



TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS

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MEDIA ADVISORY

TAPS 24th National Military Survivor Seminar Honors Our Nation's Fallen Heroes Over Memorial Day Weekend

Vice President Mike Pence and Second Lady Karen Pence to be with Children of the Fallen at Memorial Day Program Kick Off

ARLINGTON, Va. -- May 24, 2018 -- Over Memorial Day Weekend, the [Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors](http://www.taps.org) (TAPS) will honor America's fallen military heroes and provide connection and healing for their surviving family members at the 24th National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp.

Vice President Mike Pence and Second Lady Karen Pence will be with grieving families during the opening sessions on Friday, spending quiet time reflecting on the lives of our fallen service members, learning about the coping strategies TAPS offers including art therapy, and talking with the children and military mentors about our nation's legacy of service and sacrifice.

Overall Program: Thursday, May 24-Monday, May 28, 2018

Where: Arlington, Va., and Washington, D.C.

Who: Bonnie Carroll, President and Founder of TAPS; experts in the field of grief and loss, and surviving military families

To request access to cover any portion of the seminar, or to request an interview with a surviving family member, grief expert or TAPS representative, please email Rita Barry-Corke at rita@taps.org or Christine Fuentes at christine.fuentes@taps.org; or call (202) 588-TAPS (8277) to speak with someone on the media relations team.

For any press covering the opening ceremony with Vice President Mike Pence, the set-up time is between 7-7:45 a.m.

Please note a press room will be available onsite for use by media attending the event. Background information on TAPS and the National Military Survivor Seminar can be found in our online press kit at <https://www.taps.org/memorialday/media>.

OVERVIEW

Families who have lost a loved one in military service to our nation will gather for the 24th National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp from Thursday, May 24 through Monday, May 28. The seminar, which offers a Good Grief Camp for children and informative workshops for adults focused on coping with traumatic grief, provides many opportunities for surviving family members to remember the life and legacy of their fallen loved ones, regardless of the circumstances of their death.

More than 2,000 participants will take part in the five-day seminar, which offers a TAPS Good Grief Camp for children of the fallen, workshops and activities for family members and all those grieving the loss of a loved one in the military and an opportunity for families to remember the life and legacy of

their loved ones. Attendees will include loved ones of those killed in action and those who died from other causes including suicide, accidents or illnesses.

On Friday morning, Vice President Mike Pence and his wife Karen will officially open the Good Grief Camp for over 500 children of the fallen each with a military mentor trained by TAPS, in groups facilitated by children's grief professionals.

On Saturday evening, Air Force Gen. Paul Selva, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will host seminar participants at a banquet, where Robert Irvine, Food Network celebrity chef, will be joined the best of the military chefs to cook for TAPS families. Families will also participate in the National Memorial Day Parade and activities on Monday at Arlington National Cemetery.

"The TAPS family celebrates the lives and legacies of our fallen heroes every day, but on Memorial Day we join with all Americans to honor their lives of selfless service and sacrifice," said [Bonnie Carroll](#), TAPS President and Founder and 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient. "Over Memorial Day Weekend, many families of the fallen gather together here in Washington to connect with and support each other, and we are joined by the tens of thousands of additional families across the country who are commemorating the lives of their loved ones in their local communities."

At the TAPS Good Grief Camp, over 500 children who have lost a loved one as a result of their military service will learn coping strategies and meet other children grieving a loss. During the camp, the campers are paired one-on-one with volunteer military mentors, trained by TAPS.

This Memorial Day weekend, there are many ways to engage with us via social media. Use [#GratefulNation](#) and help celebrate the lives of those who died in service to our nation and honor all those left behind. Go to www.taps.org/memorialday to view the Grateful Nation Memorial Hero Wall and view the photos and stories of America's fallen service members.

EVENTS OPEN TO MEDIA COVERAGE BY ARRANGEMENT

Friday, May 25 - Opening Ceremonies, NBA Basketball Clinic

4 to 9 a.m. - Morning Show Stand-ups Available

Interview TAPS Founder and President Bonnie Carroll and surviving family members of America's fallen military heroes as they pay tribute to their loved ones who died in service to our nation.

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. - Meet Families of the Fallen, Talk with Experts on Military Loss

Interviews available by request with family members, experts on grief and loss by request.

9:30 to 10:30 a.m. - TAPS Good Grief Camp Opening Ceremony with Vice President Mike Pence

TAPS Good Grief Camp is where children and teens engage in interactive activities to help cope with military loss and trauma with the help of military mentors. The opening ceremony will also feature retired Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Army Downrange.

Note: The press pre-set time for Friday opening events is between 7-7:45 a.m. sharp.

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - National Military Survivor Seminar Opening Ceremonies

1:30 to 5 p.m. - Artful Grief

Art therapy studio workshop to encourage healing through art.

2:30 to 4:30 p.m. - NBA Basketball Clinics at Good Grief Camp

NBA players and coaches host a basketball clinic for Good Grief Campers. Attending will be Rodney

McGruder, player for the Miami Heat; Jarrett Jack, player for the New York Knicks; Bryan Gates, coach of the Sacramento Kings; Jamahl Mosley, assistant coach of the Dallas Mavericks; David Vanterpool, assistant coach of the Portland Trailblazers; and Iciss Tillis, former WNBA player with the Detroit Shock.

Note: Rodney McGruder is local to the Washington area, having grown up in Landover, Md. Jarrett Jack was a military child and was born in Ft. Washington, Md. David Vanterpool attended high school in Silver Spring, Md. Iciss Tillis currently lives in the D.C. area.

Saturday, May 26 - Workshops, Monuments, Field Day and the TAPS Grand Banquet

5 to 9 a.m. - Morning Show Stand-ups Available

Bonnie Carroll and surviving families of military members pay tribute to their loved ones. Interviews available by request.

8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. - Good Grief Camp Offsite Activities

Surviving children of military service members will participate in offsite activities to work through their grief with the help of their military mentors. Close to 500 children will be visiting various locations throughout Washington, D.C.

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. - Meet Families of the Fallen, Talk with Experts on Military Loss

Interviews available by request with family members, experts on grief and loss by request.

1:30 to 5 p.m. - Artful Grief

Art therapy studio workshop to encourage healing through art.

5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Field Day U.S.A.

Military mentors and children of fallen military service members participate in interactive games.

6:30 to 9 p.m. - TAPS Grand Banquet – “Giving Thanks”

Gen. Paul Selva, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will join seminar participants will join a dinner prepared by Food Network Chef Robert Irvine and the best of the military chefs. Entertainment by John Schneider.

Sunday, May 27 - Workshops, Good Grief Camp, TAPS Family BBQ

5 to 9 a.m. - Morning Show Stand-ups Available

Bonnie Carroll and surviving families of military members pay tribute to their loved ones. Interviews available by request.

9 to 4 p.m. - Artful Grief

Art therapy studio workshop to encourage healing through art.

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. - Meet Families of the Fallen, Talk with Experts on Military Loss

Interviews available by request with family members, experts on grief and loss by request.

11 a.m. - Good Grief Camp Picnic with military escorts

Good Grief Campers and their mentors will be welcomed by the Fife & Drum Corps.

5 to 8 p.m. - TAPS Graduation and Family BBQ

Surviving military loved ones connect with each other to create lifelong friendships. The event opens with military mentors as they march in with the children of the fallen. In addition, 26 teens will graduate from Good Grief Camp in an official graduation ceremony.

Monday, May 28 - Memorial Day Observances at Arlington National Cemetery, Memorial Day Parade

4 to 7 a.m. - Morning Show Stand-ups Available

Bonnie Carroll and surviving families of military members pay tribute to their loved ones. Interviews available by request.

7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Memorial Day Observances at Arlington National Cemetery

Surviving families will participate in Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Day Observances beginning at 7:30 a.m. A wreath created by the children of the fallen will be presented at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier around 11:30 a.m. Families will visit gravesites of their loved ones in Section 60 following the program (Section 60 is where many of the Iraq and Afghanistan fallen are interred).

*Note: Media access to the cemetery must be coordinated with Arlington National Cemetery Public Affairs Office. Media access for the amphitheater must additionally be coordinated with the Military District of Washington. **Requests must be made by 2 p.m. on Thursday, May 24.***

2 to 4:30 p.m. - National Memorial Day Parade: TAPS Float

A TAPS float will be part of the parade procession accompanied by military vehicle, the Oshkosh Defense JLTV. Surviving family members will participate in the National Memorial Day Parade wearing red t-shirts and carrying photos of their loved ones. For more information, visit www.nationalmemorialdayparade.com.

SPONSORS AND SUPPORT

The 24th TAPS National Military Survivor Seminar & Good Grief Camp is made possible with the generous support of partners including Grunt Style; Lockheed Martin Corporation, New York Life Foundation; A&E Networks; Booz Allen Hamilton; American Greetings, Inc.; Veterans United Foundation; Ashton Tiffany; GEICO; Northrop Grumman Corp.; Optum Serves; Hasbro; United Concordia Dental; Humana; Mission BBQ and Fisher House Foundation.

RSVP REQUIRED FOR INTERVIEWS AND ATTENDANCE AT NATIONAL MILITARY SURVIVOR SEMINAR:

For permission to participate, contact Rita Barry-Corke at rita@taps.org or Christine Fuentes at christine.fuentes@taps.org, or by phone at 202.588.TAPS (8277).

SOCIAL MEDIA PARTICIPATION:

Twitter: @TAPSorg

Hashtag: #GratefulNation

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TAPSorg

ABOUT TAPS

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) is the national organization providing compassionate care for the families of America's fallen military heroes and has offered support to more than 75,000 surviving family members of our fallen military and their caregivers since 1994. TAPS provides peer-based emotional support, grief and trauma resources, grief seminars and retreats for adults, Good Grief Camps for children, case work assistance, connections to community-based care, online and in-person support groups and a 24/7 resource and information helpline for all who have been affected by a death in the Armed Forces. Services are provided free of charge. For more information go to www.taps.org or call the toll-free TAPS resource and information helpline at 1.800.959.TAPS (8277).