

Directions: Read these instructions and see samples below:

WRITE A LETTER TO OUR HEROES! Operation Gratitude sends 250,000+ Care Packages each year to Deployed Troops, Veterans, New Recruits & First Responders. Of all the items included in these Care Packages, the most cherished are the personal letters of appreciation! Our goal is to include several letters and colorful drawings in every Care Package and tell our heroes "WE CARE!" Writing a letter is a meaningful way for Americans to show support for all who serve. It only takes five minutes of your day, but will bring lasting joy to the recipients.

LETTER WRITING TIPS

→ Start with a salutation, such as "Dear Hero" or "Dear Brave One" → Write to a: Deployed Troop, Veteran, New Recruit, First Responder A Deployed Troop is currently overseas in harm's way. A Veteran has served our country in the past. A New Recruit just completed Boot Camp and has sworn to serve for 4+ years. A First Responder serves as a Firefighter, a Paramedic, or in Law Enforcement.

All deserve to be thanked for their commitment and bravery! → Express your thanks for their selfless service

→ Please do not include the date or year on your letter or card → Avoid politics completely and religion in excess; however, saying you are praying for them is wonderful

→ Share a little about yourself: Family, Hobbies, Work, School, Pets, Travel → Talk about life and interests: Sports, Weather, Music, Movies, Food, Books →

Adults: Include your contact information (mail or email) so the recipient can reply.

Children: USE FIRST NAMES ONLY and no addresses please

→ Can't find the words? Consider drawing or painting a picture instead; please add a note to kids' drawings with their age. Please avoid glitter!

Sort and label letters by Deployed Troop, Veteran, New Recruit, and First Responder. Place all sorted letters and artwork in a large envelope or box. (Please, NO INDIVIDUAL ENVELOPES.)

Turn in to Miss Lavin

Miss Lavin will send: Operation Gratitude 21100 Lassen Street Chatsworth, CA 91311 *Please download, fill out, and include a Donation Form in each box you send to us. The form can be found on our website at OperationGratitude.com/pro

SAMPLE 1 Letter to a new recruit from an adult.

Dear Hero,

It is with honor and respect that I write this letter to you, a new recruit, who may have just completed boot camp. Congratulations on such a huge accomplishment!

I have been wanting to honor our troops in some way for a very long time. Now I finally get to do that in this letter. I am a Middle School Teacher in California. I am also the mother of son with military background. I coordinate a leadership group whose goal was to come up with a community service project. The all wanted to help our men and women in uniform in some way.

I spend my time teaching both Middle School and College Students. When I am not working, I hike, garden and spend time at Volleyball Tournaments with my 13 year old daughter. I have 3 dogs, 2 chicken and a bunny!

You are welcome to write to me, and I will write back. Debbie Lavin, 1169 Whitehall Way, Vacaville, Ca 95687. Or, debbie.lavin@gmail.com

I hope this finds you strong and knowing there are so many people dedicated to supporting you.

Thank you for your sacrifices and dedication as you

Debbie Lavin
Kairos Public Schools Vacaville Academy
Scholar Ambassador Coordinator

SAMPLE 2 Letter from Student

Dear Soldier,

I chose to write to you, a deployed soldier,

I am an 8th grader at Kairos Public school and currently serving in the Scholar Ambassador Program. As a group, we chose to focus on our nation's veterans as our community service project.

A little about me. I am looking forward to beginning High School in fall. When I am not in school, I spend time participating in theatre/acting and I am an avid soccer player. I also love to attend baseball games. I am a Giants Fan, since I live in California.

What are some of your interests? Do you have a favorite sports team? What is the food like? Where have you travelled ? My uncle was in the Air Force and he often tells my stories.

I hope my letter makes you know how important you are to me and to our nation.

If you wish to write to me, you can write to my dad at: john.smith@gmail.com (optional).

Sincerely,
Student (your first name only)