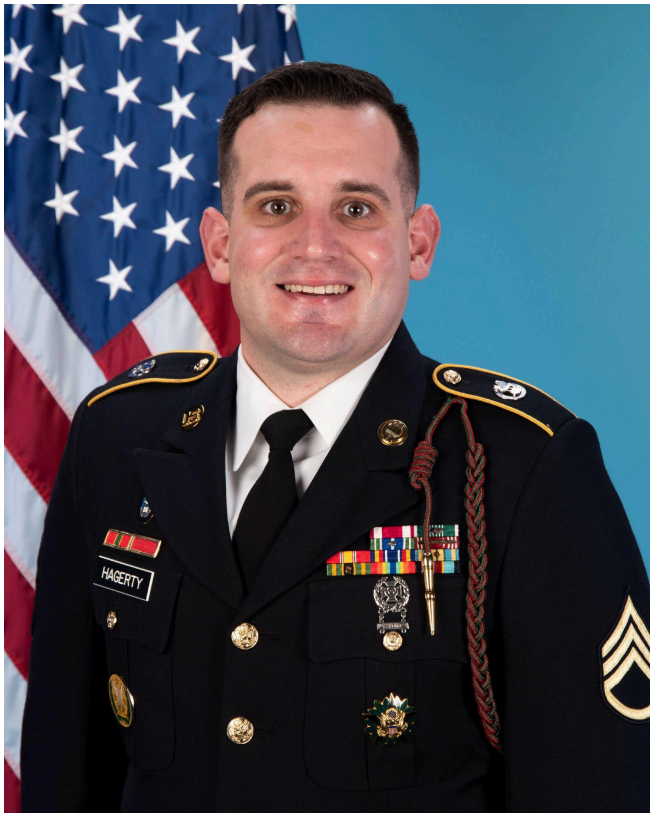
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Mark Szymanski, Evocati PR
Email: mark.szymanski@evocatillc.com
Website: TAPS.org

United States Army Staff Sergeant Tanner Hagerty to Receive the 2026 TAPS Military Mentor Award

Honoring extraordinary service, compassion, and commitment to grieving military and veteran families



Arlington, Va. – Feb. 18, 2026 – The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) proudly announces Staff Sergeant (SSG) Tanner Hagerty, United States Army, as the recipient of the 2026 TAPS Military Mentor Award. This national honor recognizes a service member whose dedication, heart, and service to grieving families reflect the very best of the military and the mission of TAPS.

“SSG Tanner Hagerty embodies what it means to be a Military Mentor,” said Bonnie Carroll, President and Founder of TAPS. “He shows up with humility, compassion, and unwavering

commitment. For families grieving the death of a loved one who served, his presence is steady, comforting, and deeply meaningful. He reminds them, through action, that their loved one's service matters and will never be forgotten."

A Life of Service

SSG Hagerty enlisted in the United States Army in July 2014 as a Religious Affairs Specialist. He completed Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He currently serves as the Religious Affairs NCOIC for the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Georgia.

His assignments have included:

- United States Army Garrison Stuttgart Religious Support Office, Germany
- 224th Military Intelligence Battalion, Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia
- Flight Detachment 16, Combined Joint Task Force, Al Assad, Iraq
- United States Pentagon Family Life Center NCOIC
- 3rd Recruiting Brigade, Fort Knox, Kentucky

A Calling to Serve Grieving Families

SSG Hagerty's journey with TAPS began in 2019 after being introduced to the program by his Battalion Commander and TAPS Military Mentor Colonel Nathan Lewis. When he walked into his first group room at the 2019 TAPS National Good Grief Camp, he immediately knew he had found where his heart belonged.

For more than six years, SSG Hagerty has devoted his heart and more than 1,700 volunteer hours to serving families at:

- The National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp in Washington, D.C.
- Regional Military Survivor Seminars across the country
- TAPS Family Campouts and special events nationwide

He has made it his personal mission to live the Army Chaplain Corps competencies: *Nurture the Living, Care for the Wounded, and Honor the Fallen.*

About the TAPS Military Mentor Program

The TAPS Military Mentor Program brings active duty, Guard, Reserve, and veteran service members together with surviving military and veteran families to provide strength, stability, and compassionate care. Military Mentors serve alongside trained TAPS Peer Mentors, offering a powerful connection rooted in shared military culture, values, and understanding of service and sacrifice.

Military Mentors are carefully selected and trained to serve at TAPS events nationwide, including the National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp, regional survivor seminars, family camps, and community gatherings. They provide safety, structure, and consistency for children, teens, and adults, often becoming trusted role models for young survivors and steady companions for grieving parents and spouses.

Through presence, service, and genuine care, Military Mentors help survivors feel seen, protected, and supported. They honor the fallen not only with words, but through action, ensuring families know their loved one's service is remembered and respected.

A Well-Deserved Honor

SSG Hagerty will formally receive the 2026 TAPS Military Mentor Award at the TAPS Honor Guard Gala, where USAA will serve as the Presenting Sponsor, on March 17, 2026, at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. "Tanner does not just volunteer," said Carroll. "He carries families with him. He remembers names, stories, and fallen heroes. He lives his service long after the uniform comes off at the end of the day."

###

About TAPS: *TAPS is the leading national organization providing compassionate care and survivor support services for the families of America's fallen military heroes. Since 1994, TAPS has offered support to all those grieving the death of a military loved one through peer-based emotional support, connections with grief and trauma resources, grief seminars and retreats for adults, Good Grief Camps for children and teens, casework assistance, connections to community-based care, online and in-person support groups, and the 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline, all at no cost to surviving families. For more information and to get involved, visit TAPS.org.*