



2020

Annual Report

Young Marines
NATIONAL FOUNDATION

We Are

A national youth program for boys and girls, ages eight through completion of high school, focused on leadership / citizenship through community service, self-discipline, and living a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

1959



The Young Marines began in 1959 as a dream of several people who had proudly worn the uniform of America's Corps of Marines. These Marines saw the need to pass their values on to young boys of their community of Waterbury, Connecticut.



235

NUMBER OF UNITS

40

NUMBER OF STATES

7,500

NUMBER OF YOUNG MARINES

2,500

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

Veteran Support

The members of the Young Marines commit to honoring America's veterans through education and patriotic volunteerism whenever and wherever opportunity knocks. Of particular note are three activities that have become annual events: Navajo Code Talkers Day, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, and the "Reunion of Honor" on Guam and Iwo Jima. At all three, the Young Marines honor the contributions and sacrifices of the men and women who served in the Armed Forces who have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by the people of the United States.

HEALTHY DRUG-FREE LIFESTYLE

One of the pillars of the Young Marines program is to lead a positive, drug-free lifestyle and to educate and encourage others to do the same. The Young Marines Drug Demand Reduction program is titled, "Closing the Gate on Drugs." The curriculum used is Project ALERT, a school-based, substance abuse prevention program.



WE SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITIES

1.8 MILLION

Service hours volunteered in the past 3 years

A volunteer hour is equal to \$24.69

That equates to over \$44,000,000.00



**BUILDING
TOMORROW'S
LEADERS
TODAY**

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IN THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION

Our children are the future—future world leaders, captains of industry, teachers, scientists, change makers. The Young Marines mission is to empower them, helping them maximize their potential to become the citizen-leaders that our nation needs. Here, they hone and uphold values such as discipline, self-confidence, the desire to live a healthy life, and the motivation to excel academically. Values that stand as the cornerstone of our success as one of the leading nations in the world.

MESSAGE FROM OUR **Chairman of the Board**

I have had the pleasure of being associated with the Young Marines for well over twenty years, having served as the National Director for sixteen and on the Foundation since its inception in 2015. I have met thousands of Young Marines and parents from across the country and all walks of life. Certain things stand out in my mind as being consistent regardless of the geographical location or quality of the unit leadership, and that is that they all join the program to be challenged. And those challenges are not the same for all of them. Some are challenged by the physical fitness, others by having an authority figure tell them what to do (especially if that authority is a senior Young Marine). Whatever the issue might be, those who stay with the program not only overcome those challenges but actively seek others that will test them. This is no more evident than when the Young Marines have an opportunity to attend one of the many leadership schools.

“Leadership” may well be the long pole in the tent for the organization. Consequently, the program has gone to great lengths to provide a series of courses to help prepare our future leaders to tackle increased responsibilities. The National Leadership Academy was established to provide a Junior, Senior and Advanced Leadership curriculum for those who qualify. The qualifications are strict, and our young members work hard to meet those requirements. Once the attendees are identified, up to 250 Young Marines assemble from across the country to participate in a one-to-two-week training program that challenges them in all aspects of leadership.

We have always known that our program worked we could see it; But we did not have sufficient data points to show how and why it worked as well as it did. Unit commanders and parents would marvel at the changes they saw in their Young Marines on return from the Academy. Why? One reason is that they learn to function outside of their comfort zone. This is evident on the first day when the Young Marines find themselves attending leadership classes with Young Marines from all over the country, and they realize just how capable the kids are from other units. They know immediately that they have to step up their game. While the Academy is competitive, they realize that they also have to rely on teamwork to succeed.

But as the Young Marine assumes greater roles of responsibility, their focus on what is important changes. They realize that what they learned as a Junior Young Marine serves as a building block for what they will learn as a Senior or Advanced Young Marine. A more detailed article on our survey of Young Marines will appear in this Annual Report and I think you will find it very interesting.

Unfortunately, not all Young Marines are able to attend the National Leadership Academy, so local leadership training programs have been implemented. The course of instruction for the Junior and Senior Leadership Schools mirrors that taught at the national level. Once completed, the Young Marines may apply for the advanced course which is only offered at the National Leadership Academy.

The Young Marines program works, and watching these young leaders practice the art of leadership is truly an amazing thing to behold.

Michael Kessler



OUR MISSION

The Young Marines National Foundation provides financial support to the mission, values, and programs of the Young Marines through the solicitation, preservation, and distribution of gifts, grants, and matching funds from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

MESSAGE FROM OUR **National Executive Director**

The year 2020 was tough on everyone. The pandemic, social and political change has affected us all. But, fortunately, some activities and communities continue to ground us and give us hope.

All around the country, Young Marines continued to honor veterans by cleaning up veterans' cemeteries, scrubbing headstones, and educating themselves and others on the value of service and sacrifice.

Young Marines are serving their communities by volunteering their time cleaning parks and rivers.

Young Marines are fighting the war on drugs, committing to a healthy, drug-free lifestyle, teaching drug demand reduction classes, and acting as role models in their communities.

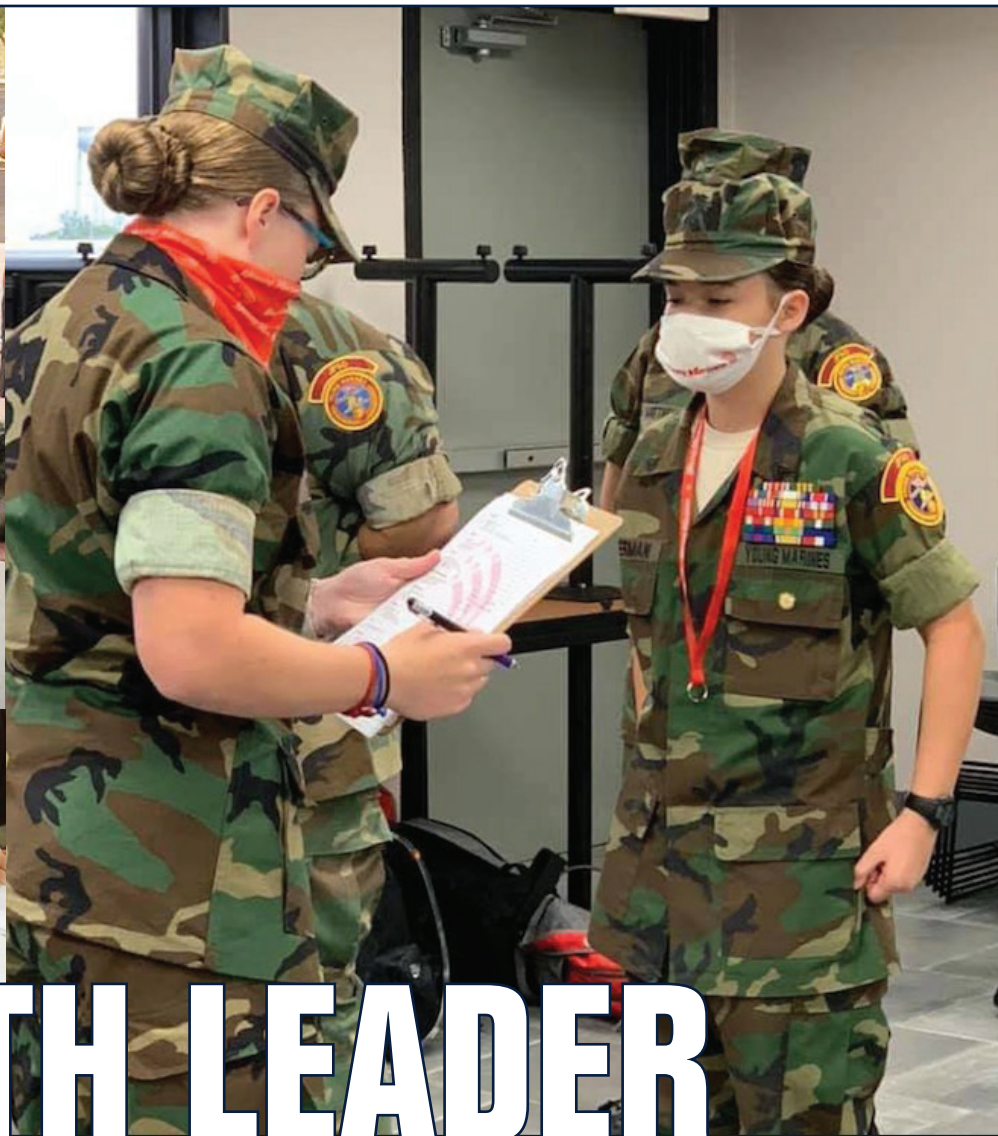
When I watch these Young Marines in action, I can only smile, be proud of all they do, and share in their optimism.

Fortunately, we continue to find supporters and build resources to maintain the Young Marines' efforts. Every month, additional Marine Corps League units signal their support with contributions and letters of encouragement. In addition, Brown Advisory continues to steward our savings and advise our investments, and our board of trustees continues to lead us with a steady hand and eye to the future.

After a year of challenge, we only need to look to our Young Marines for inspiration, so full of hope and enthusiasm. Now we have to continue harnessing that energy, telling their story, and building goodwill for our program.

Thanks for all you do as a member of our community, and on to 2021.

Mike Zeliff



YOUTH LEADER

"We Rise By Lifting Others"
-Robert Ingersoll

The Young Marines National Foundation is proud to support the Young Marines youth leadership in their mission to lead by example.

OUR NATIONAL YOUNG MARINE OF THE YEAR

Hello Young Marines! To say this summer in the Young Marines has been unique would be an understatement.

One thing the National Young Marine of the Year can count on is travel, and as the reality of COVID and cancellations began to sink in, I decided to not focus on the disappointment of what events were not happening, but to be mindful of being even more thankful for each event that was happening.

After earning the title of National Young Marine of the Year, many units reached out to me to invite me to their virtual drills. It was so much fun to see the way different units had embraced meeting virtually with creative games, classes, and time for questions that I could tell each Young Marine had thoughtfully come up with a question for me. I was welcomed into these virtual meetings with so much joy and sense of camaraderie. It was a great way to connect with units across the county.

Toward the end of June, I was able to get out to both a Junior and Senior Leadership School in New Orleans with the JPSO Young Marines. I was reminded that, no matter where we come from as Young Marines, we are a family, and it was amazing to be part of not only the motivated Young Marines becoming leaders but to be immersed in the culture of New Orleans.

After Senior Leadership School (SLS), I headed up to Headquarters Young Marines for Advanced Leadership School (ALS). The experience of true teamwork from all involved was outstanding.

While it was an ALS like never before, with everyone working to keep each other safe; the same hard work, dedication, and motivation was seen in all the advanced leaders. These leaders left ready to head back to their units with new knowledge, confidence, and great memories.

By the end of the summer, I was able to be with Division 2's Junior Leadership School (JLS) in Maryland. I was humbled by a Young Marine with dyslexia, who I saw as a younger version of me, pushing himself to graduate entrusting me to help him through classes. It never gets old to me to be with Young Marines as they advance their leadership

styles. I enjoyed meeting and really getting to know so many Young Marines at these schools.

I was also able to attend the Glock shooting event in Colorado and visit some local units again giving me an opportunity to meet more of you. Our program is amazing because of each of you Young Marines! Embrace and appreciate each event and activity that is happening, brush off the ones that are canceled and know they will one day return!

Overall, this summer was very different for us all, but the support and camaraderie that I felt at each event cemented my belief that we will get through this together. That together we will weather this storm and come out stronger than before! We are approaching my favorite season of the Young Marines, Prevention Month!

I look forward to seeing all your efforts during Red Ribbon Week, the DDR Dash, and the Young Marine Birthday! Please reach out if there is anything I can do for you! I am here for each of you! Thanks, Young Marines, and Semper Fi!



YM/SgtMaj Abbigail Waters
2020-2021 National Young Marine of the Year

THE NEED FOR PRESERVING OUR SHARED

AMERICAN VALUES

American values are the guiding principles of modern democracy and set the basis for how many other governments around the world are formed today. From various freedoms, such as free speech, freedom of religion, equality, and a government-run by the people, America often sets the precedent that much of the world follows.

Although we do hold these values close now, it wasn't so long ago that these rights were nonexistent and had to be fought for. From the beginning roots of the United States our founding fathers knew personal freedom and rights were important and took them into consideration when they wrote the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

Our American values played a large part in the Civil War where we fought for freedom of all races, and more recently, the fight for racial and gender equality. Without the idea of the government being run by the people and for the people, we would have never been able to fight for what we believe in and most importantly fight for and keep our "American values".

In the 1700s, when George Washington became the first president of the United States, he established the overall idea of how America was going to operate, thus he established the first principles of our American values. President Washington believed that the American people should run the government and the government should be in place to assist the American people. This was in stark contrast to many countries at the time, where a king or dictator ran a country as he saw fit, mostly for the

good of himself, his family, or noblemen. President Washington knew those governmental systems were unfair and wanted America to be different, free, and independent. Elected as the first president, Washington knew he had to set an example for other presidents to follow. He thought having integrity and showing fairness was extremely important.

Having elections for public officials, like the presidency, Americans could vote for who they chose to support and who they thought would look after their interests. This was the first real sign of a democracy as the people had an actual say in the government. A government for the people and by the people is our most treasured American value, it is what makes a democracy great and ensures our personal freedoms. Many countries, on the other hand, do not have this same value, as their government is run by one sole person or the government is passed down from generation to generation, thus never allowing the peoples' voice to be heard. A government for the people and by the people is our most important value, as it allows for change and advancement allowing Americans to correct wrongs and constantly advance towards equality for all.

In the early 1950s and 60s Americans realized there were practices in our country that did not support equality for all. People like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks, were but a few that worked to change this value for the better. People fought for freedom of religion, gender equality, and equality for all races, and because we live in a democracy, the people could change laws and past practices and improve the country for all.

When people think of the United States, they think of the land of equal opportunities, and a place where freedoms and values are protected. This is the reason why so many people immigrate to America. No-where else in the world do you see as many people moving to a single country, looking for a better life, wanting to find jobs, attend school, and build a family in a land where they can live with true freedoms.

Our uniquely American values are rooted in the past struggles of our ancestors fighting for their freedoms, many fleeing persecution in other countries. While our core values, guaranteed by the Constitution hold firm, as time progresses, we are able to add to and improve our freedoms because of

**Our challenge
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subsequent generation
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our great democracy, set in motion by people like George Washington.

Our challenge is to hold dear and fight for our American values, so that we improve our Nation for each subsequent generation of Americans. We must always look to the future while remembering our past, and why it was so important to have a governmental system that allows for change. Our next generations may need to establish values and rights that our great-great-grandparents could never even imagine such as personal privacy rights with electronic devices or a person's right to access the internet, a global form of free speech. Our "American

values" hold all Americans accountable to one another and define who we are as a nation! We must never take our freedoms for granted and always work to preserve them.

Programs like the Young Marines are building tomorrow's leaders, and following in the footsteps of many great Americans, and we must uphold our American values for the generations of Americans to come. A free world may very well depend on it!



**By YM/MGySgt Sophia Righthouse
Miramar (CA)**

Article reprinted from Young Marines Esprit Magazine



Being in the Young Marines program, I've spent the past 6 years learning about the dangers and consequences of drug misuse.

In fact, as a Young Marine we pledge to live a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

Abbigail Waters

Young Marines Sgt Maj Abbigail Waters

Those are not just words to me. It has always held a more personal spot in my heart. I've had several members of my family who have struggled with drug misuse, including an uncle who died of a drug overdose. Seeing the ripples that drug misuse has on the entire family really made me want to make a difference and help my peers stay away from drugs.

Being a Young Marine has always been such a big part of my life, and with our focal point being Drug Demand Reduction, I've had so many opportunities to learn about the dangers of drug misuse and also ways to say no to peer pressure. Being able to talk to kids about what I've learned and help educate my community has become a passion of mine.

It is important for me and my peers to be drug free because I think we are the future leaders of this country. We all have such big and amazing dreams for what we want our lives to look like in 5, 10, 20 years... and drug misuse will derail all those dreams

we have. Through education, we can help keep our peers from even starting on the path of drug addiction.

HOW DO I RESPOND TO PEER PRESSURE?

In high school, there are many times my friends and I have been pressured to use drugs. I have found that even having one friend stand up and say no, makes it easier for everyone else to follow the positive influences.

However, I have had friends who have fallen into the pressure to try drugs and what I tell them is that it is just not worth it. The best strategy is to think about the goals you want to achieve in your life. The path of drug misuse will not allow you to reach those goals and can cost you your life.

Telling my friends what happens to your brain and body when you put drugs into it is also a very useful tool. It is not enough to say, "just say no." Most kids need to know the why. For me, my motivation has always been joining the Marine Corps after I graduate. When I hold that in my head, it becomes much easier to say no to pressures.

Your goals and dreams, that is your "why." Everyone needs a "why" that is bigger than peer pressure. Encouraging kids to find their "why" is something I always try and do because I think that is key to keeping kids away from drugs.

DEALING WITH STRESS

Sometimes people turn to drugs to escape life and the stresses they are under. Having healthy ways to deal with stress is so important so you do not fall into that trap of trying to numb your feelings.

Some of the things that work for me when I am stressed is being involved with hobbies. I am a huge dog person, and spending time with my dogs helps me relax. During the pandemic, I have also really gotten into baking! So when I am stressed, I will try a new recipe for my family to eat. By the time I'm done baking my stress has been forgotten.

And then of course, staying physically active is so helpful! After I work out my mind and body feel better and it definitely keeps stress away.

WORKING WITH RED RIBBON WEEK

One of my favorite drug prevention projects that I get to be a part of in the Young Marines is Red Ribbon Week. It is the last week of October each year and is in honor of Special Agent "Kiki" Camarena. He believed that one person could make a difference in the war on drugs, and I have that same philosophy.

Each year for Red Ribbon Week, I visit middle schools to give presentations. I talk to the students about who Kiki was, why we remember him, and talk to them about gateway drugs and strategies to say no to peer pressure. I end the presentation by having them take the pledge to live a healthy, drug free lifestyle and giving them red ribbons.

I encourage them to go home and talk to their parents and siblings about what they learned, hoping that many of them will take the information and BE the positive role model in their schools and homes.

One question that always comes up in these presentations is vaping, and how do they say no when their friends are vaping. So many of the kids I talk to do not understand the health consequences of vaping, and so sometimes get easily swayed into trying with their friends. That is why talking to kids and teaching them the dangers is so important to me. Education really is the key to preventing drug misuse, underage drinking, and vaping.

OUR GENERATION CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The message I would like to give to young people

who want to make a difference in their communities is that you can be the change! One person is enough to start a ripple of good. Kids listen to other kids, and your voice can be a positive influence.

I have given presentations for the past 5 years and I can tell you I've had my share of rolling eyes and smart comments. But I've also had so many kids come talk to me after my presentation and want to know more. They want a pamphlet to bring home to help a sibling, they tell me their parent is smoking pot and want to know how they can help, they ask questions about drug addiction, and sometimes it is even the kid who was rolling their eyes around their friends.

Kids will listen, you just have to be brave enough to be a voice. Our generation is the one that can make a dent in drug misuse, through education and making good choices ourselves.



YM SGT/Maj Abbigail Waters
NATIONAL YOUNG MARINE OF THE YEAR 2020/2021



Manassas, VA Unit Awarded DEA's Fulcrum Shield Award

The Department of Defense (DoD) selected the Manassas Young Marines from Manassas, VA, as this year's winner of the 2020 Fulcrum Shield Award. The award is given annually by the DoD and recognizes military-affiliated youth organizations around the world that have made intensive efforts at spreading anti-drug messages in local communities.

"We are extremely honored and proud of this recognition," said Nick Pecci, Unit Commander of the Manassas Young Marines. "I would like to thank our youth members and Adult Volunteers, particularly Helia Maritato who is the Manassas XO/DDR Officer and Adjutant Lisa Pecci, for their hard work and dedication to the program.

The unit has 19 youth members and seven registered Adult Volunteers. The unit amassed 450 hours of drug demand reduction (DDR) training and ser-

vice in the local community. In addition, community service hours totaled 720 last year. "Our Young Marines are positive role models in the schools, religious congregations, and the community", Pecci said.

Manassas Young Marines were the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Kiki Camarena Award winners for its division in 2017, 2018, and 2020. The DEA award honors Young Marines units for drug demand reduction efforts through community education and peer-to-peer role modeling.

"We are extremely proud of Manassas Young Marines for their remarkable efforts in educating the local community on the dangers of drugs," said Col. William P. Davis USMC (Ret), National Executive Director and CEO of the Young Marines. 🌀

FITNESS

is More Than Just PT, It Is a Journey

I have been an active person all my life. Growing up in Colorado and central California, I spent much of my childhood outside. I played sports, rode bikes and skateboards, surfed and snowboarded. Upon graduating high school, I went into construction working for a general contractor and performing parts of every occupation in that industry. Eventually, I made the decision to enlist in the United States Marine Corps.

I spent 16 years serving the country I love. As you would expect, Marines PT...all the time! It was while I was serving in the Marine Corps when I discovered and fell in love with CrossFit. I was never one to enjoy "going to the gym" or formation runs. What I found was that I loved the simplicity of the movements and complexity of the workouts in CrossFit. I also loved the supporting and inspiring nature of the members within the CrossFit community, which reminded me of our Young Marines community.

Terms like *WOD* (Workout of the Day), "*Fran*" (Thrusters and Pull-Ups, 21-15-9 repetitions), and *AMRAP* (As Many Rounds As Possible) became part of my vernacular and I started to see dramatic improvements in my fitness, as well as my level of enjoyment when it came to exercising. I decided to bring some of those ideas and concepts with me to Young Marines. At the time, I was volunteering with the Camp Pendleton (CA) Young Marines (*Congratulations on celebrating your 35th anniversary this year!*) and the Young Marines really liked it!

We made the decision to add PT to every meeting. We started every meeting with an hour of PT. It would consist of a warmup, a workout, and a cool down. Over time, we started to see improvement in the Young Marines' PFT scores. Simply put, we (the Young Marines and Adult Volunteers) were having fun working out!

As life has moved on, my family and I have moved on from southern California and now hang our hats in Virginia. I have been blessed to work as your Director of Operations at Headquarters Young Marines and have brought CrossFit with me on that journey.

I have become a CrossFit Level 1 Trainer (CF-L1), a CrossFit Kids Trainer, and started the Chester's Fitness Club. Next, we incorporated WODs into the curriculum at the National Leadership Academy and Adult Volunteer training opportunities like LAVA and the UMCs. These steps were necessary to emphasize the focus of living a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. Through adversity comes growth and strength.

Once the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we as a program needed to adjust everything! Meeting in person has not been an option for some of us for many months now. Because of this, I started an Instagram account @chestersfitnessclub where we post workouts once a week. This provided Young Marines, Adult Volunteers, and parents workout options that they could do at home and stay in shape while not being able to meet with their unit.

Young Marines, Adult Volunteers, and parents, as we move through the remainder of 2020 let us focus on the positive, why we do what we do, and how important each and every day is. My challenge to you is this: Set attainable goals to accomplish and make a plan to accomplish them. Workout once daily, even if that is just a short jog or walk. Follow the Chester's Fitness Club Instagram and try a few workouts.

Lastly, live each day to the fullest, challenging yourself along the way, and always give 100% in all that you do.

Stay Strong Young Marines!

Jeremy Jones

Director of Operations

Headquarters Young Marines



Article reprinted from Young Marines Esprit Magazine 



March, 2020: Young Marines' teamwork amid devastation.

The Young Marines provide support to our community through service. With over 1,800,000 community service hours in the past three years we are proud of the efforts of the Young Marines program.

YOUNG MARINES

Respond in Times of Crisis, Serve Their Communities

On March 3rd, 2020 at approximately 1:30 in the morning, an EF-3 Tornado with winds ranging up to 165 miles per hour hit Nashville, TN and remained on the ground for an unbelievable distance of more than 60 miles. The tornado that hit Middle Tennessee that morning has been declared the second most deadly tornado event in Tennessee history. According to the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency, 24 storm-related deaths were confirmed which included five children under the age of 13. The overnight disaster injured hundreds of people and damaged or destroyed homes, businesses, schools and churches across four counties.

As the Unit Commander of one of the heaviest hit counties, Wilson County, my first responsibility was to ensure the safety of my Young Marines and their families. My staff and I spent the entire day contacting the families of our Young Marines, communicating with local emergency personnel, and driving to the damaged neighborhoods in search of our Young Marines. Thankfully, all our YMs were safe and their families only received minor damage to homes and businesses.

Immediately following my unit roll call, in coordination with our Battalion and Regimental Commanders, I mobilized our Young Marines and we spent the remainder of the week out in the devastated communities. The Young Marines cleaned up debris, delivered water and food to rescue personnel, and delivered hot coffee/blankets to emergency personnel who remained in the neighborhoods overnight.

The tornado relief efforts of the 1st Tennessee Battalion Young Marines (Mid Cumberland, Music City, and Rutherford County) were recognized at the 3rd Division UMC by the Division Commander, SgtMg John Gionet, by Col. Bill Davis (Ret), National Executive Director of the Young Marines, and by Col. William Smith (Ret), Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Young Marines. Col. Smith was immensely proud of the fact that, "the Young Marines were in the disaster zone area days before President Trump arrived."

Although I was immensely honored to be presented with a challenge coin from each of these gentlemen, I must say that it was a greater privilege to represent all the Young Marines of the 1st Tennessee Battalion.

The recognition, by our organization's executive leaders, is a valued tribute of all the Young Marines in our battalion, a reflection of the exemplary leadership of our senior Young Marines, a testament to our Young Marine's commitment to community service, and an unwavering statement to their compassionate desire to serve a community that lost everything that fateful morning.

By Charles Ware, Unit Commander
Mid Cumberland (TN)



Article reprinted from Young Marines Esprit Magazine 



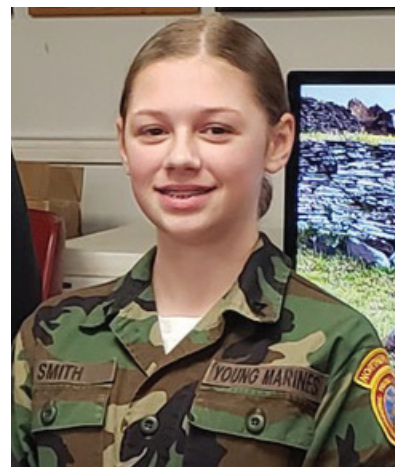
Northern Kentucky YMs Assist with Toys For Tots Efforts

One of my favorite things about being a Young Marine is being able to give back to the community. Toys for Tots is one of the events that my unit and I participate in. For this event we partner with the Campbell County (KY) Fraternal Order of Police to shop for local kids in need.

With COVID-19 affecting many things, we were worried that we wouldn't be able to participate in this event. When our unit commander and our XO reached out to us and said we would still be able to participate, I was very excited. During this event, some of my fellow Young Marines and I went around the store finding different items for females and males that different age groups would enjoy.

Each Young Marine in our unit was able to have almost \$200 to spend on toys, board games, and art supplies for children to play with. In total my unit was able to spend around \$1400 on toys for children. At the shop for kids event we still followed all of the COVID-19 procedures for the store and our state.

With so many things being canceled, I was overjoyed to still be able to participate in this event with the Northern Kentucky Young Marines unit. 🎁



By YM/Cpl Abby Smith
Northern Kentucky Young Marines

MAKAYLA'S MISSION

Dedicated to children in foster care

More than 672,000 children spent time in the U.S foster care in 2019, and on average stay in for more than a year and a half. I wouldn't have learned this if I didn't choose this topic for my English research project. Always helping those who need it has been a passion of mine for years, and when I heard I had the opportunity to act on this project, I couldn't resist.

Oftentimes, when children enter the foster care system, they have nothing to call their own. This

could. I began to receive physical and monetary donations, and I felt so motivated to see the outcome, once the project was completed.

When local news reporters came to interview me, the project really flourished. Watching the interview segment really made me realize what I was doing and how personal this could mean to some people that might have had experience with foster care. After a couple months of raising the funds and receiving donations I had enough to purchase 150



YM/MGySgt MaKayla Barstow • Natchaug River (CT)

is why I started "MaKayla's Mission". This project would consist of making care packages that contain school supplies, blankets, stuffed animals, clothes, and hygiene items, all placed in a duffle style bag, imprinted with the MaKayla's Mission logo. After having many discussions with my family, we all collectively agreed this was the project for me.

Once this project got approved, we were unfortunately struck with a global pandemic that put a halt to proceeding this project since everyone was in a time of need. After a couple months I made the decision to continue with this project and start reaching out for donations. I created a Facebook page and set up a PayPal account. Once I made that first post explaining my project and my goal, the community was so eager and willing to help as much as they

customized "MaKayla's Mission" duffle bags, and 50 school bags filled with school supplies for children. Other items were donated as well such as clothes, more school supplies, masks and hand sanitizer, and even letters that went into each bag for reassurance for the person that reads them. In total, I had approximately 2,500 dollars worth of donations for my project from businesses and the community.

On October 9, 2020, I made my donation of 200 bags to the Department of Children and Families. The feeling that I had knowing that I might have made a child's day just a little better is indescribable. The amount of support that I got from the community and my family was completely overwhelming and positive. I will be forever grateful.

Statement of Financial Position



CURRENT ASSETS

Cash	
Prepaid Expenses	\$55,468
Total Current Assets	\$15,363
Other Assets	\$70,831
Investments	\$3,883,628
Total Assets	\$3,954,459

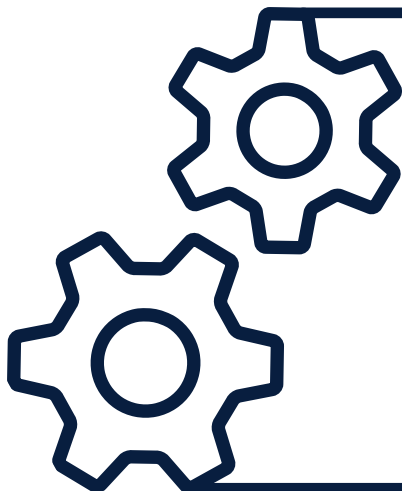
NET ASSETS

Increase in Net Assets	\$184,848
Net Assets, Beginning	\$3,762,438
Net Assets, Ending	\$3,947,286

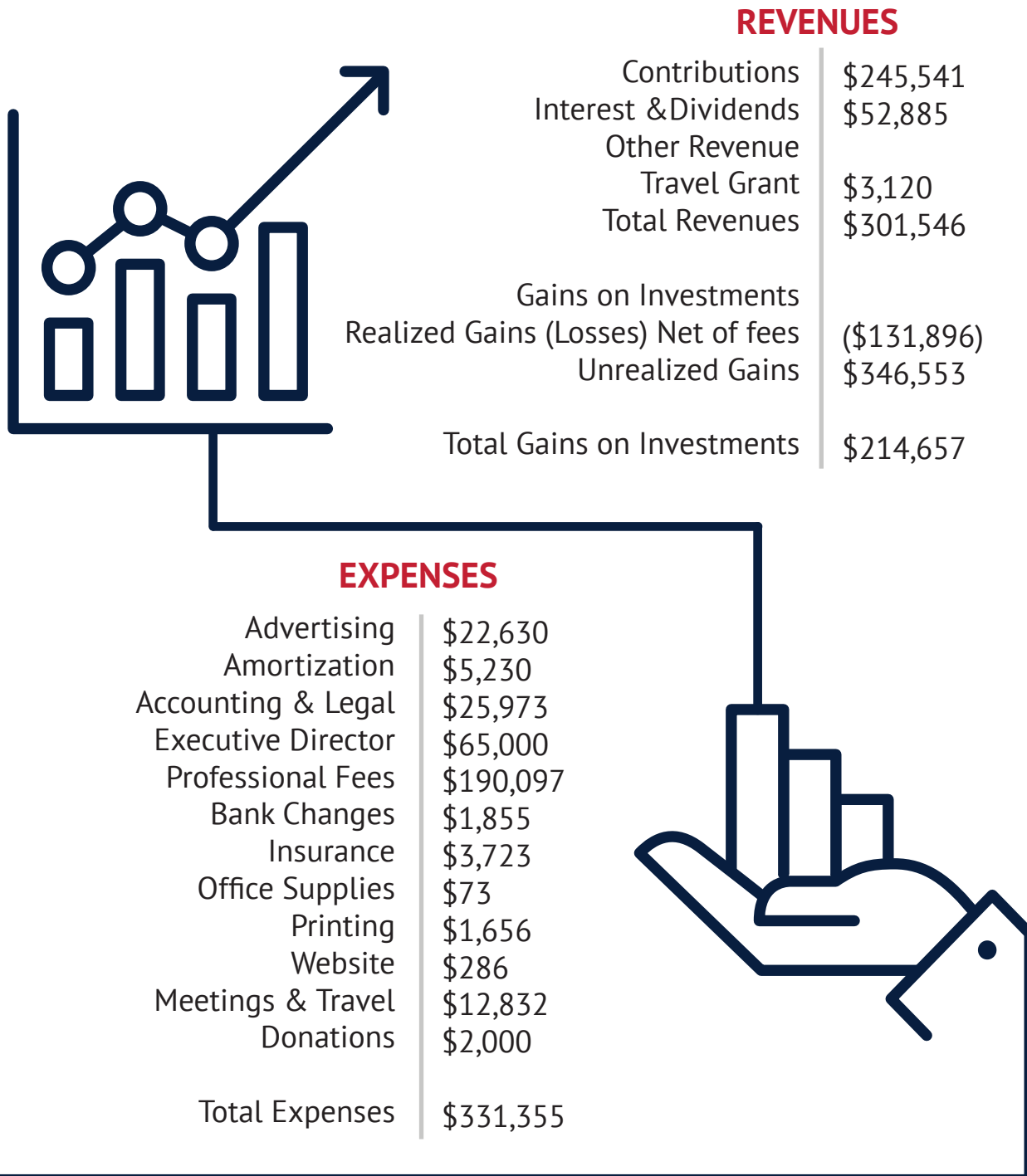


CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$7,173
Net Assets Unrestricted	\$3,947,286
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$3,954,459



Year ending December 31, 2020



The presentation above is consistent with prior year annual reports and may differ from the presentation on the audited financial statements.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Young Marines provide support to our community through service. With over 1,800,000 community service hours in the past three years we are proud of the efforts or the Young Marines program.

Make A Difference and help the Young Marines National Foundation continue to grow their service in communities across the United States.

MY FIRST YEAR AS A YOUNG MARINE

I hope I make a Difference

It was August 13, 2018 when I started my Young Marines adventure. My recruit class had 10 recruits about my age. Every Monday, for 13 weeks, we had recruit training class. During recruit training we had the chance to learn about discipline, leadership and teamwork as well as military drill, PT skills, marching movements and commands.

It was hard for me, because I wasn't used to this type of training, but in time with the help of my drill sergeant and the other recruits, I overcame my fears, became much stronger and more confident. The last week of recruit training was the encampment which was very important for graduation. During the encampment, my very first ever, I learned a lot of things. The best part of the encampment was the food prepared by our AVs. I will always remember October 13, 2018 because of the encampment. On October 20th, 2018 we celebrated at the 59th Young Marine Birthday Ball. Following that special party, on October 22nd, 2018 we had our recruit class graduation ceremony. The graduation was important because we were promoted from Recruit to Young Marine Private. At the end of the ceremony the senior Young Marines helped blouse our boots and unbutton our Cammies. Another thing that I realized was that all of us were wearing the same uniform. We were all the same! We had lots of fun events in November, marching in the Veterans Day Parade in downtown Raleigh, attending the celebration of 369 infantry regiment-the 15th NY National Guard Regiment, and we did many hours of community service, and marched in the Holly Springs Christmas Parade.

In December, we remembered our fallen veterans by laying wreaths at the cemetery. In February, the Capital City Young Marines did color guard at a Firebirds basketball game. In March I was promoted to a PFC. I worked toward the following ribbons: the Achievement Ribbon, Basic Ribbon, Basic First Aid, Drug Demand Reduction, Musician, Community Services, Marksmanship, Physical Fitness, and Veterans Appreciation. In April of this year the Young Marines went to another encampment along with

the new recruit class to help out where necessary.

Being a Young Marine means not just learning discipline, leadership, teamwork but also going on fun trips. In August we went to Roan Mountain, TN which was for me one of the best trips so far.

During my first year I did more than 75 hours of community service. I am enjoying doing community service because I love giving back to the community without expecting anything in return. I want to make a difference in my community I live in and I want people to know more about Young Marines. So far, I had a great year in Young Marine program, and I hope that more youths will join the program. I will do my best to live by the Young Marine Core values, set an example for my fellow Young Marines and the people from my community. I am proud to complete my training to be a part of my unit. My skills and my knowledge will bring improvement to the unit, and the fun continues.

Semper Fi!



By YM/LCpl Dominic Austin • Capital City (NC)

Article reprinted from Young Marines Esprit Magazine 



ALUMNI

Young Marines National Leadership Academy (NLA) is a culminating experience in a youth's advancement in the Young Marines program. Through the three leadership schools (Junior/JLS, Senior/SLS, and Advanced/ALS) Young Marines are not only given the skills and knowledge to succeed in their rank progression (through classroom time

and practical application), but they are also given the opportunity to build life-long relationships and make connections with other Young Marines from all over the country. The schools' classes and events are designed to embody the programs core values of leadership, teamwork, and discipline.

LEADERSHIP

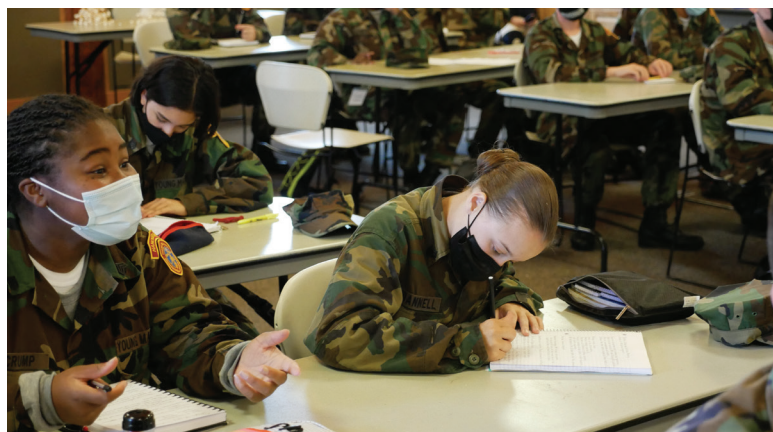
Tomorrow's Leaders Today

These classes and events, such as land navigation, create environments where the foundational traits of being a Young Marine are crucial for a successful training evolution. The youth members are expected to be able to navigate together as a randomly selected team to various points on a map through different terrain. Relying on their teammates and the leadership of their compass holders, youth successfully gain practical application of map and compass skills. They are also learning to work with others that they are not familiar with to accomplish a collective goal. The lessons learned and friendships created at leadership schools surpass the experience a youth receives at a basic unit level, and the foundation for the rest of their Young Marines career is cemented during these experiences.

2021 Division One Young Marine of the Year, YM/SgtMaj MaKayla Barstow from Natchaug River Young Marines is passionate about the program and what she has taken from it. "The National Leadership Academy impacted me in endless ways. I had the opportunity to travel across the country and meet other like-minded people that I can relate to, share my experiences with, and form strong friendships. I have also learned that mistakes are okay. Before NLA, I would get upset with myself if I made a mistake, but one of the first things the Young Marines Cadre tells you when you arrive is that mistakes are bound to happen and that you should take those mistakes as learning experiences. The NLA experience in general has made me the leader that I am today. You learn so many unique things about leadership, down to the leadership style that you prefer, and that has impacted me immensely throughout my Young Marine career. I have learned so many valuable skills that I will use for the rest of my life, including how to set goals for myself and reach them to the best of my ability. I have learned what leadership truly is, what my style of leadership is, and how I want to mentor other Young Marines, so they are prepared to be in leadership positions in the future. These are just a few of the many tools that I have in my toolbox that the Young Marines Program has taught me."

Attending the NLA and Regional Schools allows our youth to gain perspective on just how large the Young Marines program is. Meeting other youth from around the region/country and hearing about their experiences in the program keep Young Marines motivated to continue their journey to be the best Young Marine possible.

"The Young Marines Leadership Schools have impacted my life in many positive ways, including teaching me how to prepare myself for future challenges and how to compete with grace. I also learned the importance of teamwork and how to come together during a difficult challenge. The Young Marines leadership schools have given me the opportunity to engage in new environments, and with other Young Marines from across the country. I feel more prepared for college and beyond because of what I have learned. I will be forever grateful for the people who have guided me, and the lessons



learned as a Young Marine," said YM/MGySgt Ethan Mayer of North San Diego Young Marines.

The Young Marines leadership development process at the National Leadership Academy is designed to enhance leadership skills in a way Young Marines have never experienced before. The Academy prides itself on introducing experiential learning mixed with self-discovery to challenge Young Marines with daily leadership tasks and the battle within themselves to make the right decisions during



tough situations. On a larger scale, NLA is an opportunity for each youth member to rise to their potential and gives them the tools in which they can do exactly that. This is accomplished through character-building and molding Young Marines into engaged citizens who can operate at a higher level than their peers with an understanding of the necessary work ethic required to achieve any goal. This is accomplished with a curriculum designed to challenge Young Marines physically, mentally, and morally. The curriculum and environment at NLA prepares each individual Young Marine with basic life skills that continue to strengthen the lives of America's youth.

"Leadership schools are an amazing opportunity for personal growth and making new friends. As a Young Marine, it helped me to really understand what it means to be a leader. All of the leadership schools are such a valuable experience that I would recommend any Young Marine to go to. JLS began teaching me the basics of leadership and how important teamwork is. SLS taught me how to take charge and be confident in my decision making. ALS taught me how to work effectively with different types of people to accomplish a common goal," said YM/SgtMaj Jason Glaskox, 2021 Division Three Young Marine of the Year.

Even with the pandemic hitting our whole country hard in 2020, the Young Marines persevered and

continued to mentor the youth in the program. While many programs had to go virtual, many of the regional schools were still held in a safe and effective manner.

FY2020 Regional Schools - held in all 6 Divisions

Junior Leadership School (JLS)

9 Schools

214 Graduates

Senior Leadership School (SLS)

7 Schools

129 Graduates

It is important that each Young Marine have the opportunity to attend these leadership schools on their Young Marine journey. The data shows that attending NLA and/or the regional schools have demonstrated a significant impact long after a Young Marine graduates from the program.



ONCE A YOUNG MARINE,

Today a Volunteer Firefighter and EMT

A Former Young Marine Continues to Make a Difference and Help Others in His Community

Giving back to the community is important, and I had the opportunity to speak with Young Marine Alumni Justin Chobirko, who is currently a firefighter and EMT.

Justin was a member of my unit (the Westmoreland County Young Marines) from 2015 through May of 2018, where he achieved the rank of Young Marine Sergeant and was discharged upon his graduation from Hempfield High School.

Justin has been a volunteer firefighter for the past six years. He became interested in firefighting after his family's home suffered fire damage and he and his family had to live in a hotel for a month while their home was being restored. He later applied to become a junior firefighter.

Justin has gone through and continues to complete all the required training to be a volunteer firefighter and spends numerous hours weekly at his assigned fire station when he is not working as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT).

While in high school Justin also took classes to become an EMT and since has completed the coursework required to be an advanced EMT. He has been an EMT for 3 years and an advanced EMT for 3 months.

Being an EMT is another way Justin feels that he is making a difference in the community and at the same time doing what he loves, helping others. Justin reports the best part of being a

firefighter is saving lives, property and just making a difference in people's lives. He feels pride in giving back to the community, something that he also enjoyed while in the Young Marines program.

Being a part of the Young Marines program helped him learn leadership, teamwork, and discipline skills that he also uses as a volunteer firefighter and EMT. Justin believes that the most challenging part of being a firefighter is the physical, emotional, and mental strength required to do the job well.

He always strives to do his best. Justin says firefighting is not for everybody, but people should educate themselves on fire prevention and slowing down further damage if a fire occurs.

No matter what, he strongly recommends that everyone becomes certified in basic first aid and CPR. You never know if or when you may need those skills. But having that training could possibly help you save your life or the life of someone else.

Justin plans to continue to be a volunteer firefighter for as long as possible as well as further his career in the health care industry.

**By YM/MSgt Gabriel Myers
Westmoreland County (PA)**



Article reprinted from Young Marines Esprit Magazine 



The members of the Young Marines commit to honoring America's veterans through education and patriotic volunteerism. The foundation continues the opportunities through our fundraising efforts and association of our members with national veterans organizations.

PEARL HARBOR

Young Marines Honoring the Memory of December 7, 1941

When I told my friends I was going to Hawaii with my North Valley (AZ) Young Marines unit, they all said "You are so lucky." However, when I told them that I was going to Pearl Harbor to learn about the attack on America and to honor those who sacrificed so much, they looked at me with blank stares and some even asked "What's Pearl Harbor?" I was in shock that they didn't know, yet grateful for what I've learned from my unit.

Before going to Hawaii, our Unit Commander, Mrs. Cabell, took us to see the movie *Midway*, which is based on real events from the war in the Pacific. This helped us gain a visual understanding of what happened. She also required us to submit a short research paper of the history of Pearl Harbor. Here's what I learned: Sunday, December 7, 1941, was supposed to be a day of rest for the military soldiers at Hawaii's Pearl Harbor naval base on the island of Oahu. But at 0755, Japanese fighter planes zoomed in without warning and attacked the United States naval ships. Thousands of lives were lost that day.

During the week I was in Hawaii, I had the opportunity to do some pretty amazing things, like visit the *USS Arizona* memorial, meet Pearl Harbor and WWII veterans, and serve the community by cleaning Pyramid Rock Beach, participate in the wreath laying ceremonies and march our National Colors in the Pearl Harbor Remembrance Parade. Before entering the *USS Arizona* memorial, I watched a short film about Pearl harbor with actual footage of the attack.

December 7, 1941 was, as then President Franklin D. Roosevelt would call it, "a date which will live in infamy." In the eyes of the five Veterans I met, you can see appreciation and pride in our amazing Young Marines program. You can see their faces light up with sincere smiles as one of them stood up from his wheelchair to gave me an unexpected sweet hug. I could not be happier or luckier to have attended this Pearl Harbor trip.

By YM/Cpl Yasmeen Cabell
North Valley (AZ)



An Unexpected Hug From A Veteran of Pearl Harbor

Article reprinted from Young Marines Esprit Magazine 

PLACING WREATHS

Foothills Young Marines at Fort Logan Cemetery



Foothills (CO) Young Marines joined with Wreaths Across America at the Fort Logan Cemetery in Denver, Colorado last December to participate with other volunteers, families, and friends to place 22,000 Christmas wreaths on the gravestones of our brave veterans and their spouses.

There were hundreds of volunteers and families of veterans, and only a few Young Marines. Young Marines participated in the ceremony that was held prior to placement of the wreaths. As a representative from each branch of the military walked onto the stage (including our Platoon Commander who is in the Navy), my fellow Young Marines and I followed with a wreath and a flag to pair with each representative. It had been decided at the last minute to include the Young Marines in that part of the ceremony, yet all went smoothly. I was just glad to know we were trusted enough to perform the task on such short notice. It was an honor that we were

asked to do this with so many other groups and people there.

After the ceremony, we all began to place the wreaths. With so many volunteers, the entire cemetery was covered in a matter of minutes and my group was left with a handful of wreaths. We searched to find empty places to put them (we later learned that more than 22,000 wreaths were placed across the cemetery). Even though more than 100,000 people are buried there it was a 20% increase from the previous year.

That's when we passed by a woman who was in tears near her husband's grave. She was upset because she didn't have a wreath to put on his grave and all of them were gone besides the ones we held with us. She saw us and asked us for one for her husband, and after being handed one and setting it down with him, it was heartwarming to see her smiling as she looked down at his decorated grave.

That's the best part about Wreaths Across America, seeing the families who can honor their loved ones during the holidays, how happy such a simple gesture makes them. It's an amazing experience. My unit and I look forward to taking part in this tradition again next year!

YM/PFC James Morago
Foothills (CO)



Article reprinted from Young Marines Esprit Magazine 

YOUNG MARINES

In Texas, Honoring Our Veterans on Memorial Day



On May 27th, Bomb City (TX) Young Marines placed 1,500 roses on the headstones of interred veterans at Llano Cemetery in Amarillo, TX. Families and friends from all across the U.S. gathered with our Young Marines at the Memorial Day Celebration to pay respect to all the military personnel who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces.

Bomb City Young Marines was relatively unknown in the Amarillo community as we'd only been a unit for about three months, but through this service we were able to share the values and beliefs of the Young Marines Foundation with all those who attended. The response from everyone was, and still is, simply amazing.

Many family members expressed their deep appreciation and gratitude toward the Young Marines Foundation and its willingness to serve

those who had served and gone before us. This was a great opportunity for both Young Marines and veteran families to come together and mutually pay their respects.

Bomb City Young Marines would like to thank both the Young Marines Foundation and The Memorial Day Flowers Foundation for their support and generosity. Serving our community in this way was such a great opportunity and we encourage other units to get involved. This is such a fun and easy way for our kids to impact our local community in a positive way and we look forward to doing even more next year!

--Submitted by Jeremy Neusch, Executive Officer,
Bomb City (TX)
Young Marines

Article reprinted from Young Marines Esprit Magazine 



YM/MGySgt Sophia Righthouse and YM/MSgt Kirk Meldrum are the recipients of the Jimmy Trimble Scholarships from the American Veterans Center.

Young Marines MGySgt Sophia Righthouse, 17, of San Diego, California, and Young Marines MSgt Kirk Meldrum, 17, of Lapeer, Michigan, have won Jimmy Trimble Scholarships from the American Veterans Center.

The award is presented annually to two Young Marines who exemplify the fine qualities of James "Jimmy" Trimble III. Trimble was a star athlete who passed up the opportunity to play professional baseball to first serve his country in the Marines. He died at age 19 on March 1, 1945, on Iwo Jima.

YOUNG MARINES FRONT & CENTER

Jimmy Trimble Scholarships Awarded to Two Young Marines

“Jimmy Trimble gave up professional baseball and despite many other offers, he remained focused on serving his country and remaining in combat,” said Col William P. Davis USMC (Ret), National Executive Director and CEO of the Young Marines. “We are grateful to the American Veterans Center for keeping his spirit alive and for allowing the Young Marines to play a key role in that effort.”

The two scholarship winners will escort WWII veterans to Guam and Iwo Jima next spring for the Reunion of Honor. They will join eight other youth members of the Young Marines as they travel to the island of Iwo Jima which is accessible only one day a year.

The honors would have been bestowed during the 23rd Annual Conference of the American Veterans Center in Washington D.C., but because of the pandemic, the conference will be held virtually.

YM/MGySgt Sophia Righthouse is a member of the Miramar Young Marines located in San Diego, California, under the command of Bret Righthouse. She joined the Young Marines when she was eight years old and today, she is 17 years old and a senior at Westview High School in San Diego.

Righthouse was the Honor Graduate from Recruit Training, both Junior and Senior Leadership School, and Advanced Leadership School. She has received the Distinguished Service, Personal Commendation, Meritorious Service, and Life-Saving 2nd degree ribbon. In addition, she has attended FEMA, the National Symposium, and the Public Affairs course.

“The best part about being a Young Marine is the ability to connect with like-minded youth from all across the nation,” she said. “Being able to motivate, inspire, and encourage each other throughout our careers in the Young Marines is amazing. Another great aspect of Young Marines is meeting youth at different events and being able to reconnect at events years later.”

Outside the Young Marines, Righthouse has amassed many prestigious honors. For example, in 2018, San Diego County and City proclaimed “Sophia M Righthouse Day.”

Righthouse plans on making a career in the military as an Operations Officer in Surface Warfare or Intelligence. After retiring from the military, she hopes to continue in a job in government or a position that will benefit the community.

She is the daughter of Susan and Bret Righthouse. Her grandfather, Jerry Righthouse, who served in the Vietnam War, was very inspirational telling Sophia stories of bravery, perseverance, and commitment to country.

A resident of Lapeer, Michigan, Kirk Meldrum is a member of the Lapeer County Young Marines located in Lapeer, Michigan, under the command of Jeff Oke. Meldrum joined the Young Marines when he was nine years old and today, he is 17 and a senior being home schooled.

Meldrum was named Iron Mike at the Advanced Leadership School. He has been the 2019 Young Marine of the Year for his unit, battalion, and regiment. In addition, the Daughters of the American Revolution presented Meldrum an award for being an outstanding individual in the community.

“The best part about being a Young Marine is the opportunity to make a difference in kids’ lives,” he said. “It’s important to set younger Young Marines in the right direction from the beginning and helping them be respectful and drug-free.”

Following high school, Meldrum may join the Navy for diving. He hopes to have a career in diving and live on the coast.

He is the son of Rhonda and Tom Meldrum, and his brother Kyle is a Gunnery Sergeant in the Young Marines. Meldrum’s grandfather served in Korea, and his great uncle served in Vietnam.



The Young Marines National Foundation is supporting the future leaders of our great nation and along with your contributions we can achieve a brighter tomorrow.



**In Memoriam
James R. Laskey**

Our program recently lost one of our biggest supporters when Retired First Sergeant Jim Laskey passed away in March of this year. A Past National Commandant of the Marine Corps League and serving member of the Board of Directors, Jim loved the role he played in helping kids become better citizens. He was an active participant in many of the activities that the kids were involved in and even traveled with them on the Reunion of Honor trip to Guam and Iwo Jima. He believed strongly that this program paved the way for future leaders and that his role was to encourage our young members to reach for the stars. Jim will be deeply missed.

Rest in piece, First Sergeant.

OUR LEADERSHIP

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