Why I’m Proud of My Veteran

Every year at my school we put on a Veterans Day program and one of the songs that touches me the most is, “Thank You Military”. The words that make me teary-eyed are in the first verse. “It takes a lot of courage, to have to say good-bye, not knowing as you go to war if you will live or die. Many make this sacrifice and the fight to keep us free, they’re doing it for each of us they’re doing it for me.” During this song I like to think of my father, Major Brian Samuel Bennion, and all that he has done for the country. My Dad is a logistics officer for the United States Air Force Reserves at Hill Air Force Base in Ogden, Utah. While on duty, my dad makes sure that soldiers and supplies get transported safely.

My dad has been deployed many times. He has gone to Iraq and Afghanistan. He has been gone 3 times so far. When my dad first went to Afghanistan, I was only a three-year old and my mom was pregnant with my brother. The second time he went, the second story to my house was being built. The last time was two years ago when it was my birthday and he surprised me by coming home from Iraq.

I am proud of my veteran because he gets to serve our country and he gets to do it by choice. Most people in other countries do not have a choice. My dad once told me that only 2 million people out of 35 million people in the United States serve in the military. I’m also proud of him for being brave enough to leave our family for a long time to keep others than ourselves safe. Another thing I’m proud of my dad for is that he is so loyal to our country. He also is able to get so much work done and still make quality time for his family. My dad came to my school once to show my class how to fold the flag. All the kids in my class seemed to love it because they thought it was cool to see him in uniform.

In conclusion, I am proud of my veteran because he fights for our country’s freedom and put others before himself, he works SO hard at what he does, and because he is able to make family time even though he has a lot of responsibility. That is why I love my veteran.

Elizabeth Bennion
Elementary School Winner
Ensign Elementary - Region 4

My favorite subjects in school are math, science and art. I really like math this year because I am learning about percentages, dividing improper fractions, and negative numbers. I want to continue studying math and become good enough to someday attend MIT for college and become an engineer.

When I am not in school, I spend my time practicing piano and cello, reading, and listening to and watching musicals. I like the musical “Hamilton”. Lately, my dad and I have been reading together about his two favorite historical figures: George Washington and Alexander Hamilton. I love to connect the songs in musicals with actual history. My favorite thing to do with my dad, is cooking. We make some tasty treats together!
I know a lot of people whose dad’s careers do something that could change the world. Every time I hear about it, sometimes I wish my dad had a different occupation. I wish he could change the world like those people, or that he could be the employee of the month for being the good man that he is. But, in truth, maybe he does change the world. My dad is in the United States Army National Guard. Sometimes, I wish he wasn’t, because it takes him away from home a lot. But I am proud to say that my dad is in the Army, because every day he is away from home, he works; he saves people he doesn’t know. He helps the American dream live on. Sometimes, one man can make a difference, and I am honored to say that my dad is that difference.

One of the things that I love about my dad is that he is hardworking, smart, and does what he can to make things right. I know that he doesn’t love his job the way some others do, but he makes the most of it. For example, my dad is currently deployed for the fourth time in my life. I am currently twelve years old. If you do the math, he is deployed every three years of my life. Deployments he has been on are at least a year long. That is four years of my life, a third of my life that my dad hasn’t been there for, not even counting the smaller trips that he makes for his job that are days, weeks, or months long. My dad is committed, he does his job, and he’s good at it. My dad is currently on a mission that he got chosen for because of his individuality and his smarts. I respect and love him, for who he is, no matter what.

Just because my dad is away, doesn’t mean that is he isn’t a part of my life. When he is home, he tries to make the time last as long as it can. My dad spends time with us, as a family, by playing board games, visiting historical places, exploring national parks, going on road trips, camping, etc. My dad also gives me words of advice. Sometimes when I get mad at my parents or I make choices that aren’t so good, my dad is there for me. He pulls me aside and explains to me very clearly what I am doing. He testifies to me that all actions have a consequence. When I need him the most, Dad is there to straighten me out (along with my mom, of course). My dad might not be someone who gets a lot of credit for doing something special, but he has a career that should be respected. That is why I am proud of my veteran.
Why I'm Proud of My Veteran

One word could never describe how I feel about my father, yet if I was forced to choose, it would have to be pride. I am so proud to call him my father. Ever since I was a very young child, my dad was in the Marine Corps. I grew up saying goodbye to him as he left for long work weeks away, training and deployments. I couldn’t realize then the gravity of his actions, why he was willing to leave my family and me alone, why he was willing to risk his life for this country. Now I understand he left because he loved us: my sisters, brother, mother, and country more than his own life. He valued freedom and peace above all else.

More than that, I am proud of how he has dealt with the difficulties the war gave our family. When I was young my Dad came home from Iraq with severe PTSD. I remember waiting at the airport in my patriotic outfit for him to get off the plane. I can still remember as soon as I saw him I thought, “Why is he so different?” I didn’t understand the effects of war then. I didn’t yet understand what PTSD was as it began to shape our family’s lives. I noticed Dad hated large crowds, got rigid around loud noises, and was quicker to flare up in angry irritability than before. It was hard, and I believe that learning how to deal with PTSD is one of the hardest things a family, and person, can be called on to learn. And learn we did. It was a long time before Dad was ready to admit he needed help. It was very hard for him to be humble and seek help. He worked hard to heal for our family because he loved us. He was a Marine, brave and courageous and could conquer anything. It was difficult to admit what he saw as a weakness. But to me, he was even braver because he also conquered PTSD. He taught me that it’s ok to ask for help. That we all have things in our lives that are hard that we need to overcome. My family taught me that I have the love and support of all of them to help, as did my father. It was because of him that I could go to sleep safely at night, never fearing monsters or nightmares because I knew he could protect me. Now I can go to sleep at night knowing I have a brave father who taught me how to conquer the things life throws at you and come out a stronger better person for it. I am proud of my father because he is brave and courageous inside and out. He was and is my protector, my example, my hero. I couldn’t be prouder of my amazing veteran, and am so grateful to be able to call my hero a far better name, Dad.