

ON THE *move*

the official magazine of the Military Child Education Coalition®



Where Am I From?

I'm from the bravery of this country,
I'm from dog tags and uniforms,
I'm from moving boxes and long road trips,
I'm from Old Glory, from new friends,
I'm from overseas and down the road,
I'm from separations, from reunions,
From divisions, from units,
From new faces, new places,
Strict homes, unfamiliar towns,
From tanks and helicopters,
From wars, from peace,
From patriots, from defenders and rebels,
From camo, from red, white, and blue,
From different languages,
From sharing holidays with neighbors and
vacations with family,
I'm from constant change yet familiar posts,
I'm from reveille at 0630 and retreat at 1700,
I'm from scrapbooks of old places and
maps of new ones,
I'm from goodbye and welcome home
ceremonies,
I'm not from the same four walls but from
stars and stripes.



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



The Military Child Education Coalition is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Military Child Education Coalition maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

FOLLOW US ONLINE!



@MilitaryChild



Military Child Education Coalition



YouTube.com/MilitaryChild



homeroom.MilitaryChild.org



MilitaryChild.org/blog



flickr.com/MilitaryChild



pinterest.com/MCEC1



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.

Military Child Education Coalition®, MCEC®, and associated programs, institutes, trademarks and design elements are owned and licensed by the Military Child Education Coalition. TM/© 2015 Military Child Education Coalition. All Rights Reserved. Reproduction of this magazine, in whole or in part, is authorized with appropriate acknowledgment of the source.

ON THE MOVE

Cindy Simerly, Executive Editor
Dr. Mary Keller, President/CEO/Managing Editor
Karen Kirk, Art Director
Sarah Ricard, Contributing Editor

tableofcontents

FEATURES

April is Month of the Military Child



- 4 A Spotlight on Military and Veteran Kids
- 6 Mikhala & Sterling Gittens
- 8 Cyrus Hoang



- 10 Marguerite Flynn
- 12 Rahzel Lemott
- 14 Collin & Madison Clark



- 16 Jermian Virella
- 18 Kelly Kamiya
- 19 Patrick Milligan
- 20 Margaret Seebeck

WHAT ELSE IS INSIDE

igniting the spark



- 22 Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program

policies & partnership



- 24 Staying on Standard
- 26 Continue to Serve: Teach
- 27 Operation Homefront's Military Child of the Year® Awards

aboutthecover:

Photo taken at Fort Hood, Texas, courtesy of brittanymorganphoto.com

"Where Am I From?" by Nick, Grade 11 Carlisle High School, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania • U.S. Army



Join Our Interactive Community: Homerom.MilitaryChild.org



Homerom
MILITARY CHILD EDUCATION COALITION

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!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

General (Ret) Benjamin Griffin, Chairman
Brigadier General (Ret) Robert "Bob" Gaylord, Treasurer
Brigadier General (Ret) Earl Simms, Vice Chairman/
Secretary
Barbara Day, Vice Chairman
Dawn Goldfein, Vice Chairman
David G. Henry, J.D., Vice Chairman
Rich Lerner, Ph.D., Vice Chairman
Cathe Robling, Vice Chairman
Robert "Bob" Utley, Vice Chairman

Members

Renee Bostick
Bruni Bradley
The Honorable Chet Edwards
Barbara Gentry
Chief Master Sergeant (Ret) Denise Jelinski-Hall
Patti Hunzeker
Robert Muller, Ph.D.
Command Sergeant Major (Ret) Mark S. Ripka
Ali Saadat
Ed Van Buren
Joyce Ward

Members Emeriti

Cathy Franks
Dr. William "Bill" Harrison
Lieutenant General (Ret) Don Jones
Dr. James Mitchell
Kathleen O'Beirne
Robert "Bob" Ray
Mary Jo Reimer
Sandy Schwartz
General (Ret) Thomas A. "Tom" Schwartz
Patricia "Patty" Shineki
Lieutenant General (Ret) H.G. "Pete" Taylor
Zoe Trautman

MCEC STAFF

Mary M. Keller, Ed.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
John L. Ballantyne
Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer
Todd Buchs
Vice President/Programs and Business Development
Cindy Simerly
Vice President/Fund Development and Marketing
Shellie Campos, PHR
Director, Human Resources
Lee Ann Deal, CFRE
Director, Annual Giving
Annette Farmer, J.D.
Staff Counsel and Director, Contracting
Juan Garcia, CPA
Comptroller
Michael Gravens
Director, Business Development
Daryl McLaughlin
Chief Technology Officer
Denise Montana-Graham
Chief of Logistics and Retail
Stacey Smith, Ph.D.
Director, Grants Management and Program Evaluations
Lisa Thomas, Ph.D.
Coordinator, Curriculum Development and Professional Standards

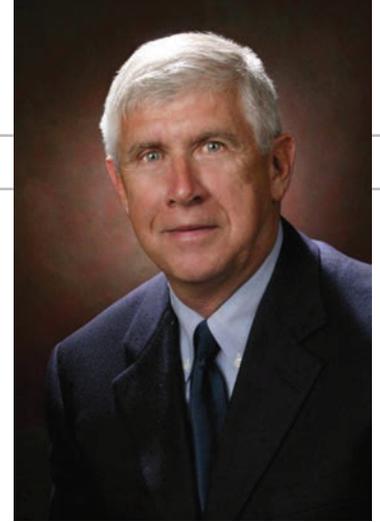
FROM THE CHAIRMAN»

We hope you enjoy this special edition of *On the Move*, where we highlight some of our Military Children. The reason MCEC exists is to make life a little better for our children and help provide for the unique challenges they face — while one or both parents serve this great Nation. Here are some statistics most of you probably already know:

Military kids on an average move 6-9 times in their K-12 education careers and all those school transitions present challenges. MCEC responds to their needs by continuing to develop programs that support academic achievement. They also endure frequent family separations, and sometimes even the death or serious injury of a parent, but are proud of their parent's service to this Nation. Statistics show military kids are at least twice as likely as their civilian peers to enter military service. They understand and appreciate service to their country.

My heartfelt thanks to each of you for what you do for our children, MCEC, and the men and women of our armed services serving around the world.

General (Ret) Benjamin Griffin, USA
Chairman of the Board, Military Child Education Coalition



Growing a Community of Support

At MCEC, we strive to empower military and veteran-connected children and the community that surrounds them. Please join us as we work to ensure the children of our service men and women have everything they need to reach their full potential.

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

Your tax-deductible donation to MCEC funds programs for students, parents and professionals, providing vital peer and community support systems. MCEC will be honored to be the recipient of your charitable contribution designated in one of the following areas:

- Student/Youth Initiatives
- Parent Initiatives
- Educator/Professional Initiatives

Together, we will grow a community of support
...for the sake of the child.

For more information and to donate, go to:

<http://www.militarychild.org/partners/growing-a-community-of-support>



FROM THE PRESIDENT >>

Congress has declared April Month of the Military Child. At the Military Child Education Coalition, we celebrate the contributions and commitment of military and veteran-connected kids every single day. As a group, children of our Nation's service members have much in common: a parent's duty, family separations of varying degrees, and transitions common to military life. Individually, however, military and veteran kids have a story to tell, and that's our mission. We are here to champion their successes, reflect their challenges, and secure opportunities for their futures. In this issue, you will hear from kids whose parents are currently serving or have served. In their own words, they will share their unique experiences and perspectives as military children.

Today's teenagers have grown up with the reality of war, and the implications on families are felt in many ways. Younger children have a frame of reference reflecting a lifetime of deployments and transition. As more service members transition from the military with young children, we will develop curriculum addressing military to civilian transition issues that might impact academic performance, have social and emotional implications and, ultimately, affect a child's ability to thrive.

Thank you for taking the time to read these stories and for joining us in our efforts to serve the children of those who serve us all.

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



MCEC OFFICE
(254) 953-1923 • (254) 953-1925 (fax)
909 Mountain Lion Circle
Harker Heights, Texas 76548
info@MilitaryChild.org

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mrs. Charlene Austin
The Honorable Valerie Baldwin
The Honorable Carolyn H. Becraft
Mr. Douglas Belair
General (Ret) and Mrs. B.B. Bell (Katie)
Ms. Dona Bushong
The Honorable and Mrs. John Carter (Erika)
Mr. Ed Casey
General (Ret) and Mrs. George Casey (Shelia)
General (Ret) and Mrs. Peter Chiarelli (Beth)
Lieutenant General (Ret) and Mrs. Kurt Cichowski (Laura)
Mr. Mike Cohen
Dr. Dan Domenech
Admiral (Ret) and Mrs. Walter Doran (Ginny)
Mrs. Lea Ann Edwards
General (Ret) and Mrs. Larry R. Ellis (Jean)
Ms. Lucy Fitch
Lieutenant General (Ret) and Mrs. Phil Ford (Kris)
General (Ret) Tommy R. Franks
Command Sergeant Major (Ret) and Mrs. William J. Gaaney (Cindy)
The Honorable Pete Geren
Colonel (Ret) Robert L. Gordon III
Major General (Ret) and Mrs. Mark R. Hamilton (Patty)
Lieutenant General (Ret) Charles R. Heflebower
RADM (Ret) and Mrs. Leenert Hering (Sharon)
General (Ret) James T. and Dr. Toni Hill
Lieutenant General (Ret) and Mrs. William Ingram (Lil)
Major General (Ret) and Mrs. Robert Ivany (Marianne)
Lt Gen (Ret) and Mrs. Darrell Jones (Holly)
Mr. Gary Knell
Mr. Luke Knittig
General (Ret) and Mrs. Leon J. LaPorte (Judy)
General (Ret) and Mrs. David McKiernan (Carmen)
General (Ret) and Mrs. Craig McKinley (Cheryl)
Mr. Drayton McLane, Jr.
General (Ret) and Mrs. Duncan McNabb (Linda)
Lieutenant General (Ret) and Mrs. Thomas Metz (Pam)
Major General (Ret) and Mrs. Paul Mock (Karen)
General (Ret) and Mrs. Richard Myers (Mary Jo)
Mr. Danny Pummill
General (Ret) Dennis J. Reimer
Mr. Matthew "Matt" Rogers
General (Ret) and Mrs. Norton Schwartz (Suzie)
General (Ret) and Mrs. Henry H. Shelton (Carolyn)
Lieutenant General (Ret) Stephen M. Speakes
Lieutenant General (Ret) George J. Trautman III
Dr. Philip "Uri" Treisman
Ms. Kirsten White



OUR NEW SERIES OF PARENT VIDEOS, the *Learning Skills Toolbox*, sponsored by the General Electric Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation can be seen on our youtube channel and at www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/resources



**BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation**



New Resource Available: **Persistent and Challenging Behaviors**

The *Persistent and Challenging Behaviors* course helps parents and caregivers analyze behavior challenges and determine age-appropriate strategies to address those behaviors. The course includes resources participants can download.

www.militarychild.org/learning

A spotlight on Military and Veteran Kids

Their Story, Our Mission

MATT VANDERLAAN
Writer and soon-to-be
teacher, Portland, Oregon

WHEN I WAS ASKED to interview military children for *On the Move*, I was excited. I'm a military child myself, with both parents having served in the Army – my father in the Infantry and my mother in the Nurse Corps. I had worked a spell as a conference facilitator for the Military Child Education Coalition on the *Living in the New Normal™* initiative. It felt good to be able to take my story of growing up in the military and use it to help teach civilian leaders about what military children face in their unique lives. But a part of me always thought it wasn't quite enough.

My story was true and a solid example of one military child's life, but that was the issue: one child's experience.

that if anything happened to my parents, I would go live with one of my aunts. And the "if anything happened" was not vague. My mother was direct about the possibility of dying in the line of duty. I came of age between Desert Storm and the War on Terror, and even in that relative peacetime, my parents made sure I, an eight year old, knew the risks of their career choice. I once heard the military is one of the only jobs where parents are willing to risk their children becoming orphans.

I let these military children speak for themselves. All I did was put the words and thoughts in order, but the concepts are wholly theirs. I hope this impresses upon you, the reader, just how mature and wise these young

A military child is one who knows how to prepare for the worst but hope for the best... They all know that service is not something only those in uniform do.

Despite all being military children, each child of an armed service member has an incredibly individual life. There are certainly shared aspects, as you'll see in these pages, but every child still lives a unique life. With this project, I was able to hear the voices of amazing young people who have grown up in the military, and how each of them found the experience challenging but still positive.

As I talked to these military kids, I found myself wondering if I was that confident and competent at their age. It's hard to think I was, but I can't deny the kinship I feel for them and their experiences. Military children are handed a lifestyle they have no choice but to accept. Their parents voluntarily make the commitment to serve the United States for years, and military kids must live with the consequences of this lifestyle.

When I was in elementary school, I remember learning

people are. A military child is one who knows how to prepare for the worst but hope for the best. She knows the cost of war on a personal level. He knows the difficulties of being an outsider by virtue of his parents' profession. They all know that service is not something only those in uniform do.

Military children carry a burden they did not ask for. But they do it with a courage often not found in their peers. While much of America may never truly understand what a military child goes through – what thoughts and worries and doubts about moving or a deployed parent compete in their mind with the same thoughts and doubts and worries about growing up – we can do something: **we can listen**. We can ask them to share their story, and we can make sure we hear it. And sometimes, all a person needs to know is that people are listening.

MILITARY

Child



Dylan, Grade 8 • Bayside Middle School, Virginia Beach, VA • U.S. Navy

Spotlight on

Mikhala & Sterling Gittens

Throughout a parent's military career, a places, and ways of life th

MIKHALA and STERLING GITTENS are 17-year-old twins who live in Oak Harbor on Widby Island in Washington state. Both of their parents have served in the military. Their father, originally from Panama, began his military career in the Navy as a hospital corpsman. He transferred to the Army where he now works as an engineer. Their mother also served as an engineer in the Army. Sterling and Mikhala were born at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. While twins, they have different ways of looking at their experience as military children.

Mikhala's favorite subject in school is Spanish. She enjoys speaking it with her father and other relatives. In addition to applying herself in her AP classes (which take up a lot of her time), she likes to swing dance. Both twins volunteer and attend a Boys and Girls Club youth center, where Mikhala likes jumping double-dutch with the other kids. Eventually, Mikhala wants to work in a field where she can travel the world, learn new languages and meet new people. She especially enjoys learning how other people live.

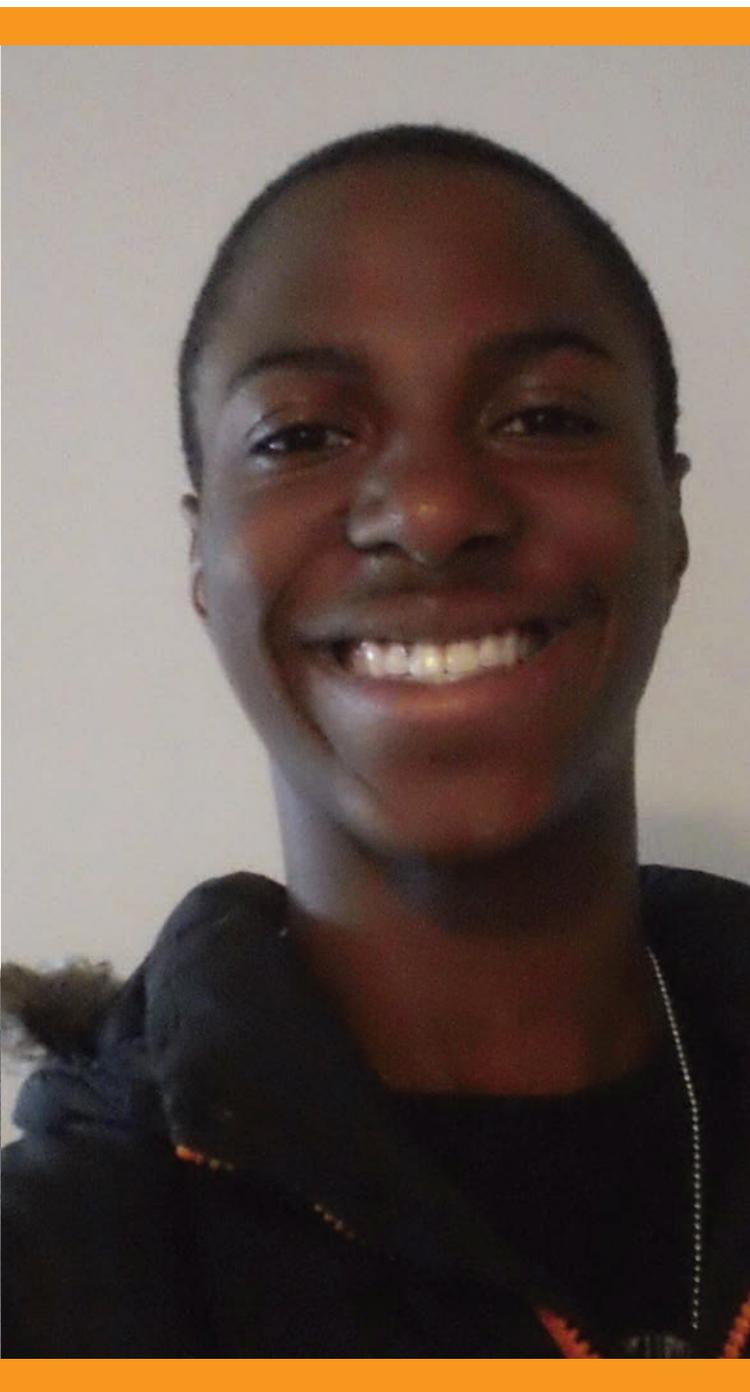
Sterling's favorite classes are English and Psychology. He likes to explore the ways people understand one another. His writing focuses on poems, lyrics and speeches, and when not putting pen to paper, Sterling enjoys playing dodgeball and video games at the youth center. He's interested in a career that involves public speaking and writing (preferably poems) and is thinking of teaching psychology at the high school and college levels.

For Mikhala, the best thing about being a military kid is how it allows her to see things – and life itself – in a new way. She and her brother spent three years in Germany during middle school, and Mikhala jumps at the travel opportunities that her life as a military child has given her.

They have gone on a cruise through the Mediterranean with 15 other kids, where they traveled through Greece, Turkey, Italy and Croatia. Despite the occasional language barrier with their travel-mates, they all played foosball and moved as a pack during the trip.



child is exposed to new experiences, at broaden their perspective.



But Mikhala also said, “I look at the world.” Her experience in traveling has given Mikhala a wider sense of her place on the planet, a quality that shows in the way she discussed her excitement at exploring France, Switzerland and Spain when they lived in Germany.

Sterling discussed another aspect of all that travel, specifically the opportunity for growth. Throughout a parent’s military career, a child is exposed to new experiences, places and ways of life that broaden their perspective. For him, the best thing is what this “advantage” affords. These opportunities teach flexibility, despite the inherent structure of military life. Sterling said learning to be flexible is similar to a mother bird pushing a baby bird out of its nest. Military kids learn to adapt to new situations in every place they have lived and traveled.

Mikhala added to her brother’s comments that such learning sometimes comes at a cost. One of her biggest challenges is not having an easy answer to that most basic question: *Where are you from?* Not having a hometown, in the sense that most Americans understand it, can be tough to explain and to live through, she says. Despite this challenge, military kids learn adaptation younger than most of their peers. While this is important for everyone to learn, she feels life as a military child is particularly suited for just such a skill.

Sterling sees the biggest challenge for military children is having a limited perspective – specifically, viewing change in the wrong way. He talked of kids who bemoan having to move away from friends, that they fail to spin the situation and “try to see the great thing they’re already in.” Moving away from friends doesn’t mean you lose them, and a new place to live only means you’ll meet more.

Sterling was adamant about the notion that military children want to be treated with respect. “People baby them, treat them like they need help,” but, he says, they don’t want to be handed things. He was quick to add, “don’t take pity on yourself if you’re a military kid. Embrace the change.” As their father starts to transition out of the military, Sterling and Mikhala are living that very credo.

Spotlight on

Cyrus Hoang

“Military kids don’t dwell on the negative aspects of their parents’ job. It is more important to look forward and focus on the future than get tied up in the past.”



CYRUS HOANG is the picture of an active and successful 17-year-old. He lives in Falcon, Colorado, with his mother and younger brother, and four Chihuahuas. He enjoys history class, specifically all the details surrounding World War II and the Cold War, attributing some of his interest to having a good teacher. Outside of classes, he is involved in HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America), National Honor Society, Boy Scouts (where he has earned the rank of Eagle Scout), and *Student 2 Student*®. He is interested in working in medicine and possibly becoming an orthopedic surgeon.

Unlike most teenagers, Cyrus’s father does not live in Colorado with their family. His father is in the Air Force and currently stationed in Alaska at Cyber Command. Cyrus is a military child, and in addition to the difficulties of growing up, he has the added challenge of his father serving in our nation’s armed services. But it is a challenge that

Cyrus is willing to undertake, because, as he says, “My parents remind me to be thankful for what I have.”

His parents’ words are not just fondness for a good life. Both of his parents grew up in Southeast Asia and fled to the United States after the Vietnam War. His father’s father was in the South Vietnamese Air Force and smuggled his family off shore in a boat where they were picked up by a U.S. Navy destroyer. His mother had to hide in rice fields while Communist soldiers demanded they reveal themselves or be shot. Astoundingly, both of his parent’s families arrived in America and settled in Oregon, where his parents met while attending Oregon State University.

Cyrus is interested in continuing the legacy of service and is looking at becoming a doctor in the Air Force. His work in HOSA and JROTC serves him well, along with his outlook on his experience of having a military parent. For Cyrus, the positives of his life outweigh the negatives, and he has learned to be outgoing and independent as a military child. Cyrus only had to move once, in 2006, when his family moved to Colorado. It was there his parents decided that stability was important to them, and his father went alone the next time he was transferred.

Despite having a stable home and “a really strong mother,” Cyrus still finds it challenging to not have his dad around. When competing in drill competitions for JROTC, he wishes his dad could be there. But they do see each other every night during dinner, via video chat on FaceTime. His father was deployed for two tours in Afghanistan, where Cyrus felt like he “never knew what was going to happen.” During that time, he claims he was “more relieved just to see [his dad].”

In spite of the challenges that living far away from his father brings, Cyrus is still upbeat about what he has gained from the experience. He’s learned to be supportive of his mom and brother and is more perceptive to their needs. Military children learn to take care of themselves, he says. He wanted to share this important piece of wisdom about military children: “Military kids don’t dwell on the negative aspects of their parents’ job.” It is more important, according to Cyrus, for them to look forward and focus on the future than get tied up in the past.

SchoolQuest™

A Military Child Education Coalition® Initiative

How SchoolQuest supports College and Career Readiness

SchoolQuest was created, designed, developed and is implemented by the Military Child Education Coalition® (first launched 2006) for military students in transition, with a special focus on educational transitions.

Basic Facts about SchoolQuest:

- ✓ All resources are of high quality and they are FREE!
- ✓ Guest information on SchoolQuest is secure and password-protected.
- ✓ Students, professionals and parents use SchoolQuest - with the primary user being parents
- ✓ The *State Education Resources* feature shows parents, by state and category, important requirements and offerings.
- ✓ MCEC's SchoolQuest is accessible from anywhere in the world.

Compare and Find Schools

Our Find a School feature is our most popular!

School-specific information is derived by us from a real-time data feed from *Great Schools*. Searches may be conducted by city, state or zip code, military installation or school district, allowing parents to find and contact schools that best fit their child's needs and interests prior to their move.



"I really do love being able to record my kids' activities or achievements right away and know that I can recall it for whatever purpose necessary but especially for future college reference." Parent

College Prep Resources

Any 8th-12th grade student (and parents) have access to our college prep resources. Unlike programs offered by a school district - which stop when the student PCS's - they do not lose any work they've done on SchoolQuest if they move during this time. Resources include:

• College Prep Toolbox:

- > *Scholarship Finder* - Search for undergraduate funding
- > *Schmoop* - Fun and free ACT/SAT prep
- > *March 2 Success* - Helping high school students with both high school and college prep materials
- > *College Options Services* - Plan for your bright future using information found here

• Library Resources:

Easy access to helpful information on military in-state tuition and waivers, college transfer students, paying for college, choosing the college, and much more.

• Blog Posts:

Blogs are posted regularly on topics such as Transition to College, Moving to a New School, Your Child's Ages & Stages, and other Special Topics.

Since 2014 there were **32,864** sessions on SchoolQuest, averaging **90** sessions per day.

"Thanks so much for your prompt response. I love using this site and will continue to use it through my kids' high school years." Parent

Educational Questions?

Through SchoolQuest, as well as through our *Ask Aunt Peggie* feature, we respond to our audience questions and comments personally, professionally, privately and efficiently.



Your support makes a difference! www.SchoolQuest.org

Spotlight on

Marguerite Flynn

“My entire life centers around my next move,” frequently thinks about how it will affect her friendships and her family.

MARGUERITE FLYNN is unique among military children. She’s 14 (“Almost 15,” she kept adding) and lives in Leesburg, Virginia. She was originally born in Kodiak, Alaska, and has moved six times in her life. But Marguerite’s situation is slightly different because even the most up-to-date civilian might not realize Marguerite is a military child. Her father serves in the Coast Guard, and the average U.S. citizen rarely remembers that the fifth side of the Pentagon is the Coast Guard. Marguerite has lived the life of a military child and is quick to remind people that military children aren’t *only* Army brats.

In school, Marguerite’s favorite subject is geometry, even though she was never too keen on math before. She likes how she can work out the solution to a problem when given only a few small pieces of information. Eventually, Marguerite wants to go into the military and have a STEM-related job (Science, Technology,

Engineering and Mathematics). While she’s not sure of the exact position she’d like, she is preparing handily through her involvement in the Civil Air Patrol Cadets, the Air Force Auxiliary. In the program, she gets opportunities to learn and apply aerospace sciences, leadership and emergency service work.

In addition, she plays lacrosse, and the mere mention of it showed a gleeful intensity in her face. She attended Space Camp last year in Huntsville, Alabama, through the Bernard Curtis Brown II Memorial Space Camp Scholarship.

Moving is one of Marguerite’s favorite things about being a military child. She relishes the opportunity to explore new places and meet new people. One of her favorite places was New Jersey because of how close they were to the beach. “My entire life centers around my next move,” she says, and she frequently thinks about how it will affect school, her hobbies, her friendships and her family.

But her least favorite thing about being a military child is *also* moving. She talked about having to start over in every new place: make new friends, join new teams, find new routines.

Despite the brevity of her stays, Marguerite clearly leaves an impression. When she and her family

Military Girl

I don't wear any uniforms, no blues or greens.

But I am in the military, in a rank never seen.

I have no job on my shoulders, salutes I never give.

But the military world, is the place where I live.

I am not in the rank of command, orders I do not get.

But my daddy is the one who does, this I cannot forget.

I am not the one who fires the weapon, who puts my life on the line.

But my job is just as tough, I am the one that left friends behind.

My dad is a patriot, a smart and kind man

With the job to serve his country, not all understand.

My dad makes the sacrifice, my dad works to keep his country free,

But so does my mom, brother, sister, and me.

Even though it might get a little wild,

I stand with the rank known as the

Military Child.

Katie, Grade 6 • Holloman Middle School, Holloman Air Force Base, NM • U.S. Air Force

she says, and she school, her hobbies,

moved from Connecticut to Virginia, her lacrosse team retired her number, and she has gone back to visit her old teammates because of the strong bonds she had formed with them.

Marguerite's father is deployed for an average of two months on most patrols, but when she was 12, he deployed to Bahrain in the Persian Gulf for a full year. Thanks to her four siblings and mother, the family handled his absence well, but her father mentioned how even adults are confused when he and his family have to explain how members of the Coast Guard are deployed like any other armed service member.

When asked about the most important thing people should know about military children, Marguerite got quiet for a second and then confidently said, "Kids serve, too." Drawing on her experience with Operation Purple Camp, Marguerite talked about coming together with other military children and seeing how their parents' service affected them in similar and unique ways.

Marguerite also talked about how difficult it was to meet other kids who didn't want to form a relationship with military children just because they'd move. If her bonds with previous friends prove anything, it's that Marguerite demonstrates a passion for life that people should seek out in a friend.



Spotlight on

Rahzel
Lemott

RAHZEL LEMOTT is 14 years old and goes to school in Stafford, Virginia. He is the youngest 9th-grader in his class. He plays lacrosse and enjoys flying remote controlled airplanes. But Rahzel stands out among his peers. Most of his friends at his school were born and raised in Virginia their entire lives. Some haven't even left the state. Rahzel's story is quite different.

Rahzel was born in Okinawa. His parents are both Marines; his father serves as a communications officer, and his mother served as an air traffic controller. In addition to Okinawa, Rahzel has lived in California twice, South Carolina, and two different locations in Virginia. He says it is sometimes hard to readjust every year. When he was younger, the changes were easier, but getting older has presented challenges such as trying out for sports teams or transferring school credits.

Rahzel's favorite classes are math and science. "I like that there is a single answer (in math), with only one definite way to solve a problem." His affinity for calculations is unsurprising, as he hopes to study aerospace engineering at the U.S. Naval Academy. He plans to eventually serve as either a naval or marine aviator, continuing his family's legacy of military service. Rahzel also got to attend Space Camp this past year in Huntsville, Alabama, through MCEC's Bernard Curtis Brown II Memorial Space Camp Scholarship.

Despite the trials of relocating every couple years, Rahzel enjoys moving. He says seeing new places is important to him. He's already traveled across a third of the planet, and he's not yet able to legally drive. His family has taught him to enjoy travel. Rahzel, his mother, father, older sister and two younger brothers frequently globe hop for fun. His favorite trip recently was a cruise through Central America, including stops in Belize and Panama.

The tougher part of being a military child, for Rahzel, is seeing family leave for deployment and trying to



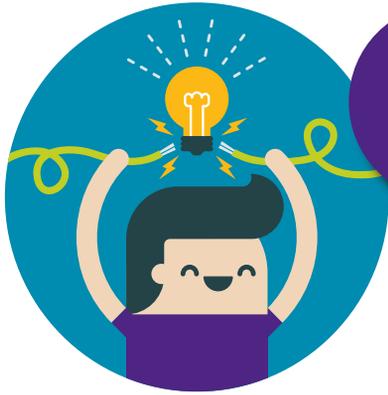
persevere through their absence. His father has served three tours in Iraq, including an entire year when Rahzel was only 7 years old. Even at that young age, Rahzel remembers that lacking a male role model and his father's point of view was difficult for him. His mother, who builds aviation command control systems, was a great source of strength for him, but the absence of his father still affected him.

When he was younger, the changes were easier, but getting older has presented challenges such as trying out for sports teams or transferring school credits.

An important thing to know, Rahzel feels, is that family is most significant to him. In addition to being the constants in a life of moving around, his parents gave him a broad area to find his passion and future, letting him explore the world.

"Some people only know war through video games," he says. But Rahzel clearly knows it in a much more direct way. Even when his father was gone and the family treaded forward, all Rahzel wanted was his father to return unhurt. Even though there were shifts in the family when his father returned from deployments, Rahzel said "No one minded. We were just glad to have him back."

Helping Military Children Discover Their



Strength

Potential

Aspirations

Resourcefulness

Confidence

⚡ Beyond resilient! ⚡

helping military kids thrive by finding their SPARC!

Learn online! Only \$67.99

Course Topics:

- ⚡ What It Means to Thrive
- ⚡ Equipping Youth with Sparks
- ⚡ Military Children and Academics, Relocation, Social Issues, Family Dynamics
- ⚡ Mindset: Fixed vs. Growth

Train at your own pace, any time during the two week course window.

Schedule:

Thursday 04/16/15 - Wednesday 04/29/15
Thursday 04/23/15 - Wednesday 05/06/15

The Learning Outcomes Are:

- Explain what it means to thrive and the role of caring adults in helping children reach their full potential.
- Interpret current research on thriving, and examine a special four-step process to help adults support youth.
- Network with colleagues to develop strategies for promoting thriving attributes in children and youth.
- Analyze professional and personal practices as related to components of thriving and identify strategies and methodologies for application.



Register today at: www.militarychild.org/SPARC-Training

CEU - Course participants are eligible to receive 0.6 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for this six clock hour course.



Spotlight on

*Collin &
Madison Clark*



COLLIN & MADISON CLARK are siblings who live in San Antonio, Texas. Madison, 14, enjoys her theater class, where she performs duets with her brother. She prefers acting in plays to watching them. In her free time, she likes to hang out with her friends, go shopping and recently started exercising with her mom.

While college is still a bit ahead of her, Madison is interested in becoming a surgeon, which she claims comes from watching *Grey's Anatomy*. She imagines it would be exciting, and not an "average kind of desk job."

Collin, 17, considers himself a science kid, but really enjoys history, especially of the United States and World War II. He played football but dropped it to focus on academics. He also practices Cross Fit and is currently working on earning his private pilot's license. Eventually, he would like to go into the military, but he is still undecided on whether he wants to be a pilot in the Air Force or work with tanks in the Army.

Madison and Collin are military children. Their father was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army and worked with tanks – a "Cav guy" as Collin calls him. On June 8, 2013, Madison and Collin found out their father had been killed in action. "That day, we went from being an active duty family to a military dependent family," Collin says.

Their father was on his second deployment to Afghanistan, having previously served three tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. Now, a year and a half later, Madison says, "It was a risk everyone knew he was taking," but that didn't make it any easier to accept. Both Madison and Collin talked about how, as a military child, you are aware of your parent being in danger, but you never think it could happen to you. And after so many deployments, both of them had reached a point where they simply waited for their father to get back, not wondering whether or not he would return.

Their father already had a new job lined up for after his deployment, as the second in command of the Army ROTC at Texas

A&M University, where he had graduated and gone through ROTC. When the news came, Collin remembered thinking, "It's not fair, not just about his job, but... it's just not something easily explained." Madison talked about expecting "the life that we thought was going to happen, but it ended up going a very different direction."

Of their experience as military children, both Madison and Collin still view it as an overall positive experience. Madison described growing up as a military child a challenging but good life. Getting to see new places was good, even when moving was hard. Collin was born at Fort Hood, Texas, and then the family moved to Fort Knox, Kentucky, where Madison was born. From there they moved to Louisiana, California, then Kansas for their father to attend the Command

most recent deployment or where you're going to be living in the next 10 months."

The most challenging aspect of being a military child, according to Madison, is the constant worry you have about your parent and "hoping they'll come home safe and not knowing what's going to happen. You really have to take it one day at a time, and whatever happens, happens."

Collin echoed Madison's words about uncertainty, and how a military child is never quite sure what it will be like to move to a new place and have to leave old friends behind. Making new friends fast is a skill most military kids learn, he says.

When their father died in the line of duty, their perspective of the military didn't change drastically, but it did shift. Collin admits he is more aware of all the people

Sometimes... the unique challenges of being a military child are underappreciated. In spite of the difficulties they've faced, Collin and Madison demonstrate how military children are able to flow with the life they're presented with.

General Staff College, and finally to Fort Drum, New York. It was while stationed at Fort Drum that their father was killed in Afghanistan. They moved from Fort Drum to San Antonio to be near family, and because their father wished to be buried at Fort Sam Houston. All the moving around can be a challenge, said Collin, and not having a single place you're from and how their civilian peers sometime struggled to understand.

Both Madison and Collin are grateful for being military children because they have learned to "worry more about the bigger picture." Through more experiences, more places lived, more cultures encountered, they broadened their worldview and became more mature than most teens. Some teenagers, explained Collin, just think of living in the moment, but in "being a child of the military," you have to think about more significant things, like "if your dad is going to come home from his

affected by military services, to include families, not just the servicemen and women. Madison acknowledged that she was never too fond of the military, but she didn't blame the military for her father's death. "My dad knew what he was getting into and he was willing to make that sacrifice."

Both Madison and Collin want more people to know that military children go through a lot, and while people are sympathetic, very few truly understand. "Unless they are a child of the military," Collin says. Even kids whose parents come home still worry about their parents and still face having to move and make new friends, Madison adds. Sometimes the struggles of growing up with the unique challenges of being a military child are underappreciated. In spite of the difficulties they've faced, Collin and Madison demonstrate how military children are able to flow with the life they're given.

Spotlight on

Jermian Virella



JERMIAN VIRELLA lives in Harker Heights, Texas. He's 18 years old and attends Shoemaker High School. Jermian's father is a Sergeant First Class in the Army and currently serves in the Army Operational Test Command at Fort Hood. Originally born at Fort Irwin, Jermian moved many times in his early life, from Fort Irwin, to Puerto Rico (where his parents are from), California, Alabama, and finally Texas.

In Texas Jermian's path deviated from the typical military child; he's been in Texas since the fifth grade. With two older brothers, Jermian has had time to develop an established circle of friends and a routine that military children rarely get.

Shoemaker, a high school located next to Fort Hood, has a high percentage of military kids, and last year alone, Jermian says, there were over 700 new students. The school's current enrollment is just

shy of 2,000, which means between freshmen and transfer students, over a quarter of the student body were new to the school.

At school, Jermian's favorite subject is Engineering Design and Problem Solving. Like many other military kids, he is interested in eventually working in the military, specifically in Aerospace Engineering. He enjoys the technological side of engineering along with building and innovation and is interested in the

Navy and the Air Force for their focus on hardware development.

Outside of class, Jermian works with a robotics team, Shadetree Robotics, which (as of this writing) will have its first competition in San Antonio. In the competition, the team must build a robot that can move totes full of different objects and stack recycling totes in certain configurations.

Jermian is also a member of Shoemaker High School's Technology Student Association and has been helping them work on a soapbox derby car. "And, uh, I have to drive it," he says and laughs nervously.

In his experience as a military child, Jermian has always appreciated the diversity of the communities he has lived in. Even though he's been in Texas for some time, he learns a lot from all the other people who

have come and gone throughout the years. He says it's easy to talk to these new people and find connections in their experiences, and not just from their shared background as military kids.

Jermian echoes the sentiment of many other military children regarding the challenge of moving. Instead of his family moving, however, good friends eventually move away, and he can't help but miss them. "But," he says, "new people move in and you make friends and then they leave and more come in." He tries to keep in touch, as much as the frantic pace of teenage life allows, and so Jermian has an ever-growing cadre of friends all over the nation and world.

Shoemaker High School, located next to Fort Hood, has a high percentage of military kids. Last year, there were over 700 new students. The school's current enrollment is just shy of 2,000, which means between freshmen and transfer students, over a quarter of the student body were new to the school.

His participation in the MCEC *Student 2 Student*[™] program at his high school allows him to share experiences with both civilian and military students.

The most important thing Jermian wants people to know about military children is that each one is different. Some move more than others and can start to see making friends as a hopeless cause. Jermian wants people to know that they can help remind those kids that they can still make friends and keep them, despite a life of many transitions. "They just need to be reminded to be happy because not many kids get the chance to grow up in the military." Jermian's final idea regarding military kids is that they're more resilient than people initially think, and the way they handle challenges later in life is indicative of how they persevered through the tough times when growing up.



PETE TAYLOR PARTNERSHIP OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

K-12 AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Applications due May 15th

In 2004, in recognition of General Taylor's work and dedication to helping America's military children, the Military Child Education Coalition Board of Directors established the Pete Taylor Partnership of Excellence Award. The K-12 award encourages and applauds the outstanding partnerships that exist between military installations and school districts, and brings special recognition to those partnerships that demonstrate the MCEC core value that *"real goodness happens at the local level."*

The Higher Education award highlights outstanding teacher preparation programs that include critical information and experience focused on military-connected children. The award promotes and celebrates collaboration among institutions of higher education, public school systems and military installations. Programs that produce well-educated and successful teachers are recognized for the support they provide to military-connected elementary, middle and high school students.

WHO CAN APPLY:

K-12: Military installations and local K-12 school systems may apply in a joint submission. It is recognized that in some communities there are partnerships drawing from more than one military installation or school system.

Higher Education: Colleges and Universities that prepare K-12 teachers or other professionals who work with the K-12 population and include information on the education of military-connected children.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

View the scope of the awards, descriptions of partnership activities, and download applications.

www.militarychild.org/pete-taylor-partnership-of-excellence-awards-k-12

www.militarychild.org/pete-taylor-higher-education-award

Spotlight on

*Kelly
Kamiya*



KELLY KAMIYA is proof the life of a military child is guided by the experiences they have while their parents serve. Kelly is 29 years old and currently lives in San Antonio, Texas. She graduated from high school while living at Fort Polk and went on to attend Marquette University. She currently works as a government contractor, helping develop bids for grant proposals. However, she plans to go back to school and become a registered nurse, with a focus in pediatrics and pediatric oncology. In addition to work and school, Kelly volunteers with Respite Care of San Antonio which helps toddlers and babies with special needs.

Kelly was born in Kauai, Hawaii, and moved, on average, every two years during her childhood. Her father, who retired in 2010, served in the Army Infantry, most recently as a Major General with Joint Forces Command. Growing up, Kelly always liked science classes, especially the hands-on aspects of biology that focused on human anatomy and health, clearly setting her on the path she is now pursuing.

Kelly enjoyed her life as a military child. She saw it as a way to go to different places and meet new people. Because of how frequently her father was reassigned, Kelly got used to moving around. The children of civilians all grew up together,

and she remembers the challenges of trying to integrate into those groups at each school she went to. And while military kids formed their own clique, she found it limiting to only associate with teenagers from the same background. She remembers wanting "those friends you grow up with."

But Kelly discovered her love for travel through the many moves during childhood and her parents being stationed in Italy once she was in college. Visiting became a treat, and she recalls Rome, Switzerland and Germany as some of her favorite places. While in Italy, her father was deployed to Afghanistan. When she visited, she helped out by babysitting children with deployed parents, giving the at-home parent a break. The children ranged in age from 10 months to 5 years, but she recalls how every child had a soldier doll with a picture of their deployed parent for the face. These were kids who knew full well what military action meant in terms of the impact it had on the people waiting for the servicemen and women.

Kelly's own experience as a military child was far from perfect, and she had to move in the middle of her junior year of high school, from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, to Fort Polk, Louisiana. In addition to the stresses of moving mid-year to a new place, her new school did not offer the AP classes she had been enrolled in. Fortunately, she was able to finish the AP classes remotely through the school at Fort Campbell, but the obstacle still caused stress.

*She remembers wanting
"those friends you grow up with."*

Kelly thinks the most important thing about military kids is how they develop adaptability and resilience. In her own experience, these skills allowed her to feel more at ease when meeting people and moving to a new place. And while she didn't say it, her own pursuit of service work has clearly been influenced by her family's dedication to service as well. Most of all, Kelly wanted it to be known that "Military kids are the same as everybody else, just more mobile."

Spotlight on

Patrick Milligan



PATRICK MILLIGAN is 17 years old and lives in Clarksville, Tennessee. Originally born in Russia, Patrick was not even a year old when he was adopted and brought to the United States. He’s lived in Tennessee his entire life and “loves the South.” In school, he enjoys history because he likes seeing how the world changes, going back to how everything started and learning about how we got to where we are now. Outside of the classroom, Patrick plays outfield and considers baseball his biggest hobby. In the future, Patrick wants to study Forensic Psychology, which he credits to his stepmother’s work in psychology and his own interest in criminal justice. He also likes traveling, and while he’s never done an international trip, he’s enjoyed trips to Chicago and Miami, among others.

Patrick’s dad works for the military. Specifically, he serves as an engineer for the Army National Guard. For a while, his father was stationed at Fort Campbell, but now works at the barracks in Nashville.

Patrick says the positives of growing up a military child definitely outweigh any negatives. Unlike a lot of fellow military children, he never faced the transitions that come from a permanent change of station. Instead, Patrick frequently has to handle his father going on business trips and training exercises, which range from a weekend to almost a month. This time away from family doesn’t usually come with much warning. “They kind of just tell him and he has to go.” Whether he’s staying with his stepmom or his mother during these times, Patrick talks to his dad as much as their schedules can allow.

...it is important that people know when to comfort military children, especially since there are times “they don’t know if they’ll be able to see their family member again.”

Patrick has seen firsthand the value of what his father does on these trips, as he’s had the privilege of traveling along. One instance he remembers well is his father speaking at a West Tennessee high school Veteran’s Day event. Patrick liked the experience because of “how much impact he had on the people there and how they looked up to him as somebody they could follow.”

On his upbringing as a military kid, Patrick believes it allows him to synthesize his experiences of the world better. It helps him be “more of an all-around person” and better skill relating to and working with all kinds of people. He thinks people should be aware that having a parent in the military may affect a child’s behavior and attitude. “From not having their dad or mom or whoever around, they may get a sense of loneliness.”

Patrick thinks it is important that people know when to comfort military children, especially since there are times “they don’t know if they’ll be able to see their family member again.” This may allow people to understand a military child better, and that acting out or seeming troubled may not be normal for the child. It’s important to show sympathy and kindness in such instances because, as Patrick says, some military children box up their emotions about a parent being gone, and may not want to share how difficult it is to have a parent in a job where they may not come back.

Spotlight on

Margaret Seebeck

MARGARET SEEBECK is 14 years old and currently lives with her family on Randolph Air Force Base near San Antonio, Texas. She is the middle child of five girls. Margaret's father served in the Air Force for 27 years, most recently as a Judge Advocate, or JAG. And while her father did serve overseas in a deployment several years ago, it was before she joined the Seebeck family. Margaret was adopted by the Seebecks the last time they lived in San Antonio.

Now in eighth grade, Margaret splits her time between classes and extracurricular activities. In the classroom, she enjoys health for its focus on the human body and how its systems interact, history for learning about different wars throughout time, and band where she enjoys playing an instrument and reading music. She is president of her student council and secretary for her school's chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. She runs on her school's track team and plays volleyball and basketball.

Outside of school, Margaret plays club soccer, spends time with friends and plays the ukulele.

But Margaret's life has not been without

challenges. As a military child, she has moved five times, an average of every three years. Margaret becomes hooked on every place she lives and finds that she grows close to the people around her in the short time she is there. Moving is the "not-too-happy" part of being a military child for her.

However, Margaret has faced challenges not specific to military children. A year and a half ago, her oldest sister, Josephine, died in a car accident. Josephine was headed back to college in Michigan after spending the summer



at home with their family. Margaret describes the entire ordeal as a shock no one was ready for. When her parents asked her if she wanted to come with them to see Josephine in the hospital, she decided to stay home with her younger sisters and the family coming in to support them. She explained that part of her reason to stay home was not only fear of what she might see but also to be available for her siblings. "They always get into those little stupid arguments that'll make you laugh inside, so I was just trying to stay happy at the time."

The most important thing to know about military kids, says Margaret, is despite the difficulties of moving, in the future military children won't regret it. "They have so many experiences and meet many different people that it's going to be worth it in the end."

Margaret speaks from experience, having lived in Germany for three years and getting to explore Europe with her sisters. Overall, Margaret says, life as a military child includes a whole lot of adapting. Whether adapting to transitions where she lives or facing the difficulties of losing a loved one, Margaret lives as evidence that adaptation serves a military child well.

★ Military Brat Day ★

Colby, Grade 5
Liza Jackson Preparatory School
Hurlburt Field, FL • U.S. Air Force

Veteran's Day, Military Spouse Day, but what about the kids? We have holidays that recognize the sacrifice of military service men and women. We even have holidays to appreciate the military spouses that support them. We should also honor the brave military kids who sacrifice to support their military parents. We can honor these kids with *Military Brat Day*.

People outside the military appreciate all the sacrifices military members make because they are willing to give their all for America. But, most people don't think of the sacrifices military kids make. Military kids go through many hardships including sacrificing time with their parents when they are deployed and moving away from friends every few years.

Military Brat Day would honor the service of the military kids with awesome food! The aroma of all the different foods would make your mouth water. On this holiday, kids from all over the world would celebrate by eating, playing, and having a blast! We get to try "Meals Ready to Eat," which are meals

that are already prepared and military members eat them when they are at war. We also get to eat all different foods from all different cultures. Yum!

There are also colors that correspond with Military Brat Day. The colors are red, white, and blue. These are the colors of the U.S. flag. The red stands for the blood that was shed making America free. Blue stands for justice and freedom. The white stands for purity.

The customs for Military Brat Day are fun-filled and action-packed. We get to have parades with kids on floats that could look like planes or tanks. We celebrate Military Brat Day on September 2nd because that was a very happy day. It was the day World War II ended.

I can picture it clearly. As I walk down the street, it is September 2nd. Instead of a regular old school day, I see people trying new food, the streets coming alive in parades and people wearing red, white, and blue. This is what it would be like if we have Military Brat Day!



By Elizabeth, Grade 10 • Ramey School, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico • U.S. Army



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, April 12-17, at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado.

Student Leader Closeup



Larkyn Baum

Larkyn is a junior at Portsmouth High School in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. She is active with S2S, Student Council, Friends of Rachel, varsity volleyball, Ski Club, Great Bay Volleyball Club and South Meadow Beach Volleyball. Larkyn is co-leader and co-founder of her school's S2S program, captain of the volleyball team, a

recipient of the UNH Volleyball Camp Coach's Award and was an MVP for JV volleyball. She works as a babysitter, French and math tutor, is a community and school volunteer through Student Council and is a Class Council volunteer.



Carson Butler

Carson is a junior at Kellum High School in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and is active with S2S, Junior Senate, Young Life Christian Youth Group, volleyball, Spanish Club, Wave Church Youth Group and Family Career and Community Leaders of America. Carson is founder and vice president of Kellum's S2S program. Achievements include NJHS

and NHS, varsity volleyball letter, Volleyball Academic award, VA Aerospace Science and Technology Scholar, Model NATO Challenge Student Diplomat, GT program, and straight A's in all classes since kindergarten. Volunteer work includes Wounded Warrior Games, baseball concessions, nursing home visits, fundraisers for beach/neighborhood cleanups, Race for the Cure, Navy SEAL Foundation Turkey Trot and UNICEF Trick or Treat so Kids Can Eat.



Abigail Copley

A junior at T. R. Robinson High School in Tampa, Florida, Abigail is active in S2S, student government, Feeding America, cross country and indoor/outdoor track. She attended VA High School League's Student Leaders Conference and the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Seminar, is

student government secretary and a member of the Spanish Honor Society. Abigail is co-captain of her cross country team, receiving the 100% award, Captain award and Heart and Soul award. Work and volunteer outlets include Waynewood Elementary track, Habitat for Humanity, Community Center cleanup, helping at a soup kitchen, feeding the homeless at a local church, race setup and registration, and babysitting.



Andraya Crawford

Andraya is a sophomore at Pickering High School in Leesville, Louisiana. She is active with S2S, Art Club, Student Council, cheerleading, Literary Rally, Bible Club, Beta Club, Character Counts and gymnastics. Awards and leadership roles include the A Honor Roll, GT program, Academic Excellence Award, Student of

the 6-wks, U.S. Academy of Excellence and Hispanic Honor Society. Andraya works at her church youth group and is a Red Cross volunteer.



Sharod Farmer

Sharod is a junior at Rutherford High School in Panama City, Florida. His activities include S2S, Interact Club, Pep Club, soccer, Pride Band and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Sharod is an IB diploma candidate, S2S president, 2X superior medalist at the Florida Solo & Ensemble Festival, Florida Bandmaster Association Concert Band

superior medalist, and has participated in the MCEC National Training Seminar. He is a Visual Arts Center of Northwest Florida volunteer, Rutherford High School executive intern, mathematics and Latin tutor, Wyndham Hotel & Resorts cleaner and homecoming dance volunteer.



Jason Green

A junior at James I. O'Neill High School in Highland Falls, New York, Jason is involved in S2S, Science Club, varsity soccer, JROTC, Youth in Government, the Interact Club, and Cornwall United Clash Travel Soccer team. He has received the George C. Marshall Foundation Leadership & Academics award, Chemistry award, is a member of the High

Honor Roll, NHS and National Society of High School Scholars, is Science club president and soccer captain. Jason was awarded OCIAA Defensive Player of the year, is a Section 9 All-Star Team player and holds the record of highest goal scorer. Jason works as a life guard at West Point and volunteers at events such as the Red Cross Blood Drive, Breakfast with Santa and West Point Reception Day. He has been Field Marshall at the Cornwall United Soccer Club Indoor Tournament, an Army Family Action Plan delegate, Special Olympics athlete mentor, peer tutor, elementary school science night experimenter and is an altar server and teacher's aide at church.



Hunter Hughes

Hunter is a sophomore at Falcon High School in Peyton, Colorado, and is active with S2S, AFJROTC (drill team), cross country and track and field. Hunter is an S2S Core Leader and AFJROTC flight commander, where he also received the leadership award, academics award, good conduct award and service award. He also

has achieved the Gold Standard in the Presidential Fitness Challenge. Hunter volunteers with AFJROTC and his church, where he is Deacon Quorum President and Teacher's Quorum President. He holds the rank of Life Scout with the Boy Scouts and is working towards becoming an Eagle Scout.



Steven Lamoureux

A junior at Academy of Richmond County in Augusta, Georgia, Steven is active with S2S, JROTC, golf, soccer, football, cross country and swim team, and is on the Student Leadership team. He is the S2S program co-president, an Eagle Scout and IB student, a member of the San Antonio Mayor's Youth Council, Augusta Youth Leadership Board

and Red Cross Youth Board. Honors include Youth Volunteer of the Year, JROTC Cadet of the Year, NJHS, Math Honor Society Mu Alpha Theta, Science Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society and Mayor's Youth Fitness Council. Steven works and volunteers with the Animal Defense League, Operation Military Kids, Wounded Warrior Support Center, San Antonio Zoo and Fort Sam Houston flag ceremonies. He has worked on a project at BAMC to honor fallen soldiers, clears brush at Bracken Cave for the American Bat Association, does stage and lighting at the Dinner Theater, and clears trails at New River Gorge National Park. Jason is also an altar boy and patrol leader.



Sara Lippert

Sara is a junior at Steilacoom High School in Steilacoom, Washington, and is active in S2S, Book Club, Drama Club and marching band. She is a member of the National Honor Society and has attended the Honor Band Western International Band Clinic. Sara received the Marching Band Musicianship award, Best Actor Award — Cape Fear Regional Theater,

and won 1st place in the DAR Essay Contest. She volunteers with the Club Beyond Ministry, Fayetteville International Youth Orchestra, Plunge to Poverty at church and the library.



Daniel O'Leary

A junior at Portsmouth High School, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Daniel has participated in S2S, Friends of Rachel, Student Council and Peer Leadership. He has received the American Legion Student Award, is the Student Council VP and on the executive board. Daniel works and volunteers with the MC3 Elementary

School after school program, Salvation Army soup kitchen, Seacoast Repertory Theatre, Portsmouth Historical Society and St. Jude's Children's Hospital. He fundraises at Portsmouth Country Club and teaches rock climbing and outdoor adventure at a local nonprofit organization.



Chloe Sims

Chloe is a sophomore at Fort Campbell High School in Kentucky. Her activities include S2S, Student Council, Clean Teens, First Priority and Precision Parkour Performance. Chloe received the Outstanding Freshman of the Year award and Physical Education Excellence award, achieved the high honors roll, is president

of the sophomore class, treasurer for Spanish club and is an S2S leader. She works as a Next Step counselor and teacher's aide at Awaken Church, is social media correspondent for Awaken Students and a tour guide for the Director of DODEA and Fort Campbell school board. Chloe volunteers for the Salvation Army, Community Outreach and Hope Pregnancy Center, and is a blood donor for the American Red Cross.



Domonic Smith

A sophomore at Burkburnett High School in Burkburnett, Texas, Domonic participates in S2S, football and JROTC (flight commander, drill team, color guard). He is a Distinguished Graduate AFJROTC Future Leader and National Society High School Scholar, received the Celebrate Freedom Foundation academics award, National

Academy of Future Physicians & Medical Scientist award of excellence, and is part of the National Youth Leadership Forum: Careers in Medicine. Domonic is a Spanish tutor, mows lawns, bags groceries at Sheppard AFB Commissary and visits the Lawton Veterans Home. He volunteers at the PPG family picnic, flag folding ceremonies for deceased veterans, Yellow Rose Sertoma, Sheppard AFB Children's Christmas party, Dollar Dog Night at IC Evans Elementary and Meals on Wheels.

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



Staying *on* Standard

JOAN BARRETT
MCEC Grants Project Manager

ACADEMIC STANDARDS, no matter where a child lives, are the building blocks to school success. They define what a child must learn at a particular grade level to succeed at the next level. If a young student in first grade, as an example, masters addition and subtraction within 20, then he is ready to tackle and master addition and subtraction within 100 in second grade. Each grade builds upon the previous year's skills and content.

States set standards for all public schools within their borders. School districts and classroom teachers determine the curricula that will guide students to achieve those standards. The units, methods and lessons used to teach children to add and subtract within 20 in first grade and within 100 in second grade are curricula. Standards are the end; curricula are the means.

Because standards can vary between states, mobile military families often find it perplexing to determine when their children are “on grade level.” When families move between two states that have adopted the Common Core State Standards, the uniformity provides assurance that their children are prepared on grade level for the

2. Keep on top of each student's academic progress by checking homework, mid-level quizzes and other tests. Attend parent-teacher conferences and find ways to connect individually with teachers on a regular basis.
3. Learn about student assessments in each state, particularly the state-wide tests that are typically used to determine grades, promotions or even graduation. These test outcomes may also be used by schools, states and federal agencies for accountability and information purposes.
4. Use MCEC partner websites, such as the National PTA's (www.pta.org) *Parent Guides to Student*



new location's standards. If standards in the new state are different from the old, however, then families need to proactively determine if there are gaps or concerns to meet the new school's requirements.

There are a number of tools that allow parents to determine if their children are on grade level and if their state's standards will translate well to a new location:

1. Utilize each state's education website to find the standards for each state. A concise means of finding that information is to use the MCEC website, SchoolQuest.org. Click on the *Resource Library* heading and scroll down to find the *State Education Resources*. Choose the state(s) and “Curriculum and State Standards” as the topic option. Look at all standards for each child's grade level but most especially the English Language Arts (ELA) and Math standards.

Success, to find web tools for both assessing and assisting children's academic progress and achievement.

5. Connect with children's teachers and counselors in both the sending and receiving schools. They best understand their state's standards and can help identify where there are gaps, overlaps and possible challenges.

Many mobile military families dream that high-level national standards will provide academic consistency and college and career readiness for their children as they move from one state to another. Education reform across the country has focused on skills and knowledge that will best prepare all students to be college and career ready, but common standards are still only partially in place. Until that consistency exists, parents are their children's best advocates and problem solvers.

Art by Lauryn, Grade 7 • Carlisle Barracks Youth Art, Carlisle, Pennsylvania • U.S. Army



Mary, Grade 4 • Carlisle Barracks Youth Art, Carlisle, Pennsylvania • U.S. Coast Guard



Continue to Serve: **TEACH**

SIDNEY T. ELLINGTON, PH.D.

Director, You Served For America, Now Teach For America, An Initiative for Supporting Veterans and Military Spouses

There is probably no issue that holds a higher priority for military families than the issue of childhood education. For military families, the arrival of new set of permanent change of station (PCS) orders brings anxiety followed by a frantic search for a good school for the kids. Research and planning geared toward ensuring that the children are able to enroll in the best available schools takes precedence over the PCS pack out of house hold goods, over the military spouse's job search, and over the search for housing. Indeed, for most military families, the choice of housing location starts with researching school districts and student performance scores at the various schools in the region.

Why all the anxiety? Why does it seem natural for parents to worry about which school their children will attend? Why do military parents have to expend so much effort in finding a good public school for their children? After all, this is America – so isn't one public school just as good as any other?

Sadly, every parent in the U.S. today knows that our public education system is far from ideal. Explanations for why this is so fill everything from academic journals to blogs – and the proposed solutions to our nation's problems with public education have been a large part of the political agenda since the 1960s. While debates rage over issues like education funding, tenure, teachers unions, charter schools, vouchers, and curriculum design, the bottom line is that the key to delivering a great education is the quality of the teacher.

As with anything, a person gets better with experience. This is certainly true with the teaching profession. Yet over the last 35 years or so we've seen more and more teachers leaving the profession before they have a chance to develop into the great teachers our kids need and deserve. **The Alliance for Excellent Education reports that the U.S. loses about 16% of its first-year teachers, and between 40%-50% within the first five years.** This incredibly high rate of teacher turnover is the major contributing factor to the drop in the overall quality of our schools.

While there are many factors that lead to a new teacher's decision to leave the profession, one that could be eliminated pretty easily involves the state-to-state portability of teacher licensure. Teacher certification credentials earned in one state are often not recognized

by another state. For teachers, this lack of a consistent policy for state-to-state certification reciprocity drives many out of the profession. According to the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, some 50% of teachers relocate to another state to follow a spouse or partner. Of course, one of the most mobile professions is military service.

With every new set of PCS orders requiring relocation, the spouse of an active-duty military member who serves as a teacher is inhibited from easily finding a new teaching job. This is because each state sets its own requirements for teacher licensure, and these requirements must be met before the teacher can obtain the certification necessary to teach. This alone is a huge impediment to bringing more military spouses into the teaching profession.

Streamlining licensure requirements in a way that makes transfers from one state to another would make teaching an appealing career path for our military spouses. The military family would benefit because a career as a teacher would be more compatible with a career in military service. More importantly, America's kids would benefit because a military spouse would bring many of the qualities inherent in the culture of the military to the classroom, such as leadership, commitment, and serving as a positive role model. Further, the kids would be led by an increasingly experienced teacher, as the PCS moves would result in military spouses who have taught in a variety of states bringing new and diverse pedagogical ideas and methods to their new school.

It is time for a serious national conversation on teacher licensure and state-to-state reciprocity. Eliminating or mitigating the barriers to state-to-state licensure portability will allow more military spouses to become life-long teachers, which will benefit our nation's military families, our schools, and will reduce the current levels of teacher turnover, which will ultimately benefit kids.

www.teachforamerica.org

www.teachforamerica.org/you-served-america-now-teach-america

TEACHFORAMERICA



Operation Homefront's Military Child of the Year® Award

Operation Homefront recently announced the six recipients of the 2015 Military Child of the Year® Award. The national non-profit organization that provides emergency assistance to military families annually gives the award to an outstanding military child from each branch of service – Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard – and for the first time in 2015, the National Guard.

Following are the 2015 Military Child of the Year® Award recipients.

Read more about them at www.militarychildoftheyear.org/Recipients



Army

Cavan Grey
McIntyre-Brewer, 13
Duncannon, PA



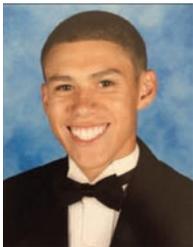
Navy

Emily Elizabeth
Kliever, 17
Orlando, FL



Coast Guard

Caleb Michael
Parsons, 18
Suffolk, VA



Marine Corps

Christopher-Raul
Rios Rodriguez, 17
Camp Lejeune, NC



Air Force

Sarah Francesca
Hesterman, 16
Doha, Qatar



National Guard

Zachary Alan
Parsons, 16
Warrensburg, MO

Each award recipient was selected from a pool of nearly 500 nominees. They will receive \$10,000 each, a laptop computer and other donated gifts, and will be flown with a parent or guardian to Washington, D.C., for a special recognition gala on April 16, 2015.

These young heroes thrive in the face of the challenges of military life and stand out among their peers. They are all active in school and community activities and participate at the leadership level. Collectively, they attribute their interest in other cultures, love of travel, and trying new things to their upbringing in a military family. Military service is a family affair, and many have extended family who served our country with distinction.

www.operationhomefront.net/highlight/list

As a group, the six recipients have:

- ▶ Had at least one parent deployed for **989** months;
- ▶ Moved **72** times, often cross-country;
- ▶ Volunteered **1,810** hours and counting.



Check out the MCEC Store!

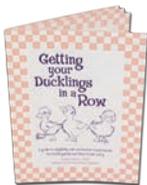
Chart Your Course™ Junior High and High School.....\$21.00

Set Includes eleven inserts: Middle School, Freshman Year, Sophomore Year, Junior Year, Senior Year, Parents, Another Option, If You Are Moving, Programs To Help You Prepare For College, Select A College Best For You, Paying For College. Also includes Total College Solution DVD and College Admissions Workbook.



Getting Your Ducklings in a Row\$1.00

This booklet was created to give parents basic information regarding age and vaccination requirements of school systems serving the majority of military children. Most families already know that school entry requirements vary from state to state. It is also important to note that individual districts can (and do) impose additional requirements so variations can also be seen in the same state. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and DoDEA are represented in this publication.



Facing Change: Falling Apart and Coming Together Again in the Teen Years.....\$4.00

This informative book helps teens understand their losses and discover creative coping strategies. Includes recognizing and understanding loss, common ways loss is experienced, creative coping choices, finding and using a support system, things you can do to help yourself through grief, finding and using help from others, and coping strategies that work.



Wristband
\$1.50

Survival Strap
\$6.00



S2S Bag
\$5.00

S2S T-shirt
\$10.00

Available Sizes:
Youth XL
Adult S-3X



More payment options make ordering easy!

Purchase orders, checks, and credit cards (American Express, MasterCard, Visa, Discover, or Paypal) accepted.

Shop our Growing, Learning, Understanding™ (GLU™) Kits!

Our kits are designed to develop early literacy skills in children from birth through second grade. All GLU Kits are built around carefully chosen resources that parents and child care providers can expand upon, adapt to the needs of their own children, and use over and over again as children continue to grow and learn. Each kit includes ideas and activities adaptable to a range of ages and developmental levels.

It's Okay to Be Different Toddler through Early school-age..... \$62.95

Created for toddlers through early school-age children, the *It's Okay to Be Different* GLU kit offers activities and ideas to help demystify disabilities and convey the message we are all differently abled, develop self esteem and encourage respect and tolerance. Books include *It's Okay to Be Different*, *We're Different, We're the Same*, and *My Friend Isabelle*.



To order, go to
www.MilitaryChild.org
and click



Questions? Ask Denise!

Can't decide what to order? Denise is ready to be your personal shopper!

Denise.Graham@MilitaryChild.org

4 million reasons to join - serving the children of those who serve us all.

Membership in Military Child Education Coalition® (MCEC®) demonstrates your support of military and veteran-connected children!



Individual:

Seeking to create an even more inclusive and broader community while providing the necessary resources with individual engagement, we've reflagged individual membership into three new membership categories:

- *Community Member* - A no-cost membership that never expires and comes with full access to digital MCEC resources and publications - the best of everything for free.
- *Sustaining Member* - Join at \$25 annually or \$60 for three years and receive a print copy of the annual MCEC calendar and special topic or new publications based on subject; digital copies of material and publications; membership letter for CDA certification; National Training Seminar registration discount rate.
- *Champion Member* - Join at \$250 and become a member for life; receive print copies of *On the Move* magazine, annual MCEC calendar and special topic or new publications; digital copies of all other material and publications; National Training Seminar registration discount rate.



Business & Organization:

By popular request, we've added a lifetime member option for Business & Organization and Corporate categories!

- *Business & Organization Member* - Join at \$75 annually or \$200 for three years and receive print copies of *On the Move* magazine, annual MCEC calendar and special topic or new publications; digital copies of all other material and publications; National Training Seminar registration discount rate; Lifetime members at \$2,000 receive all benefits indefinitely.



Corporate:

- *Corporate Member* - Join at \$1,500 annually or \$3,000 for three years and receive print copies of *On the Move* magazine, annual MCEC calendar and special topic or new publications; digital copies of all other material and publications; National Training Seminar complimentary registration; Lifetime members at \$50,000 receive all benefits indefinitely.



College & University/School District/Military Installation:

By popular request, we've included colleges & universities with school districts and military installations as voting members and established a new category of membership!

- *Associate Member* - Join at \$100 annually or \$275 for three years and receive print copies of *On the Move* magazine, annual MCEC calendar and special topic or new publications; digital copies of all other material and publications; National Training Seminar registration discount rate; MCEC voting member.
- *Patron Member* - Join at \$750 annually or \$1,500 for three years and receive print copies of *On the Move* magazine, annual MCEC calendar and special topic or new publications; digital copies of all other material and publications; National Training Seminar registration scholarships; MCEC voting member.



DO YOU WANT TO JOIN MCEC, update your membership or contact information, or have questions? Go to www.MilitaryChild.org/login, or email Membership@MilitaryChild.org.

909 Mountain Lion Circle | Harker Heights, Texas 76548 | P (254) 953-1923 | F (254) 953-1925

Serving the children of those who serve us all.

Support the children of our Nation's service members by
adding your voice to the Military Child Education Coalition.

www.MilitaryChild.org



[facebook.com/
MilitaryChild](https://facebook.com/MilitaryChild)



[twitter.com/#!/
MilitaryChild](https://twitter.com/#!/MilitaryChild)



[youtube.com/user/
MilitaryChild](https://youtube.com/user/MilitaryChild)



[homeroom.
MilitaryChild.org](https://homeroom.MilitaryChild.org)

SchoolQuest

schoolquest.org



[MilitaryChild.org/
flickr.com](https://MilitaryChild.org/flickr.com)



[pinterest.com/
MCEC1](https://pinterest.com/MCEC1)



Military Child Education Coalition®

909 Mountain Lion Circle | Harker Heights, Texas 76548 | (254) 953-1923