

Exciting VHP News Announced in our Spring Newsletter!

VHP VOICE

Connecting Students with VeteransTM
to Honor Veterans, Preserve America's Heritage and Develop Future Leaders

March 28, 2018: Volume 7, Issue 4



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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congressional Medal of Honor Society 2018 Citizen Honors Community Service Hero Award



Receiving the Citizen Honors Community Award from the Medal of Honor Society validated the hard work our team has done over the past 14 years. This includes the over 1,700 students who listened to and documented the stories of over 1,800 veterans; the teacher advisors in our schools who took on the extra task of sponsoring a chapter of VHP so their students could have this first-hand history lesson of hearing a veteran's story; the families of the students, who trusted in the value this program could bring to their young scholar; the volunteers over the years who kept the faith in our mission by rolling up their sleeves to take on any task we needed done; our donors, who dug into their personal finances to sponsor more students and veterans; our Board members, who continue to spread VHP's mission to allow us to grow; and to our veterans, who shared many painful memories to allow our next generation to understand what they must do to keep America strong.

To be among 30 Medal of Honor recipients who are thanking *us* for our service is gratitude beyond measure. We owe them everything. We were grateful to share meals with them at the Ritz Carlton, the Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington Cemetery, and the National Museum of the American Indian, and to be present when they laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Of course, many of our best conversations occurred informally as we happened to sit next to them at dinner or on the bus.

We were also inspired by our fellow Citizen Honors recipients who we are pleased to now call friends.

- Robert Engle, selected for his courageous act when he subdued a gunman inside Burnette Chapel Church of Christ. Engle's actions prevented further loss of life in the deadly shooting.

- Matthew Cobos, selected for his courageous act when he shielded and provided life-saving medical treatment to concertgoers injured in a mass shooting during the Route 91 Harvest music festival on the Las Vegas strip in Nevada.
- Kimberly Scofi, selected for her selfless service in support of veterans through her work with United Military Care and other veterans-based service organizations.
- Virgil Smith, selected for the Young Hero Award for his heroism in using an air mattress to rescue 17 neighbors trapped in their homes during Hurricane Harvey.

We thank the Medal of Honor Foundation, American Airlines, Boeing and Gordon C. James Public Relations for your service in support of veterans. VHP was fortunate to share our story and this award with [KJZZ Radio](#), [Channel 12 News](#) and [Stars and Stripes](#). We take this recognition as motivation to continue the work we have begun. We cannot let down these heroes who gave everything for us.

Barbara Hatch, Founder, Veterans Heritage Project

VHP Student Receives Soroptimist Award



Each year the Soroptimist International of Saguaro Foothills presents the **Margaret Laibe Award** for volunteering to a young woman age 14-18 years old who is an active and enthusiastic

volunteer in her community.

This completely describes **Cactus Shadows** freshman **Alyssa Canales** who was presented this award on March 14, 2018. Alyssa wrote she "developed confidence in talking with older generations and saving the veterans' legacies for their families," and found a home as an editor of the Phoenix I Edition of the 14th Volume of *Since You Asked:™ A Salute to World War II*.

VHP Students Make Local News

Congratulations to VHP student **Ellie Clark** of **Boulder Creek High School**. She is profiled in the *85086 Magazine* on pages 16 and 17 in a story written by fellow VHP student **Emma Suttell**! Way to go, girls! Click graphic to go to article.



Please Vote for VHP Everyday Until April 27 for Nonprofit of the Year



VHP has been nominated in the AZ Foothills Nonprofit of the Year Contest.

Please vote for us at the link below. Please vote every day until the contest ends on April 27th. Please like and share and help spread the word. VHP could win a media sponsorship package to help spread the word of the great work our students do to honor veterans. <https://www.arizonafoothillsmagazine.com/nonprof.../.../245.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 3, 2018 is #AZGivesDay

We'll be participating in #AZGivesDay, a 24-hour day of statewide giving, and would appreciate your support. Please help us spread the word or, even better, **schedule your gift in advance at** <https://www.azgives.org/veteransheritage>.

A generous donor has agreed to MATCH the first \$5,000 in contributions - DOUBLING YOUR IMPACT!

Your #AZGivesDay donations last year helped us welcome 8 new chapters for this school year--serving 366 students and 331 veterans. Donating on Arizona Gives Day helps us continue Connecting Students with Veterans!



Join us at the 8 April 2018 Community Reception & Book Signing

Connecting Students with Veterans™

VETERANS
HERITAGE
PROJECT

Since You Asked™ Edition 1

**Community
Reception & Book
Signing**

Sunday 8 April 2018

3:00 - 6:00 PM

DoubleTree Resort

*The Forum, Basement Level
5401 N. Scottsdale Road
Scottsdale, Arizona 85250*

Join us for the debut of
Since You Asked™ XIV: A Salute to World War II

Keynote Speaker

Louis A. Conter, LCDR, USN (Ret.)

One of four remaining survivors of the USS Arizona.

Funding for this event provided by:



Three VHP Students receive an AVHOFs Copper Lamp of Knowledge Scholarship!

Each Spring the **Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society** partners with VHP to invest in and develop the next generation by awarding three **Copper Lamp of Knowledge Scholarships** to graduating VHP students. The scholarships will be awarded at their annual **Patriotic Gala on April 21**.

Visit <http://avhof.org/gala/> to learn more.

Congratulations to Ellie, Gianna, and James!



Elisa (Ellie) Clark is a senior at Boulder Creek High School in Anthem, Arizona. Ellie joined VHP last year as a way to learn more about veterans that she encounters in her everyday life. In just two years, she has had the privilege of

interviewing nine veterans. She has been accepted into the Honors Program at the University of Arizona where she will study nursing.



Gianna Joseph is a senior at Ironwood Ridge High and has been involved with Veterans Heritage Project for four years, two of those as Vice President. Soon she'll be attending the University of Arizona as a neuroscience major and will

continue to serve veterans in her college career and beyond.

Regional Book Receptions

Tucson Edition

April 21, 2018 - 1-3 p.m.
City of Tucson Police Service Center,
1310 W. Miracle Mile, Tucson, AZ

Northern Arizona Edition

April 21, 2018 - 2-3:30 p.m.
Prescott Centennial Center at Antelope Hills
1989 Wineglass Drive, Prescott AZ

Maricopa Community Colleges Edition

April 24, 2018 - 1-3 p.m.
Paradise Valley Community College
Room KSC 1000 (Student Cafeteria)
18401 N. 32nd St, Phoenix, AZ

Phoenix II Edition

April 28, 2018 - 2-4 p.m.
Shadow Mountain High School Auditorium
2902 E. Shea Blvd, Phoenix, AZ

Ironwood Ridge Reception

May 4, 2018 - 5-7 pm
Ironwood Ridge High School
2475 W Naranja Dr, Oro Valley, AZ 85742

East Valley Edition

May 5, 2018 - 2-4 p.m.
Campo Verde High School Auditorium
3870 S. Quartz Street, Gilbert AZ



James Lednicky is a senior at Shadow Mountain High School. James has always been eager to serve in the military and has been interviewing veterans about their experiences since the 8th grade.

His scholarship will help him attend the civil engineering and Naval ROTC programs at Arizona State University.

Memorial Day May 28

8 am - National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona
Wreath Ceremony and Memorial Day Program

9 am - Town of Carefree Memorial Day Tribute Sanderson Lincoln Pavilion
Program features military speakers including Col. (Ret.) James (Jim) Kelsey (SYA Vol. VI, 2010)



Chapter Trainings

June 8 - Prospective Chapter Applications Due

August 18, 2018 Volunteer Appreciation and Annual Chapter Kickoff Training

September 22, 2018 - Publishing Training

CHAPTER NEWS

VHP Pilots Chapter Program in Niceville, Florida



How to Establish a VHP Chapter at Your School

Have you ever wondered how to establish a VHP Chapter at your school? Below is our checklist and timeline for identifying, qualifying, and training new chapters. We utilize this process to manage our limited resources effectively and so that our volunteers understand the program components and are equipped for a successful year.

Right Now have an **Informational Conversation** with Program Director Barbara Hatch. She will review with you our [Prospective Chapter Information Packet](#). Please contact Barbara at 602-218-4036 x 102 or Barbara@veteransheritage.org.

On April 8, attend our **Community Reception and Book Signing** so you can witness our mission in action.

Note: optional, yet encouraged.

By June 1, schedule an **Engagement Meeting** between VHP Program Director, and identified Teacher Advisor(s) and a school administrator.

By June 8, Submit a **Chapter Application** to VHP for review & approval

This semester [Niceville High School](#) AP English students studied the book *The Things They Carried*, a groundbreaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling. To build on the experience and to introduce Veterans Heritage Project on campus, **VHP Chapter Advocate Gretchen Erickson** worked with Christy Ellis, Pat Mixon, Jennifer Sjostrom, and Geoffrey Watson, all AP Language and Composition teachers, to host eight Vietnam veterans on February 22. The veterans shared their stories with the AP English classes, students recorded the interviews for the Veterans History Project archives at the Library of Congress, and student interviewers will write each Veteran's story to be published in next year's volume of *Since You Asked*,™ and are planning a book signing reception to coincide with the book publication in the spring of 2019. Thank you to all who are volunteering to share our mission

Note: Prospective chapters will be notified of approval status by the end of June.

Before August 18, Submit a **Signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** to VHP and begin recruiting students.

Note: Upon receipt of a signed MOU by both the Teacher Advisor and the School Administrator, VHP will provide you with support materials.

On

August 18, Attend Mandatory **Chapter Kickoff Training** for Teacher Advisors

Note: Student leaders may also attend.

Before Sept 30 Schedule and complete on-site **Interview Training** with VHP Program Director.

to reach more veterans and students. Thank you especially to the following veteran and student participants:

Lt. Col John Brennan III (Navigator)

interviewed by Rosalina Lombardi.

Colonel Howard Hill (Pilot and POW)

interviewed by Alex Pugh.

Sr. Master Sargent George Legge (Information Systems)

interviewed by Angellee Morales Rios.

Lt. Col. Gayle Norgaard (Nurse)

interviewed by Anna Caravan.

Lt. Col. Joseph Purka, Jr. (Command and Control)

interviewed by Collin Szymczak

Master Sargent Larry Sjostrom (Ground Equipment Technician)

interviewed by his granddaughter Hannah Sjostrom.

Col. Jack Starr (Pilot)

interviewed by Taylor Strickler.

Lt. JG. Patricia Wallace Mallette (Line Officer NAS)

interviewed by Olivia Tuckey.

Kyrene Akimel A-al Middle School Hosts Annual Patriotic Day Celebration

For the past 25 years, Kyrene Akimel A-al Middle School in Ahwatukee has hosted a Patriotic Day to honor its veterans. The public program, held February 21, included Staff Sergeant Lisa Cimino of the National Guard (Air Force, Ret.) singing for the students, an address from Arizona Department of Veterans' Services Director Wanda Wright (Air Force, Ret.) presentation of colors from American Legion Post 64, visiting Kindergarten students singing "This Land is Your Land," and Akimel A-al's talented band. We are so glad they are a VHP school, as they have been for three years, first under the leadership of **Jane Anderson** and now her protegee, **Andrew Williams** (picture above with his VHP Students).



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Veterans Heritage Project students have gone on to incredible achievements in life. In an effort to reconnect the brilliant minds and devoted members who are both a few months or a few years graduated, we are kicking off a new adventure...the development of an Alumni Group.

If you're an alumna or alumnus of VHP and are interested in reconnecting with past and current members and advisors, [take a quick survey](#) to provide your input on the development of an alumni group, and how you would like to be involved with VHP as the organization continues to grow.

With your input, we will then focus on introducing ways that alumni can get involved. If you're still in touch with former members, don't hesitate to spread the word about the development and growth of an alumni network!

Thank you to **VHP Alum Justin Yeck** for helping organize this new initiative!

General Dynamics Recognizes Employee for VHP Volunteerism

At General Dynamics Mission Systems, volunteerism is at the core of their culture. To honor their commitment, GDMS President Chris Marzilli started the **President's Volunteer Awards** program to recognize those who have demonstrated their commitment to strengthening our communities by substantially volunteering their time and talent to organizations and causes.

VHP Board Treasurer Shelly Yeck was recognized in January as one of the 17 employees selected to be honored with the President's Award. General Dynamics will be making a \$1,000 donation to VHP in her name. Congratulations, Shelly, and thank you for sharing your passion for service and considerable leadership and financial skills with VHP.



"Both of my sons were in VHP in high school. This organization impacted and contributed to their understanding first-hand the history of our nation, a desire to serve, respect, and accountability. The veterans and their families are profoundly impacted by the honor and healing that results from sharing their memories." - Shelly Yeck

Veterans Heritage Project™ Board of Directors Last Call for Applications

Are you interested in making a difference in the lives of veterans and students and the future of our community?

The Board of Directors is made up of members who share a commitment to our mission and whose background and expertise provide the tools VHP needs to remain a successful and dynamic organization and build our capacity to serve across Arizona and the Nation.

Board members are responsible for financial development and sustainability, strategic planning, advocacy, and representing Veterans Heritage Project at programs and events. Terms of service are two years, with the possibility of renewing for up to three consecutive terms (6-year maximum).

In addition to the expertise in the areas listed above, at this time we are particularly seeking board members with skills in education, finance, technology, fundraising, human resources, and marketing.

Application Deadline: April 1, 2018

[Click here to download Board Application Packet](#)

VHP IN THE COMMUNITY



VHP volunteers were thrilled to help unveil the American Flag on the football

field before kickoff at the Fiesta Bowl on December 30, 2017. The Flag was in the shape of the USA, and VHP was along the East Coast. Thank you, **Fiesta Bowl Charities!**



The theme of the 5th annual Arizona Dept. of Education **Civic Learning Conference** on March 2, 2018 was *Inspiring Student Voices!* What organization does this better than Veterans Heritage Project, which asks students to write the service stories of America's veterans? This conference helps educators find programs that help teachers impress upon young people their "rights, roles, and responsibilities as American citizens" to "sustain and strengthen the values that define the United States." Keynote Speaker Mary Beth Tinker participated in the rights of students to



Rose Mattie (Vol. XIII, 2017) is currently an Army National Guard Black Hawk pilot and was on a Cultural Support Team in Afghanistan during the War on Terror. In February she shared her story as the guest speaker for the **Desert Mountain Dinner and Speakers Series**.



protest in 1969; her case went to the Supreme Court in *Tinker vs Des Moines Independent School District*. Vietnam veteran Mike Burns, pictured above, answered teacher questions at our display and then spoke to interested students on the value of bringing veterans to their classrooms as an integral part of their curriculum, with newly created lesson plans to help them teach about the Vietnam War. Some might even become new VHP schools! The conference concluded with a naturalization ceremony where each new citizen expressed what becoming an American citizen meant to him or her.

Col. (Ret.) James (Jim) Kelsey (SYA Vol. VI, 2010) served two tours in Vietnam and then went on to Military Intelligence, where he handled the first-ever personnel exchange between the Russians and the Americans. Jim describes his job as being in charge of the "Jason Bourne," commanding 26,000 operatives worldwide while he lived in Germany at the time when the Berlin Wall came down. Jim shared his story this month as part of the inaugural **Military Associate Resource Group (MARG)** meeting at **Nationwide Insurance**.



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When you shop on Amazon through their Smile portal, Amazon will donate to Veterans Heritage Project. **AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know.** Same products, same prices, same service. All you need to do is go to smile.amazon.com/ch/26-4572636 and start shopping.

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**THE KEMPER
AND ETHEL
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Thank you to **The Kemper and Ethel Marley Foundation** for their continued investment in our Capability Initiative.

With their support, VHP is able to enhance our organizational infrastructure and chapter supports, and implement strategies to meet the growing demand for program delivery both in and beyond Arizona.



Thank you, **Arizona Department of Veterans' Services**, for enriching the lives of Arizona veterans and their families through your support of Veterans Heritage Project with a Veterans Donation Fund Grant. Funding supports all aspects of our program,

helping VHP to address "moral injury," a term adopted by the Departments of Defense and Veteran Affairs.

Moral injury has been defined as "perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations." According to the Moral Injury Project at Syracuse University,

"The effects of moral injury go beyond the individual, impinging on the family system and the larger community. Moral injury must be brought forward into the community for a shared process of healing. In the case of military veterans, moral injury stems in



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Thank you to the employees of **National Bank of Arizona** and **NBAZ Charities** for selecting VHP to be one of your grant recipients! Your support of our core program components helps VHP provide a quality, impactful program for our students and veterans.

part from feelings of isolation from civilian society. Moral injury, then, is a burden carried by very few, until the "outsiders" become aware of, and interested in sharing it. Listening and witnessing to moral injury outside the confines of a clinical setting can be a way to break the silence that so often surrounds moral injury."

By sharing their experiences and resulting life lessons through VHP's oral history program and on-going classroom lecture series, veterans receive the positive reinforcement for their service and sacrifice which is so important for overcoming moral injury. At the same time, veterans are able to feel as if they are continuing to serve by helping to instill civic pride, accountability, and respect in our next generation of leaders.



Thank you, **BMO Harris Bank**, for supporting VHP with a Ring of Honor

Sponsorship to show appreciation for our volunteers and donors.



IN MEMORY OF

Chuck Blumenthal, Jerry Boyd, Burk Burkholder,
Don Cline, Robert Delsi, Sam Little, Frank Minas,
Nelson Mitchell, Jr., Ray Sandoval,
and VADM James C. Irwin

Veterans Heritage Project honors the beloved veterans we have lost. Your stories live on in our memories, our books, and our hearts.

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Veterans Heritage Project | 1-877-VHP-PROJ (847-7765) | www.veteransheritage.org

Veterans Heritage Project | Mailing Address: PO Box 22058, Physical Address: 10210 N. 32nd Street,
Suite C2, Phoenix, AZ 85028