

# VFW, Gratitude Initiative Collaborate to Support Military Families

*College Success Academy provides full-service college and career prep*

**KANSAS CITY, Mo. (October 23, 2019)** – The Veterans of Foreign Wars is proud to announce it is teaming up with Gratitude Initiative to provide vital support for the children of service members and veterans.

Co-founded by former Army Captain and Operations Desert Shield/Storm veteran, Lee Sechrist, Gratitude Initiative's College Success Academy program utilizes degreed counselors and an online environment to provide full-service college and career preparatory support for veteran and military children all over the world at no cost to the family.

America's military families face unique educational challenges, as children of active-duty service members are often required to relocate between six and twelve times before graduating high school. With more than 2 million military children having a parent on active duty, 66 percent struggle with academic and school-related issues.

"The VFW's more than 1.16 million members understand better than most the strains and hardship military life can put on not only service members, but their dependents," said VFW National Commander William "Doc" Schmitz. "The VFW's 120-year mission to support military and veteran families aligns effortlessly with Gratitude Initiative's work to ensure the children of our heroes have the support and assistance they need to be successful, no matter where their parent's service takes them."

"Gratitude Initiative is thrilled to join forces with VFW," said Lee Sechrist, co-founder and executive director of Gratitude Initiative. "Aligning with such an established, respected veteran service organization like the VFW will help us serve even more veteran and military families and their children with our college and career preparatory program."

The Gratitude Initiative and VFW collaboration will work to not only further the program's reach, but help raise awareness of the unique challenges America's military and veteran families face before, during and after their military service.

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**About the VFW:** The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is the nation's largest and oldest major war veterans organization. Founded in 1899, the congressionally-chartered VFW is comprised entirely of eligible veterans and military service members from the active, Guard and Reserve forces. With more than 1.6 million VFW and Auxiliary members located in 6,200 Posts worldwide, the nonprofit veterans service organization is proud to proclaim "NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS" than the VFW, which is dedicated to veterans' service, legislative advocacy, and military and community service programs. For more information or to join, visit our website at [vfw.org](http://vfw.org).

**About Gratitude Initiative:** Gratitude Initiative (GI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides essential education programs and college scholarships to the children of our active duty military, veterans, disabled vets, and those killed in defense of our country. GI serves families around the globe providing students from 8th grade through college graduation with the tools and programs proven to put young people on the path to educational and career success. For more information about Gratitude Initiative, please visit [gratitudeinitiative.org](http://gratitudeinitiative.org).

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