

Building Capacity in Military-Connected Schools

December

2013



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Limited Time Offer

For a short time, Teachers College Press is offering free copies of Building Capacity's guidebooks for educators and military parents. Click [here](#) to request a copy. These books are essential resources for those who work with military-connected students.

MSW Students' Projects Teach Students the Importance of Honoring Veterans

Because of USC MSW interns, students have gained a new awareness of both the history of Veterans Day as well as ways to recognize current members of the military.

Interns, both in *Building Capacity* Consortium schools as well as in schools in the Los Angeles area, implemented a variety of projects throughout November that are good examples of what schools can do to recognize those who have served and to show appreciation to those currently on active duty--not just in November, but any time during the year.

Krystal Lerner, who is interning at Live Oak



Krystal Lerner

Elementary in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District, created a large American flag and collected photos of "veteran heroes" from students to display on the flag. She also invited parents on active duty to a

school-wide assembly and arranged for 6th graders to read poems at the event.

"The highlight of all the time I spent preparing for the assembly was making 'Welcome Home' posters with the children whose dads are currently deployed," she wrote in the summary of her project. "Overall, the assembly was successful and hopefully shed some light on the importance of Veterans Day for the students."

Here are few additional highlights:

- Anjelica Dome, an intern at Pyles Elementary in Anaheim, worked with the local VFW post to hold a flag-folding

Quick Links...

[Our Website](#)

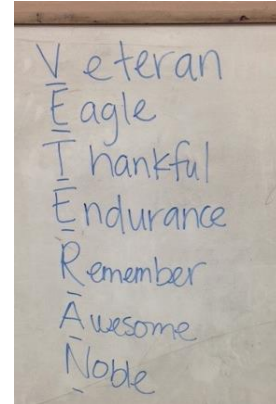


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ceremony, which included explaining to students the symbolism behind each of the 13 folds.

- Intern Brian-Pradeep Patel had students write thank you notes to veterans, which were distributed through both the VFW and [Operation Gratitude](#), an organization that sends care packages to members of the military.
- Interns Melanie Reyes, Merry Simonyan, Lianna Galadjian and Justine Roach worked together to plan a lesson

on Veterans Day at McKinley School in Pasadena. They used acrostic poetry as one activity. "Some of the students had very close family members that were in the military and these students wanted to write a personal letter to their loved one," Lianna said. "I think this helped them express how they were feeling and it was an emotional experience for them. I was really honored that our project allowed these students to have an opportunity to do this."



- Rebecca Soupir worked with students to create a Hall of Heroes at the school where she is completing her internship. She received over 100 pictures from students to display. "All of



the students seemed pretty happy with the final product and

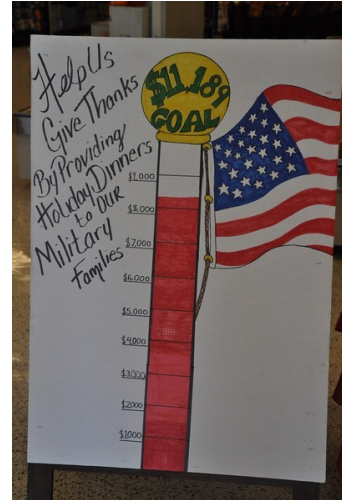
several brought their parents in to look at it after school," she described. "My favorite moment was when this jock-like popular kid brought all of his friends over to check out the picture of his grandpa. He was so proud to show it off and I loved it."

Temecula Navy Jr. ROTC Students Give to Others During the Holidays

For the Navy Junior ROTC students at Chaparral High School in the Temecula Valley Unified School District, Thanksgiving was just as much about giving as it was about being grateful.

The 9th through 12th graders raised over \$11,500 this year to provide Thanksgiving dinners from an Albertson's store in Temecula to 231 Camp Pendleton families--exceeding the amount raised last year by over \$3,200.

"The professionalism shown by the cadets and your eagerness to help and even stay after your scheduled shifts, impressed us all," store director John Hurst wrote in a letter to the cadets. "You have helped us set a new record number of dinners donated!"



Featured Resource: Responding to the Military Child with Special Needs

This new training course from the [Military Child Education Coalition](#) is designed to inform participants about military-connected children who have exceptional needs and the issues they may face as they transition from school to school. Exceptional children are defined as those who need either special education services or gifted education services to

maximize their individual potential.

The course focuses on:

- teaching the amplified transition challenges faced by children with special needs, whether in special education or gifted and talented
- identifying strategies to help meet the challenges
- designing methods to put in place to work with families



Building Capacity Annual Reports Available

Make sure to check out *Building Capacity's* two recently released annual reports focusing on Year 3 of the grant. The [public report](#) provides summaries of the major events of the year, including release of the California Healthy Kids Survey data, being honored at a San Diego Padres game and progress on state and national policies that would benefit military students.

The second report is the [technical evaluation](#), which provides a detailed analysis of the CHKS results and assessments of the many components of the project, including the internships and various programs implemented in the schools to benefit military students.

Headlines and Resources

We regularly feature stories, reports and resources related to military children on our [website](#). Check back often for new additions, such as these:

- The Huffington Post ran an [op-ed](#) by Dr. Ron Astor on military children facing an increased risk of depression and thoughts of suicide.
- Dr. Ron Astor wrote a [commentary](#) in *Education Week* related to the one-year anniversary of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.
- Dr. Jill Biden, co-chair of the Joining Forces campaign with First Lady Michelle Obama, wrote this recent [essay](#) in Politico on supporting military children.

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Building Capacity in Military-Connected Schools, University of Southern California, Hamovitch Center for Science in the Human Services
| 1149 S. Hill St. | Suite 360 | Los Angeles | CA | 90015