



ORION'S ARROW

THE NEWSLETTER OF
ORION MILITARY SCHOLARSHIP FUND, INC.

SPRING 2022 • VOLUME 3

ANNOUNCING: ORION'S 2022 MILITARY SCHOLARS



Henry S.



ARMY

Amelon R.



NAVY

Jael G.



ARMY

Harrison V.



AIR FORCE

Lorelei P.



ARMY

This spring, your donations to Orion Military Scholarship Fund will afford five children of active duty military families the opportunity for stable, uninterrupted high school experiences. The 2022 Orion Scholars hail from duty stations in the U.S. and abroad, and will enroll in Orion member boarding schools in the fall.

Henry S., who has moved eight times, looks forward to forming new friendships at

Fountain Valley School. Amelon R. will be sailing at St. George's School while her dual military parents move to Japan. Jael G. and Harrison V. will join Orion's 2021 Scholars, Rachel D. and Ben M., at the Lawrenceville School. And Madeira School is excited to welcome Lorelei P. as a Snail in September.

To see full Orion Scholar Profiles, go to www.orionmilitary.org/our-scholars.

Housing crisis limits schooling options for military children

Most civilians think that military members are fortunate to receive "free housing" for volunteering to serve. But the reality of this often misunderstood government benefit is complex. Service members are entitled to base housing commensurate with rank and number of dependents, **if available**. However, there is currently a major shortage of military base housing due to the inflated rental and real estate markets. Furthermore, some military houses have been deemed "unlivable", due to mismanagement and abuses by privatized military housing contractors.

If base housing isn't an option, military members rent or buy on the economy by using their "Basic Housing Allowance" intended to cover 95% of housing costs. However, only 17% of military families report that BAH covers housing costs. Of those who move off base to find better school districts, 77% pay \$200 to \$1000 per month out-of-pocket for housing.

According to a 2022 survey report by Blue Star Families in collaboration with Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families, half of military families are financially stressed due to out-of-pocket housing costs and chronic double-digit military spouse unemployment. Survey respondents said the "local housing market is unaffordable" and the "cost of housing rental is too high," especially in areas with good school districts. Many families who want to live on base to avoid these issues can't, because the waitlists are too long. Out of desperation, some military families are living in trailers, recreational vehicles, motels and other temporary lodging facilities.

Private school is not affordable for



the vast majority of military families, so it's no surprise that four times more military parents homeschool their children than civilian parents.

As US property prices continue to rise in the midst of a building materials supply shortage, the problems military families face in finding adequate housing and schooling will not be alleviated anytime soon.

With your help, Orion Military Scholarship Program will continue to offer military children the stable, quality educational opportunities they need and deserve -- One way of saying, "Thank you for your service."



**Give
Today**



Survey shows frequent moves put military teens at risk

In October, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Adolescent and Child Psychiatry, and the Children's Hospital Association declared a National State of Emergency in children's mental health due to dramatic increases in childhood mental health disorders, mental-health-related emergency room visits, and suicide attempts. And in December, the US Surgeon General warned of further "devastating" effects the pandemic has had on adolescent mental health.

If the general population of teens is experiencing dramatic increases in mental health problems, what about military teenagers? Does their unpredictable military lifestyle with frequent moves and disruptions put them at even greater risk?

The answer is a resounding "Yes," according to the 2022 Military Teen Experience Survey (MTES) conducted by the National Military Family Association (NMFA) and Bloom

Military Teen Organization. "Military kids look just like any other kid, so you don't realize what's happening in their homes and the weight of the responsibilities that they're carrying. We learned that weight is heavier than we knew," said Besa Pinchotti, NMFA's CEO.

The 2022 MTES shows 37 percent of military teens reported having thoughts of harming themselves or others, and over 90 percent have "at risk" mental well-being in low to moderate ranges. The report states that the 28 percent of military teens who scored in the lowest mental well-being range reported having trouble thinking clearly and making decisions. "They also rarely felt optimistic, did not often feel relaxed, and felt disconnected from others," common experiences associated with depressive symptoms, according to the survey report.

[Access the full report at www.militaryfamily.org/the-military-teen-experience-2022.]

We Our Donors

(Donations collected so far, during Fiscal Year 2022 which ends June 30th.)

Thank you!



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