



ARMED SERVICES YMCA

ART & ESSAY CONTEST

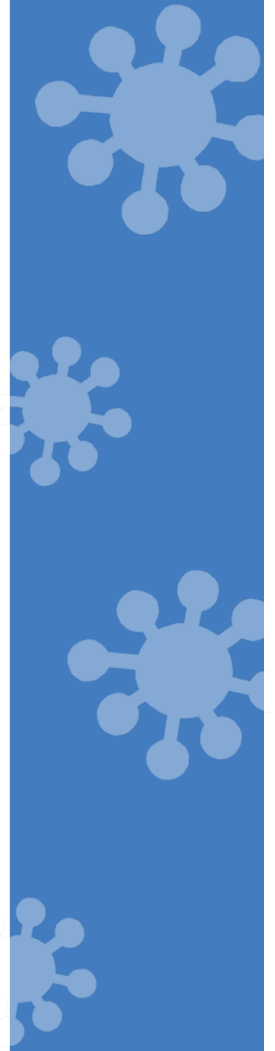


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

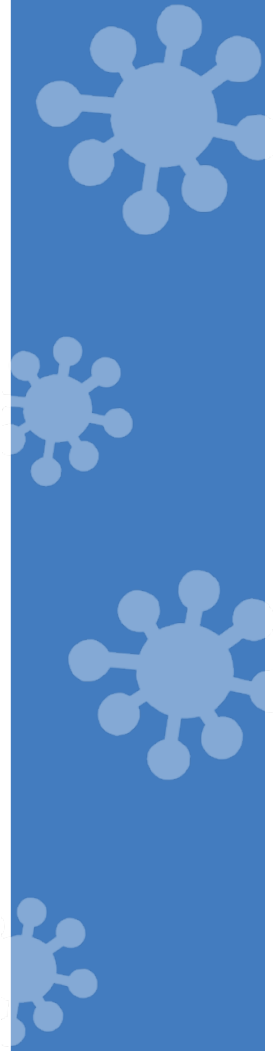
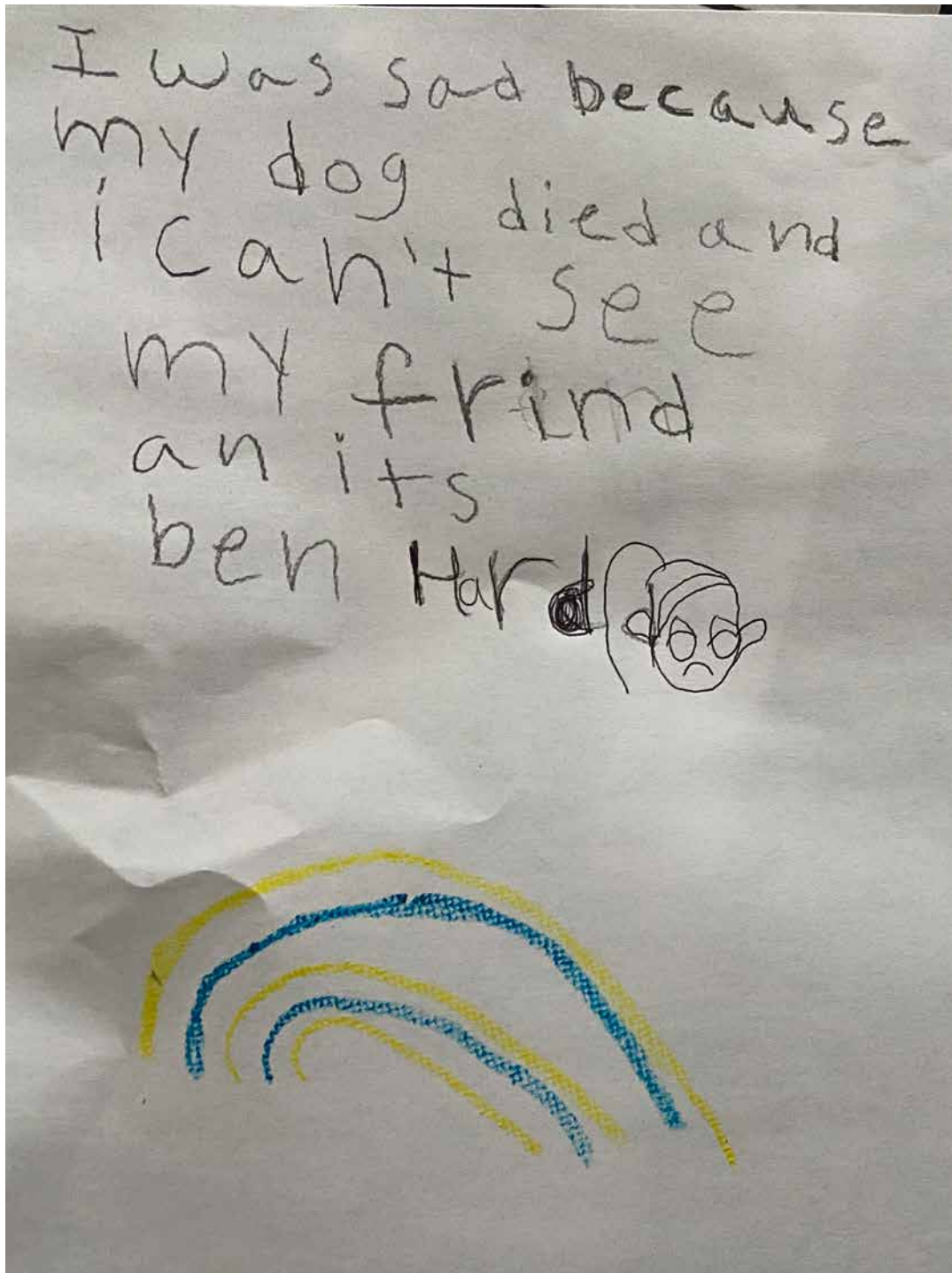


ART | AGE 6-7

Created By: Eliza Sauber, Marines



Created By: Airianna Constable, Army



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Kate Anderson, Air Force

What should we play before
I move?

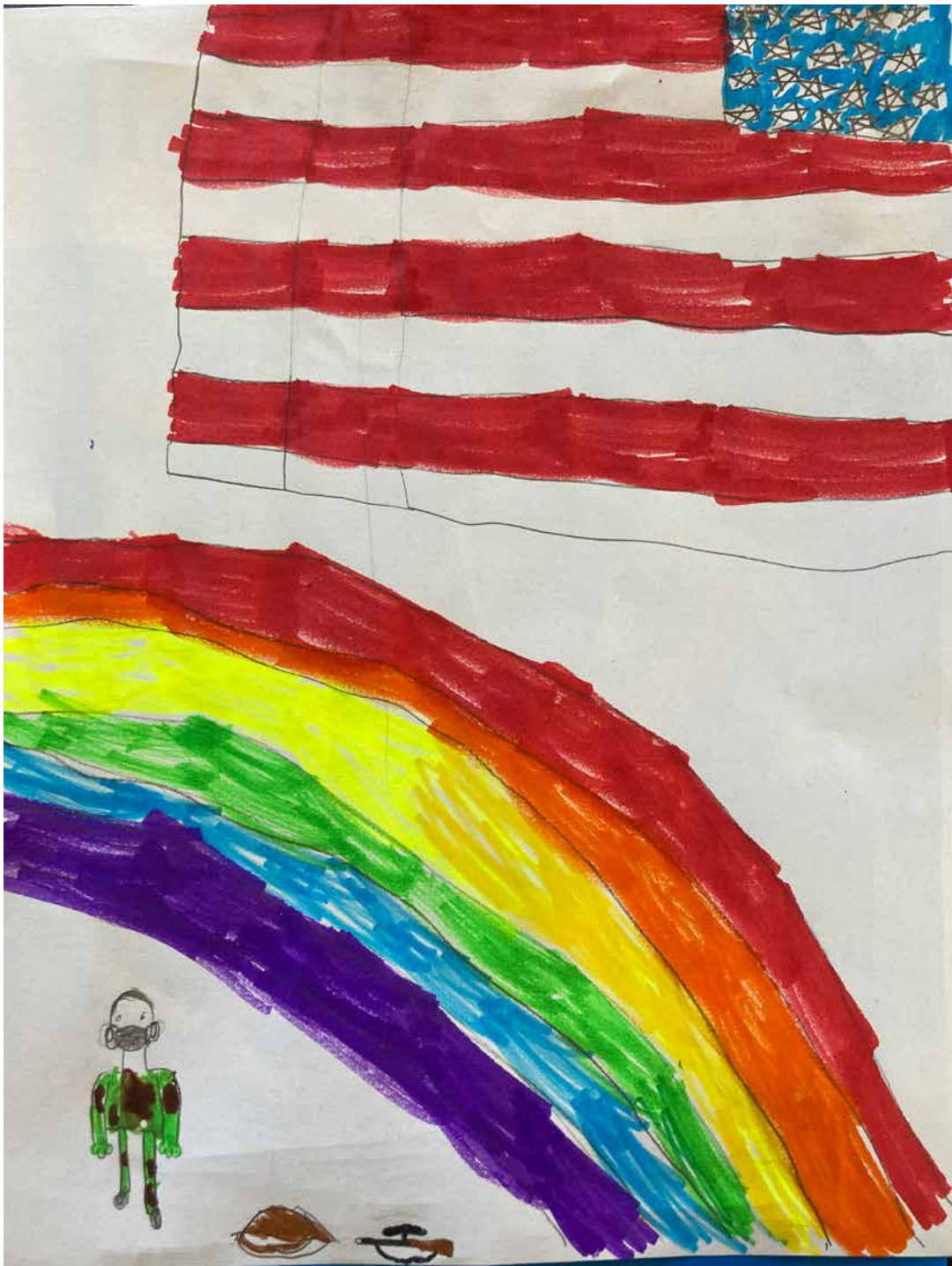
-Kate age 6



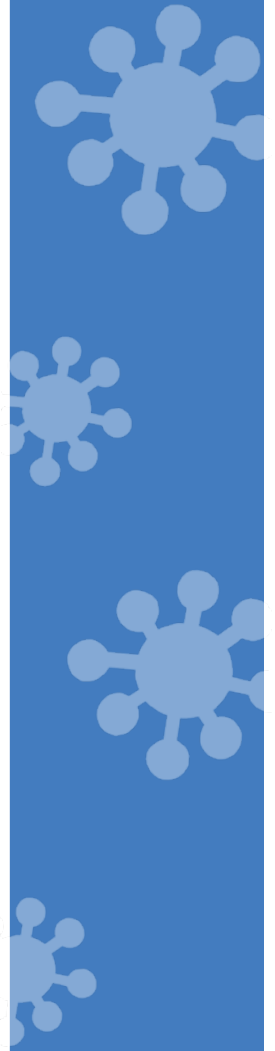


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Tucker Nicholson, Marines



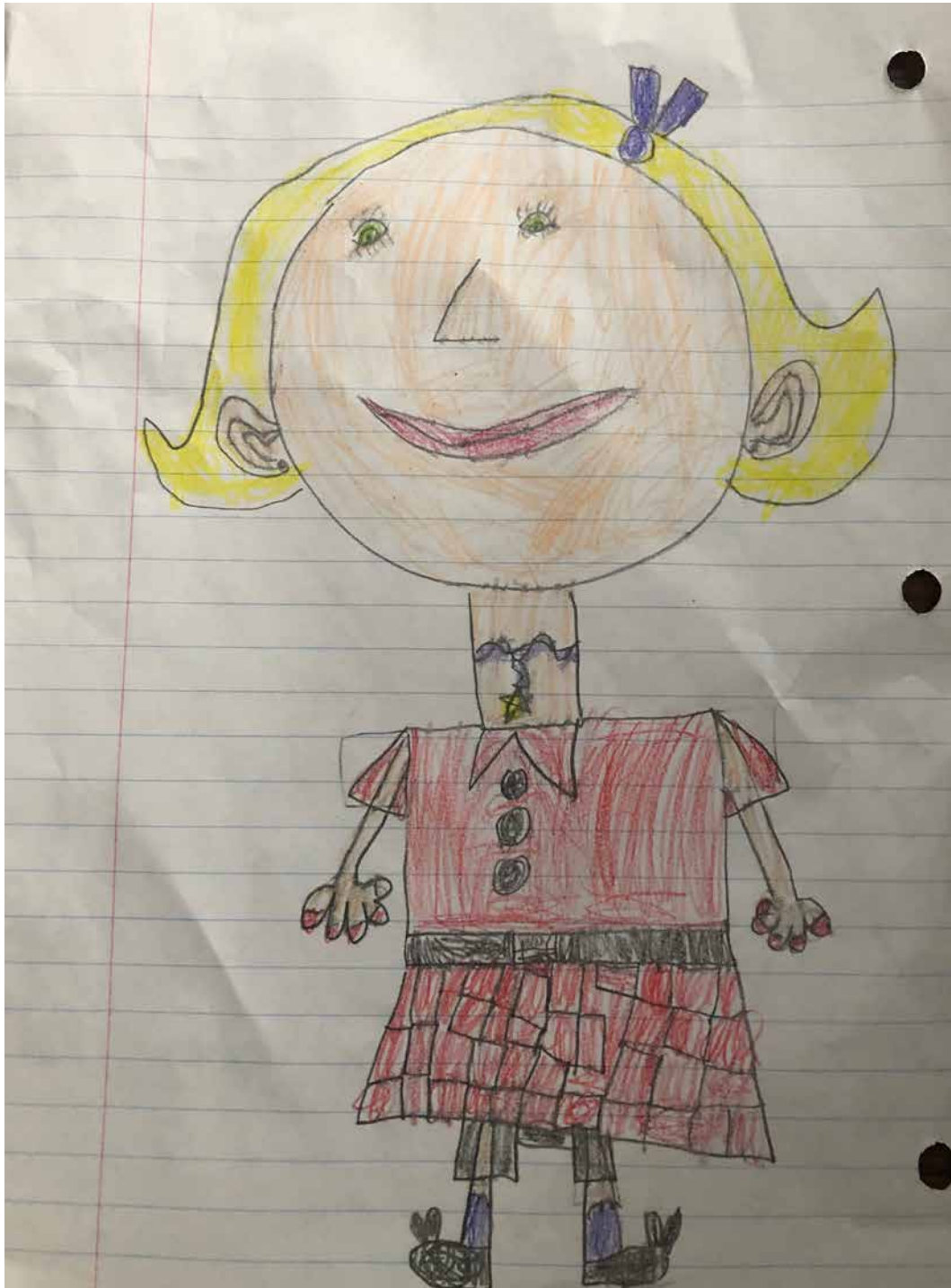
ARTWORK



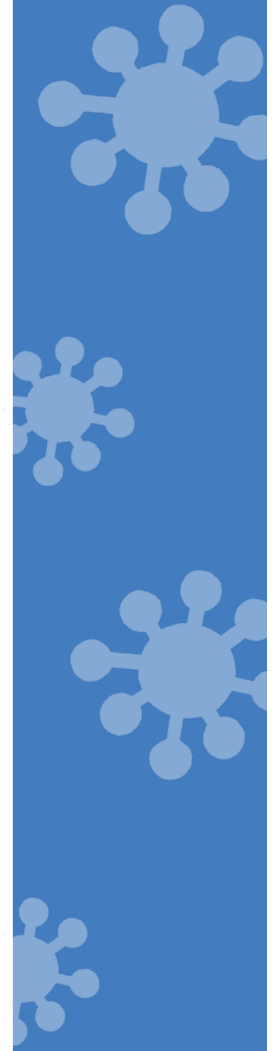


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Joy Janiga, Marines



ARTWORK



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Caroline Crowe, Army



ART & ESSAY CONTEST



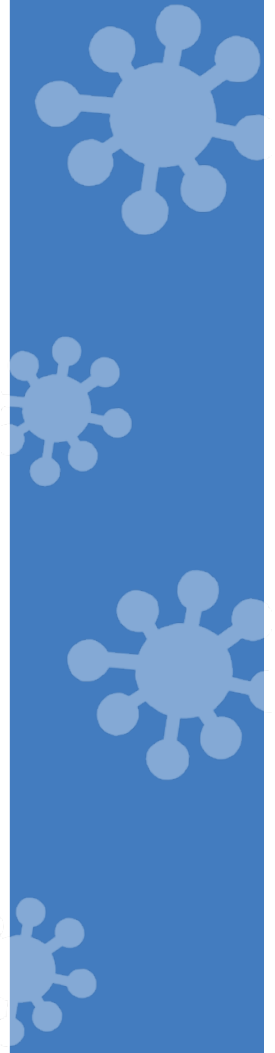
ART | AGE 8-9

ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Jenilee Ludwig, Army



ARTWORK

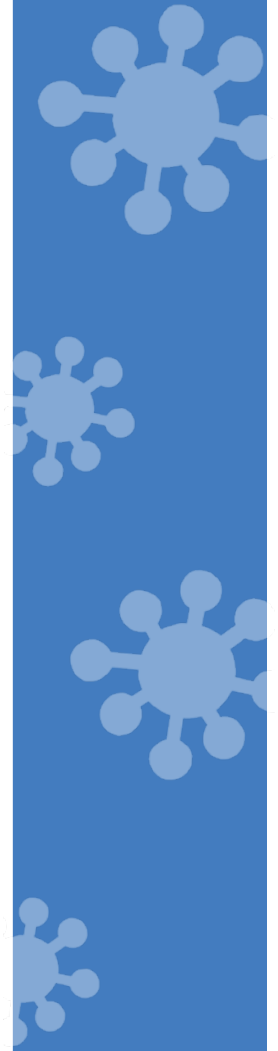


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Evelyn Diddams, Marines



ARTWORK



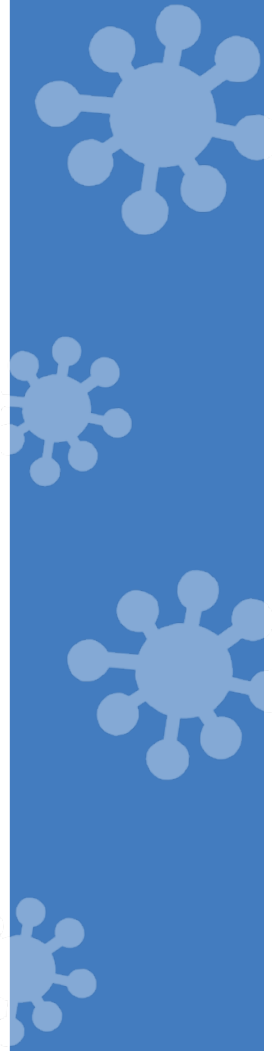


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Emmy Brow, Army



ARTWORK

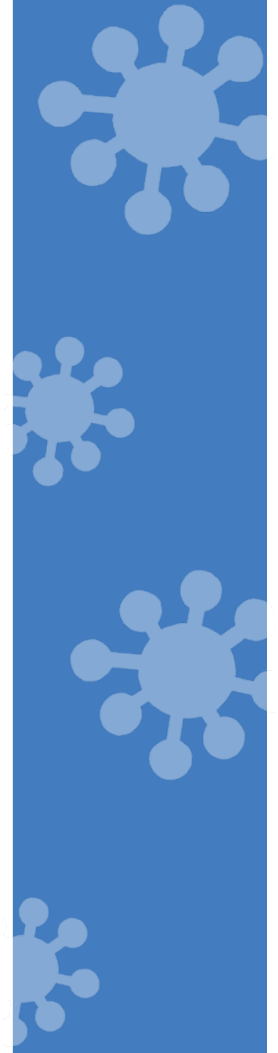
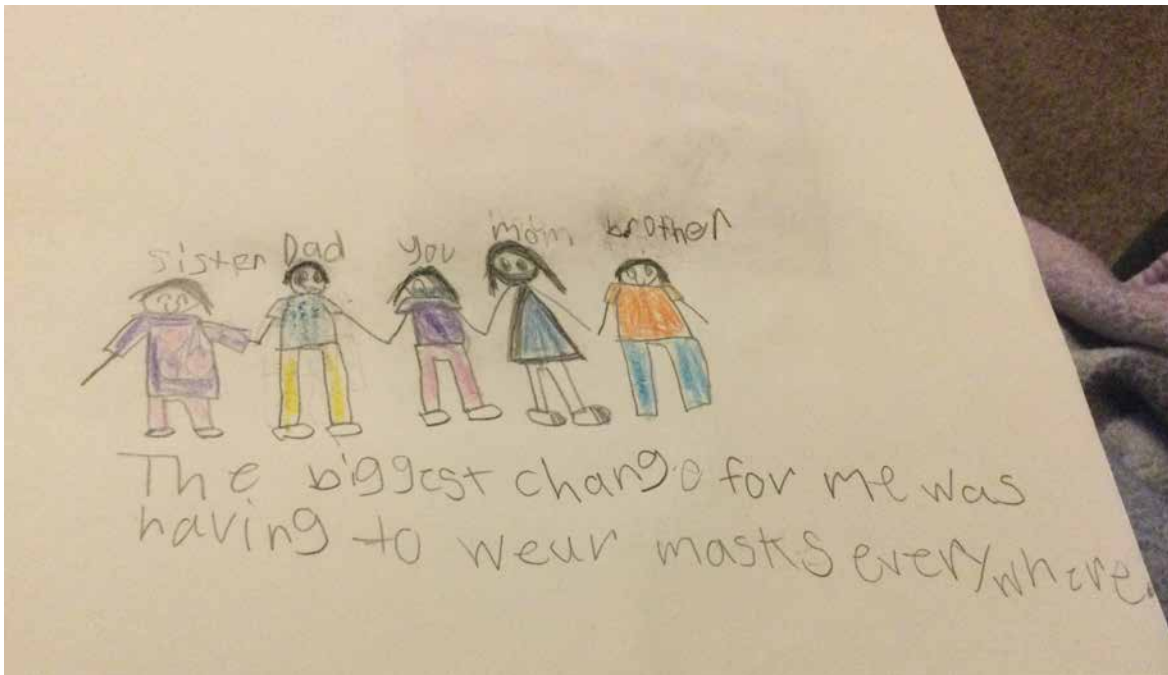




ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Layla Zapata, Army

ARTWORK

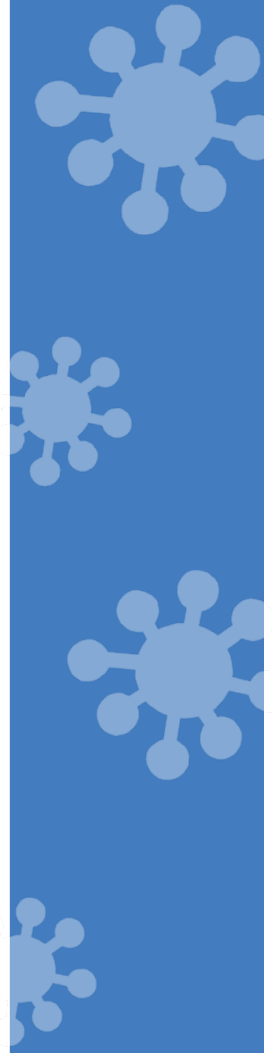


ART & ESSAY CONTEST



ART | AGE 10-12

Created By: Riley Nicholson, Marines



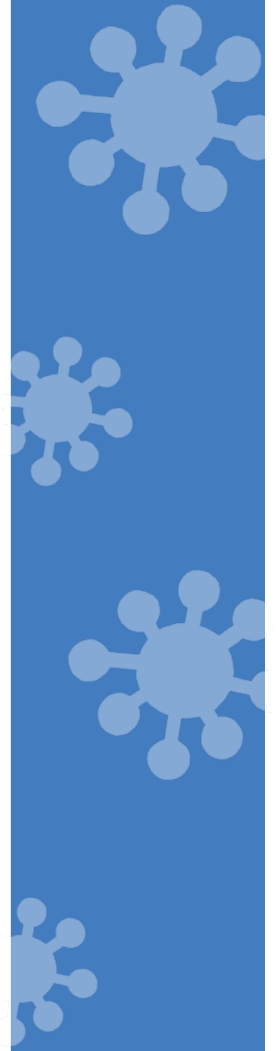


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Bella schauer, Army



ARTWORK



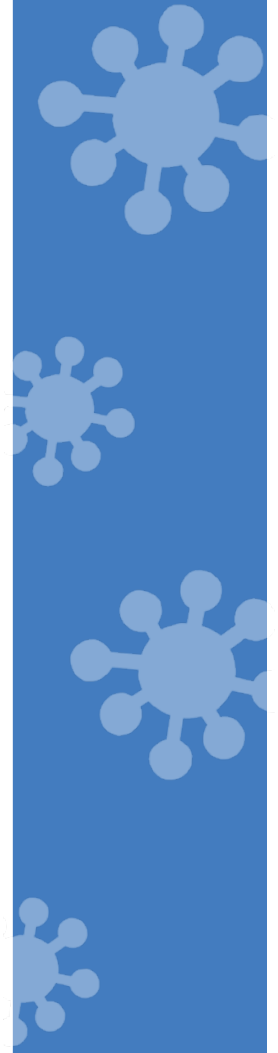


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Lillian Thompson, Navy



ARTWORK



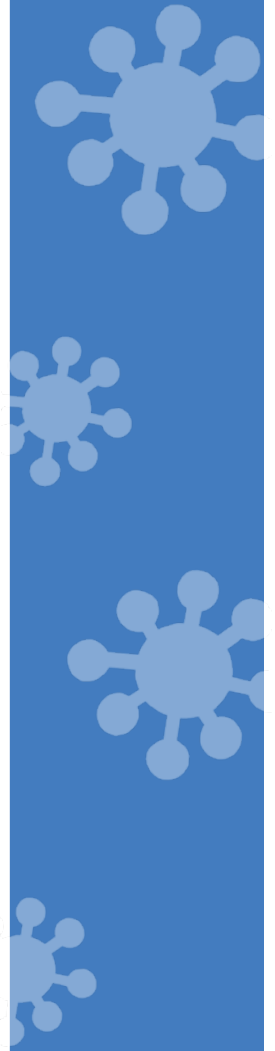


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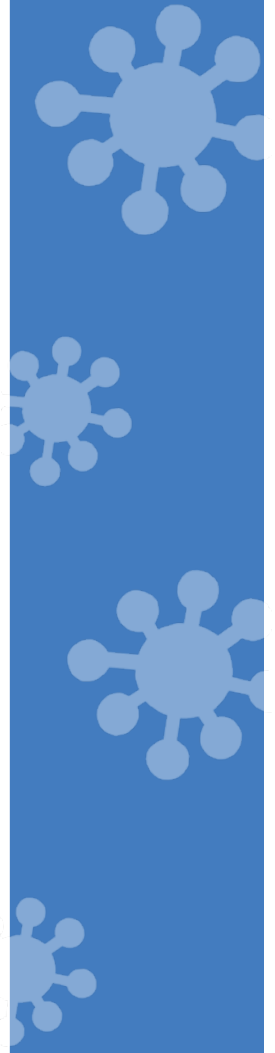
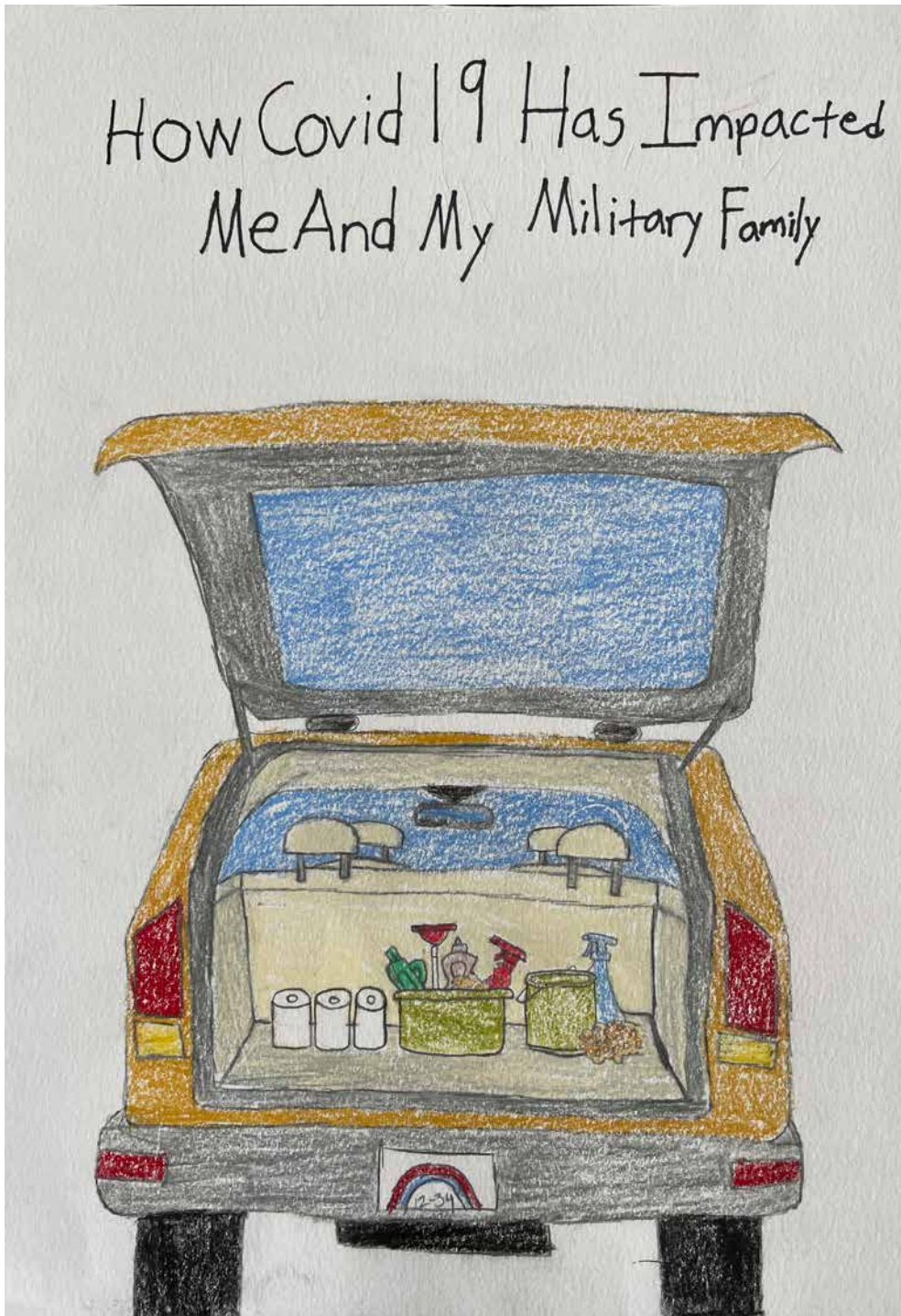
Created By: Emily Friedel, Air Force



ARTWORK

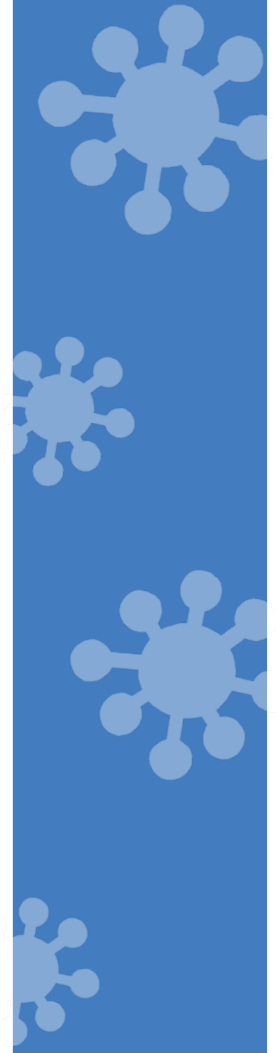
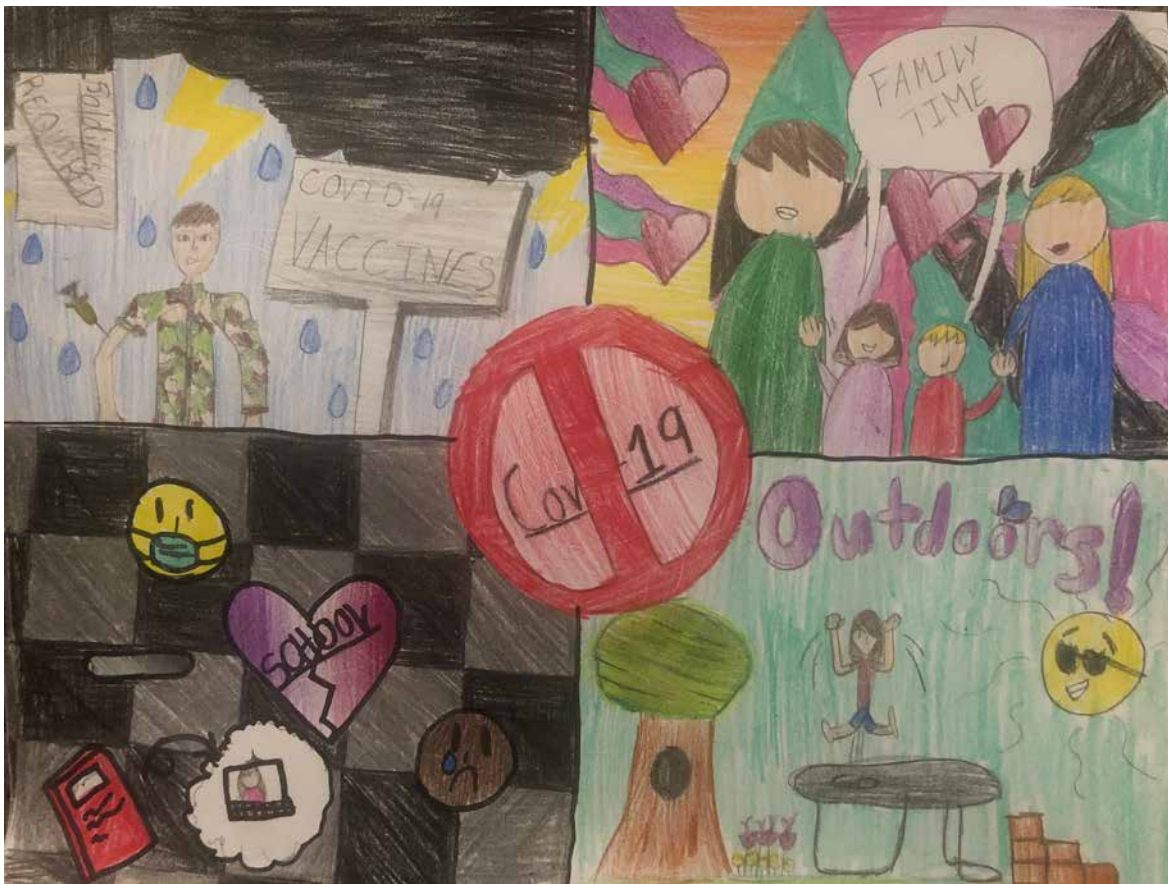


Created By: Alison Geyrozaga, Army



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: Livie Church, Army



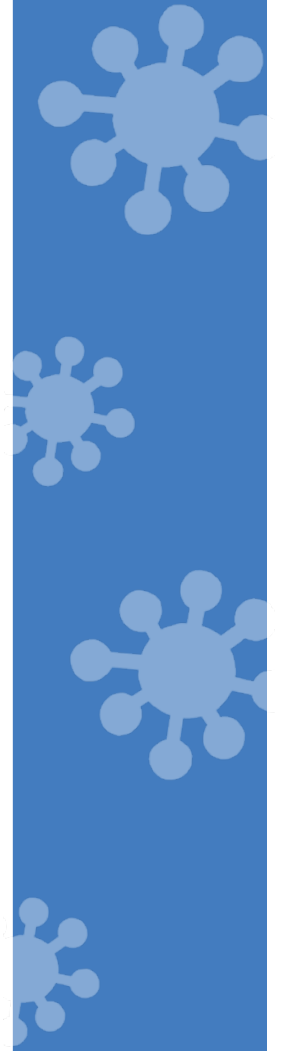


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Created By: fabian ortiz, Army



ARTWORK



ART & ESSAY CONTEST



ESSAY | AGE 6-7



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Grayson West, Army

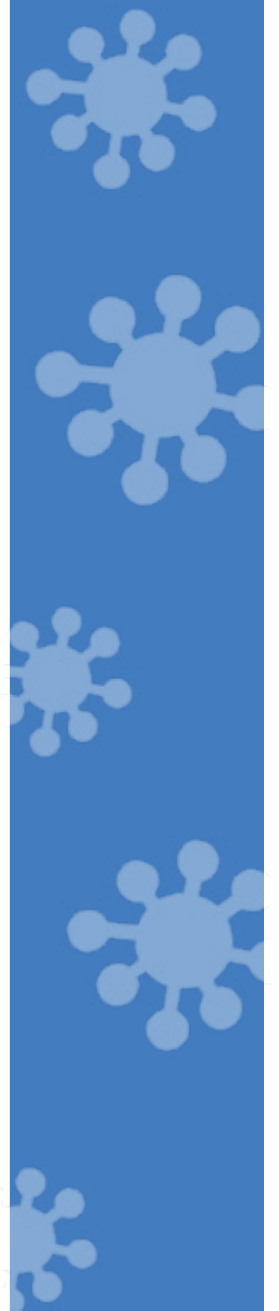
How Covid Affected My Military Family

Covid was hard on my family. Covid made my family afraid of getting sick. I was very frustrated when I could not see my friends. I was already homeschooled so it made me happy that I didn't have to be pulled out of school. I liked that I didn't have to go in stores. I loved my drive through birthday party.

Covid was hard on our family because we had to stay home. At home, my family missed out on going inside of Chick-fil-A, going to the park, pool, and Savers. We got a dog and had fun playing with him. Getting a dog made staying home easier. My family gave friends cupcakes on my drive through birthday.

It made me sad that Mom and Dad had people die that they loved. Covid was hard on my Dad because we didn't have a lot of family time out. Covid was hard on my Mom because it was hard to explain Covid to my brother, my sister and I.

Covid was pretty hard but this year is new.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Kate Anderson, Air Force

I learn at home now. It is more fun than being inside a school because I can have a lot of breaks, snacks, play time with my brothers, visits with my guinea pigs and lunches with my dad. He works at home now in our basement! I get a lot of visitors at my door. My friends knock now more than before. We play outside with our masks and have fun together. Dance class is in my living room now and I am getting stronger. I am moving to the other side of the country soon so I am playing as much as I can with my friends. Coronavirus does not stop me from having fun before we move!





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Maggie Turner, Marines

How Covid has affected my family

This year has been bad because of Covid-19. You have to wear a mask and sometimes people wear it the wrong way, so it can spread the virus. Because of Covid-19 I had to do school virtually. I did not like that. I did not like having to be in front of the computer all day, so my mom decided to homeschool me for 1st grade. Even though I like being home, I miss my friends, but I am glad I don't have to wear a mask all day at school.

I miss my grandparents a lot. They live in South Carolina and Brasil and I have not been able to see them. I wish I could get on a plane and go visit them.

I am very glad that I do not have Covid-19 so I don't have to quarantine. I am also sad for all the people that caught Covid and died, especially the old people and kids.

I can't wait until Covid-19 is over so we can all go back to traveling, playing and not wearing masks.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST



ESSAY | AGE 8-9



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Luke Anderson, Air Force

Smile With Your Eyes

Playing outside with friends instead of sitting in our classroom.

Doing school at the kitchen table means more time with mom, brother, and sister.

I visit Dad downstairs in his office, every lunch break is together now.

Museums are closed, but the internet is open.

Masks cover our mouth and nose, so we smile with our eyes.

A pesky virus can't ruin our fun, we found a new way to smile!





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Hannah Smith, Marines

Covid-19 has impacted my family and me by not being able to travel and visit family. We homeschool which allows us to travel year round whenever we want. However, Covid-19 has prevented us from traveling to see new amazing sites and countries all over the world. I really want to see the Eiffel Tower and Statue of Liberty. Additionally, Covid-19 has restricted us from being able to see relatives in person. As a military family we move repeatedly and often far away. This makes visiting family members special and important. Considering this, the virus has made it even tougher to meet with family. I haven't hugged my Grandma and Papa in 17 months. I hope I will get to hug them soon. Covid-19 has had a big impact on my family and me.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Evelyn Diddams, Marines

COVID AT ITS FULL HEIGHT

Cautiously we walk, for fear of getting sick

Overprotecting parents keep their children inside

Voices are nowhere to be found

Inside is a prison, we want to get out

Despair reeks the houses, send the vaccine!





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: June Janiga, Marines

Covid-19 and My Military Family

Covid-19 has affected my military family and I in three different ways: we moved across the world to Germany, we started homeschooling and we have more family time.

First, in July, we packed up our house because we were moving soon. We slept on air mattresses and I loved it. Soon, we flew to Germany. We stayed in the Panzer Hotel for almost 3 months. Finally, we got a house! We moved in with our dog, Elsa.

Second, we started homeschooling. At first, it was kind of hard, but soon I got the hang of it. I am very good at homeschooling now.

Third, I enjoy family time together. We have been on many fun adventures to castles, caves and fun German towns. I've loved the together time and weekends. I even went to the treetop ziplining course by the Lichtenstein Castle. It was very fun! I hope more people have their own family time because of Covid-19.

To conclude, we moved to Germany, we started homeschooling and we shared lots of family time taking fun day trips. Covid-19 has affected my military family in a positive way.

ART & ESSAY CONTEST



ESSAY | AGE 10-11



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Kamille Johnson, Army

“How has Covid-19 impacted me and my military family?”

The Covid-19 pandemic began about a year and a half ago which changed all of our lives and daily routines. It has affected all of us mentally, emotionally, and physically especially those who are members of the military including spouses and children. As a child of a military parent I have personal experiences of the difficulties of moving often than others, changing schools, and leaving friends behind. Traveling is now much more difficult than before because of restrictions of movement. The limitations create more delays PCSing to new duty stations which causes unpredictability.

When Covid-19 began people did not take it as serious until schools and the economy shut down. My mom stays at home to take care of the household she has daily errands to run such as grocery shopping, taking me to school, and takes me to my doctor appointments. My dad often work long hours and received a Covid test, one day the results came back as positive.

My dad was sick we could not go anywhere but my mom was always still on the go taking care of the three of us and also taking care of of my dad since he got

Covid-19 it was hard for her my sisters and I were scared to even come out of ours rooms (well not really my sisters since they just walk around the house skiing for stuff) my dad spent all day in his room sick coughing, sweating, and headaches. Remember my mom was still on the go doing online school with us, doing online school herself, and still going out and getting medicines for my dad. Until she started having some symptoms 2 or 3 weeks later.

At that point my dad started feeling way much better so we took her to the hospital to get her Covid test. Around this time Covid cases were skyrocketing and people still did not know what to do except to pray that the virus would go away and follow the guideline rules. We sent my mom to get a Covid test when she finally came out; they said the results are going to take 4-5 days to get the results. 4-5 days later she got her tests results back and they came back positive.

So we all had to stay home for another 2-4 weeks. It didn't really hit my mom badly since she was asymptomatic. She had a few coughs here and there sometimes she would feel really tired to the point where she did not want to get up. But the main symptom that hit her hard was her loss in taste or smell. Sometimes I would just check on my mom to see if she was okay. My dad mostly took care of us at this time since my mom was sick.

Weeks later, my dad was actually able to get back to work and my mom was able to get back to her regular schedule of taking care of us. We were all still careful and wearing a mask everywhere we went. I never caught Covid-19 which is good. My dad did sometimes have to back and forth from staying at home and going to work because sometimes someone at his job was sick and caught Covid. Sometimes my dad has to go to the field for 3- 7 days to train, that just left me, my mom, and my sisters doing things like cleaning, doing work, and playing.

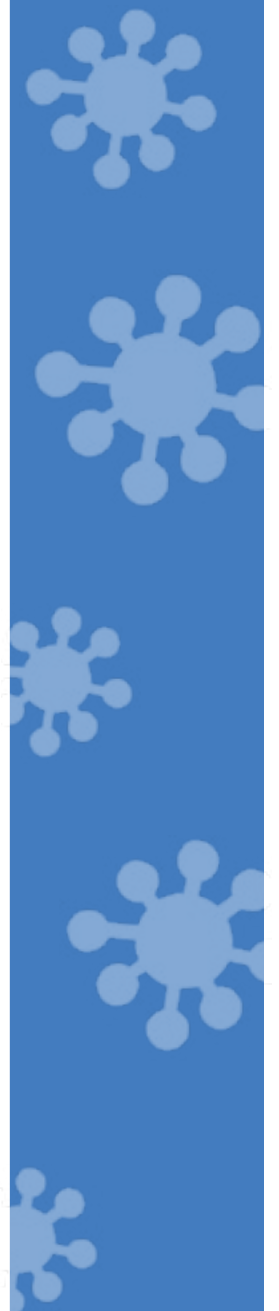


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Since my mom got done doing her online school it is easier for her to actually do things like take care of us. We also do a lot more things than just sit around in the house all day. We still go places like the mall sometimes there are only just a little bit of people there we still wear our masks and walk around. One time, we took a little vacation to North Carolina beach. It was a nice long car ride there seeing the clear blue skies and other cars. When we got there we played in the sand and in the ocean. By the look on my family's faces I could tell we needed a little beach vacation forgetting about work, Covid, and school and just relaxing for once.

To be honest I think Covid is a positive mark on families and basically the world. Not just the Military family but just the entire world what it feels like to stop and relax and hang out with family and friends once in a while. Families all over the world have created the strongest bond they can ever have (especially my family). Having family by your side makes you feel more like you are not alone. Some people live by themselves and still go to social distance gatherings just to make themselves feel like they are not alone in this pandemic. Family and/or friends what everybody needs in this pandemic to make them feel loved and is what family is for. So to sum it all up the moral of the story is: Family is for everyone.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Payten Collins, Army

Personally, my life hasn't been easy due to COVID-19. It's made things difficult for me and my family members. For me, it's been difficult to accomplish goals or see people without receiving weird glances or being told to have my masks on by everyone around you. Or even getting yelled at by people if you take a breath of air... I can't see people anymore or be more within 6ft apart with someone. I can't even go to school and enjoy hanging out with people without being told to be, "6ft apart." Now it's very difficult to communicate with people face to face. COVID-19 turned everyone crazy due to the fact of the toilet paper shortages everywhere. I feel as though people have been

over-reacting about multiple things. For example, if you take more than a sheet of toilet paper it's a crime; Or more than a sheet of paper towels, it's the same issue. To me, it's as if we can't just live normally in our houses anymore due to the world that's burning right outside our window.

As for my parents, I think COVID-19 makes their life just as hard. My dad is in the military and has to work at home which is stressful, due to the fact that there's a lot of background noise in my household. As for my mom, she works retail and has to deal with stressed customers, stressed associates, and being exposed to covid, then bringing it home. They can never do the things - like going on dinner dates or even going shopping anymore. Everything is always shut down from the pandemic so they never get a chance to get out of the house, a get-a-away from their kids.

As a whole family, it has been very tough. I can see my parents getting more and more stressed and since my brother has online college it just makes everything worse for him as well. His classes last until 10 pm so we have to hear his teachers and his lectures. If anything, we all just need a break for a while from being in an enclosed space together. This pandemic has changed our family into a very stressful situation that we have to deal with

However, the pandemic has had some positive impacts on my life. My family is home more often. We don't go out as much so we play more games. My brother did not stay in Maine to go to school, so he is close. Plus, my Grandma is a traveling nurse and now has a job in NC and lives with us.

To sum up everything that has been stated, COVID-19 has made a big impact on me and my family. I really hope that in the future that COVID-19 will be gone and everything will start re-opening and going back to normal. Even though there is a vaccine, it doesn't seem to be traveling fast and soon I think the problem might get bigger once again.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Charlie Anderson, Air Force

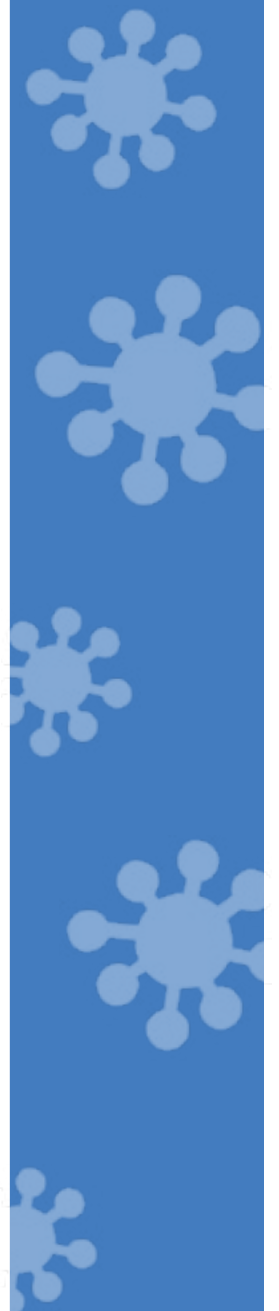
In person school retired,
Homeschool now.
Handshakes are expired
Want to high five anyhow.

Don't like the mask,
Stuck taking constant walks.
Virtual school is a hard task,
News reports have me in shock.

Quarantine is not short, they lied!
Less school work during the day,
I'm stuck inside,
Running out of ways to play.

Can't see many friends,
Nothing to do.
Still stuck inside,
Wish Covid was something I could undo.

Covid is like bad weather,
But don't worry.
We are all in this together.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Chloe Weidner, Army

Hi my name is Chloe Jean Weidner I'm here to write an essay about how covid-19 affected me and my military family. First my sister is in the army and now she has to take a covid test often but that's not it. Because of covid my family and I have to wear masks and I know everyone does also but it also affects home style birthdays and more. I am a bookworm but because of covid I can't go to the public library. I'm also an artist so when I want to paint pottery I can't because all of the pottery shops are closed but let's stop talking just about me. Covid-19 has caused my family delay's because of this we can't do things like when my sister had to go to korea but the plane got delayed which really sucked it affects there jobs and that affects are money towards bills, allowances, food, college and more. Covid-19 has also affected birthdays and family reunions now we can meet up enjoy new experiences and talk i mean yeah we have a phone but also it just feels good to talk to people in person there's a difference. See covid-19 not also affected are jobs but are living style now we are cooped up in the house going face to face 2 days a week it really has got us bent out of shape now we are always on games and our exercising rate has gone down we haven't been doing much sense covid. Covid-19 has some bright sides too like how when we're sick we don't miss a day of school. Now we have ways to keep going even if it's not in person. It also gives us a chance to read more books. Covid-19 has down sides and bright sides. It affected us all but we can't help how the world works but we can help what we do and say. Hi, I'm Chloe Jean Weidner and this is my essay of how it affected me and my military family.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Mackenzie Shafer, Air Force

How COVID-19 impacted my family?

My little sister Nova has heart problems. She was born early. So, she can get sick easily. That means we have to be very careful. We moved from Oklahoma to Nebraska. We had to stay in our house for 14 days (2 weeks). My dad has to work from home. We have to wear a mask everywhere we go. I go into school and we have to wear a mask at all times. We stay 3 feet apart and every time we go out of the classroom, we get hand sanitizer. They sanitize the playground every time someone uses it. We were supposed to go to Sea World and go to see our family, but we were not able to because COVID got really bad. My dad has to go on a deployment for six months. He has to leave 2 weeks early so he can quarantine. People think COVID is the worst, but if you think about it, when you are trapped in your house you get to spend more time with your family. ALWAYS STAY POSITIVE!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Riley Nicholson, Marines

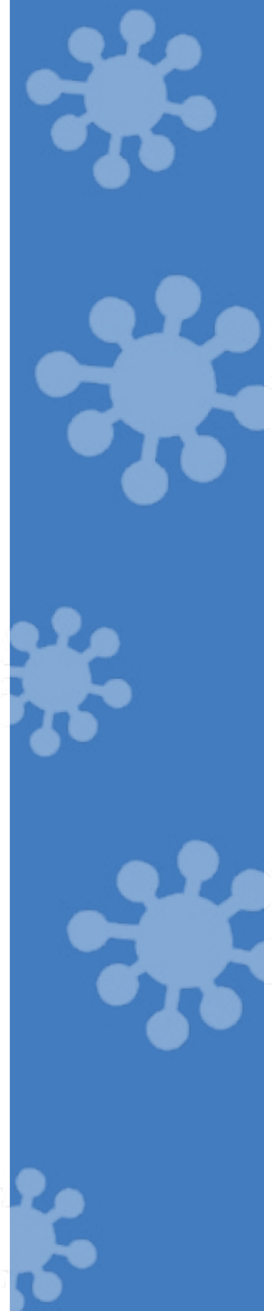
Bang! Covid-19 slammed the door in the face of the world.

Boo! Covid-19 scared us out of our wits.

Shhh! The schools and parks fell silent. Laughter gone.

Ring!! Ring!! Get on your zoom call

Covid-19 has had many effects on my life. When my dad went on a deployment he stayed really long because of the virus. When he got home we had to quarantine. Quarantine meant I couldn't leave my house. I was so excited when he got home, but I kept on wishing that I could play with my friends. It was so boring without them. Always awaiting for amazing outside adventures. I did a lot of FaceTime and Zoom calls in quarantine. Time moved slower than a snail. But it was fun with my family there. I realized that I am lucky enough to have my family here. My dad is doing good, I have to take this so he can help others. Just like military kids have to adjust to moving around, we have to adjust to COVID.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Addison Sauber, Marines

Creativity Beats Covid

Covid-19 has been terrible but also great.
No need to worry about time.
That's just fine.
No dates for moms and dads.
Whatever,
Kids will make that a fad.
We've also learned so much,
Especially not to touch!
Our immune system has really rocked,
Even though sometimes it's been hard to talk.
And those masks,
Allow all our families to still have a BLAST!
Sports have been cancelled,
So online things could be answered.
The world has found a vaccination.
Everyone thinks "what a wonderful creation."
Through this time that we've managed just fine.
By being creative we've found ways to have fun in Covid.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Emily Friedel, Air Force

How Covid-19 has impacted my family.

I am Emily Friedel; I am in fourth grade and ten years old. I live in Norman, OK.

I used to live in Virginia and in Virginia while Covid-19 first started the wildlife around our house went crazy!

There were some woods behind our house and in it there were lots of animals; deer, groundhogs, squirrels, foxes, and lots of other animals. Since we were always at home we could always look out at all the animals. There were even baby groundhogs and foxes under our neighbor's shed!

Our family also went on many walks to an old fort that had a park. At that park we also flew kites a lot.

Last summer I had to move, Covid-19 impacted me because when we moved last summer we moved from near Washington, DC and we had a tour of the White House scheduled, then it got canceled, it was very disappointing to my family and me. But, last year I had a really fun drive-by goodbye party.

Once I moved here, I was not able to really meet anyone until I went to school on the first day. But, my dad knew somebody, from the military, whose daughter was in my class. I benefited from Covid-19 because my school had a really fun back to school night and me and that girl met.

That is how my military family and I have been impacted in both good and bad ways. So, if you really think about it you have probably benefitted from Covid-19, even though the only way you think is that you have been badly impacted from Covid-19.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Lila Turner, Marines

How Covid-19 affected my family

The year of 2020 was tough. We were supposed to move to our next duty station, but when Covid-19 hit our country, our move was cancelled. Our school closed down in March, and we had to do school virtually. This was a very hard adjustment for me and my family. I am a Level 6 gymnast, and I was unable to keep going to practice with my team due to the regulations in North Carolina. It was so hard because I love training so much. We usually go down to Brasil for Christmas to see my grandparents, but we were unable to do that too. I really miss them. Learning to wear a mask was another tough thing. We had never had to do that before, so it took some time to adjust. My sister loves playing outside with her friends, but for the first few months, she wasn't allowed to do that because we were afraid, she would catch the virus.

Despite all the hardships Covid-19 brought, it also blessed our family in a few different ways. In August, my mom started homeschooling my sister and I and we really like it. Well, I do...my sister misses having friends and socializing. I love being able to sleep in and do school in my pajamas, but the best part is that I have no homework. We got to spend a lot of family time at home. My dad still had to go to work every day, but since my mom was teaching us, we got to be together a lot. I switched gymnastics gyms and found some great new friends and coaches. I got back to practice and even got to compete again. I also started a business called Lila's Letters. I set up yard letters in people's yards to celebrate different events, like birthdays, homecomings or retirements. I started this business to fundraise for my gymnastics competitions, but it ended up bringing so much more joy than we imagined...mostly because everyone was stuck at home due to the virus.

Covid-19 has affected my family in many hard ways, but also good. I am sad for all the people that died and got sick and hope they will find a cure for this virus soon.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Jarek Janiga, Marines

How Covid-19 has Affected My Military Family

Covid-19 affected my United States Marine Corps military family and I can tell you how.

First, we moved to Germany during Covid-19. We moved into the Panzer Hotel. During our three month stay waiting for base housing, we enjoyed hot cocoa and free fresh baked cookies daily! There was even a beautiful forest outside the hotel. My new friends and I built forts in the forest!

While in the hotel, we went to many neat places like: castles, caves and a few charming German towns. One of my favorites was a ziplining park at the Lichtenstein Castle. We were really high up in the treetops!

My sisters and I started virtual schooling. It did not work out for our family, so we switched to homeschooling. We had been in the Panzer Hotel for almost 3 months when the housing office called. We had gotten a house! We enjoy homeschooling and continue doing it now.

We have had lots of fun moments. If you think about it, Covid has more good things than bad. Our military family has adapted to Covid-19 well!

ART & ESSAY CONTEST



ESSAY | AGE 12-13



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Nathan Geyrozaga, Army

How Has COVID-19 Impacted Me and My Military Family?

COVID-19 has affected my family in many different ways, but we have been strong and persevered. My dad is a Chaplain in the Army, and this is our fourth duty station. I've been an Army kid for as long as I can remember, so I've had to say "bye" and "see you later" many times and it's never easy. My dad has deployed once, but many of my friends have experienced multiple deployments. It was really hard when their dad couldn't be there for birthdays or holidays.

In addition to military life, COVID has made life even harder by not being able to go to school and make friends. In May of 2020 we finished school, but couldn't enjoy summer or travel anywhere because of the military travel ban. Then in June, we got surprise orders to move and had to be there in two months. About this time, everyone else also had orders to move, so the packing companies were extremely backed up and we had to move ourselves. It was super stressful for my parents and my mom even cried when we couldn't leave on the day we were supposed to. Once we got to our new duty station and got settled, making friends was a challenge because people were reclusive and distancing themselves.

Even through these stressful and hard times, there were positive things that came from it. We switched from regular school to homeschool, which allowed us flexibility and more time to play in the afternoon instead of driving to and from different activities. We spent more time together as a family because everyone was home, especially my dad. We played board games, cooked new foods, and exercised together. COVID-19 has changed the world and made the challenges of being a military family even more difficult. But in these times of uncertainty, we need to stay strong, persevere and trust God that everything will work out okay.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Audrey & Lauren Peralta, Marines

Our Voices and Emotions as Military Children During COVID-19

Military life already has its ups and downs. As military children, we also experience some highs and lows. The effects have been stronger with the pandemic. My sister and I came up with the ABC's of the highs and lows of our current reality during our recent overseas pcs/move while in this pandemic.

	Highs	Lows
A	adventure	absent
B	belated	bashful
C	creative	chaotic
D	develop	discouraging
E	endurance	exhausting
F	faith	far
G	grateful	gloomy
H	home	hardship
I	inspiration	ignorant
J	joyful	jitters
K	knowledge	kindless
L	lovable	limited
M	memories	missing out
N	nice	naive
O	observant	odd
P	pleasure	pitiful
Q	quest	quiet
R	reinvent	regrets
S	solutions	sorrow
T	true	tiredness
U	unique	unknown
V	valuable	vulnerable
W	wonderful	worry
X	extra xoxo	extra days without HHG, restrictions, less outings
Y	youthful	yell
Z	zen	zap



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

These emotions became very real during our last pcs, overseas and with Covid -19. It was a very hard move, but the experience of being aware of our emotions and diving into a new culture has been uplifting. Covid -19 has taught us the strength in unity as a family. It has been a nice way to learn more about ourselves and our parents. It has given us the opportunity to be more creative and play/explore outside the box while still being at home. We spend more time together and we stay positive because we have each other, and we know history and memories are in the making. It has definitely taught us that there are things that will always be out of our control, but we have the power to practice being more positive. During this time, we also have become more aware of our actions towards the planet and spending of natural resources. Even though Covid-19 has been a rough time, it helps us remember that each one of us can make a difference.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Kacie Bishop, Army

How has COVID-19 impacted you and your military family?

Covid has impacted my family in many ways. It has had some positive effects and some negative ones. Covid has impacted a lot of people not just my family but here are some of the ways quarantine and covid have impacted my military family and I.

Some of the good things covid has brought is we have definitely gotten closer together as a family. We know more things about each other, but that has also gotten us to get annoyed with each other more quickly. It has also caused us all to have to do online learning, which has definitely been frustrating. We have also had to be socially distanced from others.

Online Learning

Online learning has been difficult to say the least. We have not seen our classmates in almost a year. We haven't been in a real classroom in almost a year. Overall it has been really hard to learn with the shortened class times, glitching, and the internet problems. Our mom has helped us so much, she helps us deal with the stress of learning and glitching. She also helps us actually learn. (She pretty much is our real teacher) I actually have to switch math teachers to a teacher I have never met so that will be pretty interesting. But I know my mom will help me with it.

My dad is at work for the whole school day but he still motivates us to work hard and get good grades. My sister is really good at school and doesn't really need any help. But my brother is only in 4th grade and still needs help with assignments and things like that.

We all miss going to school in person, I think every student has missed seeing other people in person and it's going to be tough trying to get back to our regular schedules once we go back to real school, but I think it will be worth it. To see everyone's faces and interact with other students will be amazing, and so much better than online.

Quarantine

We have all been really stressed and worried about everything going on in our world right now. Like BLM and the Election. But we're coping with it and hopefully we will get back to normal really soon.

Quarantine has been tough. There have been ups and downs like, for some positive things we have grown closer together as a family and we have gotten more time to work on ourselves. For some of the negatives, We have been really bored and annoyed with each other. We haven't been able to see many people, and our electrical bill has probably gone through the roof. Hopefully quarantine and social distancing will stop soon.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

After School Activities

My brother and I both have after school activities. It has been a little difficult with the changes they have made, but we are really grateful that we are still able to do them. My brother does soccer, hockey and lacrosse. He was able to do lacrosse when it was that season. Hockey was a little different. He has to wear a mask when they play but they still travel to tournaments and games. As for me, I dance. We have to wear masks as well but we still also got to go to our Showstoppers Convention. It was really fun and hopefully we can go to our competitions. Fingers crossed.

COVID-19

My family has luckily not gotten sick but we do know some people who have had it. My two friends Emmiline and Maddie had it but they are both fine now. My brother's friends' whole family had it. Our neighbor has also passed away from it and we still keep them in our prayers.

Overall

Overall I don't like covid and I really want it to go away. Here are some of my family's opinions. My sister thinks that COVID is all anyone talks about but she is still glad that we can get a break from school while my brother hates having to wear the masks and wants to go back to school. My mom and dad hate having to social distance from people and us not getting to go to school.

"There is always light in the dark, even with quarantine and covid-19." -Kacie Bishop



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Grace Martin, Army

Covid 19 you WILL NOT defeat me

Covid 19 had many Pros and Cons

On and on and on the list goes

Victory and defeat always go hand in hand, as do positives and negatives

In a world of imagination I have remained

Doing my best to escape reality

Never have I wished so hard to rewrite reality

In my world of imagination, I am in control

Now I see there were good things too though I saw them not

Today I am joyful, my father is home and we need not be separated as long as we used to

Even though life is dreary the world keeps turning and we try to find the good things in life

Every day when I feel there is no hope, and life is meaningless and empty I tell myself;

NEVER GIVE UP HOPE! FOR EVEN IF THIS TRIAL IS DARKNESS ITSELF THERE IS BOUND TO BE LIGHT
SOMEWHERE AROUND THE CORNER, IF ONLY YOU KNOW HOW TO LOOK FOR IT.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Katalina Burris, Navy

How Covid-19 has impacted me and my family

Covid-19 has impacted me and my family in different ways. Although we have faced difficult times, we just keep moving forward, hoping for the best. The worst moment was when I learned my father had the illness and had to be hospitalized. He was struggling but we couldn't see him because he was quarantined. We stayed with our grandmother while we worried about our father.

We didn't know how to cope if he died so we just prayed that he would live. He almost died but in the end, he overcame it and came home to us. It took two months before he came home from the hospital. I am so thankful to God for keeping him alive. A week after my father came home, me and my brother started online school which was hard because the workload for online school is beyond anything that we have come across in regular school.

Another reason why it was so hard was because my mother was deployed in Italy, one of the easiest places to get Covid-19, but thank god she didn't get it. One month later our mother came home from her deployment in Italy, I was overjoyed she was back home. My mom being home was short lived seeing as she had to go back one deployment for another year but this time to Rhode Island. It was different because we got to go with her, and because of that we got to spend more time together. Even though there were bad things that happened because of Covid-19, for my family it has brought us all together. It taught us to adapt and not be afraid, and that you have to find the good within the bad.

ART & ESSAY CONTEST



ESSAY | AGE 14-16



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Elise Riedinger, Army

“How has COVID-19 impacted me and my military family?” A poetic interpretation

Time before the terror,
the heartbreak,
this global disease.
Time where the worst
was packing up,
and sailing overseas.
Opportunities, they said,
to that I don't disagree.
But never did they tell me,
what opportunities I'd see.

I was promised a life here,
one full of adventure.
Adventure that birthed those
vowed opportunities.
For a time, that promise rang true,
loud as the liberty bell,
like a call, directly to me.

Little did I realize that call rang short,
simply a preamble to
momentarily please.
I'll never forget what that call awakened in me.

Buildings and lights,
culture of infinite heights.
I became privy to a world that had me believe,
maybe moving, leaving,
getting up in the night and sailing,
far across the sea,
was a gift,
wrapped in service,
stamped in sacrifice,
and packaged to benefit me.

I don't know exactly
when that gift became a weapon,
one that had to be
shaken just right to work properly.
But now I look back,
at the world before disease,
and I wonder how I didn't see it:
The demon, the demon
that wasn't haunting me.

Far across the ocean,
stuck in a hive with just those three.
My greatest loves:
My sister, my person.
My mother, my leader.
My father, oh my father,
my protector, my hero.
How haunted did that present leave he?

I became stuck in my bubble.
My adventure ran away from me.
My solitude became a prison,
but the real prison was far worse
than I could see.

With that bow of duty,
given above every want or need.
I was shown the true power
of isolation, of sacrifice,
of a patriotic comorbidity.

The disease keeps taking,
pillaging as far as the eye can see.
But yet it wasn't that global disease
that took something,
something not from me.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

He walks the hall at night,
shifting,
watching,
patrolling,
locking us in,
to keep us safe.
Safe from an enemy
that prowls in his dreams.

He can't run
from the shadows in his head.
The danger all around us,
is now tangible to me.
I look,
I see,
I feel the horrid danger
that this disease
revealed to me.

Sick is not the word I'd say,
but sickness I can see.
Sickness only heightened,
strengthened by this
isolating disease.

Camouflage can hide the man,
but yet the scars I see.
Uniforms can't protect the man,
the mother, the babies,
not from this disease.
This one lies far, far beneath,
incited by duty,
increased by sacrifice,
hidden for the safety of my mother, sister, and me.

The world around us crumbles,
cripples with this plague,
but there is another consequence that
symptoms lists don't read.
Affecting only those who were ready
to give their lives,
so that I can be free.

Free to see what troubles,
what trauma hides beneath.
This disease has hurt me,
because once blind, I can now see
the disease that makes my hero hide,
hide his demons from me.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Karma Burris, Navy

During the duration of covid me and my family have had many ongoing hardships. My mother was deployed to Italy before covid had started and had to continue her orders there until she fulfilled her time there. During this time my sister, dad, and I were all supposed to go visit her and take a vacation there, however, all flights were canceled due to covid so we were not able to see her. Since we could no longer go visit her and go on vacation our grandmother decided that we should go visit her in another state and she would take my sister and me along with our cousins and so we did. While we were away with our grandmother, my father who was still at home happened to catch covid. This was a horrible thing for us to hear. The vacation we had with our grandmother had to be shortened for us to be near our father to take care of him since our mother was still deployed at the time. We took the long drive back and my father wasn't getting any better. However, on the ride home, we got a phone call from our father and he told us that he was doing worse. He was having a hard time breathing and moving. We insisted that he go to the hospital but he declined thinking that he would get worse there were more patients with covid were at. So we booked a hotel near him and dropped food off so he could have things to eat but he got to the point where he couldn't get up so we knew we had to take him to the hospital. My grandmother drove him to the hospital and distanced my sister and me from him to keep us from contact covid too. When entering the hospital my grandmother was not allowed in because of the large number of covid patients and my father had to go by himself. My grandmother would get reports of what was happening to him in the hospital and they said he needed to be in a special room because his respiratory system was doing horrible. They weren't too sure if he was going to survive. We stayed at home while he was at the hospital and gradually he got better. During this time we also had to attend school online which was difficult because it was something that we have never done before. It took two months for him to get better and he lost 30 pounds in the process. Soon after he was discharged, my mom returned from Italy and had to quarantine because she came from a different country. When my dad was finally feeling good and my mother got back we thought everything would be back to normal but Covid is still raging, and we have to be careful, can't even be with our friends or live a normal life as before.

ART & ESSAY CONTEST



ESSAY | AGE 17-18



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Charlotte Lee, Army

How COVID-19 Has Affected My Military Family:

The COVID-19 pandemic that all the world is currently experiencing has affected everyone in different ways. Millions of people have lost loved ones and careers or struggled through our fully virtual world. My family is very blessed, as we have not contracted the virus or lost anyone due to it, though it has had strain on our lives. During this pandemic, it is so easy to focus on all the negatives and unpleasant things that have come along with it. For my military family and me though, there are some positives that are almost impossible to ignore.

Last February, right before the pandemic hit, my father returned home from his yearlong deployment in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The year without each other had changed us all; my mother had a new job, my sister turned 14 and got her first job, and I turned 17 and had matured significantly. My father was coming home to a completely different environment and adjusting to living together again after a year was exceedingly difficult on the four of us. I did not remember what life with my father was like, and I was terrified of adjusting again.

But then- weeks after his return the pandemic hit. Us, along with everyone else in the world quarantined at home for the next few months. During quarantine, the four of us spent just about every waking second together. Everything we did together, whether it was a hiking daytrip, or a "Criminal Minds" marathon was precious to me. Being around my father so much was refreshing, as we had not had time together in so long. The prolonged time together gave us the opportunity to make up for all the missing time and things we had missed during the last year. The transition became much easier than it had been during past deployments, as we had so much time to reacquaint ourselves.

Growing up with my father in the army reserves, I am used to him being away often, but the pandemic put a pause on this chaotic lifestyle. Between deployments, drill, and his day job as a police officer, it felt as though I never saw him. He has not been able to go away since February, and it has truly strengthened my family. I cherish the amount of time I have been able to spend with my family and the memories we have made that I will remember well into my adulthood.

Almost a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, my military family is closer than we have ever been previously. Though there have been hard times for us, I am greatly confident in the fact that we are a stronger and more loving family after enduring a deployment and a pandemic back-to-back. Overall, I feel as though there are an overwhelming number of positive ways in which the pandemic has affected the relationship within my military family.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Cameron Webb, Navy

Art- it's been a part of my life for years- no... longer my entire life. Art is how I describe myself, I'm an artist. I love doing it and after college I want to do it for a living. Just the ability to be able to tell stories and communicate absurd ideas with my hands is just such a cool thing to me. So how did I come to be this way? I mean I most definitely wasn't born an artist, so something had to happen that made me have this passion... right? Well I'm not too sure... too be honest I'm still looking for the answers for myself. My journey so far from birth to finding my true passion was and has been a ride of a lifetime, and though it's not over yet I'm excited to see what's next.

September 30th, 2003. My mother gave birth to me on this day, and though I don't know the exact time I know that on this day I would start my journey in finding myself. My earliest memories I have of art actually didn't start with drawing, it instead started with crafts- Mainly origami and other paper things. I remember I would try my hardest to "wow" my classmates with origami cranes, claws, and cubes. I would even take "commissions" for people if they wanted something made. My mother actually has a video of me when I was around 5-6 teaching you how to make an origami cube. Eventually in around 7-8 I started playing with cardboard and hot glue. I remember one day I was building a cardboard knife to use as a prop and I had accidentally spilt some of the glue on my leg (straight from the gun). I hurt- a lot, I still have the scar today; but I look at it as a token of my hard work. But even with all the beginning passion and fun I had I didn't end up taking the crafts route to the fullest, I instead took the route of drawing, because of a discovery that would change my entire life.

One day while browsing Youtube I had found these speedarts, but... they were done digitally. I thought to myself "Are they drawing digitally?"- And it was at that moment when I realized that digital art is my calling. Computer's have always been a big part of my life and so has art, put two and two together and we have a perfect match! And thus opened the door of digital art for me, having this realization brought me to a world of new possibilities! Different types of arts, different types of styles, different types of artists, and so forth. It was a blast to discover all that for the first time. I jumped right into it- had my mother buy me a drawing tablet in 6th grade for my birthday; and I started drawing!. It Was hard- way harder than I expected. But I had a blast for those first couple of years of messing around



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Mattie Sumner, Marines

I WALK ALONE

I walk alone, through the desert, where dreams die. Hopes, not even this world could ever satisfy.
Through the valley, where passion fails,
To the bridge of loss, fallen from no side rails.
Through the mountain of the future, torn down by my past. To the river of pain, that flows too fast.
I walk alone.
To the house of loneliness. Past the ally of messiness, Down the lane of brokenness,
from being sad on depression street,
to my heart burning on a road called heat. I walk alone.
On the waves of a vast ocean, where my feet fail to reach,
onto the shore of a happy beach. I walked alone.
I walk now with a God who won't ever let go.
I walk now with the new family I have come to know. I walk now with confidence, I never knew I had.
I walk away from the labels that covered me, stupid, ugly, wrong, and bad. I now walk to my future in which I'll
never have to walk alone again.
Because I know how it felt to walk alone back then.
I walked alone.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Kaitlynn Anderson, Marines

Although many families across the world have had to adjust their day to day lives because of COVID-19, my family has had to take extra precautions due to my stepmom having hypogammaglobulinemia. Hypogammaglobulinemia is an immunodeficiency disorder that prevents the immune system from creating antibodies called immunoglobulins, which are crucial to fighting off viruses. In order to protect her, we've had to take extra precautions such as working from home, wearing double masks and gloves when grocery shopping, wiping all groceries down prior to having them enter our home, not attending holiday family gatherings and of course, opting to continue virtual school instead of hybrid. When my father has to visit different cities for work, he has to quarantine prior to coming into our home and when he does come home; we disinfect his belongings. Though not being able to see friends and family has been difficult for my siblings and I, it has grown us all closer to one another than we previously have been and has allowed me to provide a social outlet for them. Since I am 5 years older than my youngest brother, COVID-19 has given us an amazing opportunity to spend time together prior to me leaving for college. Additionally, I have been able to provide extra help for him when he doesn't understand a topic. COVID-19 showed me the importance of being responsible for my education. With having to attend school virtually, I have learned more about how I information, have grown more accustomed to the importance of having open lines of communication with teachers and administrators and have taught myself how to be proactive rather than reactive. Despite being virtual, I have maintained A's and B's and been able to assist other classmates and my little siblings via tutoring. Though COVID-19 has caused my life to change drastically and rapidly, it has shown me how resilient my family and I are and has proven to me that I can adapt to new situations, maintain good mental health, and continue to excel in school.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Ryan Doucette, Coast Guard

A mere two weeks before the world changed before our eyes, I was halfway across the country, living life to the fullest. I had no reason to believe that I would be writing about my experiences coping and overcoming a global pandemic within a year's time, yet here we are. The experiences that followed last March would forever be ingrained in our world's, nation's, community's, and my memories.

Reminiscing on the world before Covid-19 is a feeling akin to therapy, a necessary assistance to cope with the immense loss of life. For me, I remember that as cases began to rise across the United States and even more directly within our community, I experienced the loss of my grandfather – not of Covid-19, but other ailments. This feeling dominated much of what I remembered from last March, much of everything else seemed distant from my reality. The loss inevitably distracted me from the toilet paper craze or similar pandemic-induced phenomenon around me.

For many, including myself, we saw our education disrupted and our future plans forever altered. We saw the vulnerability of ailing health, a striking reminder that every day is a blessing. We saw the ingenuity that we all possess to be active members and problem solvers within our community. Similarly, we saw the power that an individual's empathy can go in the lives of someone struggling.

However, as life seemingly changes around us, some did not see this abrupt shift. My father was not able to sit at home idly by as the pandemic cleared out workplaces. His service in the Coast Guard required him to go to work everyday and because of that, I learned a great deal about commitment – and the subsequent sacrifices. His expected orders were issued in December and the normalcy of military life remained.

As we slowly work our way out of this pandemic with more community members receiving a shot in their arms, we will see time pick up again, but that does not mean we need to resume the lives that we lived the day before the world shut down around us on March 12th. We have all learned greatly from this experience and it is ever-so-important for all of us to embrace the lessons learned over the past twelve months.

It is my hope that we learn to pause the craziness of life. Put things into perspective every once and a while. Appreciate the small things. Appreciate the big things. Count our blessings. And hold no malice to our adversity. Because like so many generations before us, we have experienced our own once-in-a-lifetime event truly worth never forgetting.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Emily Scheuerman, Navy

How Covid-19 Impacted Me and My Family?

It has been extremely hard I feel like for everyone during the past few months. Even though we have all had a tough time it is worse for different families. It has been hard for my family because we have not been able to do anything normal. It has made us grow closer together because we have been spending more time together. Finally, it has changed everything that we do, and we have not been going out as much because a lot of places are not open.

The main thing that has been going on is that when we started school again, I knew that it would be different. This is meaning that we can still go to school, but we will have to split up everyone into two groups so that we can keep going to school and being safe. This has been hard to do is that we all must do things different so that we can keep others safe. If anything, it is going to be hard, but I know that my family will always be there for me and will help with anything that is bothering me. My family has had to make a lot of changes to what we are doing like changing where we are working and doing school at home. Lastly, my family is always going to be there for me that I know but if this goes on, we will only grow closer together because we are spending more time with each other.

After everything that has happened, I know that everyone will love their family more I know that I will. Also, I have known that my family is always there, but it has helped a lot to know that they will always help me when I need it. That is why even though things are hard my family has not changed very much because we have always been able to look after each other. With everything that has happened in the world has not changed for my family only because we have not been doing much before everything shut down. The final thing is that if things start to go back to normal nothing will change for my family because we are not going to be doing anything outside of where we live.

In many ways everyone should always know who they are closest to them because it be better when you cannot see anyone else that they know because of everything that is happening. For a while I have not been able to see some of my family because of everything that is going on. It has been hard because I have not seen them in a while, but I know that eventually everything will be somewhat normal, and we can all get together and spend sometime together. If anything, I can always talk to them on the phone but that is not the same thing as seeing them in person. Finally, we should always make sure that everything is alright with family that you cannot see right now but it is good to find out how that they have been doing.

In conclusion, everyone should make sure that they are now how much their family knows that you care about them even though you cannot see everyone in your family. In many ways all families must have grown closer together I know that I have grown closer to my family because they are always there for me when I need them. I know that I will always be there for my family and they will always be there for me. Some things that have happened is that we have been eating at home more together and are able to talk to each other more because of places being closed. The last thing is that we should all be grateful that we have some more time to spend with family even when things are hard.

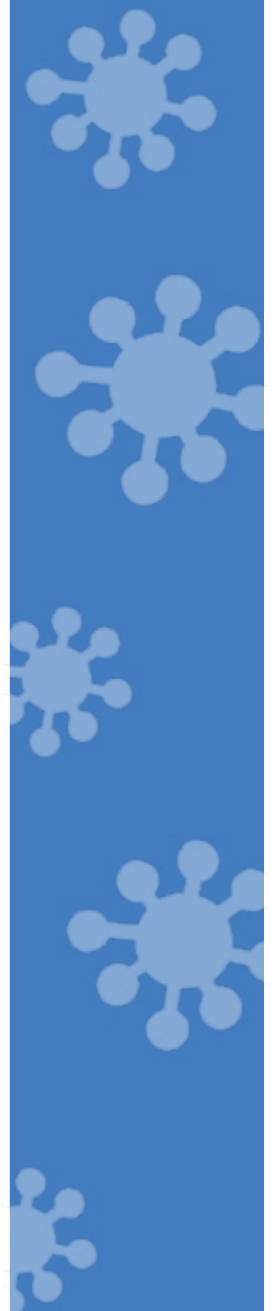


ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Caitlyn Blalock, Army

During Covid-19 my father was not able to participate in the army and use the military as a support system. Prior to covid we were able to communicate and interact with other soldiers and their families, but when Covid hit we did not know what to do, as it was an uncharted time period for everyone. When unexpected and unfamiliar events occur, we could always rely on each other and our army family to be there for each other. At the time, we didn't know how unsafe Covid could be and we weren't able to visit each other. Therefore, all we had was technology, and although it is very convenient to be able to check on everyone with a click of a button, it was not the same. Phones do not always communicate the correct emotions and could be depressing at times when we could not actually be there for our army family, while we knew Covid impacted them in a negative way. This was not ideal for anyone, especially in the beginning months of Covid, but our immediate family all supported one another with as much love and support as our army family did.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Desiree Herrst, National Guard

How Has COVID-19 Affected Me?

COVID-19 has affected the lives of many people, myself included. As a result of COVID-19, I have found myself unable to participate in most of the sports and activities I love. I was part of the cheerleading team, the quiz bowl team, the school's drama club, and the Dungeons & Dragons club. These were all put on hold, cancelled, or changed to virtual because of the virus. My school's powerlifting program was put on hold for a while and I had lost all hope. I lost the ability to hang out with one of my best friends. My only hope at the time was music, work, school, and painting. After I got into painting, life went better and eventually resumed some semblance of normal, for now.





ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Shekinah Tung, Army

Bzzzt. Bzzzt. Bzzzzzzt. My dad's phone vibrated violently as my family sat around the dinner table. The announcement that we'd be moving in the summer was barely a surprise to us. Full of excitement and expectancy for what the next chapter of my life would hold, I eagerly began searching for opportunities at our next duty station.

In just a few months, my hopes were dashed to the ground as the COVID-19 outbreak swept the nation. Initially, I wasn't sure what to expect. However, I optimistically anticipated that it would all be over before it could affect everything that I had planned.

Days passed and those days turned into months as everything I was looking forward to was either cancelled, delayed, or reinvented. Unexpectancy and fear of the unknown haunted the next couple of months.

Our moving date got pushed back several times, leaving us in a constant confusion of where we were going to live and when we could relocate school, work, and other activities as we ventured into new territory. Somehow, in a wild blur of U-Haul trucks, storage units, and a temporary apartment, we reached our new duty station exhausted and ready to finally settle in.

Unfortunately, most of the things that I had planned to do were not operating as they normally would have. Because of this, I really learned to not take anything for granted and thoroughly value every opportunity to connect with others. COVID-19 forced me to re-think the things that I was doing and take new steps in the future. It also gave me a renewed appreciation for the things in life that often go unnoticed.

During countless adventurous walks, I immersed myself in the beauty of nature and had meaningful conversations with my family that would have otherwise been lost in the hectic grind of everyday life. When we finally moved into our new community on post, my family was able to connect with the other military families in our neighborhood.

All in all, although COVID-19 disrupted my life even more than moving normally does, growing up in a military family has taught me to be adaptable and push through any changes that come my way. Dealing with the effects of the pandemic was difficult, but it taught me to value everything around me. From worrying about running out of toilet paper to the creativity that ensued in all areas of my life, I am extremely grateful to have had my family with me through it all.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Kaylee Miller, Army

An infectious virus prompted a worldwide pandemic, causing communities and families to restrict their interactions with others. The nation as a whole began complying with state regulations and proper safety procedures, including persistent hand sanitizing and wearing a face covering. My family began implementing no contact services, such as online grocery shopping, curbside pickups, delivery services, attending online services, and tele healthcare. As the number of confirmed cases began to increase, American's remained vigilant and aware of those around them with health conditions. Students around the nation, including myself, began learning full-time remotely.

In addition to my studies during the pandemic, I obtained the opportunity to intern at a local machine and fabrication company. Interning as an office assistant and general labor assistant; laid the foundation for developing attentive communication, organization, and detail-oriented skills. As I excelled in my internship, my offer to work with the company extended. It began with the responsibility of destroying confidential company documents, classified filing, answering phones as well as delivering messages, and calculating employee payroll hours. My workload evolved into landscaping, yard maintenance, and company vehicle detailing, and even minor construction for the business.

My longing need for community interaction inspired me to create and run a side business, "Simply Sweet." Baking cupcakes from scratch and selling them in the neighborhood, following a zero-contact protocol, was something I enjoyed. It presented the opportunity to become not only acquainted with my fellow neighbors but sparked close relationships.

Not only have I taken this time to advance myself, but I have also tried to give back to my community. Recently, I helped an elderly couple during the winter storm advisory, volunteering to assist them with errands and even installing a motorized garage door opener when theirs malfunctioned. I also started tutoring middle school students who struggle with online learning and babysitting for families. Due to the opportunities granted to me, I exceeded and enhanced my adaptability, confidentiality, innovative thinking, critical thinking, responsibility, attention to detail, and time management skills.

I conclusively became a self-determined, studious, and well-organized person during the pandemic. I am now committed to setting out a plan for my future. My educational aspirations are to graduate from a four-year university and acquire a Bachelor's degree. I strive to help the legal system in any way that I can by obtaining a career as a Forensic Scientist. I think that pursuing this specific career will provide me the opportunity to become a leader and excel in this particular field. My passion, hard work, and dedication to forensic science and technology would further advance my ambitions and skill set.



ART & ESSAY CONTEST

ESSAY

Created By: Kaylee Simmons, Army

How Has COVID Impacted Me and My Military Family?

The current pandemic has affected us all in a variety of ways. Each facet of our everyday living has not been untouched by our current situation. From our school environments to work, and even our home lives, COVID 19 has caused drastic change everywhere. I don't believe anything could have prepared anyone for the past year's ongoing tragedies. No one has dealt with the pandemic the same, and today I will talk about the way COVID 19 has impacted my military family.

The beginning of 2020 was undoubtedly strenuous for the military community. In late December early January, there was a lot of tension between the U.S and various Middle Eastern countries. It was shortly after the airstrike in Syria that news of the crisis began circulated in mainstream media. This particular event had affected my family especially hard, since there were immediate plans to deploy troops to deal with the conflict. I recall our Christmas holiday was cut abruptly short as my father got orders to deploy. To say my family was shocked would be an understatement. My dad had been deployed in the past, and despite it being something you never get used to, we make use of the time before the deployment to accept the situation. This time, however, was severely unanticipated and allotted us no time to prepare for his departure. It wasn't even a week after the announcement that my father and various other troops from Fort Bragg were flown overseas.

That start to the year had left a sour taste in my mouth, as I found returning back to normal life grueling. School had soon reopened after winter break, and I was taking our circumstances one step at a time. Being able to surround myself with my friends and family was a healing process within itself, and our days became habitual once again. My mom, sister and I got to talk with my father regularly over the phone, and things became a lot less hectic. Months had passed us by, and my time in school went by like a blur. It was then in March when COVID had finally reached the U.S, which was big news to everyone. I thought that the threat of war would have been the biggest event of the year, but I was swiftly proven wrong. Schools were shut down promptly after, and online instruction was quickly established. During that time, a lot of us found it hard to cope with everything in isolation.

In my military family, COVID had served as an additional variable that we didn't account for. This was an unfavorable set of circumstances, and our situation felt bleak. However, for things to get better, they often have to get worse first. My dad had returned home in May, having to adjust back to a world with COVID. Although we faced many hardships in 2020, learning how to overcome them alongside my family has made the greatest impact on me.