



Saluting America School Program

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For more information, contact Saluting America at 720.633.4117 or info@salutingamerica.org

WHAT IS SALUTING AMERICA ABOUT?

The *Saluting America School Program* ignites a strong sense of patriotism in America's K-12 students, raises awareness of our nation's cherished values, and honors the sacrifices made by active military and veterans. Many of today's youth are not aware of the bravery and sacrifices made to protect our freedoms, mostly because they have little or no interaction with the military.

To build awareness and respect for veterans and active military among the younger generation, *Saluting America* offers schools free materials and classroom activities designed to honor and remember veterans and active military personnel. The activities emotionally engage and educate students about patriotism, valor, citizenship, freedom, sacrifice, and history.

WHAT DO SCHOOLS HAVE TO DO?

The wonderful thing about this program is that it is completely customizable to your district needs and desires. There is no set "curriculum", merely suggestions and ideas on how to implement the program successfully, based on input gleaned from teachers and administrators who participate in the program.

Classroom Activities – Program materials include simple but powerful suggestions for teachers to use during classroom activities, focusing on such values as patriotism, valor, citizenship, freedom, and sacrifice. Teachers and schools are free to customize program materials or use their own.

Tribute Card – Each student receives a special Tribute Card featuring a patriotic fine art photograph and an historic quote. The student writes a "thank you" message to a veteran or an active duty military member based on what they learned during the classroom activities. Schools, students, program partners, volunteers, and other public and private sector organizations distribute completed cards to military personnel and veterans locally and throughout the world. Samples of the cards and their messages can be found in the Appendix.

Tribute Contest – Students compete by creating essays, videos, art projects or other presentations illustrating the values they learned through their school activities. School districts are encouraged to recognize the winners of these Tribute Contests.

The American's Creed Print – Schools and district Tribute Contest winners each receive a copy of *The American's Creed*, a fine art print featuring a patriotic photograph and excerpts from *The American's Creed*, a statement fashioned from key phrases found in historic U.S. documents.

Student, Veteran and Active Military Interaction – *Saluting America* supports and encourages interactions among K-12 students, veterans, and active military through classroom and school-wide activities that educate, inform, and raise awareness of the sacrifices made to keep us free.

Free School Resources – *Saluting America* provides program materials and resources free of charge to participating schools. Grants, corporate sponsorships, and volunteers support this effort.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS & ACTIVITIES

The materials in this packet are intended to be used by teachers to easily implement the *Saluting America School Program*. They are designed for you to customize in alignment with your school's interest and need.

Basic resources for the program are included in this packet. These include suggested class discussion prompts for the Tribute Contest, background on **The American's Creed**, ideas for presentations and assemblies, and typical methods for incorporating the Tribute Cards into your school classrooms and activities. Additional resources can be found on the *Resources* page of our website, *SalutingAmerica.org*.

Participating schools receive the following materials free of charge:

- All instructional guides can be downloaded from the SalutingAmerica.org website
- Tribute Cards
- The American's Creed framed prints

The Tribute Cards and **The American's Creed** framed prints are distributed to the school districts by *Saluting America* and subsequently re-distributed to the schools.

Tribute Cards

- Each school district selects the image to be used as their Tribute Card from choices offered by *Saluting America*. School district logos will be printed on the reverse of the cards. **Only ONE image may be selected per school district.**
- The cards are distributed by the district to students, faculty, and staff.
- Every student, faculty, and staff are encouraged to write a personal message of appreciation to a veteran or an active member of our military.
- The school can determine how cards are distributed. Students are encouraged to distribute the cards to individuals they know who have served or who are currently serving.
- *Saluting America School Program* engages, school districts, program partners, and sponsors to assist in the distribution of the remaining signed Tribute Cards.

Tribute Contest

- A competition for students at Elementary, Middle & High School levels: Students express their feelings and beliefs about the topics that the school pre-determined. We suggest that entries can include essays, poems, stories, videos, PowerPoint presentations, artwork, photographs, sculptures, speeches, or any activity that conveys the message and allow the student to express their individual creativity.

As originator of this program, The Cherry Creek School District posed the following questions for the different age groups:

- Elementary – (illustration or statement): “*Why veterans are so important to the United States?*”

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- Middle School – research and complete: “*What do I believe?*”
- High School – “*Why is it important to honor veterans and the extreme sacrifices made to help sustain America’s values and to ensure these extraordinary actions are preserved forever?*”
- All teachers and students are encouraged to participate. Activities have been developed to be classroom friendly. The above questions are only suggestions, and schools can customize them.
- Schools may award *Certificates of Participation* to students who enter the Tribute Contest. The certificate can be downloaded from www.SalutingAmerica.org website and printed by the schools.

The American’s Creed Print

- Each participating school will be awarded a framed copy of **The American’s Creed** print, created by *In Honored Glory* for display in the school building.
- *Saluting America School Program* recommends special presentations or displays to highlight this print and the excerpts of **The American’s Creed**.
- If your district chooses to do a Tribute Contest, Saluting America will provide a copy for of **The American’s Creed** print upon request.

ORGANIZING YOUR PROGRAM

Flexibility – The *Saluting America School Program* is designed to be flexible so schools can maximize participation and develop or enhance program activities to suit their needs.

Organizing/Judging Committee – *Saluting America* recommends that each school district establish an organizing committee to assist the schools in implementing their program. This is generally comprised of educators, district administrators, board of education members, community representatives, and parent volunteers. Your committee can serve in an advisory capacity and/or serve as judges in the **Tribute Contest**. A suggested organizing committee contact letter is included in this program guide. See the sample “*Organizing Committee Contact Letter*” in the appendix of this document.

Selecting Tribute Cards – Each school district selects the Tribute Card it will use for its program. The card options can be found at the *SalutingAmerica.org* website Resource page. School District primary contact representatives provide participation numbers to *Saluting America*. This includes the number of participating students and staff.

The American’s Creed framed prints will be distributed to schools that do not already have a print. Each year, *Saluting America* will distribute these prints to the new schools entering the program. School District primary contact representatives provide participation numbers to *Saluting America*.

Tribute Contest Certificate of Participation – Official *Certificates of Participation* in the Tribute Contest are available in the [Resources](#) section of our website, www.salutingAmerica.org. These are only for students who create entries for the Tribute Contest. The certificate master can be downloaded from the website and duplicated by the school district. We recommend that they be printed in color.

TRIBUTE CARD – OVERVIEW

Tribute Cards will be distributed to schools at the beginning of the school year for use during Veteran’s week or another time frame determined by your district. See the “**Ordering Tribute Cards**” page on www.salutingamerica.org.

Distribute a card to every student and staff member for their expressions of thanks to veterans and/or active military personnel:

1. This activity can be done as a school project, class project, individually or during private time. The greatest value comes from full participation Kindergarten through High School (12). This includes members of the staff.
2. Students and staff are encouraged to complete a **Tribute Card** for distribution to a specific veteran or active military relative (mom, dad, brother, sister, etc.), neighbor or family friend. When completed, the card is theirs to distribute.
3. For those who will be completing cards for general distribution, we encourage the consideration that the cards will be distributed to all branches of the service, men and women, and that they will receive them at different times of the year.
4. If the student or staff member does not personally know a veteran or active military member, *Saluting America* can assist with distributing completed Tribute Cards to veterans and active military around the world.
5. We encourage guidance to students that limits their personal identification. We have provided space where a student may sign their name simply “Jane”, enter the grade level and the school. **For confidentiality reasons we ask that students do not use complete names and schools.**
6. Please have each student and staff member place their card in the provided envelope and if they wish to address the card, please limit the address with... Veteran, Thank You, My Hero, etc. **PLEASE DO NOT SEAL THE ENVELOPES.**
7. The students may decorate the envelopes; just remember that postage and other mailing labels may be placed over the image.
8. Your school or district may elect to distribute cards to local nursing homes, veterans’ facilities, service organizations, etc. as part of your school activities.
9. Please collect any remaining cards and place in the box that we will provide to your school for the purpose of collecting and packaging Tribute Cards for shipping.

10. If requested *Saluting America* and The American Legion volunteers will collect the boxes from your district office for future distribution.

THE AMERICAN'S CREED PRINT – OVERVIEW

The portrait features the enduring image of Uncle Sam paired with an abridged version of **The American's Creed**, which was adopted by Congress in 1918.

Every school will receive a framed copy of **The American's Creed** print from *In Honored Glory*. We recommend displaying the print in a prominent location. If your school has already done this – *THANK YOU*.

If possible, a volunteer from an organization that is sponsoring or partnering with *Saluting America* can present the framed print to the school during a special event. The school may unveil the framed print during an assembly or other event. Schools are encouraged to incorporate some special presentation ceremony or announcement related to receiving the framed print..

If a school already has a framed copy of the print, *Saluting America* encourages teachers to use the origin and the concepts of **The American's Creed** as a possible topic of the *Saluting America* program. For example, classes or activities could be conducted around the historic documents and speeches from which the phrases for **The American's Creed** were selected.

Also, district winners of the *Saluting America* Tribute Contest will receive a framed copy of **The American's Creed** print to recognize their achievements.

THE AMERICAN'S CREED (FULL TEXT) BY WILLIAM TYLER PAGE

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed, a democracy in a republic, a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its Constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies.

Background

William Tyler Page of Friendship Heights, Maryland, in the course of a nationwide contest on the subject, wrote the American's Creed in 1918. Page was a descendent of President Tyler, and Representative John Page, who served in the Congress from 1789-97.

Mr. Page began his government career as a Congressional page in December of 1881. In 1919, he was elected Clerk of the House of Representatives, and held that position until December of 1931. a new post, Emeritus Minority Clerk, was then created for him which he occupied until his death on October 20, 1942.

Additional information regarding **The American's Creed** is available for teachers in the “**Resource**” section of our website, www.SalutingAmerica.org.