



2022 Wreaths Across America Veterans' Oral History Project

Project 1 in the Wreaths Across America Youth Series

REMEMBER ★ HONOR ★ TEACH

Visit www.wreathscrossamerica.org to learn about our mission to *Remember, Honor, Teach*, sponsor a wreath for a veteran at any participating cemetery, or sign up to volunteer.

A veteran's wreath is a symbol of
HONOR, RESPECT, and VICTORY.



10 BALSAM BOUQUETS
make up each veteran's wreath, representing the
10 SPECIAL QUALITIES
that our veterans embody.



Evergreens =
**LONGEVITY
& ENDURANCE**



Red Bow =
**GREAT
SACRIFICE**



Forest Scent =
**PURITY &
SIMPLICITY**



Circular Shape =
ETERNITY

1. Their **BELIEF** in a greater good
2. Their **LOVE** for each other
3. Their **STRENGTH**, work ethic, & character
4. Their **HONESTY** & integrity
5. Their **HUMILITY**, selflessness, & modesty
6. Their **AMBITIONS** & aspirations
7. Their **OPTIMISM** for America
8. Their **CONCERN** for the future
9. Their **PRIDE** in their duties
10. Their **HOPES & DREAMS** that didn't always come true, but left them with no regrets

2022 Wreaths Across America Veterans' Oral History Project

Remember the fallen
Honor those that serve and their families
Teach the next generation the value of freedom

Wreaths Across America is excited to launch our new education materials this year, with a focus on character development and service projects for young people of all ages. We believe the 10 Special Qualities our Veterans embody, represented by the 10 Balsam Bouquets that make a Veteran's Wreath are attributes that all young people in America can master.

Veterans of the United States military have made many sacrifices on our behalf, and on behalf of people around the globe, those currently serving in the military make the same sacrifices. Perhaps now more than ever, young people need to understand that those who made and continue to make those sacrifices do so on their behalf-to protect and defend the freedoms granted to them in the United States Constitution. Those who have served and those who continue to serve have a belief in the greater good of our country, and we need to TEACH our youth to REMEMBER and HONOR their service.

With that in mind, we are happy to introduce a special project for our youth that will encompass the Mission of Wreaths Across America to Remember-Honor-Teach. The Veterans' Oral History Project encourages young people to interview a veteran, service member or Gold Star Family member to learn about the sacrifices our military make on behalf of our country.

Young people who complete the Veterans' Oral History Project will receive a replica dog tag with their name and the name of their veteran. A matching dog tag will be created and placed on a balsam fir tree on the tip land in Maine where balsam is harvested to make the veterans' wreaths that are sponsored and placed on the headstones of our nation's heroes each December. This is part of Wreaths Across America's [Veteran Remembrance Tree Program](#). Annually, participants will be put into a random drawing for a chance to come to Maine as part of the Stem to Stone event weekend in the summer to place their veteran's dog tag.

For the purposes of the WAA Veterans' Oral History Project, we will use the following definition of an oral history: *an oral history is an interview that records a person's recollection of experiences, thoughts, and feelings about a specific event or a period of time.* These interviews can be conducted via audio or video recording (with permission) or in written word. We encourage participants to be creative and share any materials they feel are important to best demonstrate their interviewee's service.

WHO can participate?

- Young people of all ages and grades.

WHAT does the student need to do?

- Interview an individual who has served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces or a Gold Star Family member. (A Gold Star Family is a family who has had a loved one die while they were serving in the military or who died as a result of their service in the military. Gold Star Family members love for others to learn about their fallen heroes, so don't be afraid to ask!)

- Record the interview results on paper or using digital technology.
- Submit your interview by email **no later than Nov. 18, 2022**, to teach@wreathsaacrossamerica.org, or regular mail:

Wreaths Across America
Veterans' Oral History Project
PO Box 249
Columbia Falls, ME 04623

Make sure to include the completed copy of the interview release form.

WHEN does the interview need to take place?

- The interview can take place anytime from March 1, 2022, until November 11, 2022, Veterans Day.

WHERE does the interview need to take place?

- Any place that works for the interviewer and interviewee. You can Zoom the meeting and let the interviewee know it will be recorded.

WHY interview a veteran?

- Veterans make many sacrifices for our country, it is important to TEACH our youth the value of freedom.

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Hints for Conducting an Interview:

1. Decide who you would like to interview.
2. Ask the person if they will participate.
3. If they agree to participate, tell them you will need the Wreaths Across America Veterans' Oral History
4. Release form signed by them. You can email the form to them; they can sign it digitally and return it to you.
5. Let them know you will be asking about their military service and that you are conducting this interview as part of the Wreaths Across America Veterans' Oral History Project.
6. Set a date and time for the interview.
7. Be prepared!
8. Write down your questions to help keep the interview moving smoothly.
9. At the beginning of the interview state your name, the name of the interviewee and the date.
10. Be courteous.
11. Listen carefully.
12. Take notes during the interview. If you plan to record the interview, ask permission first.
13. Thank the person for participating.
14. Send a written thank you note for their participation and their service.

Suggested Interview Questions

- ☐ When and where were you born?
- ☐ Where did you live as a child?
- ☐ What are your earliest memories as a child?
- ☐ What values and beliefs did your parents pass on to you?
- ☐ Who were your childhood heroes? Why?
- ☐ What career ambitions did you have as a child?
- ☐ Describe your first job. How old were you?
- ☐ What other jobs have you worked at?
- ☐ In which branch of the military did you serve?
- ☐ When did you serve in the military?
- ☐ Tell me about your military service.
- ☐ Is there anything else you would like to share about your military experience?
- ☐ Is there anything we have not talked about today that you would like to share?
- ☐ *Thank you for your service to our country and for taking the time to talk to me today!!*

Wreaths Across America
Veterans' Oral History Project Release Form

Full Name of Person Interviewed (print) _____

What branch of the military did you serve in? _____

Address _____

Phone () _____ Email Address _____

Name of Interviewer (print) _____

Address _____

Phone () _____ Email Address _____

Date of Interview _____

I understand that this interview, written or recorded, and any photographs are part of a Veterans' Oral History Project created by Wreaths Across America as an educational tool to help educate our youth about veterans and their service to our country. We ask that you be upfront with the interviewer and tell them if there are topics you'd like to not discuss, otherwise, we encourage open dialogue. The goal of this project is for the younger generation to learn from your service and experiences and in sharing our story, help teach others about character, service, and sacrifice.

The interviewee should check all the following that apply, my interview...

_____ May be used for educational purposes

_____ May include my name

_____ May be used but please *Do Not Use My Name*

_____ May be used by Wreaths Across America

_____ I give permission for Wreaths Across America to place a dog tag in my honor as a part of the Veteran Remembrance Tree Program

Signature of Interviewee

Date

Signature of Interviewer or Parent/Guardian if
Interviewer is a Minor

Date

*For more information on the Wreaths Across America Veteran Remembrance Tree Program, visit the webpage at <https://www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/remembrance-tree-program>