

## **2022 Veterans Day Essay Contest Winners**

**High School Winner**    **Rylieann Bruin 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Stansbury High School**



### **BIO**

My name is Rylieann Bruin! I am a 17-year-old senior student at Stansbury High School! I have lived in Utah my whole life and I am a part of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Some of my hobbies I love are volleyball, longboarding, and spending time with friends!

I have a very big family and they are a very big part of my life! I am the oldest and only child of my parents, but I have 3 siblings on my mom's side and 2 on my dad's! I love and adore each of them! I have a great set of parents and family that have taught me many valuable lessons. I'm very grateful towards all of them for their love towards me.

To earn money I work at the fast food restaurant, Del Taco, I have learned many things there the past year as it is my first job.

My main academic interest is the healthcare field. I am an intern at a physical therapy clinic called Pagnani Therapy. I recently joined a club at my school called HOSA, Health Occupation Students of America. I also started taking a class at

Tooele technical college called clinical medical assistant! So far, I am loving all of them and I'm excited for more of the learning activities and experiences I will get.

## **ESSAY**

### **WHY AM I PROUD OF MY VETERAN**

Milton V. Backman Jr. was a unique example of a veteran. Born on June 11, 1927, and passed on February 6, 2016. Backman was my great grandfather whom I was lucky to get to know when I was young. I never got to hear of his experiences from him personally, but my grandma and mom told me what they knew of his time in the U.S. Military. Due to his old age and memory shortage I'm thankful they were able to hear of them beforehand, to pass them down to my family.

The first war he had the privilege to serve in was World War II, but he unfortunately did not have his eyesight at full capacity. Due to that he was not on the front lines in the Merchant Marines but on ships serving the other soldiers as a cook.

In the kitchen he spent lots of time baking, bread for the most part, to feed the hard-working men in the war. He was only informed how to bake large batches of bread. He wasn't sure how to cut down the quantity of how much he made, so there was always plenty. He was always making large amounts of food as everyone on the ships could devour it like animals. I may not have been there personally but, I know he was one to put a lot of smiles on many faces with the food he made for them, as well as his character. I believe it was a great way to serve his country as he kept those men strong and joyous.

His second service to his country was in the Korean war. He was also a cook during that time, but instead served in the Air Force. He did a lot of cooking as there were many men during that time as well.

He gained many relationships in a way he did not expect, playing ping pong. Many of them spent their free time playing ping pong and even started competitions. On base they had less to worry about and this is how they made some of their best memories. My great grandpa was one of the most skilled ping pong players on base, and even accomplished to become the ping pong champion!

Milton was in the ships or on a base cooking and baking but still made an impact. He didn't fight with guns or weapons but fought by serving those men who had to go out and risk their lives. His way of serving helped keep those men strong and healthy with something so simple. Milton Vaughn Backman Jr. may not have been one of the men on the field face to face with the enemies, but he still served his country in an amazing way, in my eyes! He is my hero!