seven or more applications between 2008 and 2013. Also, online applications are now the norm, with 92 percent of four-year colleges and universities receiving their applications online, which has increased continuously from 85 percent in Fall 2011 and 89 percent in Fall 2012.

## Selectivity still matters

Given this increase, many colleges have also begun admitting a higher rate of the growing number of applicants. The average selectivity rate at four-year colleges for Fall 2013 was 64.7 percent, reversing a slight but steady decline from 69.6 percent in 2003 to 63.9 percent in fall 2012. Early Decision and Early Action applications and admissions continue to increase as well.

As is likely expected, though, a student's high school test grades and the general rigor of their courses remain the most important factor in college admission decisions. This is followed by standardized test scores, high school class rank, and demonstrated interest in attending.

## Two-year and for-profit enrollment decreases

Finally, while enrollment at public four-year and private, not-for-profit, four-year institutions increased, enrollment in two-year public and for-profit colleges decreased as the overall number of students enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions fell from 21 million students in 2010 to 20.6 million in 2012. The report notes that this could be due to the fact that black and Hispanic persons remain under-represented while additionally, only 52 percent of high school completers from the lowest income quintile transitioned to college in 2012, compared to 82 percent from the highest income quintile.

Long term projections from the U.S. Department of Education indicate, however, that the total number of college students is expected to gradually increase from 2013 through 2023 to 23.8 million, including an increase in the number of international students from about 4.5 million to more than 7 million.

For an even more in-depth analysis of the State of College Admission, take a look at the NACAC's full report.

[http://www.nxtbook.com/ygsreprints/NACAC/2014SoCA\\_nxtbk/#/0](http://www.nxtbook.com/ygsreprints/NACAC/2014SoCA_nxtbk/#/0)



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# Data Matters:

## How Students Perceive Community Colleges

AACC STAFF  
JULY 10, 2015

**2-year institutions offer strong value for students who want to save money.**

The following infographic is by Cengage Learning, which surveyed students across the country to understand their views of community college and to learn more about their experiences.

More than 4,250 students participated in the Spring 2015 Student Engagement Insights survey, which yielded data for the infographic section titled "Cengage Learning Student Research." Of those students, 64 percent have attended or currently attend a community college.

Five thousand students with diverse backgrounds were polled in a Cengage-Work Institute survey. Data in the infographic's "Today's Student" section reflect those results.

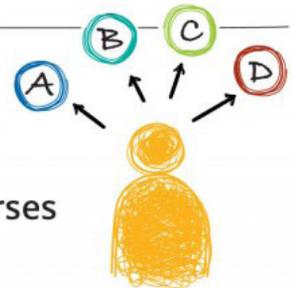


Cengage Learning Student Research —

**98% agree:** community colleges are an important part of the U.S. educational system.

Cengage Learning Student Research —

Why did you opt to attend a **community college?**

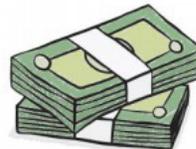


**46%** Had the courses I need/want



**35%** Enjoy the smaller class sizes

**26%** Improve grades/study skills before attending a four-year institution



**69%** Save money

From "Today's Student" survey —

**45%**

of two-year college students feel their classes are relevant for an eventual job.



**45% vs 31%**

of two-year college students feel their classes are relevant for an eventual job.

of four-year college students feel their classes are relevant for an eventual job.



Reprinted from Community College Daily, published by the American Association of Community Colleges.



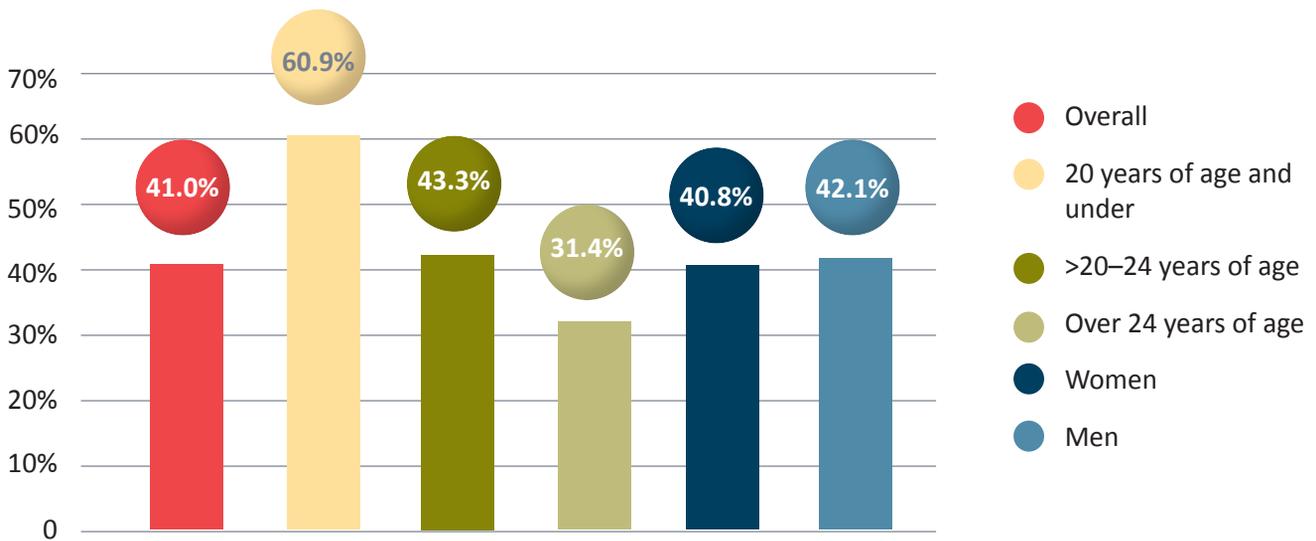


September 2015

## Completion pathways

Most traditional-age college students whose first credential is an associate degree later earn a baccalaureate.

**Students earning an associate degree as a first credential who subsequently earned a bachelor's degree**



Source: National Student Clearinghouse, “Snapshot Report Degree Pathways,” Spring 2015.  
[Data limitation](#)



About 41 percent of college students who earned an associate degree in 2008-09 as their first credential subsequently earned a bachelor's degree within six years. Sixty percent of those students completed their baccalaureate within three years of earning an associate degree. When comparing data by age groups, students age 20 or younger had the highest attainment (61 percent), followed by the age group 20 to 24, where 43 percent earned a bachelor's degree within six years. Certificates also are a stepping stone for further degree attainment. Of students who earned a certificate as their first credential, 26 percent attained an associate or bachelor's degree within six years of their certificate completion in 2008-09. Students 24 or younger had higher degree attainment, around 30 percent.

For more information, contact Kent Phillippe, associate vice president for research and student success at the American Association of Community Colleges, at (202) 416-4505 or [kphillippe@aacc.nche.edu](mailto:kphillippe@aacc.nche.edu), or Rahel Tekle, AACC research associate, at (202) 416-4508 or [rtekle@aacc.nche.edu](mailto:rtekle@aacc.nche.edu)



# How Will Our Next Generation of Kids Learn About Science?



DR. FREDERICK W. FREKING

Associate Professor of Clinical Education, USC Rossier School of Education

This past summer I had the amazing opportunity to share my experiences in science education with the Military Child Education Coalition. In this article I hope to share some of the key messages from that presentation with the larger military family community. We know kids learn best when they are engaged and can connect new ideas to existing knowledge. The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) set the expectations for how all kids should learn and understand science in the 21st century. Schools all over the United States are working hard to implement these new standards in the next few years. This article will provide parents and teachers with a student-centered model of what classrooms might look like in the near future and one example science curriculum that is aligned to NGSS.

## NGSS Scientific Practices

One of the most challenging aspects of any science curriculum is integrating the scientific practices that are listed below. Most of us will remember some of these practices as the scientific method we learned in school. It is critical that all kids experience these practices to develop a deep understanding of science as a way of knowing. It will not be easy for teachers to integrate these practices and school districts will need to provide professional development to ensure teachers are prepared for NGSS. Parental support of these practices at home will also promote development of scientific thinking. In the next section, a brief overview of the 5E model will help parents know how their students might experience science in school. The most important idea is that kids should explore before teachers explain to create a more inquiry-based learning environment.

## Scientific Practices

1. Asking questions (science) and defining problems (engineering)
2. Developing and using models
3. Planning and carrying out investigations
4. Analyzing and interpreting data
5. Using mathematics and computational thinking
6. Constructing explanations (science) and designing solutions (engineering)
7. Engaging in argument from evidence
8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

## The Five E's – A Model for Effective Science Teaching

### Engagement

The teacher or a curriculum task accesses the learners' prior knowledge and helps them become engaged in a new concept through the use of short activities that promote curiosity and elicit prior knowledge. The activity should make connections between past and present learning experiences, expose prior conceptions, and organize students' thinking toward the learning outcomes of current activities.

### Exploration

Exploration experiences provide students with a common base of activities within which current concepts (i.e., misconceptions), processes, and skills are



identified and conceptual change is facilitated. Learners may complete lab activities that help them use prior knowledge to generate new ideas, explore questions and possibilities, and design and conduct a preliminary investigation.

### Explanation

The explanation phase focuses students' attention on a particular aspect of their engagement and exploration experiences and provides opportunities to demonstrate their conceptual understanding, process skills, or behaviors. This phase also provides opportunities for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill. Learners explain their understanding of the concept. An explanation from the teacher or the curriculum may guide them toward a deeper understanding, which is a critical part of this phase.

### Elaboration

Teachers challenge and extend students' conceptual understanding and skills. Through new experiences, the students develop deeper and broader understanding, more information, and adequate skills. Students apply their understanding of the concept by conducting additional activities.

### Evaluation

The evaluation phase encourages students to assess their understanding and abilities and provides opportunities for teachers to evaluate student progress toward achieving the educational objectives.



**Hot Wheels® Speedometry™** encourages inquiry and real-world, problem-based learning through play, hands-on activities and in-depth lesson plans that is mapped to state and national standards including Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). This education curriculum, co-created with researchers at the University of Southern California Rossier School of Education, combines Hot Wheels® fun, imagination, and action, as well as toys and track to accelerate learning.

Speedometry™ is a free-to-use curriculum targeting fourth grade (8-9 year old) students. Comprised of two units with up to six lessons per unit, Speedometry™ provides coursework intended to cover a period of 10-12 days. Students work in collaborative learning groups to deepen their understanding of speed, angles, slopes, collisions, kinetic energy, and potential energy. The lessons and activities aim to put students on course for success in science and mathematics. A kindergarten curriculum for 5-6 year olds is currently in development and will be released at a later date.

With support from the Mattel Children's Foundation, five faculty members began working with Hot Wheels® designers and (S)cience (T)echnology (E)ngineering (M)ath teachers in April 2013 to develop tools for teaching scientific concepts like velocity, kinetic energy and gravity using the miniature toy cars and modular track already beloved by children. USC Rossier education professors Gale Sinatra, Julie Marsh, Morgan Polikoff, Frederick Freking, and Angela Hasan led the project for a Speedometry™ curriculum for the elementary school students that will help teachers and parents reinforce key STEM concepts. The Speedometry™ curriculum is aligned with the rigorous expectations outlined in the CCSS, NGSS, as well as TEKS, and includes inquiry, play-based, and hands-on activities.

The Rossier team is currently piloting Speedometry™ in schools throughout the greater Los Angeles area, and will evaluate teacher feedback, as well as assess the effects of the curriculum on student knowledge, engagement and motivation to learn. "With the need for more students in the STEM fields, teachers and parents need to find ways to make scientific topics engaging and accessible for students from an early age," said Rossier Dean Karen Symms Gallagher. "The Speedometry curriculum brings science to life for kids while also being grounded by the research and assessment of learning experts in the field of education."

### Speedometry for Families

Hot Wheels® Speedometry™ is a fun and engaging way to learn about concepts such as energy, force, and motion. Students also learn scientific and engineering practices such as analyzing and interpreting data. But the fun doesn't have to end when the school bell rings – you can bring Speedometry™ learning home! After all, math and science are all around us.

*Continued on page 32...*

# Supporting Veterans' Children through Transitions



Coming Soon! Spring 2016

This one-day course enables youth-serving educators, professionals, and parents to support the unique transitional issues children face when their parents separate from the military.

The course also addresses the challenges of children whose parents have died or experienced combat-related injuries and illnesses. Participants will develop strategies and resources to help these children thrive.



## Learning Objectives:

- ▶ Explore and identify the academic and social-emotional implications for children and youth when their parents voluntarily or involuntarily transition from military to civilian life.
- ▶ Explore and identify the academic and social-emotional implications during military to civilian transition for children and youth whose military parents have died, been wounded, or have combat-related illnesses.
- ▶ Discover resources and integrate positive strategies to address implications of the military-to-civilian life transitions for children and youth.

Upon completion of the training (6 clock hours)

participants may apply for continuing education credits for a fee of \$25.00. CE credit applications must be received within 12 months from the completion of the training.

For additional information visit:

[www.MilitaryChild.org/professionals/programs/continuing-education-graduate-credit](http://www.MilitaryChild.org/professionals/programs/continuing-education-graduate-credit)



Provider #: 6283



Provider #: 1307336



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The Military Child Education Coalition® solely exists to help the military and veteran-connected child thrive in the face of transition and separation.

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## Science?

Continued from page 31

Play is more than simply fun. Play helps to develop language skills, control impulses, reduce aggression, develop cooperation skills, and develop empathy. Play is also critical for the development of creative problem solving skills.

These activities are intended to provide a way to practice Science, Math, and Engineering through play. They provide an opportunity for families to share moments of joy, excitement, curiosity, and wonder. Watch the "Activities at Home" video and download the free Hot Wheels® Family Engagement Activities to try Speedometry™ at home with your kids.

[www.hotwheels.com/en-us/Speedometry.html](http://www.hotwheels.com/en-us/Speedometry.html)



Dr. Frederick W. Freking is an associate professor of clinical education at the USC Rossier School of Education. He began his career in science education as a biology major at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He earned his teaching credential at Azusa Pacific University and taught biology and human anatomy and physiology at Covina High School. His desire to learn science at a deeper level led him to doctoral studies in neuroscience at UCLA. For the past 15 years, he has used his science teaching and science research experiences to prepare future science teachers.

# Roll Out the Welcome Mat

ALEX KAJITANI  
Teacher and Author

As educators, we know that creating a culture of inclusivity on school campuses is a key factor in preventing bullying. However, sometimes we focus so much on creating this culture among students that we forget about another critical group: **parents**.

When I was teaching in a low-performing school in San Diego, one afternoon, the mother of one of my students didn't show up for a pre-arranged, after-school meeting. The next day, I asked the student why his mother hadn't shown up, and he simply shrugged his shoulders. "Where was she?" I asked. "At home," the student replied. "Does she usually miss things?" I asked. "She goes to church every Tuesday and Sunday!" he answered.

Normally, I may have brushed this off as "typical" for a parent



of an at-risk student; but this time, I realized I needed to take a hard look in the mirror. This parent was certainly attending functions (like church) in her community; she just wasn't attending our functions at school.

Her church was most likely doing many things that make her feel welcome there. And I had to ask: Are we doing the same on our campuses, especially for the parents who struggled in school themselves? If not, we need to be. Engaged parents can make a huge impact on bullying prevention, and forming relationships with parents is an important part of our job in helping students be safe and successful in school.

## HERE ARE FOUR SIMPLE WAYS TO HELP PARENTS FEEL INCLUDED, WELCOMED AND INVESTED IN OUR SCHOOL:

### 1. PAY ATTENTION TO THE SIGNS.

For many parents, a school campus can be a confusing, bewildering place. Simply finding the office, or a specific classroom, can be daunting. The signs indicating where a front office is may be obvious to those of us who work here, but not necessarily to a first-time visitor. Take another look at the signage around your school's points of entry. Do they all clearly indicate where a visitor should go?

Also, what languages do the parents of your school's current students speak? Creating a sign that says "Office" in several different languages can make all the difference for a confused visitor, and creates an exciting opportunity to demonstrate a school's commitment to the diversity of its student population.

Another idea: when a parent checks in, are they required to wear a "Visitor" sticker or badge? Consider also making a sticker/ badge that says "Parent," so school staff can welcome them as valued

### *Expanding Our View*

*While we work to prevent bullying in our schools, these ideas can help us begin to broaden our view of inclusivity beyond just the students, to their families as well. When parents feel included at their child's school, they're more likely to engage in school-time behaviors and relationships. This small tweak in perspective can have big, positive effects for an inclusive school culture.*

and highly esteemed guests. (And be sure to train school staff to greet parent visitors warmly.)

### 2. MANAGE FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

I once worked at a school where a very nice woman sat behind the desk that parents first encountered upon entering the front office. The problem? This nice woman did not speak any Spanish, yet most of the parents who entered spoke only Spanish. The first minute of every encounter was spent in the awkward situation of the parent having to ask if anyone in the office spoke Spanish, and the nice lady having to find someone.

While individual occurrences may not have seemed like a big deal, over the course of the day (and school year), a culture was created within that office that was not inviting. Having the right people in the right roles is critical to establishing a welcoming climate where parents aren't made to feel awkward or embarrassed.

Ask yourself, who and what do parents see immediately upon entering your school's office? I also worked at a school where college paraphernalia adorned the walls, and sent a clear message to all who entered—the purpose of this school is to prepare students for college.

*Continued on page 34...*



Continued from page 33...

Whatever message your school chooses to send, make sure that it is one that is inclusive, intentional, clear, and friendly.

### 3. UTILIZE TECHNOLOGY.

Often, there are parents who just can't make it into onto campus, for whatever reason. Ask, then, how can we include parents via technology they're already using?

Consider setting up a classroom Facebook page for parents, highlighting some of what happens during the day. (Label it "secret" so it's only visible to those you invite.)

To combat parents getting the standard answer to "What happened in school today?" ("Nothing!"), one teacher set up a Twitter account and, each day, tweeted three specific questions parents could ask their children about that day's goings-on.

### 4. REVERSE THE EXPECTATIONS.

When we think about it, we know that an inclusive school culture is formed outside of school as well as inside. So we must ask: what efforts are we making to get our school staff into the community?

Instead of a "welcome back luncheon" for school staff in the teacher's lounge each year, consider doing what one principal did and team up with parent liaisons to host small groups of staff members in their homes, and begin parent-school bonding before classes even begin.

You can also cut short a staff meeting and get teachers out into the community they serve – explore the neighborhood, cultural facilities, or watch a soccer game many parents are already attending.

Alex Kajitani is the 2009 California Teacher of the Year, a Top-4 Finalist for National Teacher of the Year, and a renowned speaker. He is the author of *Owning It: Proven Strategies for Success in ALL of Your Roles as a Teacher Today*, which was named "Recommended Reading" by the U.S. Department of Education. He is also the creator of *The Rappin' Mathematician*, and has been featured in many books and media outlets, including the CBS Evening News. [Learn more at www.AlexKajitani.com](http://www.AlexKajitani.com)

# MAKE KINDNESS GO VIRAL IN THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR!

DR. SAMEER HINDUJA  
Professor at Florida Atlantic University  
[www.hinduja.org](http://www.hinduja.org)

DR. JUSTIN W. PATCHIN  
Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

The major theme of this year's IBPA annual conference is kindness, and with the new school year upon us it is critical to build prevention efforts with this concept front-and-center. We don't want youth to simply not do the wrong thing, but do what is right instead – treat their peers with respect, compassion, and empathy. To be sure, sometimes educators naively expect kids to know and apply the Golden Rule in all their interactions from early childhood. However, without intentional efforts to instruct and cultivate kindness, your students are simply not going to be others-focused by default. With that in mind, here are some ways you can encourage the children and teens in your life to make kindness go viral at the beginning of this school year.

## Set Up a Social Media Compliments Page

Most teens have a profile on one or more social networking platforms and are very comfortable navigating these environments. Perhaps you could encourage them to set up a separate account for the purpose of dishing out anonymous accolades to their classmates. This idea was made famous by Kevin Curwick's "OsseoNiceThings" Twitter feed and Jeremiah Anthony's "West High Bros" Facebook compliments page. Now dozens of social media accounts have been set up by teens for the purpose of encouraging and praising their peers.

## Participate in Random Acts of Kindness

More and more individuals in all walks of life are realizing that it's actually really cool to be kind. It's even cooler when kindness is dished out anonymously and unexpectedly. Encourage your students or children to engage in random acts of kindness in their school or broader community. Search online for examples of young people being kind to others to give them inspiration. Dozens of videos and even a Twitter hashtag (#RandomActofKindness) can direct you to ideas as well.

## Create a Public Service Announcement

Many teens have great ideas for promoting positivity that they would love to share with others. Give them creative freedom and let them loose to script out and record a short video with the simple purpose of encouraging others to be kind. They could interview their classmates or "famous" people in their school or community (like the principal or mayor). Leave it up to them about how to approach the activity—they'll surprise you and hopefully come up with something really compelling! Then you can upload it to YouTube, your school's Web page, or social media accounts, and otherwise use it as a teaching tool to reach so many others!

## Make Posters

A simple activity that kids of all ages can tackle is to design inspirational posters that can be plastered on walls around the school. It doesn't take much artistic talent to

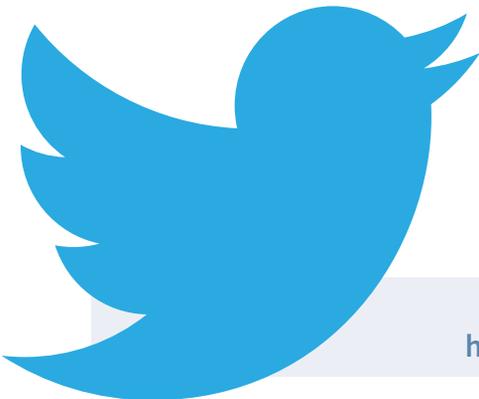
inspire others to be kind with drawings or creative slogans. Teachers could work with a particular class or a specific subset of students to produce posters that could be covertly placed all over the school on Friday afternoon or over the weekend. The rest of the student body will return on Monday and be totally inspired by what they see all around them.

In closing, remember that promoting kindness doesn't have to be a big production. The best ideas are often among the simplest. Working together, parents, teachers, and teens can make tremendous strides toward combating cruelty in all its forms during this new school year. Hopefully, as you share these ideas and stories of kindness, your teens will feel compelled to write their own!

Dr. Sameer Hinduja is a Professor at Florida Atlantic University and Dr. Justin W. Patchin is a Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Together, they co-direct the Cyberbullying Research Center (<http://www.cyberbullying.org/>), which is intended to be an information clearinghouse for educators, counselors, mental health professionals, law enforcement, and others who work with youth. The Center provides bullying and cyberbullying statistics, resources, presentations, downloads, activities, events, facts, examples, stories, and so much more to help you prevent and respond to victimization. Hinduja and Patchin's latest co-authored book *Words Wound: Delete Cyberbullying and Make Kindness Go Viral* was written specifically for teens and comes with a free Leader's Guide. In addition, their latest book for educators *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying* was just completely updated and released in its 2nd edition.



## Educators Guide to Social Media



Just in time for back to school our friends at Connect Safely have published an "Educators Guide to Social Media." The downloadable guide provides many tips for educators on how to safely and effectively use social media in class and professionally. It includes tips on how to protect both student and personal privacy and how to manage potential risks.



You can download the guide at:  
<http://www.connectsafely.org/eduguide/>



Military Child Education Coalition®  
17th National Training Seminar

Military and Veteran Kids:

# Their Story, Our Mission

**Cyberbullying** was a hot topic at this year's National Training Seminar. We heard from a panel of experts about the concerns, dangers, and results of the imperious form of harassment. The panel shared their experiences from a parent, youth, and legal perspective while relaying the importance of putting a stop to this detrimental practice.

**Bullying** is an intimidation method that has been around for a long time. With the increasing advancement of technology, people are now able to hide behind the anonymity of the internet while using the age-old method.

In the fall of 2013, 13-year-old Trisha Prabhu came home from school to find an article online about an 11-year-old girl who had jumped off her town's water tower, to her death, because she was cyberbullied. "I think in that moment I was just shocked, stunned, and angry because it seemed unacceptable to me that an 11 year old, a girl 2 years younger than myself, had been cyberbullied persistently for years and eventually ended up taking her life," expressed Prabhu. She



Trisha Prabhu

explained that it was from that day forward that she made it her mission to stop cyberbullying before it happened.

At only 15 years old, Trisha Prabhu developed **ReThink**, a computer program that detects offensive language and gives the user a second chance to rethink the message before they send it. In a Google acclaimed study, Prabhu found that over 93% of the time, individuals changed their mind when they received a ReThink alert. "We thought that if people were really intent on posting they would, so we were surprised," said Prabhu.

Trisha's product is the first of its kind and only the beginning in preventing cyberbullying. At such a young age she has already defied challenges in both her life and the lives of others. "I've always been told by my family that it doesn't matter how old you are, you can always make an impact and you can always be a hero for someone and that's something that I always wanted to do."

## Thank you

to the Military Benefit Association for sponsoring the Cyberbullying Panel Discussion at the 2015 MCEC National Training Seminar, which included: Kenneth A. Linzer, JD, Partner, Hobart Linzer LLP; Curt Schilling, Former Red Sox Pitcher; and Trisha Prabhu, Founder, Rethink.



**Kenneth A. Linzer, JD**  
Partner, Hobart Linzer LLP



**Trisha Prabhu**  
Founder, ReThink



**Curt Schilling**  
Former Red Sox Pitcher

**FORMER RED SOX PITCHER** and current ESPN analyst, Curt Schilling, is used to being under pressure and facing challenges on the field. But some people may be surprised to learn about challenges Schilling has faced off the field, particularly cyberbullying.

Quiet and timid as a young military kid, Schilling became acclimated to the challenges early-on. “There were challenges and there were moves, that’s just the life you live,” explained Schilling. Learning to become resilient as a military child, Schilling learned how to stand up for himself and others.

In early 2015, Schilling’s daughter Gabby was accepted to Salve Regina University’s softball team. “I had tweeted out, what proud dads do. I was very proud of what she had accomplished,” said Schilling. He expected to get some comments back, nothing abnormal for his life. But then he received some comments that he believed crossed a line, what he thought constituted sexual harassment. “I replied to a couple people saying, you know, enough’s

enough and they stepped it up a little bit and then it became a point where I realized that some of what was being written was criminal, it was illegal.”

Schilling decided to do his research and find all of the young men who had made these comments. He reached out to the coaches and parents, and multiple Division 1 athletes were kicked off their teams and lost scholarships. “Basically, 140

**“...it became a point where I realized that some of what was being written was criminal, it was illegal.”**

characters cost these guys \$140,000 in scholarships through no fault of anybody but their own,” said Schilling. “I feel bad that it happened to them but I don’t have one ounce of regret on what I did because as a father if I’m not here to provide and protect my family, I’m not really sure what I’m here for.”

Schilling expressed that the issue was cyberbullying and attacking of young kids. “My daughter is a very strong woman, but at that age your social

circles are everything and some of the kids that reached out and said the things that they did were at the college that she was going to.” Schilling shared the unsettling truth that kids commit suicide everyday due to comments similar to the ones his daughter received.

There is little doubt that perpetrators of bullying are struggling with insecurities or perhaps at one point even been the victim. “I think a lot

of them are people who are bullied themselves, and they feel like they need to put that on someone else because of the insecurity they feel,” shared Schilling. The repercussions of cyberbullying can be dire and sometimes deadly. Adolescents continue to be affected by bullying. Schilling continues to advocate for an end to cyberbullying, an anticipated uphill battle.

See Kenneth Linzer’s article on next page...

*Join Our Interactive Community:* [Homerom.MilitaryChild.org](http://Homerom.MilitaryChild.org)



***Homerom, our newest resource, is an online platform for anyone interested in supporting military and veteran-connected kids.***

It’s a great place to participate in discussions, ask questions, and connect with community members. *Homerom* also has an ever-growing list of downloadable, easily accessed resources.

Drop into *Homerom*, leave a comment, post a resource or share your experience. No matter where you are located, *Homerom* will be there to provide a place to gather in support of our great kids. This easy to use platform is available for smartphones, tablets, or computers. Check it out at [Homerom.MilitaryChild.org](http://Homerom.MilitaryChild.org)!



# Cyberbullies Can Easily Outwit Our

Hardly a week goes by without another story of cyberbullying and the devastating emotional damage inflicted on its innocent young victims, a majority of whom are adolescent and pre-adolescent girls. While the tragic consequences of some of these attacks make headlines, the psychic trauma experienced by many victims is suffered silently, and may last for years.

These stories demonstrate the need for engaged, supportive parents (both of the cyberbully and the cyberbullied); schools able to identify, respond to, and stop cyberbullying before further damage occurs; and knowledgeable courts equipped to address a pernicious and growing social problem.

Our judicial system, however, has been slow to find its footing in this arena. And the task becomes more difficult as technology offers up a wider array of tools for anonymity in the cyber forum.

All of us have received spam or phishing emails from fake or rerouted email accounts. But some may not realize that anyone can send a text from an email account masking his or her true identity. There's even a wikiHow page with step-by-step instructions on how to do it. For those who don't want to go through the effort of setting up a fake email account, websites such as [textem.net](#) and [sendanonymoustext.com](#) will allow them to send an anonymous text from a simple online interface. And there are a number of apps that allow anonymous texting right from the cyberbully's smartphone.

Of course, there are also websites and commentators that provide tips and counseling to cyber victims. But much of their advice boils down to this: Block the cyberbully's emails or texts. Easy to do when the attacker has a known email address or phone number. Not so easy when the cyberattack is transmitted anonymously. A victim could change her own phone number or social-media account—advice given by one unsympathetic judge recently. But how long would this fix last in a junior high or high school environment, where social connections are a primary focus? Any lasting solution has to involve an open dialogue with parents and school administrators. The first step in that dialogue, however, is often the most difficult—identifying the cyberattacker.

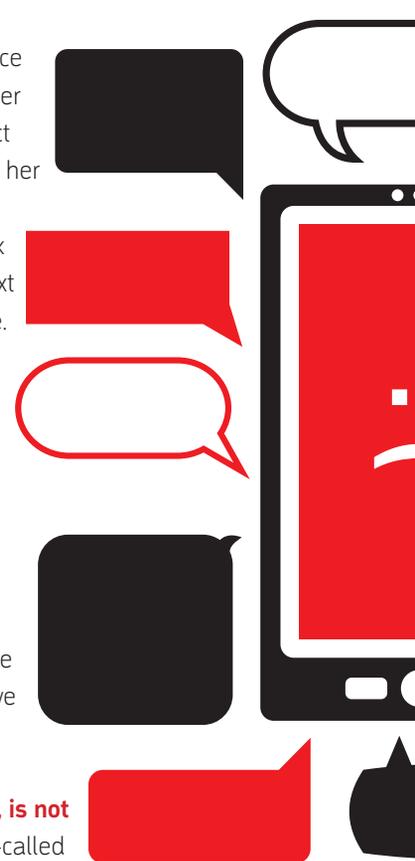
Our law firm learned this firsthand recently, when we responded to a client's plea for help in confronting a cyberbully. Her young daughter, a gifted student at one of the country's best private schools, had been the victim of a

traumatic series of offensive online posts. Our client sought our help in finding the identity of the person or persons who had sent these lurid anonymous texts to the 11-year-old, through the anonymizing website [textem.net](#). The girl (we'll call her Alice) was devastated after receiving the most defamatory text. Suspecting who had sent it, she wisely showed it to her parents.

Alice is more fortunate than many cyberbullying victims. Her parents are supportive. Her excellent school has a no-tolerance policy for cyberbullying. But neither the school nor the police could act until Alice could attach a name to her suspected cyberbully. This is not an easy task when senders mask their identities using an app or text service designed for that purpose.

The first step involved reference to [textem.net's](#) terms of use, which prohibit the sending of harassing or abusive texts from the site and caution potential anonymous texters that [textem.net](#) will assist victims of such practices by providing the Internet Protocol address and time stamp associated with the abusive text. As promised, [textem.net](#) provided both.

**An IP address alone, however, is not enough.** The Internet is full of so-called IP geolocation sites providing a general location of an IP address and the name of the Internet Service Provider, or ISP, for that address. Through the use of this type of geolocating website, we were able to narrow our search for the suspected IP address to one area of Los Angeles, served by a large cable Internet service provider.



*“Cyberbullies have all the tools they need to launch their attacks. Victims should have the tools they need to defend themselves.”*

# Legal System

KENNETH A. LINZER

Partner, Hobart Linzer LLP, Los Angeles

As first appeared in *Education Week* on March 18, 2015, as *Alice in Wonder-Who Land*. Reprinted with permission from the author.

## **Thus begins our adventures with Alice down this legal rabbit hole.**

In dealing with the cable ISP, we encountered the first major roadblock—the Cable Privacy Act. This law prohibits disclosing “personally identifiable information” of cable subscribers to the average person without a court order and notice to the subscriber.

**Alice enters the world of the unknown.** The most efficient method for obtaining a court order to restrain the perpetrator was to apply to the Los Angeles Superior Court’s civil-harassment department—or so we thought. We were informed, however, that a court order or restraining order could only be issued against a known individual. Alice was free to file a Los Angeles Superior Court complaint, thereby initiating the process of obtaining discovery of her cyberbullies, or go to the police, which the family chose not to do, thus shielding their daughter from the criminal-justice system.

**Alice falls down the rabbit hole of litigation.** We next sought a court order requiring the cable ISP to provide the identity of the subscriber associated with the IP address from which the anonymous text originated.

The first judge was unsympathetic to our preteen’s ordeal, advising us to “have the girl get a new phone number and don’t give it to anyone.” Not the most practical advice for this mobile era, when young people seem to have smartphones appended to their heads.

**Alice discovers another path.** We served a subpoena on the cable ISP to produce the subscriber’s name, which ordinarily would have the same effect as a court order in California. But not according to this cable ISP. They would have no problem responding to a court order, but refused to respond to a mere subpoena.

**Alice goes back to court.** We next appeared for a court order compelling the cable ISP to respond to the subpoena, a step that the service provider did not oppose. The court issued the order, required the provider to identify the subscriber after notifying them under terms of the Cable Privacy Act that their identity was being sought, also advising them of the 10-day period to object to the identity’s being provided.

**And then we waited.** Finally, several months and tens of thousands of dollars later, we obtained the name of the perpetrator who sent the cyberbullying text.

With that information in hand, Alice’s parents approached the school administrators, who initiated a dialogue with the parents of the cyberbullies. Not surprisingly, the identified classmates first denied having sent the offensive text, then pointed the finger at one another in an attempt to create reasonable doubt in the minds of the school administration. But the evidence was undeniable.

Alice was fortunate that her family was able to afford the lengthy and expensive process of identifying her tormentors. Not all victims have similar support. **We need a better solution.**

Our courts must have a speedier and more efficient way of obtaining identifying information in these cases. One solution would be to empower legal agencies such as Los Angeles’ civil-harassment department to issue the needed order to Internet service providers when victims demonstrate good cause. This would reduce both costs and time, by not having to file a lawsuit, serve a subpoena that may be ignored, and seek a court order to fulfill a simple request for a name.

Cyberbullies have all the tools they need to launch their attacks. Victims should have the tools they need to defend themselves. A streamlined method for obtaining information from Internet service providers would remove the current barriers, bring cyberbullies into the light, and avoid others’ having to follow in Alice’s footsteps in their own adventures in Wonder-Who Land.

Kenneth A. Linzer is a partner at the Los Angeles law firm Hobart Linzer LLP, where he counsels executives, business owners, and boards of directors in matters including strategic planning and corporate governance.





# Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program

The Military Child Education Coalition developed the Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program in 2006 in order to give exceptional *Student 2 Student*® participants the chance to receive leadership training. Frances Hesselbein, currently Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Leader to Leader Institute and the former CEO of the Girl Scouts of the USA, has a passion for the leadership development of students. The one-week program takes place at the **United States Military Academy at West Point, New York**, and the **United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado**. Participants learn about team building, leadership development, character development, community involvement, and other related topics during the week. The students profiled here have been selected to attend the Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program this Fall at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

“Leadership is a matter of how to be,  
not how to do it.”

~ Frances Hesselbein



### Noah Burlingame

*Steilacoom High School – 10th grade  
Steilacoom, Washington*

Noah is involved in his school’s swim and dive team, cross country team, and baseball team. He managed to maintain his academics while earning an Athlete Award and All League Honors Award for his swim team, and making the Steilacoom High School Principal’s Honor Roll. When he is not excelling in school and extracurricular activities, Noah volunteers at his local church, YMCA, and mission.



### Bogue Dick

*Swansboro High School – 10th grade  
Swansboro, North Carolina*

Bogue is an All-County Band Member, Main Anchor for student news, and a member of Health Occupations Students of America. He has earned the North Carolina High School Scholar Award, and is a Star Scout in Boy Scouts of America. In addition to working part time jobs and assistant coaching the local elementary school, he is making the Principal’s List and Honor Roll.



### Lauren Ellis

*Belton High School – 11th grade  
Belton, Texas*

Lauren plays on her school’s tennis team, participates in Peer Association and Leadership (PALS), and is a member of the National Junior Honor Society. Her extracurricular activities include Tae Kwon Do, and volunteering for the Wildflower Guild, Project Apple Tree, and Agape Choir. Lauren babysits in her free time and has also won Good Citizen awards.



### Sierra Flake

*Steilacoom High School – 11th grade  
Steilacoom, Washington*

Knitting baby hats for premature infants and being a camp counselor are just a few activities Sierra participates in during her free time. Sierra is on her school’s tennis and cross country team, and is a member of the National Honor Society and Future Educators of America. She has won several awards for outstanding academics and athletics.



### **Madilyn Hoffman**

*Southwest Christian School – 11th grade  
Fort Worth, Texas*

Madilyn stays active year-round as a member of the soccer, cross country, and volleyball teams. She has won awards for her leadership and service to the community.

Madilyn teaches K-5th grade at a local church and babysits when she has time.



### **Jessica Katz**

*Kellam High School – 11th grade  
Virginia Beach, Virginia*

Jessica is an active member of the Student Council Association and makes the Principal's List at her school. She spends a good deal of time working and volunteering. Jessica is a Children's Chapel Assistant and participates in a support system for military-connected children. She also volunteers at the Oceana Air Show, Serve 757 Church, and is an Acolyte.



### **Joshua LeVan**

*James Clemens High School – 11th grade  
Madison, Alabama*

Joshua is a member of Future Business Leaders of America, HOSA – Future Health Professionals, and his school's swim team and environmental club.

He lettered in several sports and has swum in statewide competitions. Already a young entrepreneur, Joshua owns and manages a private lawn care business and a private swim lesson company. When he is not busy running his businesses, Joshua volunteers at the Red Cross.



### **Deonte Mayfield**

*Fort Campbell High School – 11th grade  
Fort Campbell, Kentucky*

Freshman Class President, Sophomore Class President, Youth Ministry President, and a track and football member, are just a few of the positions

Deonte has held in his high school career. He also maintains a spot on the honor roll and has perfect attendance. In his free time, Deonte volunteers at nursing homes and shelters and works to train other S2S teams in his region.



### **Anna Northup**

*James I. O'Neill High School – 11th grade  
Highland Falls, New York*

Anna is a member of JROTC and has served as a Platoon Sergeant, Squadron Command Sergeant Major, and 3-time member of the Color Guard. In her

freshman year, she was on her school's Academic Team and worked as a front office assistant. Anna works as the newspaper's Senior Editor and Columnist, and is a Laboratory Assistant to the AP chemistry teacher.



### **Kymberlee Robinson**

*Fountain-Fort Carson High School –  
11th grade  
Fountain, Colorado*

Kymberlee is a member of the Youth Parks and Recreation Board. She has received distinguished honors four times

and been awarded the Carson Scholars Scholarship. When she is not working at Subway, Kymberlee volunteers at Discovery Day Camp and her church youth group.



### **Jane Song**

*Leavenworth High School – 10th grade  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*

Jane stays busy as a member of Interact Club, Student Council, cross country and tennis teams, and the Concert/Marching/Pep Bands. With all her

activities, Jane still received the Leavenworth High School Academic Award and finished 9th grade in the top 2.5%. Jane has volunteered on a mission trip to Honduras and regularly volunteers as a church dishwasher.



### **Josie Whitaker**

*SHAPE American High School –  
11th grade  
Mons, Belgium*

Josie is active on her volleyball, softball, and marksmanship teams. She attended the Air Force Leadership Camp and

maintains her position on the honor roll. Josie is an Alconbury Middle/High School volunteer and is a National Student Leadership Conference Nominee.

*Participation in the Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program is a competitive process. Students receive information about the application process through the S2S sponsor at their school, or go to [www.MilitaryChild.org/parents-and-students/scholarships](http://www.MilitaryChild.org/parents-and-students/scholarships)*



# **SPEEDOMETRY™** **FUN** **MAKES PHYSICS**

## **AT MCEC NATIONAL TRAINING SEMINAR**

The 2015 Military Child Education Coalition National Training Seminar was a huge success with support from our sponsors and supporters! MCEC® and Mattel® partnered to encourage 4th and 5th graders' interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) using the Hot Wheels Speedometry Curriculum.

A panel featuring General Daniel Allyn, Vice Chief of Staff, U.S. Army; Vice Admiral Sandra Stosz, Deputy Commandant for Mission Support, U.S. Coast Guard; and Fred Freking, Associate Professor of Clinical Education, USC Rossier School of Education, discussed the need for students in

STEM-related careers and heard from the children about their experiences with Hot Wheels Speedometry.

At the University of California, Fred Freking came across a project Mattel was working on to develop curriculum to engage kids and learn about science. "I just jumped at that. It's been an amazing project. Kids develop critical thinking skills, collaboration skills, and scientific practices. The curriculum is aligned with the next generation science standards so it's the way, in the future, all kids should learn science," remarked Freking. Hot Wheel Speedometry uses hands-on activities to teach kids about the concepts of physics, while having fun.

The students were given Hot Wheels cars, tracks, and tools to create successful roadways. The students used books to prop up the tracks in an attempt to create a successful roadway for the cars to go down without falling off. "What we saw was the ability of our youth to innovate, to discover solutions to seemingly insurmountable problems," expressed General Allyn. "Science, technology, engineering, and math are right at the center of developing innovative and adaptive leaders who see a problem and then can conceive of a series of variables that might lead to a solution."

The elements of learning and success, and the importance of failure is



***“LET’S CELEBRATE FAILURE BECAUSE YOU GOTTA KEEP EXPERIMENTING AND YOU GOTTA KEEP TRYING TO GET IT RIGHT. YOU HAVE TO FAIL TO SUCCEED.”***

something Vice Admiral Stosz believed was of upmost importance. "I saw some young kids having a lot of fun, learning how to work together as a team, and learning how to fail," shared Stosz. When she asked how many kids failed that day, all 15 kids on stage raised their hands. "Let's celebrate failure because you gotta keep experimenting and you gotta keep trying to get it right. You have to fail to succeed." One student, Ryan, shared that it was all about how you started the car at the top of the track. He explained the car would flip if it didn't start right. Stosz remarked, "It's how you start the day when you get up, it's how you start your homework assignments, it matters how you start."

Employers are sharing their growing need for workers in technological fields now and in the future. Students should not fear the challenges of these fields. "Scientists don't know everything, but they know how to find out," said Freking. He explained that learning STEM skills gives an individual the tools they need to these solve problems.





## Sponsors Set Tone for Successful Student 2 Student Programs

A VITAL ELEMENT to any successful *Student 2 Student*® (S2S™) Program is acquiring tenacious, unyielding, and inspiring advocates. Faculty sponsors oversee S2S activities and persist in guiding students to success. By committing to the three components of the program: **Academics**, **Relationships**, and **Finding the Way**, sponsors can prepare students for their future by shaping them into confident, resilient, and determined leaders.

Steilacoom High School is located next to Joint Base Lewis-McChord and receives a large influx of new students annually. The school sees approximately 120-140 new students a year. “These kids are new to the district, not just our school,” explained Craig Miller, S2S Sponsor at Steilacoom. With a population of only 900 students, the new arrivals

diversity of transitioning students and that every child needs something different. “In general, kids need a lot of things so we try and fit everything they could possibly need to transition to a new school,” Morris said. Encouraging 100% acceptance is a hallmark of S2S and brings military and civilian kids together. Welcoming all students provides a diverse environment of experiences, perspectives, and methods to coping with transitions. “In running an S2S program, I don’t run out of kids who want to come help and be a part of the program. So I say to anyone who is out there and struggling, the help is there; you just have to allow it to come in.”

Both Miller and Morris have been S2S sponsors for almost ten years and have made an impact in the lives of many students. Their teams have been selected to attend multiple MCEC National Training Seminars and a total of 21 of their students have been awarded the Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program Scholarship. “Personally, in my time in education, the *Student 2 Student* program has been the most influential in my career. It has reshaped my vision as a counselor and extended my ability to take care of kids,” said Morris. It is dedicated professionals like Craig Miller and Greg Morris that contribute to the success of military-connected students. Without their commitment to a mission greater than themselves, MCEC could not continue the level of success of *Student 2 Student*.

“As my Student 2 Student team considers their group a family, I consider the MCEC part of my family. The organization is one of the best with one of the best visions and efforts to do what’s right by families across this country.”

Greg Morris, S2S Sponsor, Falcon High School

represent a large percentage of the student body. Miller expressed that his job is to make sure these kids feel welcomed when they arrive and that they are making the right connections.

During his trip to San Antonio, Texas, where Miller received S2S training, he explained that he didn’t really know what the program was about. He later felt an overwhelming sense of excitement because, “After about three and a half days with the trainers, it was like they lit a fire. We came back to Steilacoom very enthusiastic and ready to start the program.” S2S is a student-led organization that is overseen by faculty sponsors. Allowing students to lead the program gives them the tools to become leaders in their own right. Miller explained that the key is to pick strong kids to run the program because after all, “...it is student to student.”

Greg Morris, Falcon High School S2S Sponsor, understands the

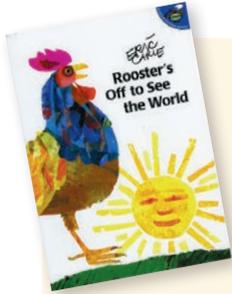




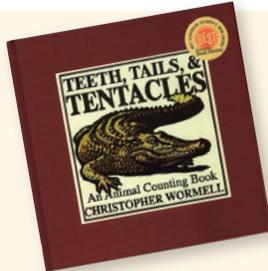
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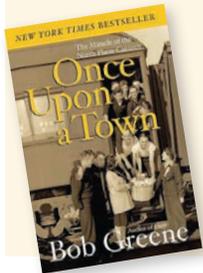
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