

VETERANS DAY

VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT



The Veterans History Project (VHP) at the Library of Congress American Folklife Center was launched in 2000 to collect, preserve and share the first-person recollections of America's Veterans. VHP offers a variety of educational and experiential opportunities for students.

Generations of students in classrooms across this nation learn about America's military history from textbooks and online

media. Oral history programs, like VHP, elaborate on these textbook accounts of history and serve as a rich resource of primary source material for students and teachers alike. Learning comes to life in an authentic way when students are able to hear directly from those who lived during historic wartime moments.

The VHP features the stories of diverse Veterans who served the nation in wartime in an ever growing online series called, "Experiencing War". VHP is diverse and represents more than 75,000 collections includes stories from men and women Veterans of all races and ethnicities, conflicts, and branches of service. More than 10,000 of these collections are digitized and are viewable to anyone with Internet access at www.loc.gov/vets. With advance notice of at least a week, collections can also be viewed in the American Folklife Center reading room at the Library of Congress.

How Can I Record a Story?

VHP relies on volunteers to record the oral histories of Veterans, as well as collect original photographs, diaries, letters, memoirs, maps and other wartime documents. Hundreds of community outreach programs nationwide (e.g., the United States Congress; colleges, universities and schools; the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; civic organizations; faith-based groups; Veterans service organizations; and libraries) contribute stories of Veterans to the VHP collection. Veterans from every Congressional District in all 50 states, the U.S. Territories, and all branches of the U.S. military have shared their stories.

Students (grades 10 and higher) and teachers who are interested in participating may follow VHP's straightforward guidelines to learn the process of recording the story of a Veteran. A revised and updated Veterans History Project Field Kit provides step-by-step instructions to collect and preserve Veterans' stories. Field Kits are available online: www.loc.gov/vets. In addition, a 15-minute Field Kit Companion Video that explains the VHP process is posted on iTunes U at <http://itunes.apple.com/us/itunes-u/veterans-history-project/id438186138>.

Record the story of the Veteran in your life so that his or her story can be a part of the permanent collection of the Library of Congress. Generations to come will benefit from hearing the story.

11.11.11

MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS - WINNING ESSAY

"Should youth in the United States between the ages of 18 and 24 be required to perform either public/community service or military service for a minimum of 2 years? Why? Why not?"

By Ciara N. Ryan-Todd

YLC-TWU (Texas Wesleyan University)

"In the United States of America (USA); a land with so many rights and freedoms; no citizen should be required to take part in any activities outside their civic duty to follow the laws of the land.

The use of a constitutional federal republic style government is part of what makes the USA so strong and unique. This form of government was developed by those who believed that unalienable rights come from God, that everyone is free to pursue their own happiness, and that the citizens control the government; not vice versa. This is something that citizens in many other countries are denied and the reason why people emigrate to the USA every day.

The founding fathers knew too well the ways in which the state could tyrannize its people, and forcing its citizens to serve the government would be infringing on a basic liberty. Americans have the right to pursue happiness and if they do not what to participate in the military or in community service, they should not be required. Making such a commitment is a decision best left to the individual and it should be a decision made from the heart; not from fear of punishment.

Forcing citizens to serve others can cause feelings of resentment in those opposed to serving. If serving others is not a person's own decision, it will show in their work. For example, a recent human resources market research survey it was shown that people who were forced into community service did the absolute minimum required; however, those who had volunteered reported significantly higher levels of effort put in their service (United Way Campaign). I often hear the phrase, 'There is nothing stronger than a volunteer.' To me, this means that volunteers serve because they are passionate and dedicated to helping others. This passion is a large factor in the quality of work being done. Would it be better to have a few soldiers who possess the passion to service versus many soldiers with little or no desire to serve?"



She is on the varsity volleyball team and track team, earned Second-Team All-District Offensive Player of the Year, and was Academic All-District. During her senior year she was the All-Around Outstanding Player at the Lewisville Tournament and won the All-State Academic Achievement Award.

She is active in other school activities: Key Club, Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, National Honor Society, National Society of High School Scholars. She also earned dual college credit at Eastfield College and earned the honor of graduating in the Distinguished Achievement Program. She has a 4.0 GPA.