



JOINT SURVIVORS' FORUM

January 23, 2025

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
& U.S. Department of Defense



JOINT SURVIVORS' FORUM – JANUARY 2025

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Subscribe to Survivors' Forum Updates

Visit va.gov/SURVIVORS/Survivors_Forum.asp
to sign up for Survivors' Forum updates,
including email invitations and access to slides.

WELCOME

Ann Duff, Director
Office of Survivors Assistance (OSA)

DOD UPDATES

Deb Skillman

JOINT SURVIVORS' FORUM - SEPTEMBER 2024

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
Military Community & Family Policy

DoD Casualty, Mortuary Affairs and Military Funeral Honors Update

Ms. Deborah Skillman, Director

Casualty, Mortuary Affairs, and Military Funeral Honors
Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP)

VA/DoD Survivor's Forum
January 23, 2025

Quality of life policies and programs that help our guardians of country, their families and survivors be well and mission ready.





Agenda

- Mission
- Updates
- Reminders
- Gold Star and Surviving Family Member Representatives





Mission

The mission of the Casualty, Mortuary Affairs, and Military Funeral Honors program is to provide oversight of DoD and Service policies pertaining to casualty, mortuary, and military funeral honors programs and to provide authorized and necessary assistance to eligible family members of **deceased, missing, ill, or injured personnel**. Assistance may include but is not limited to transportation assistance; applying for and receiving benefits and entitlements; obtaining copies of records, reports, and investigations; legal assistance; receipt of personal effects; mortuary, burial, and funeral honors assistance; relocation assistance, including shipment of household goods; liaison with other federal agencies; information and referral, including emotional and spiritual support, and other assistance as requested.

CY 2024 (Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2024)

Fatalities: 840

Wounded/Ill: 1,557

Missing: 0

Military Funeral Honors Provided: 195,459+






Congressional Reporting Requirements Updates

Interim Rule Defining “gold star survivor” and “gold star family”

- [The History of the Gold Star](#)

MILITARY ONE SOURCE 800-342-9647 | Call Us OCONUS | Call Us TTY/TDD



The Gold Star.
America's promise to never forget.

- Enroll in this brief MilLife Learning course, "[Recognizing Military Service](#)"
- Contact your respective military service – [Army](#), [Marines](#), [Navy](#), [Air Force](#) or [Coast Guard](#)



The Survivor Connection eNewsletter

Subscribe at www.militaryonesource.mil/epublications/

.MIL Email Account Version

From: The Survivor Connection News <subscriptions@militaryonesource.dod.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2024 9:48 AM
To: first.name.last.name.civ@mail.mil
Subject: Navigating Relationships, Virtual Survivor Symposium & Understanding Benefits

An official communication from the United States Defense Department.

If the following web addresses are not highlighted, copy and paste the entire website address into the address bar of the browser and press enter.

May 2024

View in Browser

*Navigating Grief & Relationships

It's normal to feel disconnected from friends and family after the death of a loved one. Learn how to navigate relationship changes, find your support system and practice self-care as you move through your grief. [Read More >>](#)

*Virtual Survivor Symposium: June 21

Join the Defense Department for its first virtual Survivor Symposium. Tune in to learn about survivor benefits — including how they change if you remarry, tips for keeping your accounts in order and applying for the death gratuity. [Register Now >>](#)

*Remembering Our Heroes

The Defense Department recognizes the commitment of those who have died in service to their country — on Memorial Day every day. Honor the legacy of your loved one by adding their name to the Military In Lasting Tribute online memorial. [Honor a Loved One >>](#)

*Spouse Career Events

Throughout May, eligible spouses can [tune in to virtual events](#) from Spouse Education and Career Opportunities. Join in and get free help to achieve your career goals with:

- The Virtual Military Spouse Symposium, May 14-16
- SECO Career Coach Webinars & Workshops, May 21-23
- Military Spouse Employment Partnership Virtual Hiring Fairs, May 29 and 30

*Lifetime Access to National Parks

Step into the healing power of nature with the America the Beautiful passes. Surviving families may be eligible for a Military Lifetime Pass that offers free access to many of America's national parks and other federal recreation areas. [Get your free pass](#) today and check out other MWR benefits, such as [travel discounts](#).

*Making the Final Move

If you're preparing to move after the death of your service member, you're not alone. [Get information](#), resources and support made to help you understand your allowances, navigate decisions and take some of the stress out of your final military move.

Personal Email Account Version



Navigating Grief & Relationships

It's normal to feel disconnected from friends and family after the death of a loved one. Learn how to navigate relationship changes, find your support system and practice self-care as you move through your grief.

[Read More](#)



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Join the Defense Department for its first virtual Survivor Symposium. Tune in to learn about survivor benefits — including how they change if you remarry, tips for keeping your accounts in order and applying for the death gratuity.

[Register Now](#)

More than
13,217
Subscribers



Quality of life policies and programs that help our guardians of country, their families and survivors be well and mission ready.

More Updates



- [The Survivor Connection](#): 11th edition sent to all subscribers on January 7th
- Online Survivors Benefit Report and our Family Assistance Team
- **DoD Winter Survivor Symposium is Friday, February 21, 2025 from Noon - 3pm ET.**
 - Updates from Defense Finance Accounting Services and Department of Veterans Affairs
 - Details about Online Survivor Benefits Reports
 - Financial Counseling and how it can benefit survivors
 - Tax implications for deceased military personnel and property tax abatements for surviving spouses

Register at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/casualty-assistance/survivor-support/survivor-symposium-series/>

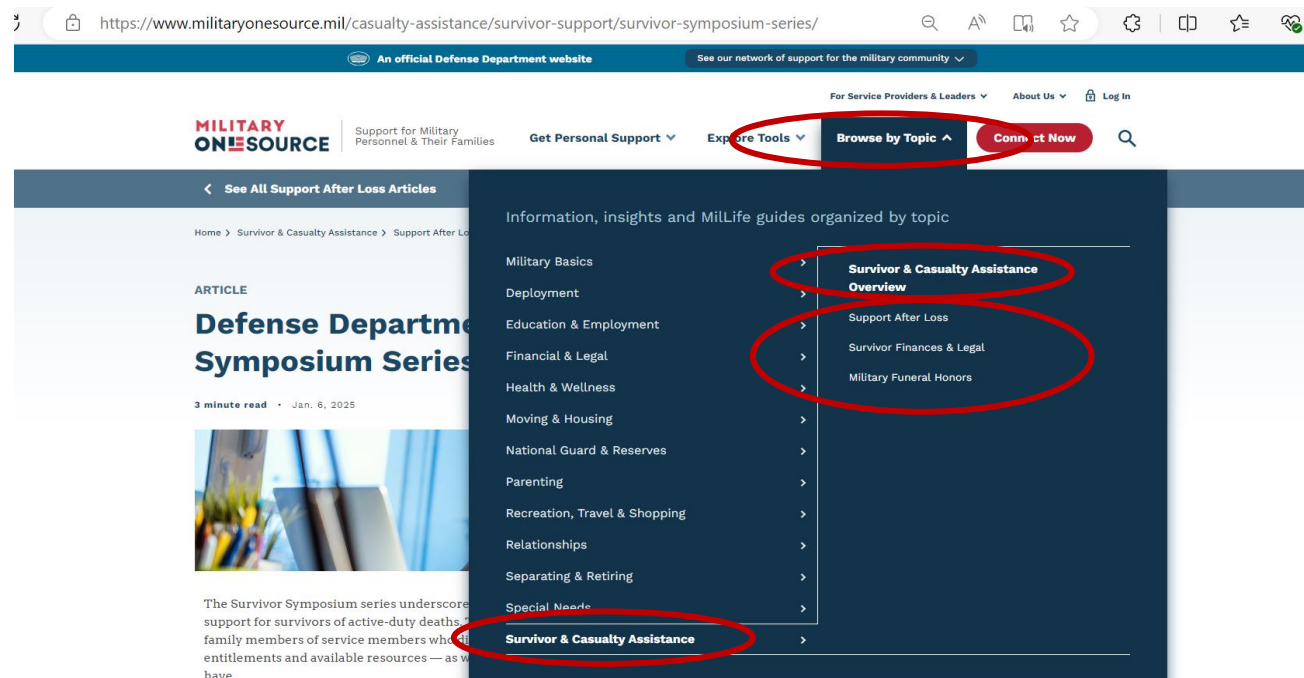


Quality of life policies and programs that help our guardians of country, their families and survivors be well and mission ready.



Updates to Military OneSource

As part of a large-scale effort to streamline navigation and content on the website based on user feedback, our pages on Military OneSource look different.



Quality of life policies and programs that help our guardians of country, their families and survivors be well and mission ready.



Reminders

- Survivor Inquiry Form for personalized and timely support available on Military OneSource at <https://public.militaryonesource.mil/survivor-inquiry>.
- Military In Lasting Tribute at <https://tribute.militaryonesource.mil/>.
- Survivors need to keep their information up to date to participate in the DoD Survivor Survey.





Gold Star and Surviving Family Member Representatives

U.S. Army

Office: Installation Management Command G-9, Survivor Outreach Services

Phone number: 833-313-1960

Email: usarmy.jbsa.imcom-hq.mbx.sos-survivor-advocate@mail.mil

U.S. Marine Corps

Office: Long Term Assistance Program Office

Phone number: 866-210-3421, ext. 2

Email: Gold.Star.Advocate@usmc.mil

U.S. Navy

Office: Long Term Assistance Program Office

Phone number: 901-874-0083

Email: MILL_LTAP@navy.mil

U.S. Air Force

Office: USAF/A1SAA, Airman and Family Care Division

Phone number: 703-693-0683

Email: af-a1saa@us.af.mil

U.S. Coast Guard

Office: Coast Guard Casualty Matters Office

Phone number: 202-795-6637

***If you are not satisfied with the casualty assistance provided by your service advocate, you may contact the DoD's Gold Star Advocate**

Department of Defense

Office: Casualty and Mortuary Affairs and Military Funeral Honors

Phone number: 571-372-5319

Email: osd.pentagon.rsrcmgmt.list.ousd-p-r-gold-star-advocate-mbx@mail.mil



U.S. Department of Defense

MILITARY
ONESOURCE

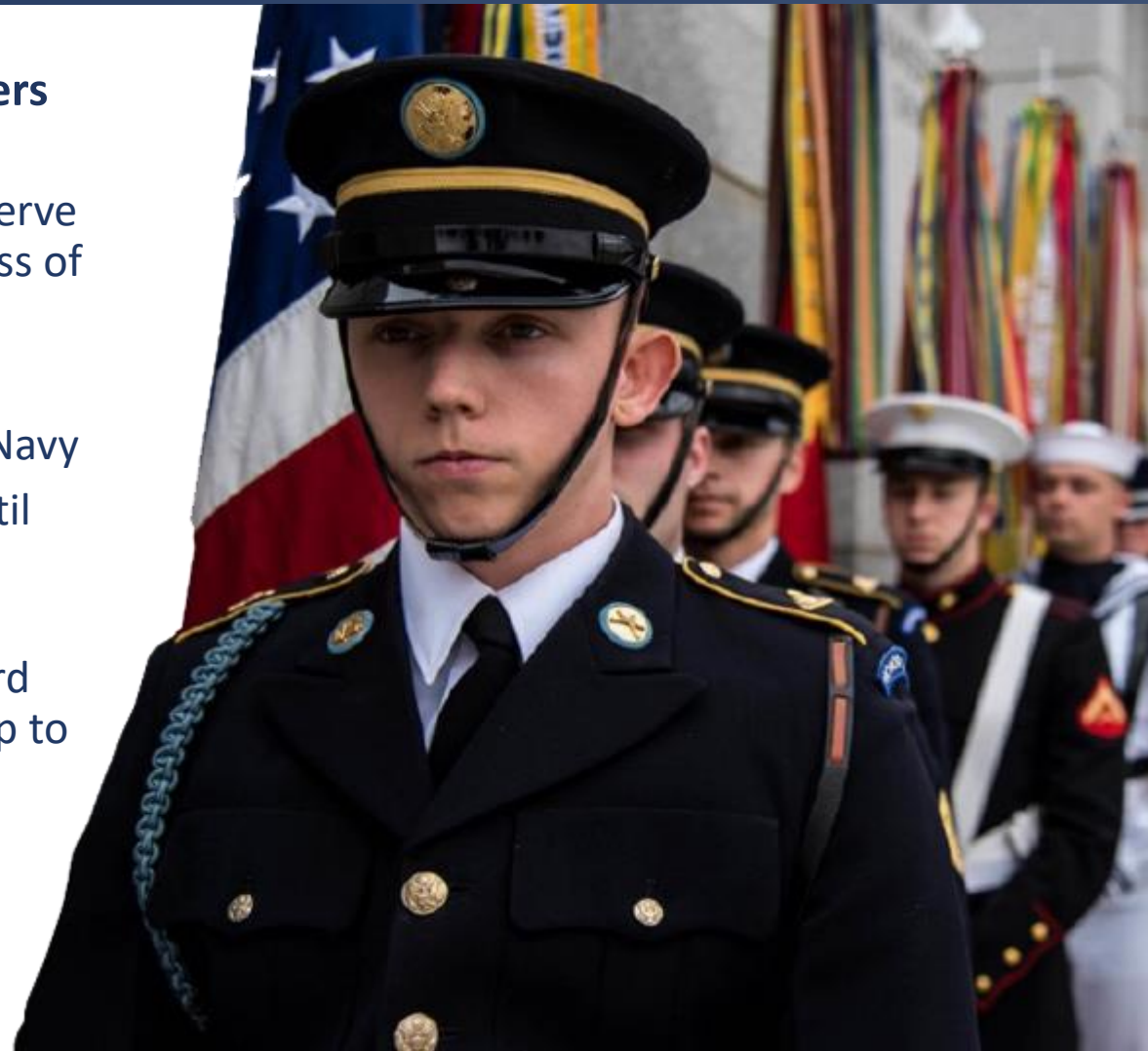
Connecting you to your best MilLife

Taking Care of Our Military Community

Personal support is available for members of our military community including:

- All active duty, National Guard and Reserve Component service members, regardless of activation status
- Immediate family members
- Coast Guard, when activated with the Navy
- Expeditionary civilians, 90 days pre- until 180 days post-deployment
- Retired or discharged, honorably or a general discharge, including Coast Guard veterans, and their immediate family up to 365 days post separation or retirement
- Survivors: non-remarried spouses and children

*Most **Digital Resources** are also open to service members' friends and extended family.*



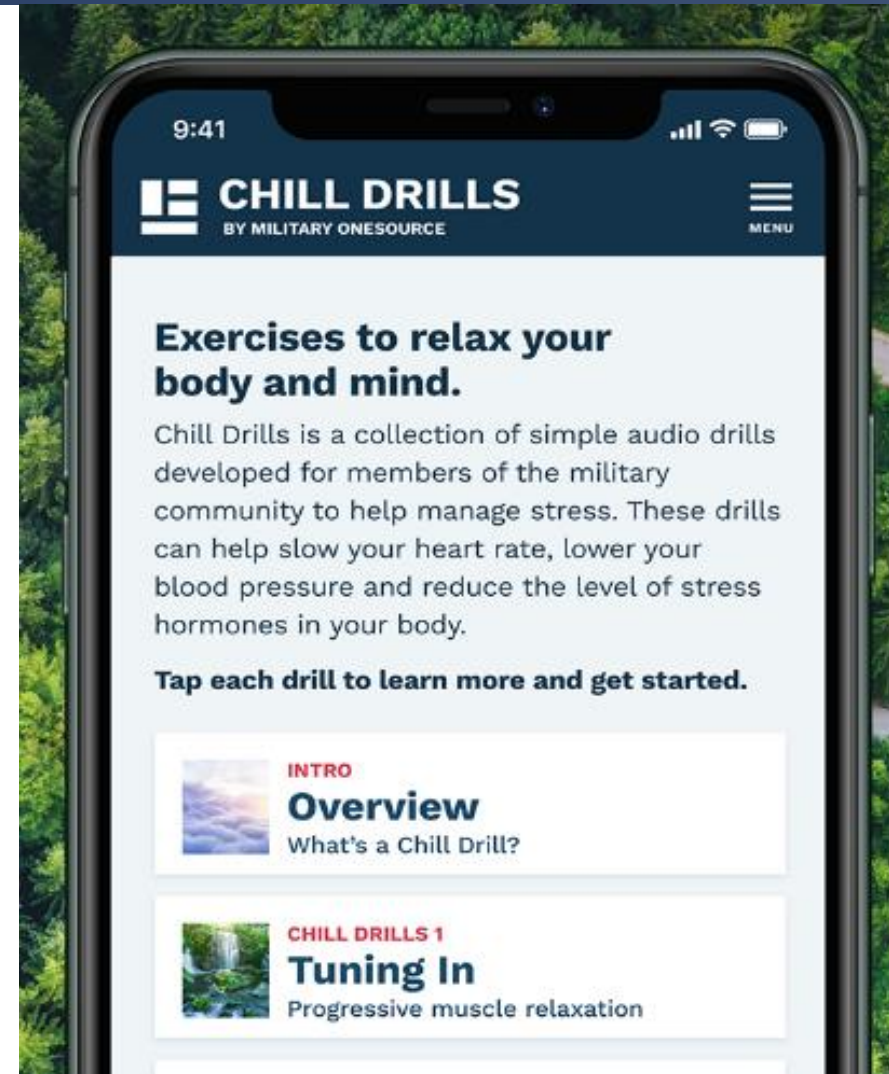
Services Offered by Military OneSource



All these consultations and services are just a phone call or chat away. Need other support? We can connect you!

Resiliency Resources on the Go

- Carry a life coach in your pocket. **CoachHub** connects you with real-time coaching experts. Coaches will help track and set goals for exercise, nutrition, stress reduction and more.
- **Chill Drills** allow you to practice mindfulness and relieve stress with a collection of simple audio recordings available 24/7.
- Your mood is a big deal. **MoodHacker** offers self-directed, evidence-based techniques to improve how you feel – every day.





Access our support when, where and how it's convenient for you.

Call 800-342-9647 | Live Chat | My Military OneSource App



MilitaryOneSource.mil

Erin T. King

Program Analyst, Military Community Support Programs
Military Community & Family Policy
erin.t.king.civ@mail.mil

OSGLI & Financial Planning

Ruth Berkheimer

VA Insurance Service

Protect Those Who Matter Most

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
Insurance Service (INS)

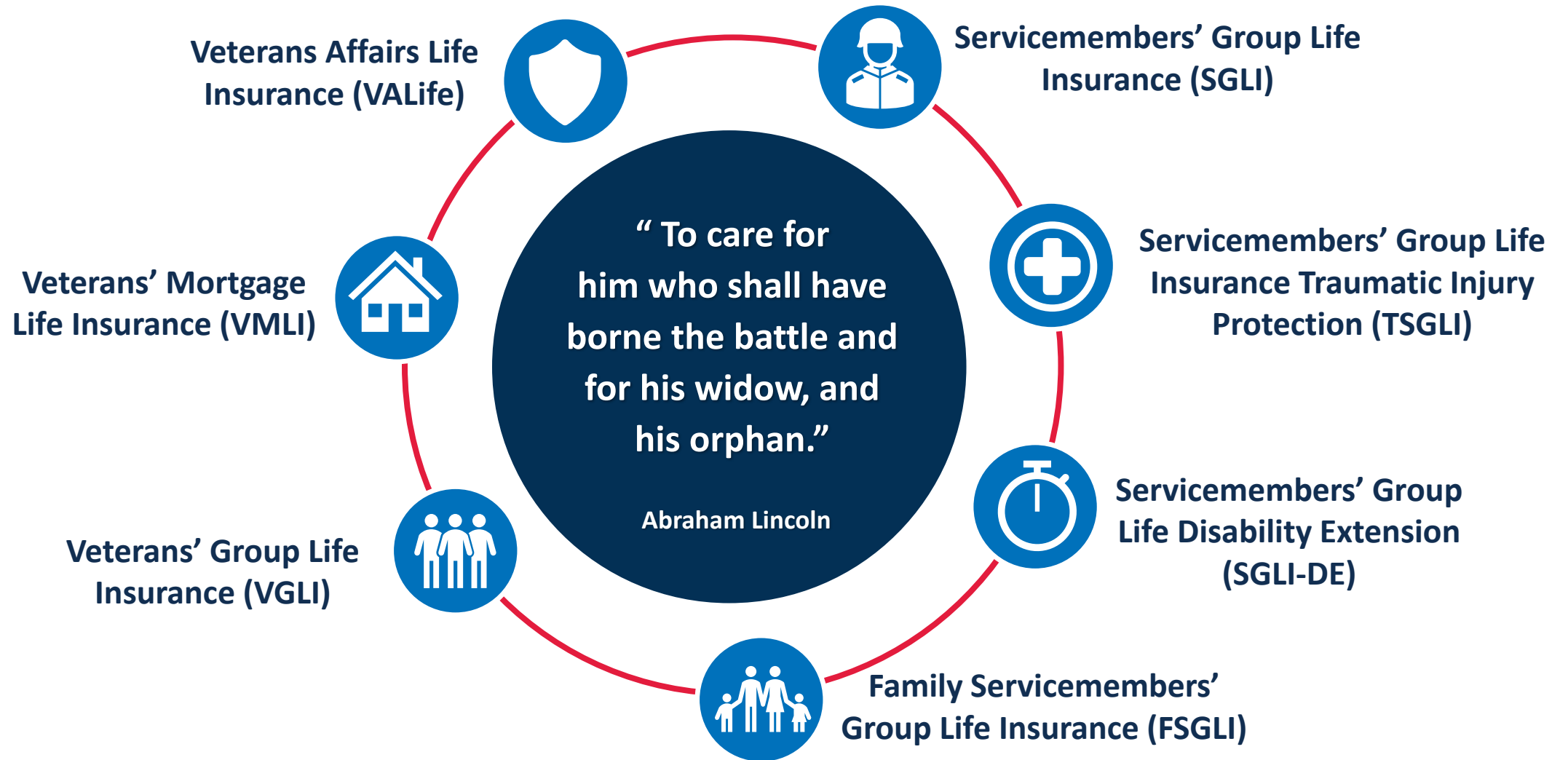


VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

VA Insurance Offerings



Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI)



Who's covered?

- Active-duty, National Guard, and Reserve Service members
- Veterans (only for 120-day period after service separation)



What's the coverage?

- Automatic maximum coverage up to \$500,000
- Group term life insurance
- Can reduce coverage in increments of \$50,000



Important reminders

- If a Service member is totally disabled, SGLI can be extended for up to two years – free of charge – through SGLI-DE upon separation.

Servicemembers' Group Life Disability Extension (SGLI-DE)



Who's covered?

Separated Service Members who:

- Had SGLI at time of separation
- Are totally disabled and unable to work or have a qualifying condition



What's the coverage?

- Free extension of SGLI coverage at time of separation for up to two years after separation



Important reminders

- Must apply for the extension within two years of their separation date to be eligible for this coverage.
- Coverage automatically converts to VGLI after the first VGLI premium payment is received.

Servicemembers' Group Life Disability Extension (SGLI-DE) Continued

Statutory conditions

- Permanent loss of use of both hands
- Permanent loss of use of both feet
- Permanent loss of use of both eyes
- Permanent loss of use of one hand and one foot
- Permanent loss of use of one foot and one eye
- Permanent loss of use of one hand and one eye
- Total loss of hearing in both ears
- Organic loss of speech (lost ability to express oneself, both by voice and whisper, through normal organs for speech - being able to speak with an artificial appliance is disregarded in determination of total disability)

Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI)



Who's covered?

- Spouses and dependent children of SGLI-covered Service members



What's the coverage?

- Up to \$100,000 for spouses – not to exceed the SGLI coverage amount of the Service member
- \$10,000 for each dependent child, with no additional cost to Service member



Important reminders

- If a military spouse was married to another military spouse on or after January 2, 2013, coverage is not automatic, but the Service member can apply through the SGLI Online Enrollment System (SOES).

FSGLI Termination

FSGLI spouse coverage terminates 120 days after any of the following events:

- Member is discharged from service
- Divorce
- Member elects in writing to terminate spouse coverage
- Member elects in writing to terminate his/her own SGLI coverage
- Death of member

Child coverage terminates 120 days after any of the following:

- Member declines SGLI
- Child no longer qualifies as an insurable dependent
- Member dies
- Member is discharged from service

FSGLI Conversion

- Spouse coverage can be converted to an individual policy within 120 days of those events
- Key benefit if spouse is in poor health
- Dependent child coverage cannot be converted
- For more information on FSGLI Conversion, visit the VA website at: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/fsgli.asp>

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection (TSGLI)



Who's covered?

- Service members who experienced traumatic injury and were covered by SGLI at the time.



What's the coverage?

- Payment ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000 to provide financial support for recovery.



Important reminders

- There are certain injuries that are excluded from TSGLI. Visit the program page to learn more. [Traumatic Injury Protection \(TSGLI\) | Veterans Affairs \(va.gov\)](https://www.va.gov/traumatic-injury-protection/)

Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)



Who's covered?

- Separated Service Members who held SGLI at the time of separation from military service



What's the coverage?

- Renewable term coverage of \$10,000 to \$500,000 depending on how much SGLI coverage was held at the time of separation from service



Important reminders

- Must apply within one year and 120 days from separation.
- If application made within 240 days after separation, they don't have to answer any health questions.
- Can purchase additional coverage in increments of \$25,000 at 1-year anniversary and every 5-year anniversary thereafter.

Beneficiary Financial Counseling Service (BFCS)

- No cost financial planning services are available **to beneficiaries** of SGLI, FSGLI, TSGLI, VGLI
 - Service provided by FinancialPoint®
 - Objective advice – they do not receive commission
- As of April 1, 2021, up to 40 hours of financial counseling available for 2 years from date claim is paid
- Toll-free, 24/7 access to professional financial counselors
- Beneficiaries can complete a questionnaire online and receive a detailed financial plan
- Beneficiaries can request a face-to-face meeting with a financial counselor
- For more information, go to: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/bfcs.asp>

Beneficiary Financial Counseling Service (BFCS)

- Beneficiary receives BFCS information with the explanation of benefits that is sent when claim is paid
- Beneficiaries of SGLI, FSGLI and VGLI receive four follow-up mailings 3, 6, 9 and 14 months after claim payment reminding them of the availability of BFCS
- TSGLI beneficiaries get 1 reminder mailing 30 days following claim payment

Financial Counseling Services for
Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI),
Family SGLI and
Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)

FinancialPoint®

Professional, personalized financial counseling

It's not always easy to make sound financial decisions during difficult times, but VA is making it easier for SGLI, Family SGLI (available for FSGLI spousal claims only, not dependent child claims) and VGLI beneficiaries by offering financial counseling services at no cost to you. Professional financial counselors are here to provide you with answers to all your most common financial questions.

What You'll Get

We offer a range of services tailored to your needs at no cost to you

- Budgeting assistance
- Reducing Debt
- Developing a savings plan
- Determining investment strategies
- College planning
- Pre- and Post-Retirement planning
- Long-term care planning
- Estate planning

Why Get Financial Counseling?

Financial counseling can help you make smarter decisions about managing your money and setting goals to make the money last well into the future. It's important to get the proper financial counseling before making any major financial decisions.

Financial counseling will help you:

- Make your money last longer
- Know which debts to pay off first
- Protect your credit
- Have extra money for emergencies
- Pay your children's college tuition
- Have a comfortable retirement



Proper planning can minimize your financial worries.

When Should I Get Financial Counseling?

You should get financial counseling as soon as possible after receiving your insurance money and before making any major financial decisions. Getting financial counseling right away will help make your insurance money last well into the future.

Contact FinancialPoint® Toll-free Anytime: 1-888-243-7351



Beneficiary Financial Counseling Service (BFCS)

Program Services Include:	Two Levels of Service are Provided
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budgeting Assistance• Debt Reduction• Developing a Savings Plan• Investment Strategies• College Planning• Pre and Post-Retirement Planning• Long-Term Care Planning• Estate Planning	<p>Level 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quick answers to financial questions• Toll-free access to professional counselors 24/7 <p>Level 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level 2 service PLUS...• A financial plan tailored to fit their needs once they complete a Financial Readiness Questionnaire <p>Counseling may be face-to-face or by phone.</p>

Additional Financial Resources

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/INSURANCE/financial-resources.asp>

- Casualty Affairs
- Military OneSource (www.militaryonesource.mil)
- Installation Personal Financial Managers & Counselors (www.finred.usalearning.gov)
- VA-Prudential Partnership Resources ([Group Insurance Well-being Hub](#))
- Additional resources ([Financial Literacy - Veterans Benefits Administration](#))

Why and When to Use Financial Counseling

Why?

It can help the beneficiary:

- Know which debts to pay off first
- Protect their credit
- Make their money last longer
- Have money available for emergencies
- Save for future expenses, such as children's college tuition
- Save for retirement

When?

- As soon as possible after receiving the insurance proceeds
- Before making any major financial decisions

Online Will Preparation

- Online Will preparation services are available to beneficiaries at no cost.
- Service enables beneficiaries to prepare a Will online without an attorney.
- Answer a series of questions and receive a legal Will, valid in all 50 states, ready to print and sign.
- Documents how assets will be distributed in the event of death.

How to Access These Services

Online

- Go to www.financialpointplus.com
- Register as a first-time user
- Use "BFCSVA" as the Organization Web ID
- Have your eight-digit SGLI, TSGLI, FSGLI, or VGLI claim number available
- Select FinancialPoint to submit information that will be used to create a personalized financial plan for you
- Select EstateGuidance® to create and print a Will

Phone or Email

- SGLI, FSGLI, VGLI beneficiaries: 888-243-7351
- TSGLI recipients: 800-428-3416
- Email: fcs@FinancialPoint.com

Learn more

Visit our website at <https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/>

Questions?



BREAK 1

Please take this opportunity to complete our survey by using the link or QR code below.



[CLICK HERE FOR LINK TO SURVEY](#)

VHA SAMS

Leah Christensen

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Survivors Assistance and Memorial Support (SAMS) Program Overview

Survivors Forum: January 23, 2025

Leah Christensen, LCSW

Associate Director, Clinical Operations SAMS

Survivors Assistance and Memorial Support Program



Every Veteran and survivor deserves the highest caliber of care as the Veteran transitions through end of life.

VHA is establishing a Survivors Assistance and Memorial Support (SAMS) Program to provide personalized, supportive services to families, caregivers, and survivors at the end of a Veteran's life and after a Veteran dies, while ensuring Veterans without identified family receive dignified burials to honor their service.

Awareness, Opportunity, and Execution

Lack of oversight of Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Decedent Affairs processes

Variation in Decedent Affairs processes across VHA

National media stories about unclaimed Veterans remains

OIG investigation and subsequent report with recommendations

Care Management and Social Work identified to lead effort

Survivors Assistance and Memorial Support Program



Choose **VA**

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

What We Know

Operational impact

- **500,000 – 600,000** Veteran deaths occur annually generating approximately **20,000 – 30,000** calls to VA Medical Centers for assistance

Business

- **21,810** VHA Decedents under authorized VHA care in FY 2023
 - Claimed: **21,422**
 - Unclaimed: **388**

Clinical

- **67%** of survivors tell us they needed more help with funeral arrangements (Bereaved Family Survey, Q3 FY 2023)

"I was told what to do about the funeral, but I'm still not sure how to do it. I was informed what I needed to do but not how to do the things to be done. I needed more help since myself and my daughter had never dealt with VA before."



"We were also at a loss with dads' burial and memorial benefits, no one provided any assistance, so we were on our own to figure it out."



"We never received any help to find funeral and cremation services in the area since we were from out of state."

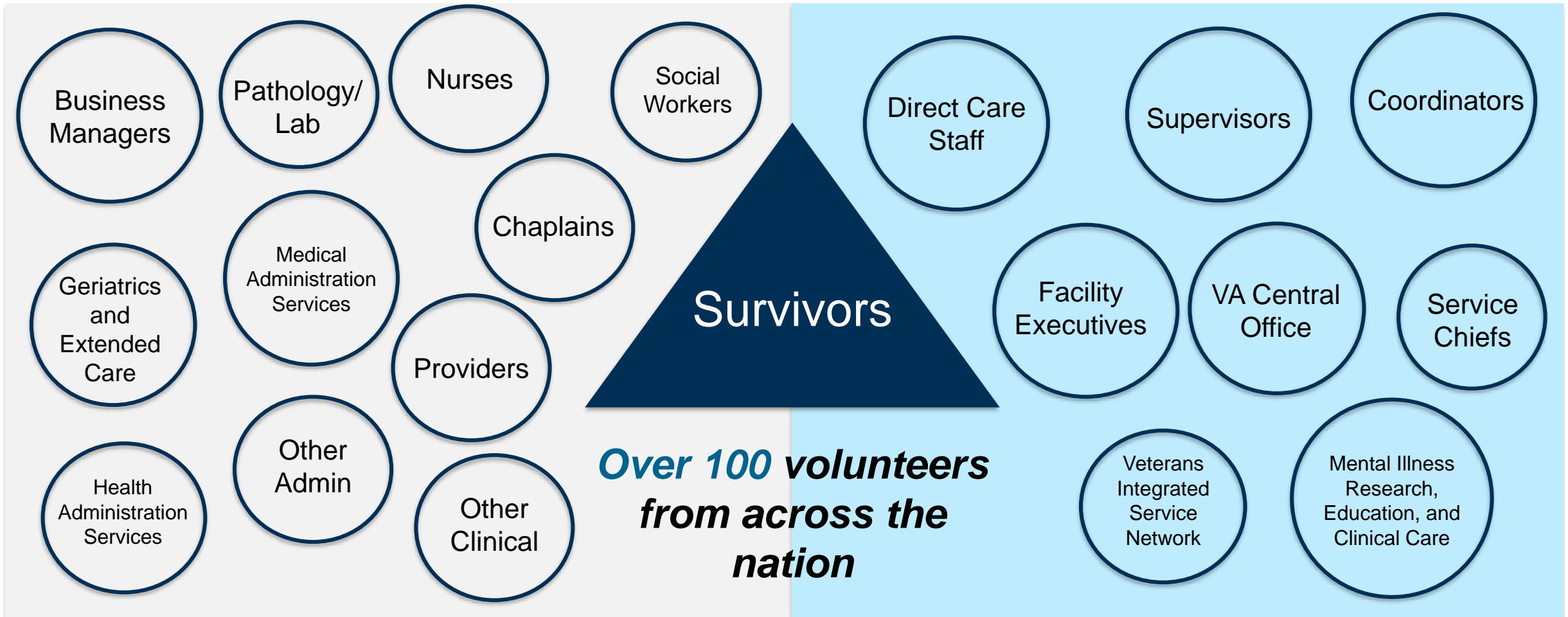
"Afterwards it was really hard to get in touch with someone regarding benefits. I literally had to fly down there and sit in an office."



SAMS Program Development

Inter-Professional

Multiple Roles

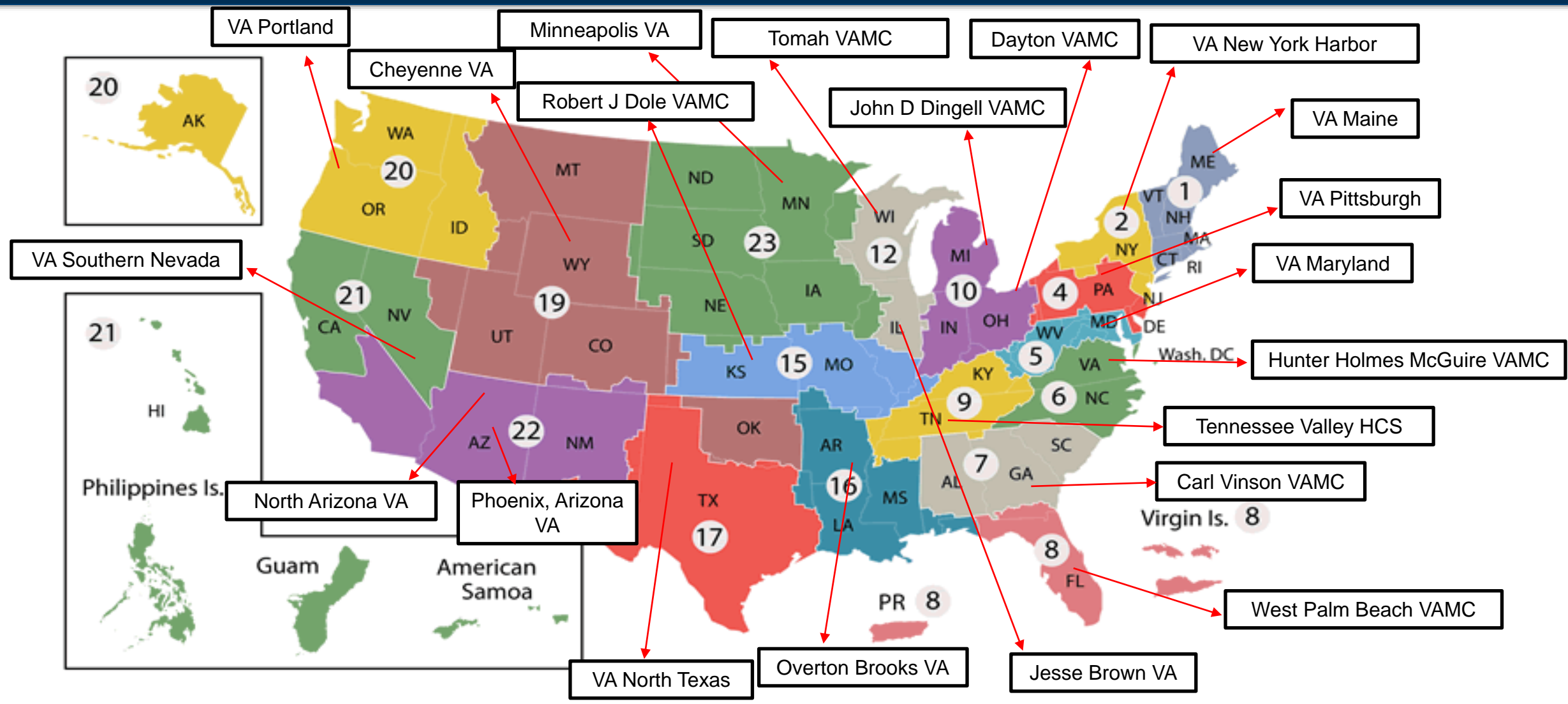


Vision

VHA will have infrastructure at every level for standardized clinical and operational processes, training and oversight to enhance the Veteran and survivor experience.



SAMS Implementing Sites



Forward Progress

Bereavement Support



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

- **Personalized and Consistent Resources**
 - Offering customizable bereavement support information
 - Training to provide high quality, compassionate interactions
- **Supportive**
 - Developing web-based resources, simplified guidance documents, and coordinating solutions with complex scenarios
 - Designating a contact person at every facility
- **Progress for Consistency**
 - Publishing job aids for standard training across VA facilities
 - Establishing national guidance, oversight, tracking and documentation
- **Strong SAMS Network of Support**
 - Strengthening partnerships with VBA and NCA
 - Outreaching and educating agencies and organizations who support survivors



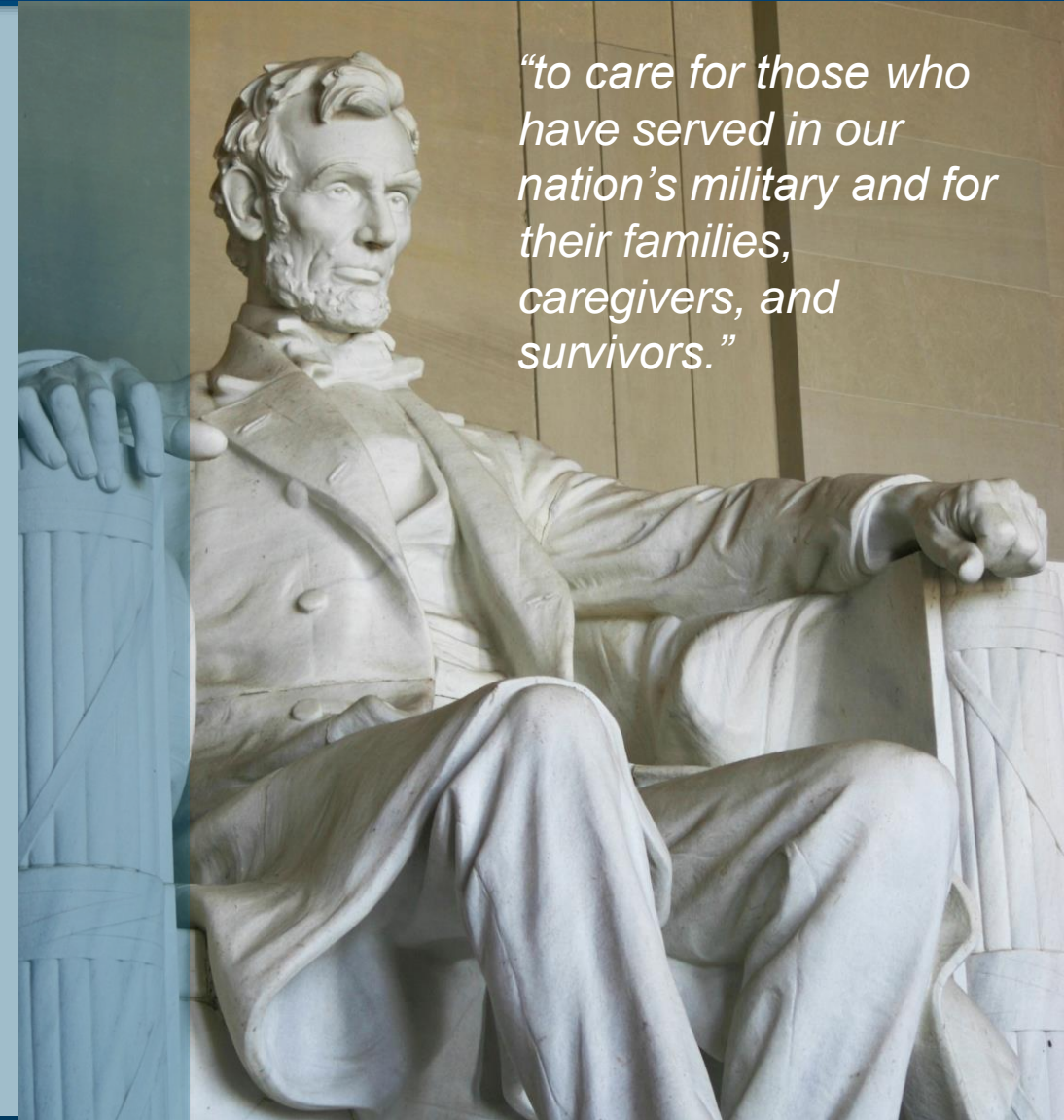
Choose **VA**

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Discussion



Contact information:

vhasams@va.gov



Choose **VA**

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

FOLDS OF HONOR

Dayna Dunn



FOLDS *of* HONOR

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS OVERVIEW





ABOUT FOLDS OF HONOR

HISTORICAL DATA

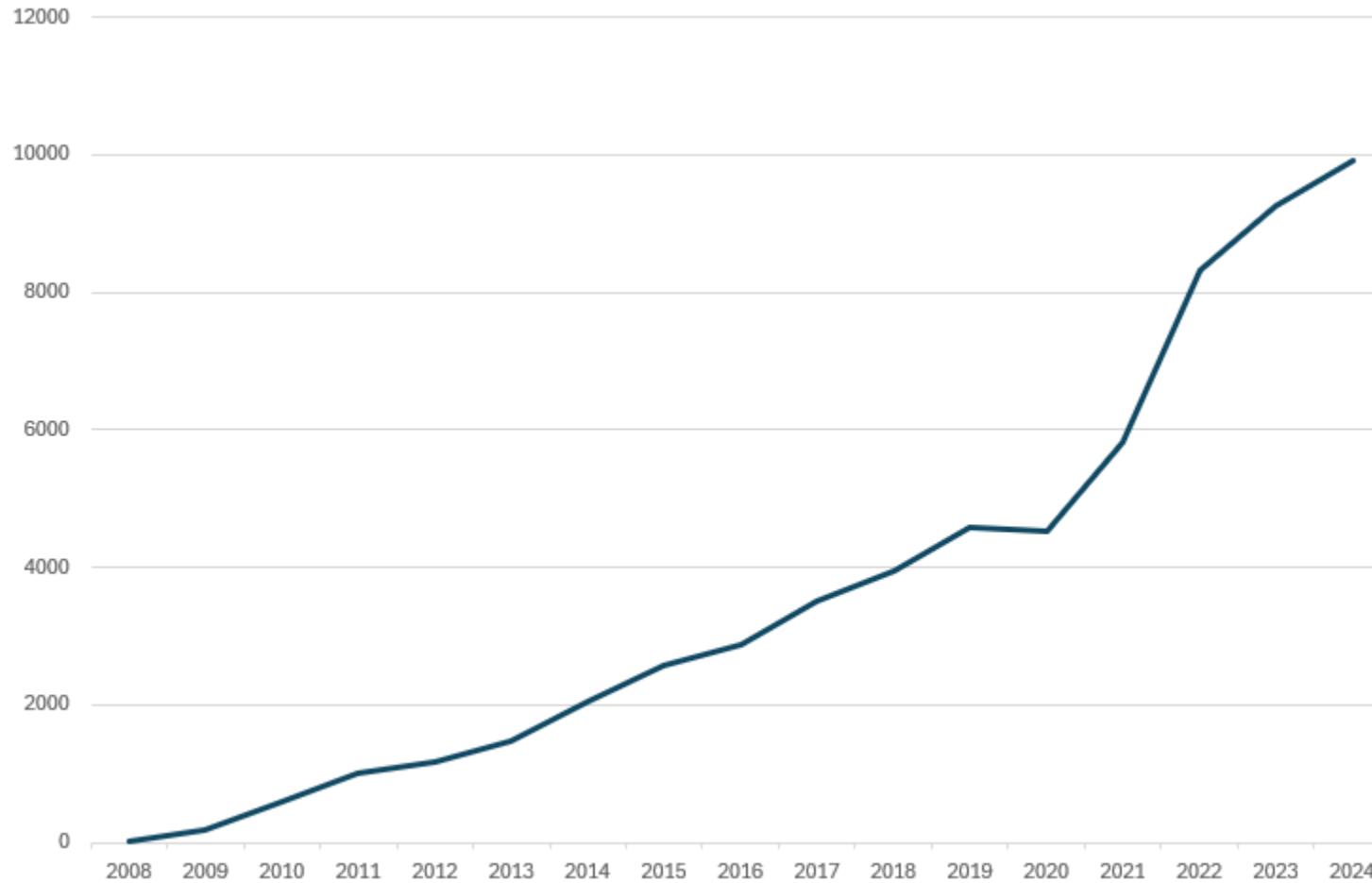
RECIPIENTS AND AWARD TOTALS SINCE INCEPTION

- 62,000 Scholarships Accepted
- \$290 Million Awarded

YEAR	RECIPIENTS	AWARD AMOUNT
2024	9,920	\$46,674,646
2023	9,322	\$43,636,475
2022	8,335	\$34,653,585
2021	5,788	\$28,146,940
2020	4,515	\$21,977,215
2019	4,585	\$22,325,850

HISTORICAL DATA

RECIPIENT GROWTH SINCE INCEPTION



ORGANIZATIONAL REPUTATION

HIGHLY RATED NONPROFIT





HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- **Applicant** must be enrolled or planning to enroll in a program of study at an accredited college or university (2-year, 4-year, or post graduate program), or enrolled or planning to enroll in an accredited technical or trade school program which results in a certificate or license,
- **AND** the dependent or spouse of a military veteran.
- All applicants must complete a 2025 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).



Higher Ed Eligibility
Requirements

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS CONTINUED:

- Service member student is applying under must have one of the following classifications:
 - Killed In Action
 - Killed in the Line of Duty (includes suicide)
 - Deceased Post-Separation with a VA disability rating (includes suicide) – if service-connected death, will require documentation
 - Disabled with a documented VA combined rating of 70% or higher, as indicated on a Benefits Summary Letter.



How a Veteran /
Service Member Can
Obtain a VA Eligibility
Letter



FOLDS of HONOR

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

AWARDING:

- Full-time undergraduate students = \$5,000 maximum per academic year
- Part-time undergraduate, master's, doctoral students, or student pursuing an additional degree = \$2,500 maximum per academic year
- Student can request funds (up to \$2,500 or \$1,250) per term
- May request funds during three Check In periods – fall, winter/spring, or summer
- Students must re-apply each year they wish to be considered for funding (only school information is required during consecutive follow-on years)
- May receive funding for a maximum of 6 years (consecutive) from 1st year funded





CHILDREN'S FUND SCHOLARSHIP

CHILDREN'S FUND SCHOLARSHIP

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Applicant must be enrolled or planning to enroll in an accredited private school OR educational tutoring institution. (If offered a scholarship, must be fully enrolled before accepting award offer.
- At least age 5 by 1 September of calendar year in which applying **and** enrolled in a full-time Kindergarten program,
- **AND** the dependent of the military service.



Children's Fund
Eligibility
Requirements



FOLDS of HONOR

CHILDREN'S FUND SCHOLARSHIP

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS CONTINUED:

- Service member student is applying under must have one of the following classifications:
 - Killed In Action
 - Killed in the Line of Duty (includes suicide)
 - Deceased Post-Separation with a VA disability rating (includes suicide) – if service-connected death, will require documentation
 - Disabled with a documented VA combined rating of 100%, as indicated on a Benefits Summary Letter.



How a Veteran /
Service Member Can
Obtain a VA Eligibility
Letter



FOLDS of HONOR

CHILDREN'S FUND SCHOLARSHIP

SCHOOL OPTIONS:

- **Private School:**
 - To be used for tuition, fees, and any required textbooks.
 - Scholarship paid in full during the Check In 1/Award Acceptance period.
- **Educational Tutoring:**
 - To be used for tutoring in core subject(s) student is currently enrolled in
 - Cannot send funds to a private individual
 - Tutor must have a legally registered business with a business bank account and/or commercial business location
 - Scholarship funds sent in two equal payments (fall and spring)

CHILDREN'S FUND SCHOLARSHIP

SCHOOL OPTIONS:

- Home School:
 - To be used for the purchase of grade-level home school curriculum bundles only
 - Can only pay one vendor, not multiple
 - We do not cover Co-ops



CHILDREN'S FUND SCHOLARSHIP

AWARDING:

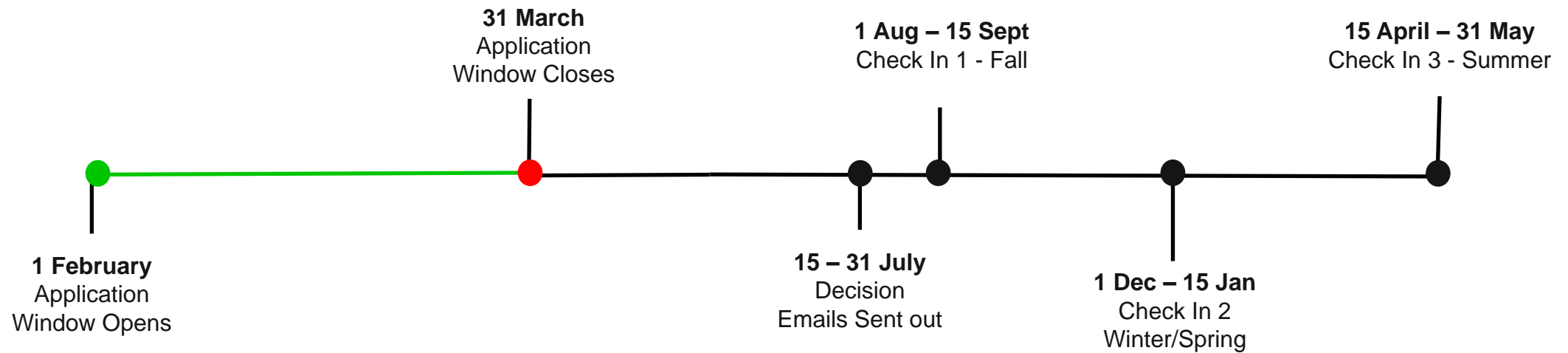
- \$5,000 maximum per academic year
- Award offer amount determined by the need calculation in the application
- Private school and home school funding paid the full award offer amount in fall
- Tutoring funding sent in two equal payments: one-half paid in fall and the remaining half paid in spring (after a Mid-Year Check In is submitted)





FINAL DETAILS

SCHOLARSHIP TIMELINE



KEYS TO KNOW

FOR BOTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

- Funds are always sent to the educational institution, never to an individual.
- All schools must be vetted and approved **before** a payment will be sent.
- Recipients must complete and submit a Check In to request available funds for any term (fall, winter/spring/summer)



HELPFUL LINKS & INFORMATION

- **Website:** <https://foldsofhonor.org/scholarships/military-scholarships/>
- Scholarship Department Email: scholarships@foldsofhonor.org
- Phone Number: (918) 274-4700
- Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8am to 5pm (Central Time)

BREAK 2

Please take this opportunity to complete our survey by using the link or QR code below.



[CLICK HERE FOR LINK TO SURVEY](#)

THE PRECIOUS LEGACY

Heaven Wadsworth

THE PRECIOUS LEGACY

The Precious Legacy's mission and vision is to create and support lifelong bonds by bringing together the aged-out young adult surviving children of service members that have died for our Nation under any circumstances.

www.thepreciouslegacy.org





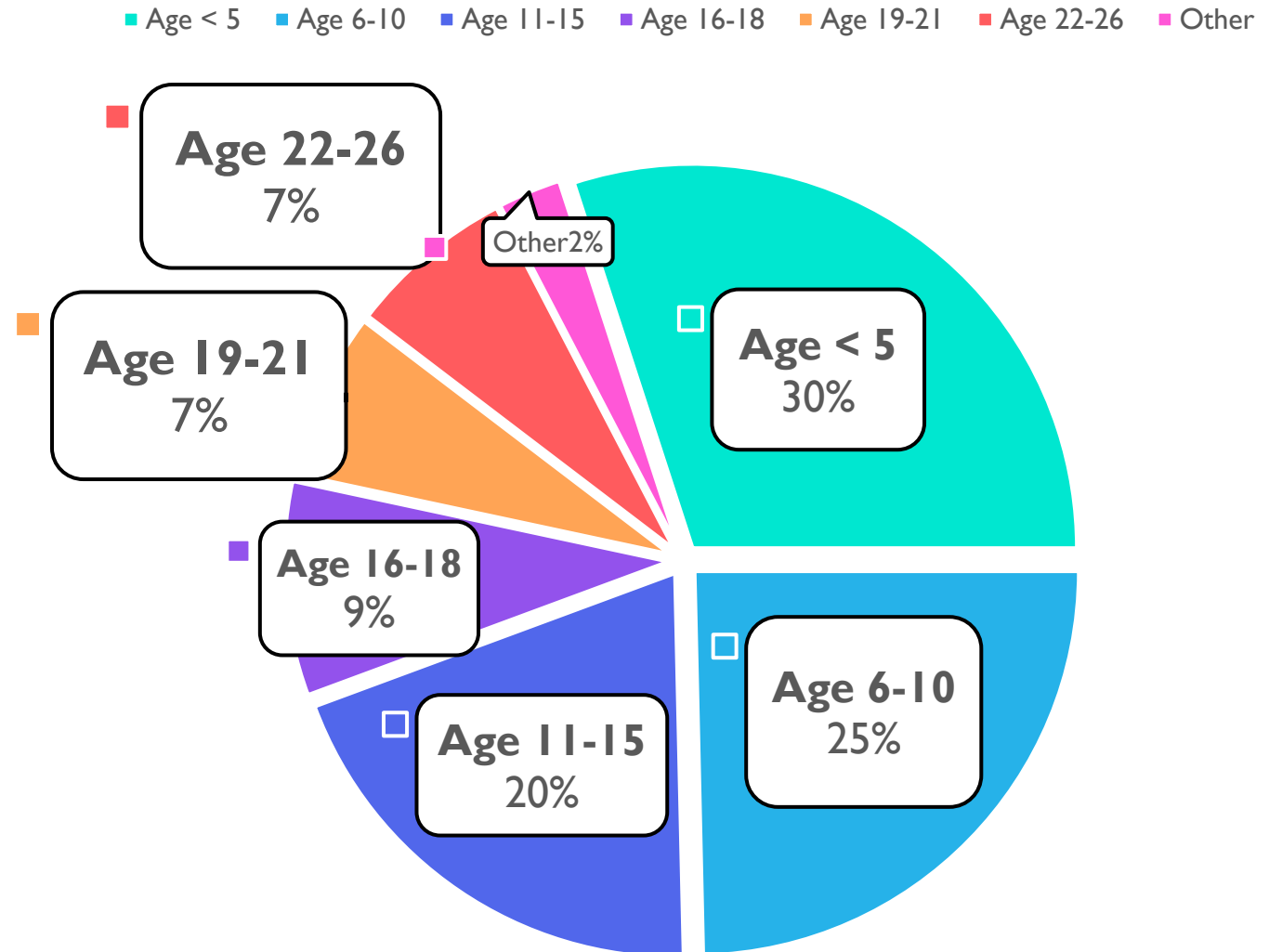
AGE A FACTOR?

A published study* on bereaved military dependent spouses captured the age ranges of 12,641 dependent surviving children. TPL serves the most underserved of these age groups (ages 19-21 & 22-26).

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Loss of a parent, compounded with common obstacles specific to military children and lack of social & emotional support can be devastating to mental health and wellness. Age becomes an eligibility factor in grief support, though grief doesn't discriminate.

Age Ranges of Surviving Dependent Children

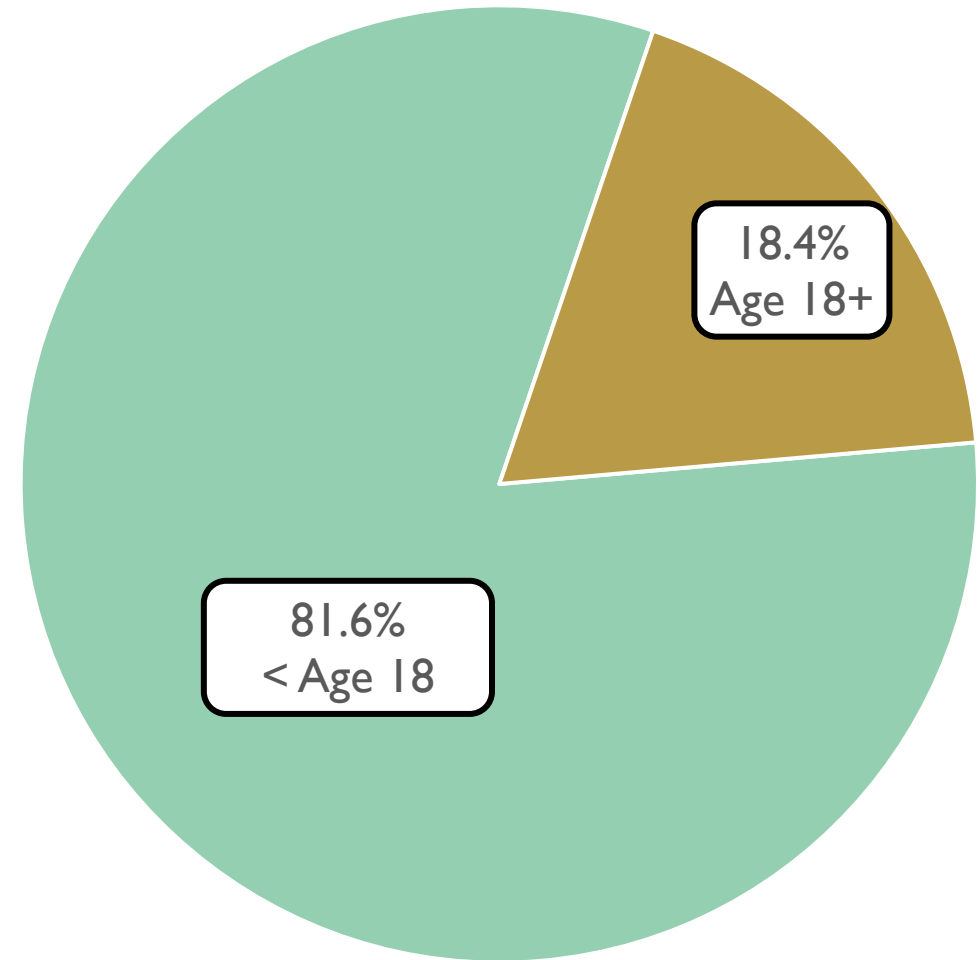


*<https://academic.oup.com/milmed/article/182/3-4/e1684/4099154>

THE FORGOTTEN FEW

103 Nonprofit Foundations were observed, and data was compiled on resources available for military surviving families...

- **81.6%** either did not clarify, or specifically stated that they serve surviving children under the age of 18.
- **18.4%** serve ages 18+.



<https://www.operationwearehere.com>

<https://www.goldstarfamilyresources.com/resources-1>

WHO WE SERVE, WHY WE HELP, AND WHY IT MATTERS

- TPL is dedicated to serving adult surviving children of American Service Members ages 19-24, regardless of military branch, manner, or location of loss, or biological relationship to their fallen Service Member.
- TPL hosts a destination weekend retreat for those who are often overlooked and “aged-out”.
- TPL honors and recognizes the sacrifices American Service Members made while serving our nation. TPL does not practice “bereavement hierarchy” which sadly, is common.
- Every child grieves and every child is deserving of support. Social emotional support is critical to mental health and grief recovery.

We invite you to join our TPL family to encourage, support, and cherish the living legacies of our fallen Service Members!

OBSTACLES & GOALS

OBSTACLES

- The military surviving young adult children are a growing community.
- Overlooked, underserved, and possibly unknown.
- Limited donors and resources due to limited exposure.
- New and learning.

GOALS

- Fund 2 retreats.
- Build relationships with knowledgeable business owners.
- Grow our community of partnerships, sponsors, and donors.



SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES



Wreaths Across
America



TPL store – Gnome
sales and TPL Swag



Amazon Smile and
Bing Search Engine



Amazon Wishlist

QUESTIONS?



The Precious Legacy

417-291-4464

thepreciouslegacy.org

thepreciouslegacy@gmail.com

Walking in their footsteps, while creating my own path.

THE ELIZABETH DOLE FOUNDATION

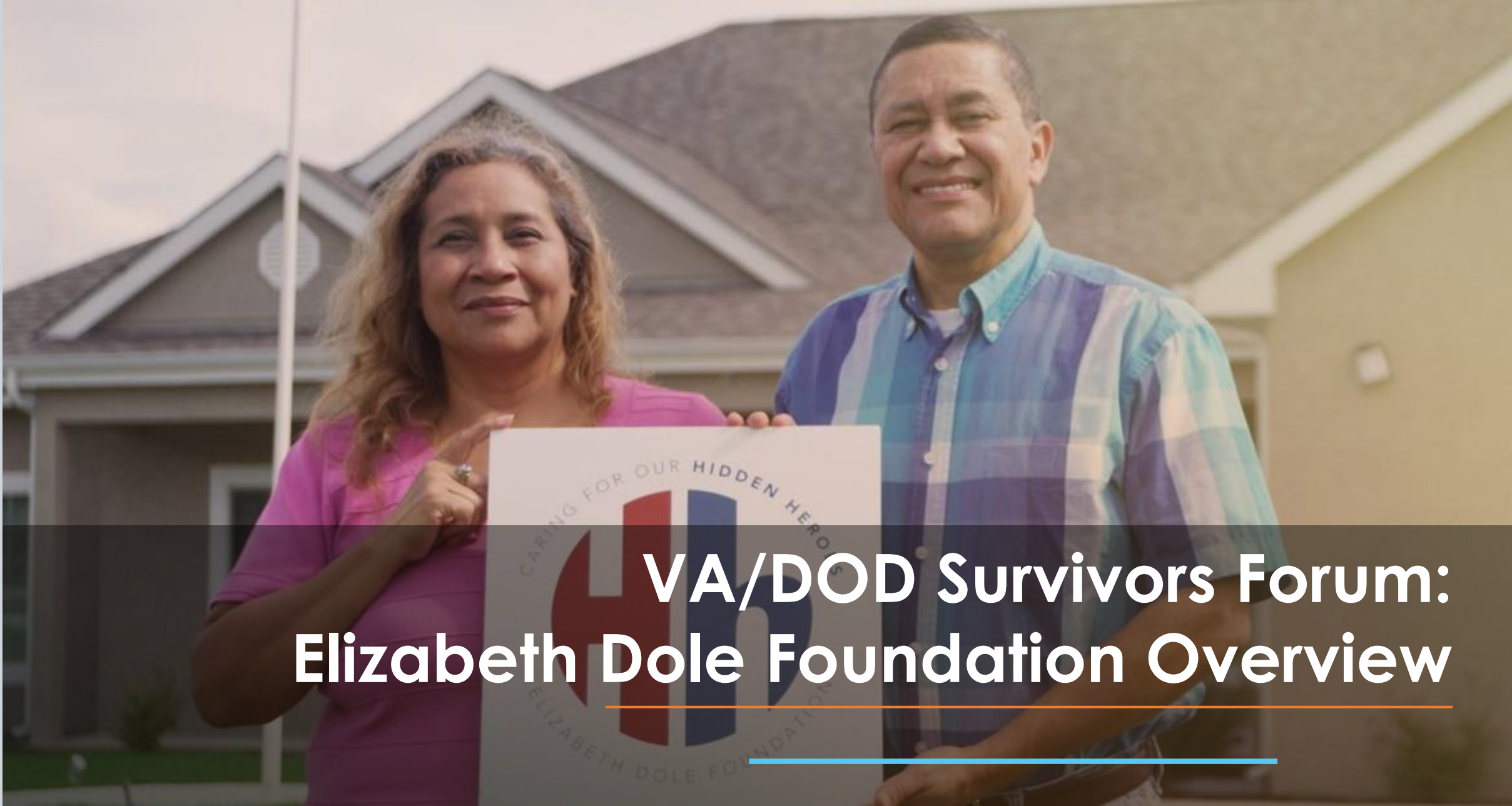
Meredith Beck

JOINT SURVIVORS' FORUM

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



VA/DOD Survivors Forum: Elizabeth Dole Foundation Overview



Overview



Overview:

History, Programs and Impact



RAND Research Detail:

Findings and needs



Elizabeth Dole Foundation:

Direction, Impact and Strategy



A decade in service of military and Veteran caregivers

Senator Elizabeth Dole: A lifetime of service, and a personal and profound experience



Presidential Medal of Freedom Recipient **Senator Elizabeth Dole** has had a **long and distinguished career in public service**, including roles as the Secretary of Transportation, Secretary of Labor, president of the American Red Cross, and a U.S. Senator from North Carolina—these experiences have deeply influenced her commitment and approach to addressing the needs of military caregivers.

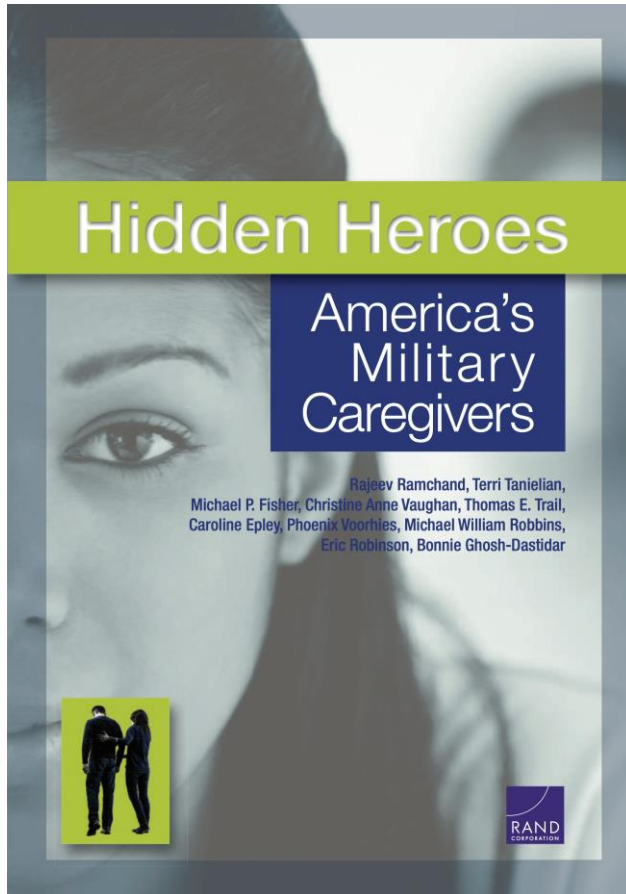


The Elizabeth Dole Foundation was established in 2012 by Elizabeth Dole herself, **inspired by her personal experiences and observations during her husband, Senator Bob Dole's, hospitalization at Walter Reed Army Medical Center**. During her visits, she interacted with numerous military caregivers and was moved by the challenges they faced.





Research leading the way: A necessary and groundbreaking look at military caregiving



RAND 2014 report, commissioned by Senator Elizabeth Dole



First report to examine the needs of the military and veteran caregiver population



Identified more than **5.5 million** Americans caring for a wounded, ill, or injured service member or veteran



Revealed that military caregivers consistently experienced **worse health outcomes, greater strains in family relationships, and more workplace problems** than non-caregivers, and that **post-9/11 military caregivers fared worst** in these areas

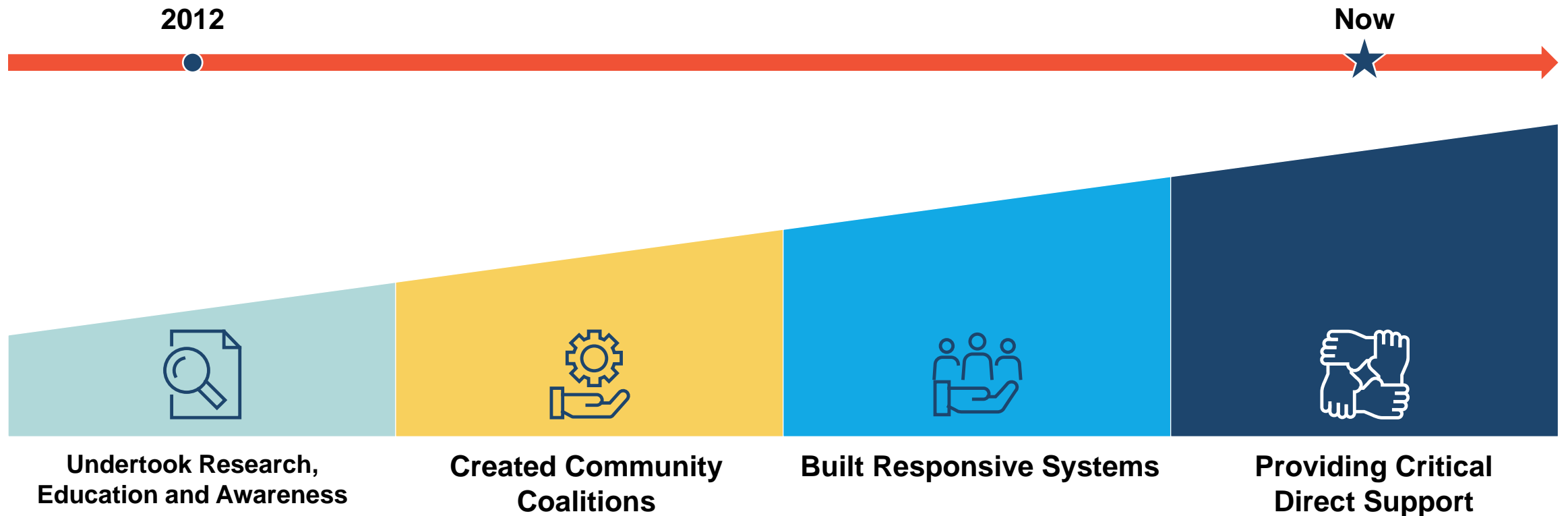


Determined that caregivers provided **\$14 billion** in unpaid service annually to support the nation's wounded and ill service members and veterans



Organizational evolution: Milestones for the Elizabeth Dole Foundation

The Elizabeth Dole Foundation has **transformed the landscape of caregiving for military and veteran families** through a holistic approach encompassing **groundbreaking research, extensive education and awareness efforts**, the formation of robust **community coalitions**, the development of **responsive systems**, and the provision of **vital direct support**





Flagship campaigns and programs



Campaign for Inclusive Care

- Joint initiative between EDF and the US Department of Veteran Affairs **to transform the culture of care at VA to be fully inclusive of caregivers**
- Through partnerships with healthcare providers, policymakers, and community organizations, the campaign works to **raise awareness, drive policy change**, and ensure that caregivers **receive the support and resources** they need



Hidden Heroes

- Access to **comprehensive support and resources** for military caregivers who selflessly care for wounded, ill, or injured service members and veterans
- Fosters a **nationwide network, through the Cities and Counties program**, of cities, counties, and states dedicated to supporting military and veteran caregivers
- Provides a **safe virtual space**, like the **Hidden Heroes Caregiver Community**, where caregivers can connect, share experiences, and seek support



Hidden Helpers

- Supports **children, youth young adults** up to age 18 who are involved in **caring for wounded, ill, or aging service members or veterans**
- Through collaboration with nonprofit, corporate, and government partners, the program aims to **create a positive collective impact for military-connected youth caregivers** and their families



Face the Fight

- Coalition effort led by USAA and organized by EDF to **raise awareness and support for veteran suicide prevention**, aiming to halve the veteran suicide rate by 2030 through strategies such as safe firearm storage, equitable care access, and support for at-risk veterans



Flagship campaigns and programs (continued)



Dole Caregiver Fellows

- Offers **training for caregivers to become advocates and leaders both locally and nationally.**
- **Connects caregivers in a supportive network** that facilitates sharing of best practices and mutual support.



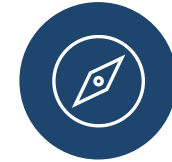
Financial Wellness

- Equips **military caregivers with resources and education** to achieve economic stability.
- Helps caregivers **manage finances effectively**, reduce stress, and build a secure future for themselves and their families
- Launched a **financial wellness platform** with the USAA Educational Foundation in 2024
- Supported **280 families** with more than **\$420k in funding** in 2023
- More than 1,400 people participated in our financial education programs last year.



Mental Wellness

- Provides military caregivers with **essential mental health resources**, support and coping strategies
- Aims to enhance caregivers' emotional well-being and resilience, addressing the unique mental health challenges they face.
- 6-week intensive small group workshops.



Resource Navigation

- **Connects military caregivers to quality programs**, benefits information, and local supports through personalized 1:1 resource navigation
- **Thousands of caregivers assisted to-date**
- Partners with organizations to **ensure effective referrals**, enhance response times, expand nonprofit partnerships, and address key community topics through webinars



Looking to the Future of the Foundation



Who are military and veteran caregivers?



1

How many military and veteran caregivers are there in the U.S.?

2

What % of military and veteran caregivers **lack health insurance**?

3

What % of military and veteran caregivers **live below 130% of the federal poverty line**, making them eligible for SNAP and WIC benefits?

Answers: 14.3 M

20.5%

35%



RAND's findings highlight four primary gaps where caregivers need intervention



Mental Wellness

Mental health is a growing issue for military/veteran caregivers (e.g., high rates of depression, stress, and suicidal thoughts, and barriers to accessing mental health care)



Economic Mobility

Caregiving has negative impacts on caregivers' economic mobility and financial position, underscoring the need for support and recognition of their financial challenges, **including access to assets, employment, legal/financial support and equitable economic security**



Youth Support

Around 40% of caregivers also look after a child, who often take on caregiving tasks themselves, leading to **unmet needs for mental health care, and increased emotional and behavioral problems**



Inclusion in Care

Military/veteran **caregivers do not always feel included in health care decisions**, with some citing a need for help in navigating VA/health systems



These interconnected issues collectively impact the holistic health of caregivers



Adjusting our efforts to meet current caregiver needs

These areas of effort can better match EDF's work with the issues impacting caregivers today



Mental Wellness



**Promoting
emotional
and mental
wellbeing**



Economic Mobility



**Building and
sustaining
economic
stability**



Youth Support



**Strengthening
support and
improving
outcomes for
caregiving
youth**



Inclusion in Care



**Improving
the clinical
and in-home
caregiver
ecosystem**

These interconnected issues collectively impact the holistic health of caregivers

wear blue: run to remember

Sarah Vargo

Gold Star Youth Mentorship Program

Gold Star Youth Mentorship Program



The Gold Star Youth Mentorship Program connects military children who have lost a parent or sibling with dedicated mentors from the military community. Through this one-on-one relationship, Gold Star youth gain essential life skills, build confidence, and develop lasting connections. Our program empowers these young people to overcome the challenges of grief and thrive in their personal and academic lives.

YOUTH REQUIREMENTS:

- K-12th grade, who lost a parent or sibling due to their military service.
- Participate in program activities.
- All abilities are welcome.

MENTOR REQUIREMENTS:

- Still actively serving in the military or recently transitioned out
- Complete and pass a federal background check
- Physically capable of running a sustained pace of at least 12 minutes per mile for 3.1 miles
- Complete a virtual interview
- Attend mandatory mentor training



LOCATIONS:

- Joint Base Lewis McChord ([DuPont, Washington Region](#))
- Fort Carson ([Colorado Springs, Colorado Region](#))
- Joint Base San Antonio ([San Antonio, Texas Region](#))
- Fort Campbell ([Fort Campbell, Kentucky Region](#))
- Fort Liberty ([Fayetteville, North Carolina Region](#))

PROGRAM DATES:

- Saturdays from March 29th - May 31st
- Memorial Day, Monday May 26th

Register by visiting bit.ly/gsymp

HOUSEKEEPING & CLOSING

Ann Duff, Director

Office of Survivors Assistance

Subscribe to Survivors' Forum Updates

Visit va.gov/SURVIVORS/Survivors_Forum.asp
to sign up for Survivors' Forum updates,
including email invitations and access to slides.

THANK YOU

Final reminder to complete our survey. We are so glad you joined us today!



[CLICK HERE FOR LINK TO SURVEY](#)