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**Fort Bragg  
Survivor Outreach  
Services  
910-396-0384**

# SURVIVOR

## Sentinel

March– April 2021

### ***Gold Star Spouses Day***



***Gold Star Spouses Day*** has its origins back to World War I. The Families of servicemen would fly banners and hang them in their windows. These banners had a blue star to represent a service member in uniform. But, if their loved one was killed in action, the color of the star was changed from blue to gold, this color change would let the community know the ultimate price that Family had paid for their country.

In 2010, the first ***Gold Star Wives Day*** was observed. Two years later the Senate passed a resolution that designated April 5th of each year as ***Gold Star Wives Day***. To make it more inclusive ***Gold Star Wives Day*** was later renamed as ***Gold Star Spouses Day***.

***Fort Bragg Survivor Outreach Services*** is humbled to provide services to all our surviving spouses and Families. We honor and recognize your sacrifice every day and are ***here for you when you need us.***

## ABOUT THE BUTTONS

In 1947, Congress\* approved the use of the Gold Star Lapel Button as a way to recognize the families of service members who lose their lives while engaged in action against an enemy of the United States. In 1977, the Army approved issue of the Lapel Button for the Next of Kin of Deceased Personnel to honor those who lose their lives while serving on active duty or while assigned in a Reserve or National Guard unit in a drill status. Issue of the button is retroactive to 29 March 1973."

These small lapel buttons are normally presented to eligible family members prior to the military funeral service. Although they are less than an inch in size, they are packed with great meaning and emotion. They are not awards. They are symbols of honor. Here is how you can tell them apart.

### GOLD STAR LAPEL BUTTON



This symbol consists of a gold star on a purple background, bordered in gold and surrounded by gold laurel leaves. It is designated for eligible survivors of service members who lose their lives during any armed hostilities in which the United States is engaged, dating back to World War I. This includes service members who lose their lives while deployed in support of military operations against the enemy or during an international terrorist attack.

### NEXT OF KIN OF DECEASED PERSONNEL LAPEL BUTTON



This symbol consists of a gold star within a circle that commemorates his or her honorable service. The gold star is also surrounded by sprigs of oak that represent the branches of the Armed Forces. It is designated for eligible survivors of service members who lose their lives while serving honorably under circumstances not defined above. This includes service members who lose their lives while assigned to a Reserve or National Guard unit in a drill status. It is authorized for issue retroactive to March 29, 1973.

### Who can wear the button?

The family members of deceased service members who are entitled to receive and wear these symbols are the widow or widower; each child, stepchild, and child through adoption; each brother, half brother, sister, and half sister; and each of the parents (this includes mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, mother through adoption, father through adoption, and foster parents in loco parentis).

**The Tax Center will open on  
March 4, 2021  
for **SURVIVORS ONLY.**  
To schedule an appointment  
call 910-396-0396 or  
910-396-6113.**



**FORT BRAGG TAX CENTER**

**DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST FOR TAXPAYERS**

(Updated January 12, 2021)

*Note: Failure to bring any necessary documents or information may delay or prevent preparation of your return.*

Required documents and information you need to bring, as applicable. (This list is not all inclusive - when in doubt, bring it.)

- ❖ Military ID
- ❖ Social Security numbers & birth dates for all Family members
- ❖ Last year's tax return(s), including state return(s), if applicable
- ❖ Routing and account number if you want direct deposit of refund
- ❖ W-2s, All 1099s (-INT, -DIV, -R, -B, -MISC)
- ❖ Social Security Benefits Statement
- ❖ Educational expenses (Form 1098-T)
- ❖ IRA or Roth IRA contributions
- ❖ Child care expenses with provider's name, address, and tax ID number
- ❖ Charitable contributions, cash or donated items
- ❖ IRS Notice 1444, Your Economic Impact Payment and Notice 1444-B
- ❖ If you are itemizing deductions (probably not if you don't own a house):
  - Mortgage interest info (Form 1098)
  - Real estate taxes paid (may also be on Form 1098)
  - Significant medical, dental, prescription meds, or eyeglass/contact expenses
  - Personal property tax (vehicle tax, if not exempt in NC)
  - New/used car Bill of Sale if purchased in the tax year (sales tax)
- ❖ Power of attorney (if applicable)
- ❖ Divorce decree or Form 8332 (if necessary to support child dependency claim for non-custodial parent)
- ❖ Health care coverage information for taxpayers and dependents (Form 1095-A, -B, or -C)



**NOT TAXABLE**

- ⇒ SGLI and Death Gratuity
- ⇒ Commercial life insurance benefits
- ⇒ Continuing DIC and VA benefits

**TAXABLE**

- ⇒ Final Pay (on 1099-MISC from DFAS)-- "Other" income
- ⇒ Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) taxable for whoever is receiving it.
- ⇒ Social Security benefits MAY be partially taxable depending on amount of other income

**Federal Tax Filing Status:**

- ⇒ MFJ (married filing jointly)—first year after death of Soldier
- ⇒ QW (qualifying widow)—next 2 years, if there are dependent children
- ⇒ HOH (head of household)—third year, if there are dependent children

**Tax return for child (federal and state)**

- ⇒ Generally only if receiving SBP
- ⇒ May be required if child has significant investments
- ⇒ Federal and NC withholding on SBP
- ⇒ Parent can sign minor child's return
- ⇒ Tax Center may no longer be able to prepare returns for children with unearned income (change in IRS rules)

**HEART Act:**

- ⇒ Up to total amount of SGLI and Gratuity may be contributed to a Roth IRA
- ⇒ Time limit—contribution must be made within one year of receipt
- ⇒ Treated as Roth IRA rollover, so normal contribution limits do not apply

***\*\*Consider filing new W-4 and NC-4EZ for Federal and NC tax withholding, if you are employed.***



# **Surviving Spouse Tax Exclusion for NC Homeowners Primary Residence**

Honorably discharged disabled veterans, or their **unmarried surviving spouses**, may be eligible for a reduction in property tax on their permanent residence.

The veteran must have a service-connected permanent and total disability that existed as of January 1 of the year in which application is made, or has received benefits for specially adapted housing under 38 U.S.C. 2101.

If applicant qualifies, the first \$45,000 of assessed value of the permanent residence is excluded from taxation. To apply, file **FORM AV9**, along with **FORM NCDVA-9** certified by the US Department of Veterans Affairs with your county tax office by **June 1**.

**To obtain FORM AV9 visit:**

<https://www.ncdor.gov/documents/av-9-2021-application-property-tax-relief>

**To obtain FORM NCDVA-9 visit:**

<https://www.ncdor.gov/documents/ncdva-9-certification-disabled-veterans-property-tax-exclusion>

FORM NCDVA-9 must be completed and signed by the Office of Veteran's Affairs. (910-396-8472).

## **REQUIREMENTS : As of January 1 each year:**

- You must be a permanent North Carolina resident.
- You must legally own and occupy your residence.
- There is NO age or income requirement for this program.
- **Surviving spouses who have not remarried**, any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces qualify if:

a. The veteran's character of service at separation was honorable or under honorable conditions, **AND** the veteran's disability was a total and permanent service-connected disability **OR** who received benefits for specially adapted housing under 38 U.S.C. 2101.

b. They are a surviving spouse who has not remarried of either: (1) a disabled veteran as defined above; (2) a veteran who died as a result of a service-connected condition and whose character of service at separation was honorable or under honorable conditions; (3) a service member who died from a service-connected condition in the line of duty and not as a result of the service members own willful misconduct.

c. In the case of multiple owners of a permanent residence, each owner must file a separate application; if eligible, each owner may receive benefits. Husband and wife are not considered multiple owners.

d. This exclusion program can be combined with the Elderly/Disabled Homestead Exclusion program on the same property, only when there are multiple owners of the property - benefit limitations apply. Failure to notify the assessor that the property no longer qualifies for this exclusion will cause the property to be subject to discovery with penalties and interest added to all taxes due, pursuant to G.S. 105-312.

**Remember - forms must be filed with  
your county tax office once completed!!!!**





*Remember applying for scholarships **can** help avoid or reduce student loans. In addition, as you enter into adulthood there are things that you will need to complete for a continuation of your military benefits.*

#### Update DEERS

You will need to ask them to include your email address under your profile. This will allow you to create a DS account.  
Call 1-800-538-9552.

#### Create a DS Logon Account

Go to <https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil>



#### Create a VA eBenefits Account

Go to <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>



#### Create an account for your Tricare (app available to download)

Go to <https://www.humanamilitary.com/log-in>

#### Create a MyPay Account – (app available to download) (only if you are receiving SBP as a surviving child)

Go to <https://mypay.dfas.mil>



### SUPPORTING THE FAMILIES OF OUR FALLEN HEROES

No greater price has been paid than that of the brave men and women who died defending our freedom. And no greater loss is felt than the loss of a spouse or parent.

The Folded Flag Foundation understands the loss you have experienced, and the enduring impact losing a loved one has on your family. This is why we are so deeply committed to honoring their legacy by helping to provide a path to success for the spouses and children left behind.



### OUR MISSION:

The Folded Flag Foundation provides scholarships and grants for a wide range of educational needs – from kindergarten to college/trade school and post-grad – to the spouses and children of the U.S. military and government personnel who died as a result of hostile action or in an accident related to U.S. combat or stateside operations. **The application period opens March 1 and closes on May 15. Returning recipients MUST apply each year.**

### REQUIREMENTS:

To apply for a scholarship, you will be asked to provide:

- **Proof of Relationship:** Birth certificate or adoption certificate, and/or a marriage certificate
- **Proof of Eligibility:** DD1300, DD214 with accompanying VA documents stating service connected and proof of tour overseas. Deaths we cover include KIA, PTSD-related suicide, illness received in combat, combat zone/training accident, or wounds received in combat.
- **Proof of Enrollment:** Official letterhead from school or institution stating child is enrolled for the upcoming school year
- **Proof of Cost:** Official letterhead from school or institution stating each individual cost for upcoming school year (prior years' receipts will not be accepted as proof of cost)

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** College students are assumed to have FRY or Ch. 35. If you are not planning to use, or are unsure how to apply, please contact [scholarships@foldedflagfoundation.org](mailto:scholarships@foldedflagfoundation.org).

If you have any questions or concerns about the documents needed to apply for The Folded Flag Foundation Scholarship, please feel reach out to: [Scholarships@FoldedFlagFoundation.org](mailto:scholarships@FoldedFlagFoundation.org)

[www.FoldedFlagFoundation.org](http://www.FoldedFlagFoundation.org)

844.204.2856

### SCHOLARSHIP WINDOW FEBRUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2021

#### CHILDREN'S FUND SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES



Applications are accepted each year between February 1 and March 31. If March 31 falls on a weekend, the deadline date will be extended to the close of the first business day following March 31.

Scholarships awards are up to \$5000 per academic year (August 1 – July 31). If, after completing the acceptance form, it is determined that the awardee has an unmet need of less than \$5000, Folds of Honor will only disburse the actual unmet need as shown on the statement of account and will retain the remaining balance.

Scholarships are for one (1) of the following categories: private school or tutoring services (from an established, licensed business)

All application information must be submitted through the Folds of Honor online [portal](#). Documentation is not accepted via US mail, fax, email or over the phone.

Offer or denial notifications will be sent in mid-July. All funds are mailed directly to the educational institution. No funds are sent directly to an awardee.

Applicants must reapply each year they are interested in receiving funds from Folds of Honor.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

Applications are accepted each year between February 1 and March 31. If March 31 falls on a weekend, the deadline date will be extended to the close of the first business day following March 31.

Scholarships are for one (1)...a university; or licensure/technical program (all schools/programs are vetted for accreditation by a third-party foundation).

Scholarships can only be awarded to those seeking a first bachelor's degree (graduate courses and programs are not eligible).

Scholarships cannot be offered to those seeking a second bachelor's degree or a certificate/licensure program if they already have an undergraduate (bachelor's) degree.

Scholarship awards are up to \$5,000....not to exceed \$2,500 (minimum payment of \$250) per term. If, after submitting a check in it is determined that the awardee has an unmet need of less than \$2,500, Folds of Honor will only disburse the student's actual unmet need, based on their school account balance. Remaining funds will be retained by Folds of Honor and may be utilized by the student at another payment term within the same academic year.

Applicants must reapply each year they are interested in receiving funds from Folds of Honor.

All application information must be submitted through the Folds of Honor online [portal](#). Documentation is not accepted via US mail, fax, email or over the phone.

Offer or denial notifications will be sent in mid-July. All funds are mailed directly to the educational institution. No funds are sent directly to an awardee.

<https://www.foldsofhonor.org/scholarships/>

### FREEDOM ALLIANCE SCHOLARSHIP FUND



#### ELIGIBILITY

The Freedom Alliance Scholarship fund is for the children of military personnel who have been killed or permanently disabled in an combat mission or training accident.

Students wishing to apply for a Freedom Alliance scholarship should review the following criteria to ensure they meet the eligibility requirements set forth by the Freedom Alliance Board of Directors.

**FREEDOM ALLIANCE SCHOLARSHIP FUND APPLICANTS MUST BE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

The dependent son or daughter of a U.S. Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Guardsman or Marine who has:

- Been killed in action.
- Become 100% total & permanently disabled as a direct result of a combat mission, or suffered a major limb amputation due to enemy action. (Qualifying parent must have received an Honorable Discharge.)
- Been classified as a Prisoner of War (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA).
- Been awarded the Medal of Honor, the Navy Cross, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Air Force Cross, or the Coast Guard Cross.
- Been involved in a training accident that resulted in the death of the service member or caused an immediate inability to continue serving (100% total and permanently disabled).

**ALL APPLICANTS MUST ALSO MEET THE FOLLOWING ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR A FREEDOM ALLIANCE SCHOLARSHIP:**

- Currently in their senior year of high school, a high school graduate or a currently enrolled full-time undergraduate student.
- Under the age of 26 at the time of application.

If you believe that you meet these eligibility requirements we encourage you to apply online by going to <https://www.tfaforms.com/4659817>. Should you have any questions about our eligibility requirements please contact Wanda Cruz at [wanda.cruz@freedomalliance.org](mailto:wanda.cruz@freedomalliance.org)

<https://fascholarship.com/>



# Family Advocacy Program January – March 2021 Classes

## Make Every Day Your Best!

Virtual services available!  
(910) 396-5521

### Parenting Insights Classes

#### Active Parenting First Five Years

(9 am - 12 pm)

Jan 5 and 7

March 2 and 4

(1 pm - 4 pm)

Feb 1 and 3

#### Scream Free Parenting

(9 am - 1 pm)

Jan 25, 27, and 29

Feb 22, 24, and 26

March 22, 24, and 26

#### Positive Discipline

(9 am - 12 pm)

Feb 16 and 18

(1 - 4 pm)

Jan 6 and 8

March 16 and 18

#### Co-Parenting

(1 - 4 pm)

Feb 9 and 11

March 1 and 3

(9 am - 12 pm)

Jan 12 and 14

#### Radical Dad 101

Interactive workshop  
for new and expecting  
fathers, facilitated  
by experienced,  
battle-tested fathers.

(9 - 11 am)

Jan 27

Feb 24

Mar 31

#### Active Parenting of Teens

(1 pm - 4 pm)

Jan 19 and 21

#### Stewards of Children

Recognize and respond  
to child sexual abuse.

If your group or unit is  
interested, call the Child  
Advocacy Center at  
(910) 396-9700 or visit link  
on back of calendar to  
request a training.

### Life-Skills Classes

Contact us to have customized  
trainings brought to your location.

#### Anger Management

(9 am - 1 pm)

Jan 7

Feb 4

March 11

#### Couples Communication

(9 am - 4 pm)

Jan 28

Feb 23

March 25

#### Stress Management

(9 - 11 am)

Jan 14

Feb 11

March 18

### Additional Resources

#### Military Family Life Counselors (MFLCs)

Provides short-term, situational,  
problem-solving counseling services,  
and one-on-one life skills guidance.  
(910) 391-9171

#### Fort Bragg 24/7 Family Abuse Hotline

(910) 322-3418

To ensure the safety of guests and staff, class  
and event sizes are limited, face coverings  
are required to be worn in our facilities, and  
social distancing guidelines will be enforced.



Soldier Support Center, 3rd Floor  
Facebook.com/FortBraggFAP  
Twitter and Instagram @FortBraggACS  
Bragg.ArmyMWR.com/Programs/ACS  
"Fort Bragg ACS" mobile App (Android/iOS)

Looking for a money Savings challenge to try this year? Having the discipline to save money can be difficult. That's why making it fun is imperative for you to be successful at it. Savings challenges can help you do that. Money -Saving challenges are fun ways to save money without stress and pressure. Think of them as games, but the reward is becoming financially secure. These challenges are great to do with friends who can help hold you accountable for sticking to it. All you need to do is follow the plan and at the end you, you will have reached your saving goal effortlessly.

## 52 Week Money Challenge

WEEK	DEPOSIT AMOUNT	DEPOSIT COMPLETE	ACCOUNT BALANCE	WEEK	DEPOSIT AMOUNT	DEPOSIT COMPLETE	ACCOUNT BALANCE
1	\$1		\$1	27	\$27		\$378
2	\$2		\$3	28	\$28		\$406
3	\$3		\$6	29	\$29		\$435
4	\$4		\$10	30	\$30		\$465
5	\$5		\$15	31	\$31		\$496
6	\$6		\$21	32	\$32		\$528
7	\$7		\$28	33	\$33		\$561
8	\$8		\$36	34	\$34		\$595
9	\$9		\$45	35	\$35		\$630
10	\$10		\$55	36	\$36		\$666
11	\$11		\$66	37	\$37		\$703
12	\$12		\$78	38	\$38		\$741
13	\$13		\$91	39	\$39		\$780
14	\$14		\$105	40	\$40		\$820
15	\$15		\$120	41	\$41		\$861
16	\$16		\$136	42	\$42		\$903
17	\$17		\$153	43	\$43		\$946
18	\$18		\$171	44	\$44		\$990
19	\$19		\$190	45	\$45		\$1,035
20	\$20		\$210	46	\$46		\$1,081
21	\$21		\$231	47	\$47		\$1,128
22	\$22		\$253	48	\$48		\$1,176
23	\$23		\$276	49	\$49		\$1,225
24	\$24		\$300	50	\$50		\$1,275
25	\$25		\$325	51	\$51		\$1,326
26	\$26		\$351	52	\$52		\$1,378

**Saving Money**  
**Can Be**  
**FUN!**





# Isn't Technology Grand?

Now is the time to download these apps if you haven't done so already!



## Assistance at your fingertips with the **Fort Bragg ACS Mobile App!**

Available now for free download  
on the App Store and Google Play!

Rated **E** for everyone



Search for Fort Bragg ACS



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## MAKE THE **CONNECTION**

Find out what's going on in  
your installation for your family  
on the **NEW** Digital Garrison app  
on your smartphone or tablet.



DIGITAL GARRISON

POWERED BY

