



ORION'S ARROW

THE NEWSLETTER OF
ORION MILITARY SCHOLARSHIP FUND, INC.

SPRING 2023 • VOLUME 5

ORION ANNOUNCES THIRD COHORT OF MILITARY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Vivian S.



Army



Andrew C.



Army



Daphne W.



Navy



Gabriel M.



Air Force

For the third consecutive year, military children have been awarded scholarships to boarding schools through Orion Military Scholarship Program. Four rising Freshmen -- Vivian S., Gabriel M., Daphne W., and Andrew C. -- will enroll in their respective schools in Fall 2023 for four-year, uninterrupted high school experiences, no matter where their military parents are located.

Orion began accepting applications for military scholarships during the pandemic, when schools were shutting down and fundraising was limited. Despite the unprecedented challenges it faced, Orion successfully developed its boarding school scholarship program, sending fifteen military children to an impressive consortium of top US

boarding schools over three years.

Orion Cohort 2023 is the non-profit's third group of scholarship awardees, selected from the largest group of program applicants so far.

"This round, we doubled our applications over previous years," reported Lisa Molinari, Orion's VP of Operations, "which confirms that our program fills a unique need in the military community for stable, quality educational opportunities." The 2023 Orion Scholars hail from three service branches: Army, Navy and Air Force. Currently, their families are from duty stations in the northeast, southeast and southwest United States, and Europe.

For full profiles of Cohort 2023, see www.orionmilitary.org/our-scholars.

Orion Scholar Profile



Orion Military Scholar and Army child Lorelei P. just finished her freshman year at the Madeira School in Alexandria, Virginia, where the mascot is the earth-clinging land snail. Despite the terrestrial gastropod adorning her school sportswear, Lorelei longs to be in the sky.

Her freshman year had its normal ups and downs, but Lorelei preferred to be up, up, and away. Namely, dangling above the ground from rocks and ropes, high in the clouds flying airplanes, and leaping over high jump bars on the track field.

In her first year at Madeira, Lorelei was a varsity athlete in Cross Country, Rock Climbing and Track and Field. She studied Latin, Geometry, Public Speaking, STEAM and Global Studies, but she had a special interest in Computer Science and Applied Physics.

"My favorite activities are anything related to aeronautics/aircraft. I have taken 2 flight lessons in the last year and part of Private Pilot's Ground School online. I want to go into the Air Force to be a pilot in the future."

Lorelei is in the Global Youth Leadership Board and Red Cross Club, and is very involved at school. "I have created a lot of strong bonds with classmates and teachers alike during my first year. My Advisor has helped me find direction while encouraging me to follow what I want to do."

Lorelei has taken flying lessons, but still doesn't have her Driver's Permit, which she plans to get this summer. Lorelei lives firmly on solid ground, but she sees her future, and it's high in the sky.



Orion Scholar Profile

Bonding Beyond Borders

New Jersey is halfway around the world from Japan, where Orion Military Scholar Harrison V.'s family is currently stationed. But as a sophomore at The Lawrenceville School, Harrison says he's found friends from all over the globe.

"My best friends are all from completely different places in the world. It's kind of crazy because we all come from different places and backgrounds but are all together and friends here at Lawrenceville."

While living in Japan, Harrison was taking classes online and on COVID lock down most of the time. "Lawrenceville has given me an opportunity in sports as well as in the classroom that I didn't have while living in Japan."



"As a military kid here at Lawrenceville, I'm not treated any differently because my dad is in the military," Harrison says. "If anything, people think it's cool that my dad is in the military and express appreciation for what he does. I have made a lot of friends since I have been at Lawrenceville."

This summer Harrison's family moves across the globe again, this time to Hawaii. Harrison can't wait to surf, hike, skateboard and hit the beach before he flies all the way back to New Jersey next school year, to meet up with his new friends from all over the world.



Interview With A Military Teen: 'I'm Resilient, But I'm Human'

By Lisa Molinari, VP of Operations for Orion

When my husband was active duty and I was home raising three teenagers, all in braces at the same time, I thought I was living on the threshold of Hell. However, I've learned that even though rearing adolescents can be tough, the parents often overlook their teens' experiences.

Military parents like me were repeatedly told, "Military kids are resilient!" So, we soldiered on through multiple deployments and PCS moves, dragging the kids with us, even when they were teens facing moves during high school. As long as we found an orthodontist, a soccer team, a clarinet teacher and a pizza joint at each duty station, we thought our teens would be fine.

Turns out, we were wrong.

Until recently, there's been a dearth of research about the effects military life has on adolescents. In the last few years, surveys and studies have begun to pose the question, "So, how are military teens doing, anyway?" The responses have prompted more questions that have yet to be answered, but at least someone is finally asking.

Three years ago, two military teenagers got tired of waiting and took the matter into their own hands. In April 2020, they launched BloomMilitaryTeens.org, a website run entirely by military teenagers as a forum for military teens to read, write, learn and connect. Bloom's content has been so successful, it even garnered the attention of the [White House](http://WhiteHouse.gov).

I recently picked the brain one of the organization's founding teen writers, Genevieve Oakley, who serves on Bloom's Outreach Team. I thought her military teen story was the perfect anecdote to describe



the problems Orion Military Scholarship Program aims to solve.

Genevieve described her typical "Army brat" upbringing: "[B]orn at Fort Carson, moved nine times by age fourteen." She became accustomed to changing schools every year or two. "[W]hen the house was filled with brown boxes, it meant summer had arrived and new fun was on the way... I am in awe of the annual courage it took to so confidently walk into the unknown and make it my own." She relayed common annoyances like having to repeat academic testing at each school, having to prove herself on every soccer team, and being forced to buy different lesson books from each piano teacher. "There was very little consistency and it resulted in my ten years of piano lessons yielding what can only be described as pathetic results."

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Genevieve's affectionate nostalgia about her unique upbringing came to a full stop when she described one PCS before seventh grade. "If I ever become famous and my autobiography hits the shelves, there will be many chapters dedicated to my move to Sanremo, Italy." Five hours from the closest military base, Genevieve found herself being homeschooled online, deprived of peanut butter, peers, the family's dogs, and practical ways to meet Italian kids. "I was miserable, struggling to find things to do with no friends and no social structures to make me happy."

"This move substantially changed who I am and my outlook on life," Genevieve recalled, confiding that she struggled with anxiety, depression, OCD, misophonia, and an eating disorder. Seeking control, Genevieve found peace through letter writing and working out. However, she fell prey to "diet culture" at times, driven to "alter my body to make me appear more appealing so that I could fit in. This struggle is not unique to me or military teens, but is definitely highly associated with the constant moving and unstable conditions I grew up in."

Despite it all, or perhaps because of it, Genevieve just finished her freshman year at Indiana University where she double-majors in Political Science and International Studies. Someday, she hopes to attend law school and work for the UN, "a career path undoubtedly influenced by my military background."

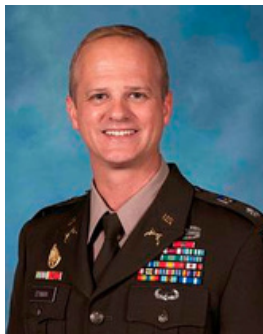
"I am resilient and hardworking and strong," Genevieve said. "But I will also never hide my previous struggles with mental health. No matter who you are, we are all human [R]esiliency is not a smooth road and sometimes we stumble and need assistance."

"I believe Orion addresses an issue so pertinent to military lives. Military kids are an under-represented group. Education is one of the most important aspects of life, and the instability tied to military life threatens that. **Orion has stepped in and provided a solution so that those who need assistance and stability offered by boarding schools can access it.**"

(Photos courtesy of Genevieve Oakley.)



Saluting Orion Parents Who Serve



#MilitaryAppreciationMonth

Thank you for your service to our country

