

THE

BRIEFING

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Letter from the Executive Director

After seven years as Chairman of the Our Military Kids Board of Directors, Fred Smith retired in October due to his declining health. Unfortunately, he passed away on November 10. As sad as this makes me, I choose to celebrate. I celebrate that Our Military Kids has benefitted from his leadership and vision, and I celebrate that I had Fred as a friend and mentor. As with any new venture, Our Military Kids has had its challenges over the years and it has been blessed to have Fred at the helm of the ship. I celebrate Fred's patriotism, dedication to serving others, and his generosity of time and talent. One of the beautiful gifts of charity is humility. Everyone who knew his good heart and unselfish works will join me in asking for God to bless and reward Fred for his lifetime of good works. At the same time, I am delighted to announce Kim Wincup as the newly elected Chairman of the Board. Kim possesses many of the same honorable traits as Fred, and Our Military Kids is extremely fortunate to have his commitment to the organization. He comes with successful careers in both the public and private sectors, but most importantly, Kim comes with the desire and passion to further the mission of Our Military Kids.

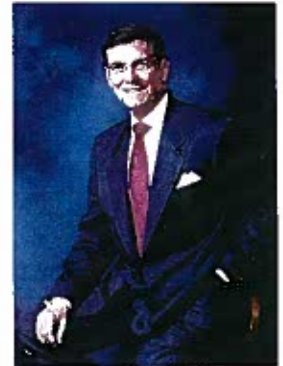
As we enter the holiday season, I continue to be inspired by the hope and spirit of generosity of our donors and supporters. I truly believe in the mission of Our Military Kids and am honored to carry on the work made possible by your donations. More and more military children are facing emotional and psychological challenges due to their parents' service to our country. Up until this year, we have been there to provide grant awards throughout the deployment. Beginning May 1, we eliminated second grant awards due to funding constraints,

resulting in a child's activity being funded for only six months instead of the full length of the deployment. It is vital to keep children engaged and focused in wholesome activities throughout the entire separation from their military parent, and we are eager to raise the funds necessary to reinstate second grants – something we cannot do without your consistent and generous support.

So again I celebrate. I thank our donors for giving our military children the support they urgently need when they need it most. The activities made possible by the grant awards are something seemingly so simple, yet so impactful. Please continue to help us meet the challenges of making a difference in the many lives we touch. And most of all, please know that our military children appreciate your gift.

God bless your good heart and happy holidays to you and your loved ones.

-Linda Davidson



In Loving Memory of Fred Smith

www.OurMilitaryKids.org

Football on the Hill

For many Americans, fall means football. As soon as the leaves start to change, fans across the country gear up to cheer on their favorite college and NFL teams, decking themselves out in the appropriate mascots and color combinations while partaking in majestic tailgate celebrations. All of these things happened in Washington, DC this autumn, but under much different circumstances.

About 30 Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle went head-to-head against the officers of the Capitol Police Force in the biannual Congressional Football Game. The goal, aside from winning bragging rights, was to raise money for Our Military Kids and the Capitol Police Memorial Fund. The event was cosponsored by Boeing and the NFL, and had many other sponsors including Lockheed Martin, Comcast, AT&T, Excel Services, American Trucking Association, and Congressional Federal Credit Union.

This was a far cry from a simple pick-up game. All through September and October, Congressmen and Congresswomen woke up early to practice on the National Mall. They had some assistance, though, from former NFL players including Ken Harvey, John Booty, and Herschel Walker. It also didn't hurt that Rep. Heath Shuler is a former quarterback for the Washington Redskins, and Rep. Jon Runyan is the former offensive lineman for the Philadelphia Eagles. With all their



professional help, the Congressional team went into the game with confidence.

Approaching October 19, all the players were ready, but Mother Nature apparently was not. The game, which was slated to take place that evening at RFK Stadium in the District, was postponed due to torrential rain. The scheduled tailgate party went on as planned, but with a change in venue. Instead of being outdoors, the party was moved to the American Trucking Association's facility on Capitol Hill. Our Military Kids grant

recipient Tori Lake sang the National Anthem before awards were given to the Congressmen and Capitol Police officers who helped organize this year's event.

The game itself took place two weeks later on November 2 at Watkins Recreation Center in Washington, DC. The weather was dry and the air was crisp, making for perfect conditions. Brig. Gen. Boe Young, Deputy Chief of the Army Reserves, presided over the coin toss, which was won by the Capitol Police team. It was clear from the beginning it was going to be a tough game. After all four quarters, the Capitol Police team flexed its collective muscle, pulling off a 27-14 win and the title of Champions of the Congressional Football Game. Most importantly, the game raised around \$45,000 for Our Military Kids. Many thanks to all those who helped make the game a reality!

Marching in the Big Apple

Ask almost anyone who was raised in the United States what they've done every Thanksgiving morning since childhood, and there's a very good chance you'll get the same answer: congregate around the television to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. As the parade celebrates its 85th anniversary this year, an Our Military Kids grant recipient will have something special to celebrate, too.

Mikaela Hannon is a high school junior in Moscow, Idaho. She has been playing the flute for seven years, which she started in the fourth grade. This is her second year playing in the marching band at her school, and she's already a member of Idaho's all-state band. So when Mikaela learned of the chance to play her flute and march in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, she

jumped on it.

"She has never been to New York before, so this will be a great opportunity for her," said Cathy Hannon, Mikaela's mother.

The opportunity presented itself through Mikaela's band director. He sent students in years prior to play with the Macy's Great American Marching Band, and knew Mikaela would be a good fit. She didn't even have to audition since she had already played with the all-state band – all she had to do was sign up. Mikaela, along with the 250 other kids who will be marching, was given the music online and has been practicing it diligently ahead of the trip.



Perfecting his Swing

At 9 years old, Jarrett Beilke got the opportunity of a lifetime thanks to his grant from Our Military Kids that allowed him to take golf lessons. Last month, Jarrett, who lives in North Carolina, made the trek up to Washington, DC with his family to play in the Keller Williams McLean Cares Golf Tournament at the Trump National Golf Club.

While golf is a popular sport, Our Military Kids gives out very few golf grants. So when approached by Keller Williams to identify a grant recipient to play in the tournament, Jarrett was an easy choice. Golf was always a sport that appealed to him.

"He's always had an interest in golf, going back to when he was two years old with his plastic golf set," said Jarrett's mother, Tammie Roe.

But while golf may have been his first love, Jarrett played soccer, baseball, and even took horseback riding lessons when he was younger. Golf was more of a 'vacation' sport. When Tammie would bring the kids up to Illinois to visit their extended family, Jarrett's uncle, Craig Barrick, would teach him the basics while playing ping-pong golf in the back yard. Uncle Craig even bought Jarrett his first putter and driver.

So when Jarrett learned of a free clinic being offered at a local golf club in North Carolina last year, he jumped on the chance to become more competitive in the sport. Jarrett enjoyed himself so much that Tammie decided to apply for a grant from Our Military Kids so Jarrett could

take private lessons with a golf pro.

"Jarrett has improved 500 percent since he started taking lessons," said Tammie. "He turned his baseball swing into a golf swing, and is now able to tackle an 18-hole course. He's impressed so many people he's met in the past year."



While the grant allowed Jarrett to take part in an activity his family would otherwise be unable to afford due to his stepfather's medical retirement from the Navy, it's had a much more profound impact on the entire family.

"I'm attempting to learn how to play golf myself so we can play together, and my oldest son DJ is also picking up the sport," adds Tammie. "Golf has also improved Jarrett's focus and concentration. It takes a lot for any kid his age to play 18 holes."

She says there are many more trips to the driving range and golf course in the family's future.

"It's great watching them get out there and have fun, and forget about their dad's injuries and everything we've gone through as a family – and just let them be kids."

The experience will certainly be an adventure for Mikaela. Not only is this her first trip to New York, but she's doing it without family by her side. Since the trip is so expensive, her family will stay behind, though another flute player from her school will accompany her. The two will arrive in New York the Saturday before Thanksgiving, and have a week full of activities: they will spend time in Rockefeller Center, Times Square, eat lunch in the Hard Rock Café, and watch a musical on Broadway. On top of it all, they'll have daily rehearsals led by renowned musicians.

Music is a talent Mikaela shares with her father, LtJG Jeffrey Hannon. Currently deployed to Afghanistan with the Navy Reserves, he began college as a music major, a path that Mikaela hopes to follow.

"She accomplishes positive things through music, and her father loves hearing how she's doing," Cathy adds. "When Mikaela performs with the band or in solo contests, we record them and send them to Jeff. He's been a really big encouragement to her."

They're both happy the grant from Our Military Kids will pay about a third of the cost of sending Mikaela to New York. And while it's doubtful that Jeff will be able to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Kabul, the rest of her family will be watching back home as Mikaela marches into Herald Square, with 50 million people watching on television.

"We'll all be gathered around the TV to watch her perform. And we will definitely record it for her dad!"

Season of Giving

On Wednesday, November 9, the Washington, DC area was abuzz with charitable giving thanks to "Give to the Max Day," an online event put together by Razoo that encouraged people to donate to the various nonprofit organizations in the nation's capital.

The idea behind the 24 hours of giving was to encourage as many people as possible to make a small donation. With many small donations, people can make a big difference for charities in the region. And that they did.

Much of the strategy revolved around digital tactics. Our Military Kids contacted every grant recipient family and program supporter via email, encouraging a \$10 donation and asking them to forward it along to all their friends and family. Additionally, Facebook and Twitter played important roles, with new status updates and tweets of progress being sent throughout the day.

In the end, Our Military Kids received 151 donations totaling \$6,125, which will provide grants for approximately 15 children. On the grand scale, though, "Give to the Max Day" produced more than 17,000 donors who gave over \$2 million. A successful day for nonprofits in the DC Metropolitan Area!



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Supporting National Guard And Military Reserve Families
One Child at a Time