

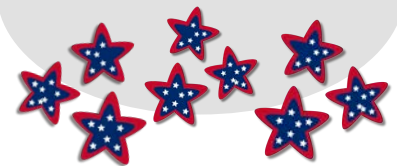
# ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES

It's More Than A Program...It's A Promise!

# NEWS LETTER

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## THE CELEBRATION CONTINUES!

April was incredible. Military kids and families across the nation showed up, connected, and reminded us all why this work matters so much. Month of the Military Child was one for the books, and we are so grateful for every family, volunteer, and community partner who made it special.

Now we are rolling right into Military Appreciation Month, and there is plenty more to celebrate. The ARNG Child and Youth Program has exciting events and activities planned across the nation this spring and into the summer, and we do not want your family to miss out.

Reach out to your local CYS team to find out what is happening near you. Your next great experience is closer than you think!

## NO COST CHILD CARE DURING DRILL WEEKENDS



Eligible Army National Guard Soldiers may qualify for no cost child care during drill weekends through the Weekend Drill Child Care Pilot Program, a partnership between the National Guard Bureau and Upwards.

This program supports mission readiness by reducing child care challenges and easing financial stress for Guard families. Care is available for dependent children ages six weeks to 12 years who are registered in DEERS.

Participating states include: Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.



Learn more and check eligibility at: [upwards.com/benefits/military](https://upwards.com/benefits/military)



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# REGION 4 SPOTLIGHT: MILITARY KIDS ARE MAKING MOVES!

From Capitol steps to fossil digs, military kids and families across Region 4 have had a spring to remember. Here is a look at what states across the region have been up to.

In **Kentucky**, the Teen Panel attended a Veterans, Military Affairs and Public Protection committee meeting, took on a boys vs. girls scavenger hunt, flew flight simulators, and wrapped the day by briefing legislators on their work and legislative priorities. Talk about making an impression.

**Tennessee** launched Adventure Club, a brand-new four-hour day camp for kids ages 6 to 12 where each session drops kids into a totally new world. The most recent installment was Fossil Day, where kids partnered with the Coon Creek Science Center to dig, clean, and preserve real fossils. Everyone is already excited about what comes next.

**Alabama** teens gathered for the annual Youth Symposium around the theme “Mission: Connection,” then kept the energy going all April with volunteering, Capitol advocacy, and Purple Up activities. And Teen Panel member Aiden C. was recently accepted to West Point’s Summer Leaders Experience. So proud!

**Georgia** began piloting the Boys and Girls Club Keystone Charter in 2025 and has already earned silver-level status twice. The nine-member club is now working toward gold in 2026 through community service hours and a national anti-bullying initiative. Big things happening in the Peach State.

**Florida** brought 18 teens together for a camp focused on communication, teamwork, resume writing, and goal setting. They left with real skills and a clear picture of where they are headed.

**South Carolina** opened Month of the Military Child with a State House visit where youth were formally recognized in both the House and Senate, then had the chance to meet Governor McMaster and the Superintendent of Education. A truly special day for military families across the state.

**North Carolina** hosted its 11th Month of the Military Child Ball, and the staff showed up in full secret service mode, walkie-talkies included. Kids completed a spy mission, families enjoyed dinner and dancing, and the SFPD reportedly had to bribe his way through the door. A fantastic night made possible by community partners including the Raleigh Elks Lodge, the USO, and United Through Reading.

**Mississippi** made history this April when Governor Tate Reeves signed the Month of the Military Child proclamation with military kids actually in the room for the very first time. The signing brought together National Guard leadership including Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Bobby Ginn Jr., Command Sergeant Major Shane Cook, Chief of Staff Air Tommy Tillman, and members of the Mississippi National Guard Teen Panel. It was a milestone moment and a powerful reminder that these kids and their sacrifices are seen and celebrated at the highest levels.





## GTP HEADS TO DC FOR FIRST IN-PERSON MEETING SINCE 2016

*Written by Charlee C. Region 7 Delegate*

This past April, I took a trip with the GTP to Arlington, Virginia, for an in-person meeting. This was the first in-person meeting the GTP has had since 2016, so it was very cool to attend.

During the trip, we briefed generals on issues we have seen within our STPs, including funding and communication. From there, we held a town hall meeting with a Q&A session with generals and other military officials. The questions came in from delegates across the country and covered topics like leadership and opportunities for kids to explore what their parents do in the military. All of the questions were answered thoughtfully, and officials committed to exploring further opportunities for military youth.

We also hosted a statewide call with the full GTP and over 50 STP delegates in attendance. Delegates had the chance to ask the GTP questions and raise any concerns. The interest was so high that we may see another one of these calls in the future!

On the last day, we got to experience some of the Washington DC culture, including the Cherry Blossom Festival and several monuments.

Throughout this trip, we experienced some truly amazing things. It was also a great opportunity for the teens to get to know each other in person and build deeper relationships and connections. We came home a better and more connected GTP.

## FROM DC TO 4-H: A WEEK OF REAL CONVERSATIONS AND NEW CONNECTIONS

*Written by Christian M.  
Region 2 Delegate*

I had an amazing time attending both the GTP meeting and the National 4-H Conference.

At the GTP meeting, I was finally able to meet in person with the other 11 representatives on the Guard Teen Panel. We had meaningful discussions about the challenges National Guard youth face with people in a position to create real change. We also connected with our state teen panels, exchanging perspectives on important topics and strengthening our understanding of shared experiences. On top of that, I grew closer to my fellow delegates and felt a strong sense of unity within our group.

At the National 4-H Conference, 21 military teens representing all service branches and components were in attendance, including Gage L., a member of the Kentucky Army National Guard Teen Panel. Together we learned about the wide range of opportunities the 4-H initiative offers nationwide, collaborated on developing a presentation addressing key national issues, and built new connections with people from diverse backgrounds.

Overall, both experiences were incredibly impactful. They helped me grow as a leader while broadening my perspective on the issues affecting youth across the country.



## RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

Big news for military families! Through the Mission: Youth Outreach (MYO) initiative, your eligible child can receive a free or reduced annual membership at a local Boys & Girls Club. That means access to programs built around academic success, healthy living, and real community connection, at little to no cost to you.

MYO is open to dependent youth ages 5 to 18 whose parent or guardian serves in the active duty, National Guard, or Reserve components. Whether your family is navigating a move or just looking for a consistent, safe space where your kids can grow and belong, this is a resource worth knowing about.

Ready to get started?

Families can enroll at:

<https://www.bgca.org/about-us/military/mission-youth-outreach/>

Disclaimer: Sharing of resources in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by NGB, any contract vendor or the PM Team.

## DOWNLOAD OUR APP!



Search "ARNG CYP"

## MAY IS MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH AND WE ARE CELEBRATING YOU

May is Military Appreciation Month, and what better way to celebrate than by taking advantage of some amazing resources made just for your family?

If you have not heard of Blue Star Museums, now is the time to get excited. Blue Star Museums is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts and Blue Star Families, in collaboration with museums across America, offering free admission to active duty military personnel and their families, including National Guard and Reserve members.

This year's program runs from Armed Forces Day, Saturday May 16, 2026, through Labor Day, Monday September 7, 2026. That is an entire summer of free museum visits waiting for you.

From art and history to science and culture, there is something for every curious kid and every family looking for a meaningful day out. Find a participating museum near you and make some memories this summer.

Visit the [Blue Star Museums website](#) to explore museums in your area.



## SUMMER IS COMING, AND WE NEED YOU!

The Child and Youth Program is gearing up for an exciting summer full of day camps, overnight camps, and special programming, and we are looking for volunteers to help make it happen.

Whether you love working directly with kids, prefer to help behind the scenes with administrative support, or have a special skill or service you would like to share, we want to hear from you. No contribution is too big or too small.

Interested? [Reach out to your local CYS team today](#) to learn more about how you can get involved this summer.