

### **Photo #1**

**Taylor Avaritt**, of Midlothian, Texas, received the “**Award in Honor and Memory of 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Soldiers for Their Meritorious Services in the Evacuation of Military and Civilian Refugees from Hungnam, North Korea, December 1950.**” His sponsor was his grandfather, Korea War Veteran Frank Avaritt (now deceased). Taylor’s essay, “The Importance of Patriotism,” defines patriotism: being a patriot is more than just celebrating holidays. “It’s about the little things one does day-in and day-out.” The essay mentions the patriots serving in our military. Those who support our troops are patriots. A patriot prioritizes one’s country over oneself. Loyalty to country is unconditional and never betraying. We can be outspoken or display our patriotism discreetly. Patriots honor the Flag and respect active soldiers, veterans, and their families; a patriot stands with pride and reverence during the National Anthem and encourages others to do so. The author quotes classical writer and Civil War Soldier Ambrose Bierce: Patriotism is “fierce as a fever, pitiless as the grave, blind as a stone, and irrational as a leadless hen.” Without patriotism, there would be no United States of America. Without the courage of our founding fathers, there would be no patriotism. He quotes Navy Seal Chris Kyle’s endorsement of patriotism and explains Kyle’s history.

### **Photo #2**

**Haley R. Blanchard**, of Lilburn, Georgia, received the “**Scholarship Foundation Memorial Award in Honor and Memory of MG Maurice Kendall.**” Haley was sponsored by her grandfather, Korea War Veteran Bob Barfield. Her essay, “Freedom,” praises the freedoms we have and remembers that not all world citizens have the same freedoms. An example used is North Korea where freedoms are virtually unheard of. The author mentions her grandfather and his influence on her views of countries like North Korea and America and the price that was paid by our Soldiers so that not all of Korea would have to live under a communist dictatorship. It cost \$50 billion dollars and 33,000 American lives to pay for South Korea’s freedom. She talks about the families left behind when their loved ones were among the 33,000 killed. She will always support the world views of freedom and capitalism and thanks her grandfather for that. “The concept of freedom and the challenge to work hard to earn success are timeless concepts that make up the ‘American dream.’ These concepts are a huge part of what makes America the country that it is. These are the things that my grandpa fought for during the Korean War and these are the things that I continue to fight for, over 60 years later.”

### **Photo #3**

**Gizangely M. Marrero**, of Fort Stewart, Georgia, was sponsored by her father, Heriberto Marrero, currently 3<sup>rd</sup> I.D. Electronic Warfare Officer. She received the “**Award Honoring LTG William E. Webster (Ret.) and the Men and Women of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division.**” Her essay, “American Patriotism” discusses patriotism, its meaning, and its force. The author admits that some countries frown on patriotism. “American Patriotism, however, is rooted in conservative values such as honor, integrity, loyalty, and bravery. It serves to unify citizens of this country under one flag as we celebrate our entitlement to freedom and the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.” “Our realm, in which patriotism is a dominant force, is within the United States military.” She describes the role of the military in her definition of patriotism and shows how they guarantee our freedoms. She discusses the issues that create divisions among citizens which must be resolved in order to secure solidarity. One such issue is gun control which she defines and explains. Another issue is the American Press. To paraphrase, fake news misleads

Americans. This issue “pits fractions of American citizens against each other and must be resolved in order to preserve and perpetuate the influence of patriotism.” “If every citizen embodied honor, integrity, loyalty, and bravery in all they do, we would ensure that future generations will be inspired to continue to protect and defend this country that we share.”

#### **Photo #4**

**Grace M. Maurer**, of West Des Moines, Iowa, was sponsored by her father, Thomas V. Maurer. Maurer served with the 3<sup>rd</sup> I. D. in Germany, 1989-1991. Grace received the Society of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Scholarship Foundation “**Award in Honor and Memory of Scholarship Foundation Trustee Dr. Marco Montoya.**” Grace’s essay, “National Pride” discusses our liberties and credits the military and our officials. Grace compares America to other countries and quotes Tony Blair: “A simple way to take measure of a country is to see how many want in and how many want out.” She mentioned fellow students from other countries who say, “We love it here.” She also discussed the extensive work she did in becoming informed before she voted for the first time, and she mentioned relatives who have served our country and noted that dedication such as theirs creates “The American Way.” She believes that our National Pride started with our forefathers who wrote a brilliant Constitution, and she believes National Pride “brings people together and prevents us from being a divided country.”

#### **Photo #5**

**Stephanie Nussio** of Woodbridge, Virginia, was sponsored by her father, Col. Ricky Nussio who served with the 64<sup>th</sup> Armor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, during the run on Baghdad. She received the “**Legacy Award in Honor and Memory of MG Maurice Kendall.**” Her essay, “The 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division: Remembering One Hundred Years of Unparalleled History and Heroes” walks us through WWI and explains how the Division got the name “Rock of the Marne.” She covers key conflicts in Europe during WWII and in Iraq and the Middle East: “After the terrorist attacks on 9/11, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division was the vanguard unit in the attack on Iraq. Stephanie covers a good deal of ground in her essay and even describes recent conflicts. “Over the last hundred years, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division has played a key role in American military history and has achieved unparalleled success in combat... Through their heroic impact, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division has arguably changed the course of world history.” She closes her essay by urging readers to study the history of our great Division.

#### **Photo #6**

**Alec Roach** of Roanoke, Virginia, received the “**Award in Honor and Memory of SFC Ralph E. ‘Rick’ Richenbacher.**” He was sponsored by his grandfather, Paul M. Roach, who served in G Company during the Korean War. Alec’s essay, “Honor,” discusses honor and how the subject is treated at VMI. Upperclassmen are responsible for instilling in the “ratline” (new cadets) the traits and qualities vital to the essence of every cadet. This creates a transformation centered in honor. The honor code is simple: “A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those that do.” This code is the first of many lessons taught to all rats during Hell Week, the first nine days of the year for incoming freshmen. At VMI, the Honor Court is cadet-run to investigate and pass judgment on all honor-related offenses. “Drum-outs” are enacted when a cadet is found violating the honor code and is then subsequently expelled from the institute. The essay describes the ceremony around which the Honor Court passes its judgment. This lesson in honor changes one to want to do the right thing all the time and to hold oneself to a higher standard. On the VMI

class ring there is an inscription: “Death Before Dishonor.” “Not only is this a slogan, it is our creed, our words to live by. They remind us that it is better to die with our honor intact than to live knowing we have chosen to forsake our honor.”

**Photo #7**

**Katherine Spellmon**, of Belton, Texas, received the “**Legacy Award in Honor and Memory of Thomas W. Mason.**” She was sponsored by her father, Scott A. Spellmon, who served with the 3<sup>rd</sup> I.D. in Germany (1990-1993) and at Fort Benning (2003-2006). In her essay, “Patriotism,” Katherine develops a very personal definition of patriotism. It began when she was a first-grader saying “goodbye” to her father who was deployed to Iraq with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division. “I will never forget the tears that filled my eyes as my dad hugged my mother, my brothers, our Golden Retriever, and me.” “It was that day when I truly realized the sacrifices men and women selflessly make in order to protect the freedoms of our nation.” She talks about what goes on at home when a Soldier is deployed and explains one symbol of freedom and patriotism with which all Americans are familiar “The Star-Spangled Banner.” She ends her essay with, [Patriotism] is what unites us; it is what protects us. God Bless America.”

**Photo #8:**

**Sierra Wright**, of Pasco, Washington, received the “**Scholarship Foundation Award Honoring the Active Duty Soldiers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division.**” Sierra was sponsored by her great-grandfather, Dale Mc Graw, who served in Korea with the 9<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (1953-1954). Her essay, “Third Infantry Division Scholarship Essay,” talks about the freedoms we are given and what the country expects of good citizens (get an education, enter the workforce, and obey the laws); however, some Americans follow a higher calling. They serve in the military. Sierra views this commitment as the most honorable form of loyalty and duty to one’s country. She sees patriotism and nationalism quite closely connected. She mentions that people do not show enough patriotism and says we have “constant reminders such as The American Flag, The Statue of Liberty, our National Anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance to show our patriotism and recognize what our country was established upon. We use these to pay respect and increase our knowledge of our country’s history and values...Patriotism is something that runs deep in my blood and will run deep in my children’s blood and generations beyond that, because it is a flame that will never die within the heart of proud Americans.”