

# Voice of Democracy: Why is the veteran important?

**Haley Korkowski**

**First Place**

Why is the veteran important? It's such a simple question, but how do we answer it? Veterans defend and protect our country, but they do a lot more than that too. They have sacrificed many things that a lot of us wouldn't be able to live without. Like being able to see family every day, or watching our kids grow up without us in their life.

Every single soldier had to make the choice to leave their husband or wife, mother, father, sisters, brothers, their children, and unborn children. Even though this is such a hard choice, they decided to make it anyways to protect you and me. I know that a lot of us here today would never be able to leave our family or country to defend people that we have never even met. All of these veterans here this afternoon, and soldiers all around the world chose to protect you, me, and everyone else in this room.

They don't know who you are, but they knew that they cared enough about you and their country to lay their whole life down on the line for you. At least when the soldiers get to come home they can see their families again, right? Well, that's not always the case. Did you know that many veterans will come home to no family house? Soldiers are literally out fighting not just for their lives but for all of ours too. They should at least be able to return to a house, family, and money at the least. Our soldiers are fighting to keep the whole country safe. The least we can do is make sure they can return to a life worth living.

Many veterans have a terribly hard time being introduced back into their regular lives and trying to find jobs and a way to stay alive. We as a country should make it easier on them during their transition process. We should also remember and be grateful for them and all that they have put themselves through for us.

Could you imagine dying for someone you don't know? Could you imagine having a meaningful death, but nobody remembers you for it, and nobody mourns you? Every single day as a soldier is fighting they will think of the country that they are saving and the lives that are being spared because of them. They truly do deserve some recognition for everything they do. Nobody deserves to be forgotten, especially a veteran.

Even when they're not in a battle or fighting a war, and retired, they're still supporting schools and communities through their VFWs. This is a huge deal for a lot of people, and a great way for the veterans to continue to serve their country. Not one veteran I have ever met was unhumbled.

They have never bragged about who they are or what they've done. They do a lot for this country and we wouldn't be here without every single one of them. Our world would be in total and utter chaos if we didn't have our peacekeepers who we call our soldiers and veterans.

So for the answer to our question, "Why is the veteran important?" there are millions of answers that would show how important they are. But none of those answers will ever be able to repay them for everything they've done for their families, communities, state, country, and world.

**Jessa Lenz**

## **Second Place**

Our country had been through a lot. Whether it was internal problems or external problems, we Americans have gotten through them all. But what about the people who were actually there for those events, helped people through them, and helped America come out on top? Veterans are the foundation of The United States of America and the role models of all future generations. This country would not have gotten to where we are today without them.

To be labeled as a veteran, you have to have served active duty in the Army, Air force, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard. The amount of bravery one has to have to do that is through the roof. Not knowing where you're going to be stationed or with who is a terrifying thing to go through, but these are things that veterans go through just for their country. This bravery and courage is what America is built on. All of the battles and struggles that were fought are because of these qualities in veterans. It takes a lot out of a person to be able to do such things which is why veterans should be honored and loved for as long as they live and decades after.

Veterans are the people who are proof of the hardships this country had to get through to get to where it is today. Citizens of America are extremely lucky to have had people like veterans fighting for their rights and freedoms. Not only do they fight for the people of our country but they also fight for the rights and freedoms of the citizens in other countries. They are the most selfless people in the world. Veterans don't even know all the people they fought for and helped throughout their active duty and after. They just want to help and do all they can to save a life and that is a moral all Americans should have.

Veterans should feel pride for what they did for this country. They are the role models for all future generations and having the title of Veteran is a thing that should be celebrated. In school, when students learn about the history of the country, they are taught through battles and paces, but less about the soldiers and people that were there for those events. Veterans are the ones who had to get through those events while dealing with the effects it has on their physical and mental health. Many of the veterans still cope with these effects today. Teaching these young students who is behind the history of the United States shares the ideals and morals of selflessness to the impressionable young children.

Being behind the framework of the country is not an easy thing to do. We should all appreciate and care for the Veterans of America to show them how much they are valued in society.

Showing the appreciation we have is the least we could do for these brave souls. So everything we think about freedoms and our great country, we should keep in mind the veterans that are behind it all.

**Joshua Anderson**  
**Third Place**

Why is the Veteran Important? This year's question is a challenging one. I have talked with many veterans over the years to help understand their story better. Here is what I learned:

The veterans decided on their own terms to "sign a blank check". They solemnly swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. They decided to leave their hometowns and their families. Go into a system to serve and protect, to follow orders without question and above their comfort and wishes. They serve and served to keep America strong and free. They provide peace to Americans They are a symbol of peace, strength, and protection. The "Model Citizen" who puts in hard work and loyalty to protect our country and our futures

One veteran I talked with left a partner and two children at home to serve thousands of miles off of American soil, to defend our freedom and to do their duty. Their duty to serve and protect. Veterans are one major reason we can live our lives in peace, to sleep in comfort. Veterans choose to put their country's wishes above their own. Yet we as Americans do very little to support them when they return home According to the U.S.department of Veteran Affairs in 2020 there were 6,146 Veteran suicides. That was about 16.8 Veterans per day, I believe that is unacceptable, especially for the sacrifices they put up for our country. We need to put more support toward such veterans awareness and help agencies. These men and women need to be protected and remembered for their acts of service and heroism. We must recognize their endured hardships and fears. To honor them for keeping us safe and secure. They are the 1% who have protected our country. The veteran is important because of their experiences, work ethic, sacrifices, and loyalty to this country. Thank you veterans for serving and protecting above your own wishes.