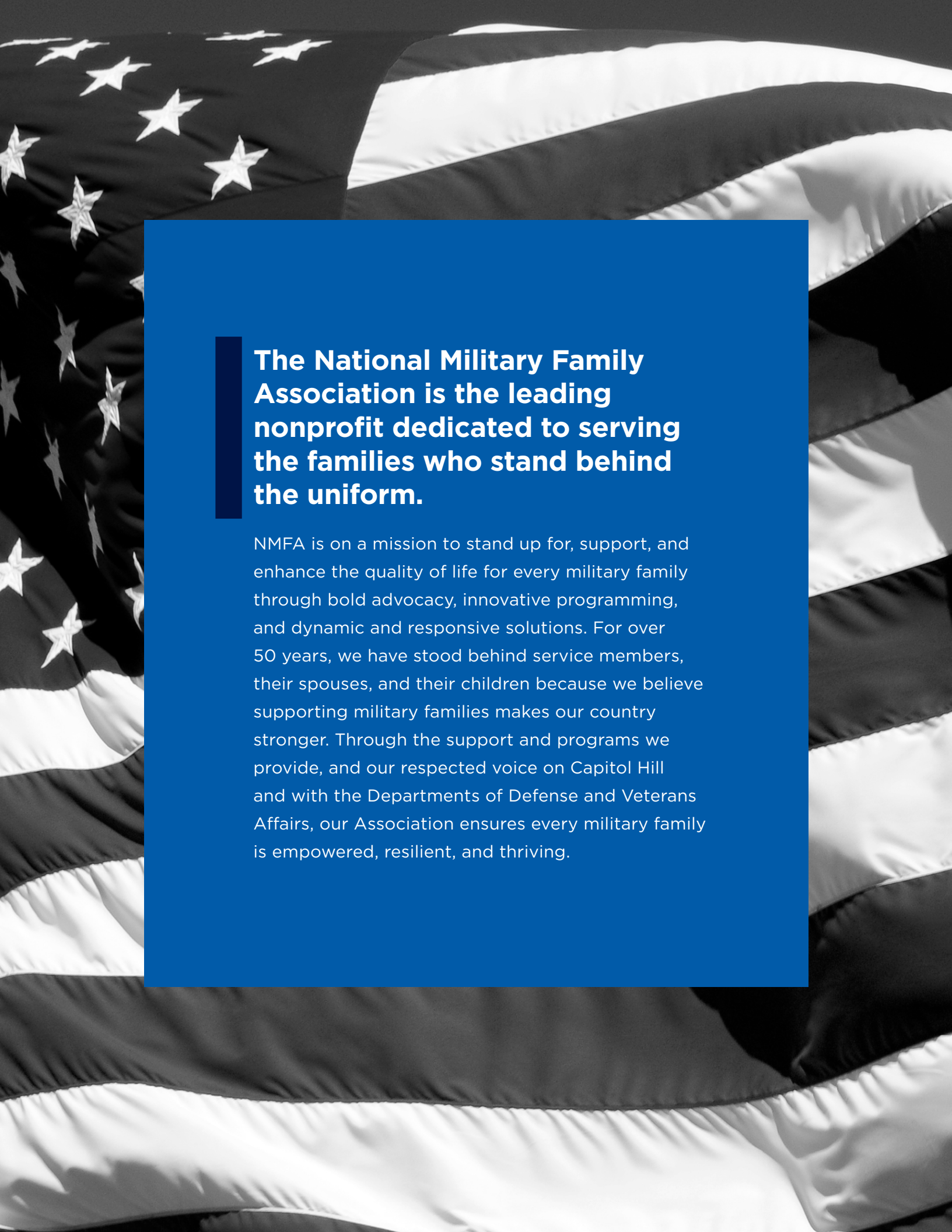




NATIONAL
MILITARY FAMILY
ASSOCIATION

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

The background of the entire page is a close-up, black and white photograph of the American flag. The stars and stripes are clearly visible, with the flag appearing to wave. A solid blue rectangular box is positioned in the center-left of the image, containing white text.

The National Military Family Association is the leading nonprofit dedicated to serving the families who stand behind the uniform.

NMFA is on a mission to stand up for, support, and enhance the quality of life for every military family through bold advocacy, innovative programming, and dynamic and responsive solutions. For over 50 years, we have stood behind service members, their spouses, and their children because we believe supporting military families makes our country stronger. Through the support and programs we provide, and our respected voice on Capitol Hill and with the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, our Association ensures every military family is empowered, resilient, and thriving.



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Together we're stronger®

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YEAR IN REVIEW

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

COVID-19 Information Hub

Created the first, premier COVID-19 information hub for military families, policy makers, and stakeholders.

Operation Purple Program

Brought the magic of camp to more than 1.8K military families across the globe, virtually

Military Spouse Scholarship & Employment Program

Awarded 6.8K+ spouses more than \$6.79M in funding

Expanded our program to provide targeted, immediate assistance

Child Care Fee Relief Initiative

220+ military families received \$340,000 in child care assistance

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

Pushed Congress to create incentives for employers to hire military spouses

Basic Allowance for Housing

Called on Congress to remove BAH from income calculations for SNAP

As a nation, we've faced incredible challenges this year. Despite the ways in which the pandemic has separated us physically, NMFA stands united in support of the one percent who always put our nation first — no matter what.

Here are a few things we've done this year to ensure military families can live the American dream they protect for us all.

Strengthening Military Families

In early 2020, military families had immediate concerns about how the coronavirus pandemic would impact their lives and service. Families had questions, and NMFA went to work finding answers. We created the first and premier COVID-19 information hub for military families, policy makers, and stakeholders.

In early Spring, we made the difficult but necessary decision to suspend Operation Purple in-person events for 2020. Instead, we created Operation Purple at Home — a virtual, at-home version of our Operation Purple program combining virtual nature explorations with the Montana Natural History Center, a tour of an NHL locker room, unique Operation Purple team-building activities for the whole family, and inspiring video messages from Congressional members, senior military leaders, and partner organizations, all celebrating the service and sacrifice of military families. In partnership with Wounded Warrior Project®, we were able to bring the magic of camp to more than 1,800 military families across the globe. We increased the impact of virtual camp by following up with four months of “camp in a kit” for participants. Each month, campers would receive a new nature-themed box aimed to get kids outdoors and exploring the world around them. We sent more than 3,200 military kids this subscription, doubling the impact we projected for 2020.

Like our Operation Purple Program, our Military Spouse Scholarship and Employment Program needed to adapt. Since 2004, NMFA has awarded more than 6,800 spouses more than \$6.79 million in funding to help military spouses overcome the unique obstacles they face when pursuing education and career goals.

Throughout 2020, requests for help poured in. By September 2020, NMFA received 5,811 applications

from military spouses seeking funding for tuition, books, exam fees, licensing and certification fees, and small business costs through our scholarship program. At the close of 2020, we awarded 872 spouses with scholarships totaling \$961,500.

For military families with one or both spouses working on the front lines of the pandemic in medical and health care fields, we expanded our scholarship program to provide targeted, immediate assistance.

But we knew military families needed more help than that. Hearing directly from families concerned about paying for childcare with schools and day cares closed or difficult to access, we launched a new child care fee relief initiative enabling parents to go to work, school, or work from home during the pandemic. More than 220 recipients received \$340,000 in assistance in 2020.

Driving Change

Early in the pandemic, it was clear that the COVID-19 crisis would affect military families uniquely.

Families stuck in PCS limbo due to stop-movement orders faced immediate financial concerns as they carried the expense of homes in two locations. We raised the issue with Congress, rallied partner organizations in support of a solution, and celebrated the expansion of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to include specific pandemic protections for military renters.

Military spouse employment, already a top priority for our Association, became a heightened concern. While military spouses faced a 24% unemployment rate in 2017, by mid-summer, the unemployment rate was increasing. NMFA pushed Congress to create incentives for employers to hire military spouses, calling for their inclusion in the Work Opportunity Tax Credit.

Military spouses worried about keeping their jobs in an economic downturn needed immediate help too. NMFA responded with a robust support system specifically for the 34% of military spouses with careers in occupationally licensed fields. We connected them to the resources and information they needed to empower their career stability through every challenge military life throws at them — including getting through a pandemic.

As the crisis lengthened, economic instability soon became unavoidable for many military families already living close to the edge. No military family should go hungry.

NMFA called on Congress to remove Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) from income calculations for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). When Congress missed this opportunity to support the military families most in need, we partnered with MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger to find alternative solutions. Together, we led the call for a Military Basic Needs Allowance that would provide a modest supplement for military families barely scraping by.

Throughout the pandemic, military families reached out to NMFA for help on specific issues. We never said no. We spoke up for military families who rely on au pairs for their affordable and flexible child care needs, ensuring the White House, Department of Defense, State Department, and Congress understood the negative impact temporary worker visa policies were having on military family readiness. And our efforts to expand and improve TRICARE's Extended Care Health Option now ensures families with special needs and medically fragile kids have the resources and respite they really need.

In 2020 and beyond, NMFA remains committed to standing strong for the families of America's uniformed services. Together we're stronger®. ■

OPERATION PURPLE PROGRAM



Here's the percentage of Operation Purple families who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements:

83%

Connected us with other military families

89%

Encouraged us to explore the outdoors together

87%

Helped us feel connected as a family

86%

Enabled us to share our thoughts and ideas with one another

80%

Helped us reduce screen time

82%

Gave us a chance to communicate openly and honestly with one another

88%

Gave us a break from our daily routine

The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to suspend all Operation Purple in-person events in 2020, but it did not stop us from providing much-needed programming to strengthen and support military families.

Instead, we improvised, adapted and launched Operation Purple at Home — a virtual, at-home version of our Operation Purple program created in partnership with Wounded Warrior Project to help families celebrate togetherness, foster strong communication, and help them connect with each other and the natural world around them, no matter where they are.

In July, we hosted a virtual week of camp for more than 1,800 military families in which we brought the magic of Operation Purple to military families across the globe. Participants explored nature on a virtual hike with the Montana Natural History Center, took a tour of an NHL locker room, enjoyed unique Operation Purple team-building activities customized to do at home, and heard inspiring video messages from Congressional members, senior military leaders, partner organizations like GEICO, PenFed Foundation, Team RWB, Travis Manion Foundation, United Through Reading, Wounded Warrior Project, New Jersey Devils hockey player Kyle Palmieri, and NASCAR drivers Brad Keselowski and Jessie Iwuji.

The excitement of the week was contagious among families. In an exclusive Facebook group, they shared stories, pictures, and videos. They made friends with other military families and reconnected with long-lost friends from previous installations. They cheered each others' families on in challenge courses and celebrated each military kid in an end-of-week talent show.

While our programming wasn't what we expected it to be in 2020, it was exactly what military families needed.

In October, we offered a taste of camp for those same families with an Operation Purple at Home "pop-up" weekend event. This two-day, condensed version of Operation Purple at Home gave participants new and exciting activities to do together and reminded them that the slog of life in a pandemic can be overcome when we connect with each other, focus on our families, and get outside and enjoy nature.

NMFA partnered with THiNK OUTSiDE BOXES to create customized nature-themed kits for military families to experience the outdoors, just like at Operation Purple Camp. Over 3,200 military kids received a 4-box subscription. Each kit included quality outdoor gear and hands-on activities that promoted education, skill building, and fun!

"I have loved seeing the other families. It's good to see the good and bad. To know you are not alone. I have enjoyed the interactions with other families. This community truly feels like home and family. We live on a military base in military housing and I don't feel like it's as close as this group. We have truly enjoyed every moment. We have cherished the activities put together especially while quarantined at home. The activities are not only fun but help us create a family bond that will last a lifetime. Thanks for much for this unforgettable camp!"

Jessica, Navy Spouse

**MILITARY
KIDS
SERVE
TOO!®**

MILITARY SPOUSE SCHOLARSHIPS & EMPLOYMENT



MILITARY SPOUSE SCHOLARSHIPS & EMPLOYMENT

NMFA is proud to celebrate the 17th year of our Military Spouse Scholarship and Employment program. Since 2004, NMFA has awarded more than 6,800 spouses more than \$6.79 million in funding to help them overcome the unique education and career obstacles many face, such as frequent moves, problems relocating professional licenses, and staggering unemployment and underemployment rates.

Unlike other scholarship opportunities, our program focuses on giving military spouses the support they need to succeed, not just tuition coverage. NMFA's Military Spouse Scholarship and Employment program supports the cost of coursework, books, exam fees, licensing and certification fees, and small business costs. When we support a military spouse's career goals, we support the entire military family.

By September, NMFA received 5,811 applications from military spouses seeking funding through our scholarship program. In 2020, we awarded 872 spouses with scholarships totaling \$961,500.

Military spouses chasing education goals and career dreams often do so while balancing the needs of growing families. Now, these military spouses are working to provide for their families while balancing the needs of children at home during the pandemic.

Because of the pressures families faced in 2020 due to the pandemic, NMFA created a temporary program

to award child care fee relief reimbursement to service members and their families. This new family-focused program awarded 220 military families \$340,000 in child care reimbursement assistance to offset the cost of care so they could go to work, attend class or do either, virtually. Parents couldn't always rely on military child care centers, public schools, or packed daycares to look after their children during the pandemic, so our child care relief efforts helped meet the unique and evolving needs of military families in 2020.

"If I'm going to dream again... I might as well dream big! Thank you for removing the boulder of financial burden from our shoulders... It is an honor and blessing that renewed my hope and will sustain my spirit through many future challenges."

**Candace, Army Spouse
Pillars of Strength Scholarship Recipient***

*Pillars of Strength scholarships are made possible by The Blewitt Foundation and the National Military Family Association to help exceptional volunteer caregivers — most often military spouses.

NMFA surveys the past five years of scholarship recipients annually to understand the long-term impact of our program on a military spouse's education and employment success. Over the last five years:

88%

reported their degree, licensure, or certification has helped them obtain employment

96%

reported they are more satisfied with their career opportunities now that they have completed their degree, licensure, or certification

80%

reported a higher salary upon completion of their degree, licensure, or certification



ADVOCACY

TOP WINS



The expansion of Servicemembers Civil Relief Act in case of stop-movement order/ national emergency



The expanded use of telemedicine



Policy change giving United States Coast Guard the same priority as active duty families at CDCs.

During the last year of the 116th Congress, our Association fought to ensure military families have the tools they need to meet the challenges ahead.

In early 2020, the pandemic's impact on military families became a priority issue. Families had questions, and our Government Relations team pressed the Department of Defense (DoD) for answers to the most critical questions from military families around the world. In response, we created the first and premier COVID-19 information hub for military families, policy makers, and stakeholders.

Families stuck in PCS limbo due to stop-movement orders faced immediate financial concerns as they carried the expense of homes in two locations. We raised the issue with Congress, rallied partner organizations in support of a solution, and celebrated the expansion of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to include specific pandemic protections for military renters.

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At the beginning of October, the Department of Defense released its second annual report on suicide among military family members. For years, NMFA has pressed DoD to release the data so we can understand the true cost of war on family members. We are no more knowledgeable this year than we were last year. Compounding our concerns, NMFA knows that military families, like all families, are under increased stress due to the pandemic. We continue to press DoD to provide more current data and work proactively to ensure military families have the effective support and resources they need.

The Government Relations team continues to advocate for military families and tell their stories to decision makers and policy makers alike. In late October, NMFA and longtime partner PenFed Credit Union hosted a virtual conversation drawing focus on the state of the military family amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The discussion included key areas such as military family needs exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, innovative approaches to the challenges facing military families, including employment, finances, mental health, and housing, and the evolving role of companies, non-profits, government (Federal, State, and Local), communities, and public/private partnerships to respond to the unique challenges facing military families.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Together, We Accomplish Great Things

The National Military Family Association is grateful for the support of our generous donors. We're shining a spotlight on these 2020 supporters:



Since 1990, PenFed's support of NMFA has been integral in our Association's ability to improve our programs to serve the ever-evolving military family. PenFed is our 50th Anniversary Year sponsor, allowing us to continue impacting countless military families in 2020. Under James Schenck's leadership, PenFed has generously shared its vast network to spread awareness of NMFA and amplify our mission.



In 2020, Wounded Warrior Project powered our first ever "At Home" virtual programs—Operation Purple at Home, a week-long online version of our Operation Purple Camp. Because of Wounded Warrior Project's strong commitment and partnership, thousands of military family members have received the support (and fun!) they need in 2020.



Thanks to the support from Fisher House Foundation, in 2020, NMFA was able to award more than 100 military spouses with scholarships to keep their educational and career goals moving forward. Spouses who received scholarships thanks to Fisher House Foundation are using their funds to: pay for Physician's Assistant degree tuition, cover the cost of clinical supervision hours, and pay certification costs to become a Speech Language Pathologist, among other things.

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