



OPERATION HONOR CARDS



★ Honoring Their Service with Ours.



American
Red Cross





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★ Honoring Their Service with Ours.

This **Operation Honor Cards Kit** will provide you with all the information you need to participate in **Operation Honor Cards**. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact us at honorcards@bluestarfam.org.

Thank you for your interest in **Operation Honor Cards**! This is a service program that would not be possible without members of the community like you who wish to express appreciation to military service members, parents, families, children and veterans.

Operation Honor Cards allows individuals and organizations to make Honor Pledges of community through the enclosed cards, or virtually on our website at www.honorcards.org. The website will also maintain a running tally of hours of community service hours committed and fulfilled in honor of military families, service members and veterans.

Operation Honor Cards is the joint project of Blue Star Families, the American Red Cross, and ServiceNation: Mission Serve, working together with the Veterans Administration, the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Department of Defense. Inspired by the First Lady's campaign for military families, the program aims to create an atmosphere of 'shared service' and a WWII sense of 'all give some' by encouraging Americans to perform service in honor of military families and veterans.

A recent Military Life Issues survey conducted by Blue Star Families found that 92% of the military families who responded felt "the general public does not truly understand or appreciate the sacrifices made by service members and their families." This highlights the huge disconnect that is felt by military families with America's larger community.

Operation Honor Cards is a way to help alleviate this disconnect. Through this program members of the community who would like to support our military members and their families are given the opportunity to express heartfelt thanks, solidarity, or good old-fashioned encouragement. This is an easy, rewarding way to support the families of those who are serving in our armed forces. While there are many efforts aimed at sending items and well-wishes to our deployed troops, no other program is currently in operation to show such support to those serving both overseas and on the



About Blue Star Families

Blue Star Families (www.bluestarfam.org) is a national, nonprofit network of military families from all ranks and services, including guard and reserve, with a mission to support, connect and empower military families. In addition to morale and empowerment programs, Blue Star Families raises awareness of the challenges and strengths of military family life and works to make military life more sustainable. Membership includes military spouses, children and parents as well as service members, veterans and civilians.



About American Red Cross

The American Red Cross has provided humanitarian support to the United States military, veterans and their families under a trusted symbol for almost 130 years. The Red Cross provides emergency communications, supports military and veteran hospitals and health care facilities as well as providing social services to military family members.

The Red Cross is able to provide these services through employees and volunteers stationed around the world - through a network of more than 650 Red Cross offices to include supporting service members, veterans and their families far from military installations. For more information visit www.redcross.org.



About ServiceNation: Mission Serve

ServiceNation (www.ServiceNation.org) is a campaign to increase service opportunities and elevate service as a core ideal and problem-solving strategy in our society.

Mission Serve (www.MissionServe.org) is the ServiceNation campaign's civilian-military initiative, connecting civilian and military communities through a broad array of service and volunteer partnerships designed to address the challenges of our nation and our military communities.

Here's how you get started.....

1) Register and Make your Pledge

Individuals and organizations are encouraged to join **Operation Honor Cards** via the website www.honorcards.org , which will promote and collect virtual Honor Pledges of community service. The website will maintain a running tally of hours of community service hours committed and fulfilled in honor of military families, service members and veterans.

The program has already collected pledges of more than three million hours of service from the **Girls Scouts, Lions Clubs International, and the Virginia Office of Volunteerism, the Red Cross, Operation Gratitude, The Mission Continues, BAE Systems, Inc. and Blue Shield of California.**

2) Fill Out your Honor Card

Fill out your Honor Card stating what act of service you will be doing in your community to honoring a service member and/or military family. Examples: mentor a child, clean up a park, plant a garden, donate to a particular charity, make a meal for a neighbor in need, etc

Place the Honor Card marked "include with your letter" with the letter of appreciation and the other card marked "post on honor wall" post on your newly created Honor Wall. The Honor Wall Will enable everyone to see the direct results in your community from honoring those who serve our country you are giving back to your community in a positive way.

Honor Cards culminate on or before 11/11/11 with 'Honor Walls' will be displayed at the Capitol Rotunda, VA hospitals, military bases, and other public venues.

3) Write a Letter

Choose the type of individual to whom you would like to write your letter of appreciation. **Operation Honor Cards** is currently seeking letters for the following individuals:

- 1) Parent of a service member
- 2) Spouse of a service member
- 3) Child of a service member
- 4) Veteran (someone who once served in the military)
- 5) Active Duty Service Member (someone who is currently serving in the military)
- 6) Caregiver (someone who is caring for a Wounded Warrior)

Write a letter expressing your appreciation or support for the type of individual you have chosen.

On the back of your letter's envelope, write the number of the category you have chosen above. This will help our volunteers sort your letter more efficiently and get it into the hands of the recipient as quickly as possible.

4) Mail your honor cards and letters to:

Operation Honor Card

P.O. Box 5456

Capitol Heights, MD 20791-5456

The American Red Cross, Pitney Bowes and Blue Star Families will distribute your Honor Cards & Letters to deployed service members, military families, wounded veterans and caregivers.

Thank you again for your interest in this program and for supporting America's military families!



Sample Letters

Dear Military Family,

Our family is thinking of you and your service member and wishing you all the best. We know it isn't just the service member who serves but the entire family. We'd like to reach across the miles that separate us to let you know our family appreciates what your family is doing.

Sincerely,

Dear Military Child,

Our family would like to tell you how much we appreciate what you do as a military child. Your whole family serves alongside your parent and you must be so proud of what your family is contributing by giving of yourselves. It must be hard at times, when your parent has to deploy, so we want you to know we appreciate it and are thinking of you.

Sincerely,

Dear Military Parent,

Thank you for raising a child who has grown up with the desire to volunteer in our armed forces. Our family appreciates your sacrifices and we want to say "thanks!" and that we are thinking of you and wishing you and your family all the best.

Sincerely,

Dear Military Spouse,

Our family is thinking of you and your service member and wishing you all the best. We know it isn't just the service member who serves but the entire family. We'd like to reach across the miles that separate us to let you know our family appreciates what you and your family is doing.

Sincerely,

Dear Veteran,

Thank you for your service to this country. Our country is a better place because of people who stand up and volunteer. Our family honors you and wishes you all the best.

Sincerely,



***“Honoring their
service with
ours...”***



Post to Honor Wall

Inspired by your service to the country, I pledge to do
_____ hours of service in your honor, specifically I will

Signed, _____ .

www.honorcards.org

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Include with your letter

Inspired by your service to the country, I pledge to do
_____ hours of service in your honor, specifically I will

Signed, _____ .

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