

# MASSACHUSETTS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT  
FISCAL YEAR 2021

ARNG Dependent Jenna practices her split with assistance from New England Patriots Cheerleaders at the team practice facility, Gillette Stadium. She was invited to a workout as a result of her father's deployment. All photographs used in this report have been authorized by a parent or guardian.



# OVERVIEW

## Mission

The Massachusetts Army National Guard Child & Youth Program in collaboration with community partners will provide a quality learning environment for Army National Guard Children and Youth that fosters resilience, personal growth, strength of character, and the development of responsible citizens in order to develop tomorrow's leaders.

## Goals

**Education:** Deliver life skills education to the Children and Youth of the Massachusetts National Guard.

**Access:** Provide equal access to federal and state benefits that support Military Children and Families including counseling, education, child care, and other resources.

**Opportunity:** Create opportunities for participation in programs and activities.

**Communication:** Create secure opportunities to network.

**Resilience:** Infuse resilience standards into all programming.

**Outreach:** Build and sustain contact with Military and civilian networks.

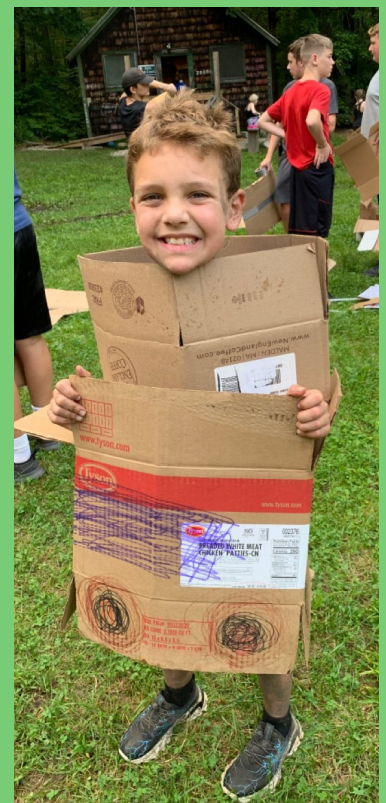
## CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVED

Branch/Component	Age 6-12	Age 13-18	Adults
<b>National Guard</b>			
Army	2,276	648	501
Air	741	144	16
<b>Active Duty</b>			
Army	74	1	1
Navy	2	1	0
Air Force	3	0	3
Coast Guard	47	2	1
<b>Reserve</b>			
Navy	47	10	0
Marine Corps	6	0	0
<b>Gold Star</b>	2	0	0
<b>Other</b>	1	1	522
Children under age 5, all branches = 1,640			
Total Children and Families Served: 6,690*			

The numbers above represent both individuals participating in multiple events as well as those served in conjunction with community partners. \*Total figure includes children of all branches/components ages 0-5.



Molly received the Camp Spirit Award for embodying all of the 4-H values. This ARNG Dependent camped with us for her fourth year in 2021 and bested all military and civilian campers for this award.



Logan designed and constructed a "car" for the drive-in movie at camp.

# VOLUNTEERS

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Thirty Seven volunteers provided one hundred forty hours of reported service in fiscal year 2021, although we are sure that they contributed more than they humbly reported. Without their tireless dedication including enthusiastic participation in training as well as organizing local unit events and support, the Massachusetts National Guard Child & Youth Program would not be able to serve as many Youth as we have. We appreciate these amazing individuals!

Of special note this year, for the first time we welcomed Teen Council graduates to our overnight summer camp as adult volunteers. Former council members Meg and Sara were invaluable assisting with camp swag distribution as well as speaking with campers and their parents about what to expect during the week.



Elise Puliafico, MAARNG Dependent, served on both our state Teen Council and the National Guard Teen Panel (Region 1 Delegate.) She was named Winner of the Operation Homefront National Guard Military Child of the Year Award in addition to many other accolades in Fiscal Year 21.

# BEST PRACTICES

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**Calendar of Events** - This is a one page document listing both in-person and virtual opportunities for Military Youth including events, classes, contests, scholarships, and more. It is distributed weekly via email to almost one thousand individuals who then forward it to untold others. Having a weekly reminder has been helpful in ensuring that Military Youth and their parents know that programming is still available to them despite pandemic restrictions.



**Summer Camp Modifications** - 2021 saw a return to overnight summer camp. However, we had to modify procedures in order to comply with local, state, and national guidance. We physically distanced the campers by doubling the timeframe and hosting eighty campers over four weeks instead of our traditional two. Additionally, we worked with the host camp facility to introduce virus screening and quarantines in advance as well as on-site rapid testing. No child entered the camp grounds without a negative result, even if vaccinated. Further, dining hall procedures, camp environment, and activities were modified this year to ensure safety.



Camper Evan challenged himself to assist other campers as well as camp staff by learning to build fishing rods.



Camper Abby doing her part to help keep the camp dining hall safe and clean.

# RESILIENCE

During FY21, we offered virtual resilience training through home activity packets as well as in-person training at summer camp. Over four weeks, we trained fifty Guard Youth in three skills: Hunt the Good Stuff, ATC, and Goal Setting. We invited everyone on camp grounds to join us to Hunt the Good Stuff nightly. After four weeks, one wall of the dining hall was covered with sticky notes documenting positive reflections of each day.

**2 Hour Resilience Workshop  
= 50 Guard Youth Trained**

# TEEN COUNCIL

FY21 brought the start of a transition on our Teen Council with the graduation of six seniors effectively cutting our council in half. The class of 2021 had so many accomplishments over the years, it was difficult to say farewell. One of them was involved since 2016 with our first summer camp! This group recorded many volunteer hours over the years. Of special note was one council member who single-handedly organized a toy drive for Military Youth this past winter. She then recruited a team of volunteers to deliver hundreds of toys in a severe storm to arrive in time for holiday delivery. Soldiers called to duty during the continuing pandemic appreciated this greatly.

# HIGHLIGHTS

FY21 Program highlights at a glance

- 33 Community Events, Briefs, Trainings
- 24 Day Camps
- 4 Overnight Camps
- 2 Unit Briefs
- 4 Teen Council Meetings
- 7 Month of the Military Child Events
- 2 Yellow Ribbon Events
- 3 Volunteer Trainings

Total programming hours = 404



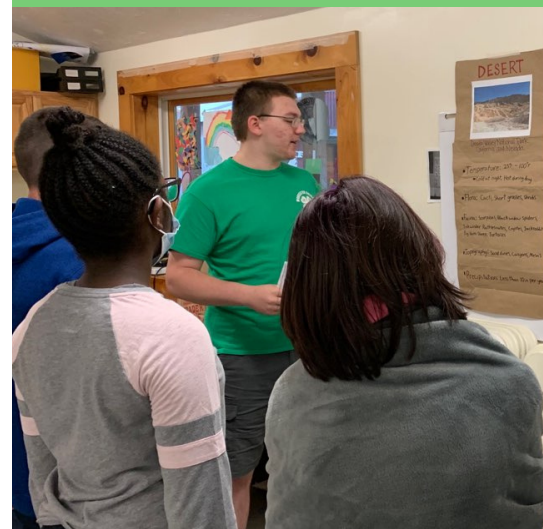
# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Our community partners are many. They are a great wealth of knowledge and information. The resources they provide to our Military Families for career, home, and school are immeasurable. Highlights of our FY21 community partnerships:

- **4-H Ambassadors** and **4-H Educators** provided both virtual programming and in-person instruction.
- The **American Red Cross** offered virtual courses, in-person camp instructors, and event giveaways.
- The **Boys & Girls Clubs of America** provided professional development and collaborated with us on program design.
- The **Home Base Foundation** provided access to training on endless topics as well as in-person resilience instructors.
- The **Massachusetts Military Support Foundation** offered food, school supplies, and holiday support items.
- **Military Friends Foundation** was an MVP for deployment support as well as caring for our Gold Star Families.
- **Military One Source** was reliable as ever with resources and materials. They also helped many nervous campers by providing their chill drills, or meditation recordings.
- The **New England Patriots Alumni Association** invited Guard Youth to work out with players and cheerleaders.
- **Operation Homefront** provided holiday toys, back to school items, and family assistance.
- **Project New Hope** distributed food, school supplies, and holiday necessities as well as offered wellness retreats.
- **Stitches** remains an amazing resource for our deployed families. These volunteers hand-make unique quilts with an extra square for the parents to bring with them on missions.
- **USO New England** assisted with equipment to encourage outdoor activity and many opportunities for fun and Military Youth appreciation.
- **United Through Reading** named our program a recording site this year and offered many contests and games for incentive to read more often.



Red Cross Volunteer Mark offers instruction to ARNG Camper Joey.



Science learning activity with 4-H at camp.



American  
Red Cross  
Service to the  
Armed Forces



# WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING...

## About our home activity packets:

"Love this issue! The coping skills are great timing as we are heading back to school soon, and speaks to my school psychologist heart. Thank you for the work you do!"

Cassandra M., Spouse of MAARNG Service Member, 215th Army Band

## About summer camp:

"I will be inquiring for next summer, (my son) made so many friends and stepped out of his comfort zone at camp. He's a little of an introvert, but made friends and had a blast at camp. He couldn't stop talking about it. I'm so happy and grateful for this program. Wish I took advantage of it in the past."

SFC Pascucci, MAARNG, Camp Edwards

## Received Monday morning after camp:

"My kids had an absolute blast at [camp] last week ... They would love to go back asap, is that a possibility? Maybe any last minute cancellations? Thank you so much for this opportunity, I haven't seen my kids this excited about a trip EVER haha!"

SFC Hernandez, MAARNG, Joint Force Headquarters

## From our national program survey:

"My children had a great experience at the camp. Their attitudes on return home was greatly improved even with them coming home to me suddenly with new orders away from home. It helped my husband with home situation with there positive and helpful attitudes."

Anonymous MAARNG Service Member

## MA Child & Youth Program Coordinators

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