

Title: "Salute to Hospitalized Veterans"

1. *Brief Summary* - This project is being conducted as a joint effort between two model programs in our district. The first is a district-wide student community service initiative. Many of our Middle School students are involved in this project. The other partner in this project is our Middle School "T.V." studio program that engages students in the production of electronic journalism. The students, in grades 5-12, will work with teacher coordinators to conduct a district-wide educational effort to foster better relationships with veterans and understanding of the issues confronted by hospitalized veterans. Our Middle School "Television Crew," will work with their peers to produce a new student documentary about veterans at a local care facility. Students will work with the veterans, staff at the facility, and their peers, to create the new documentary film, which will include inspirational photos, music and tributes to hospitalized veterans. The film will be incorporated into a larger program, saluting the Hospitalized Veterans, produced by the Middle School Journalists and their student peers in the community service project.

2. *Need and Rationale* - Our students are living during a period of war, when fellow Americans are putting their lives on the line every day to serve our nation. These can be difficult times for students who are seeing the uncertainty of war for the first time and for our Veterans who know all too well the cost of war. The program will demonstrate to hospitalized Veterans that students care about them and remember their sacrifice. The students will gain encouragement from the stories of hospitalized Veterans who can share their stories of overcoming adversity and seeing the common values that unite us as Americans throughout history despite the many challenges our nation has faced. The film will infuse the themes of "Trustworthiness, Responsibility, Respect, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship." These are all

attributes exhibited by the hospitalized Veterans the project will serve. The process of creating the documentary about our local hospitalized Veterans will help build community connections for our students, while allowing them to use their skills as “electronic journalists.”

3. *Curriculum, Grades and Population* - Middle School students, in grades 6-8, will directly benefit from this program through the Electronic Journalism/“T.V.” program. We anticipate that approximately 20 students will have a role directly in the production aspects. At least 50 additional students (grades 5-12), will be involved in working with staff at the nursing facility to coordinate photos, film shooting, obtaining oral histories from Veterans, and conducting the final event at the nursing home. A final piece about the “Salute” will be produced for broadcast over the Middle School TV for all the Middle School Students to enjoy. This will impact over 750 students. Connections to Social Studies curriculum will be included with lessons in civics, history and character education all incorporated into the program. The “production” aspects of the program also connect to English Language Arts curriculum and Career Exploration.

4. *Objectives* - To support civic engagement and commitment to the celebration of citizenship in students; To allow students an opportunity to share their care for hospitalized veterans; To have our students build relationships with Veterans for mutual benefit; To infuse principles of Character Education; To have students create a new documentary with Veterans to honor the residents of a local Veteran care facility; To engage students and our greater community in recognizing the contributions of our Veterans and recognizing the special issues confronted by hospitalized Veterans; To bring strength, hope and optimism to all involved during this time of national uncertainty.

5. *Impact on Student Learning and Teacher Practice* - This project will engage students in positive reflections and celebrations of American citizenship, our democratic values, and examples of character and service. Students will interact with community members who are

part of our nation's history. Students will learn about writing, production and development of a documentary film. Teacher practice will be impacted in that this project incorporates a strong community component and a technology component that will provide new ways to engage students in civic learning while satisfying New York State Learning Standards.

6. Activities - This program will feature a series of district-wide classroom discussions with prominent Veteran leaders, a card and letter campaign to bring joy to hospitalized Veterans, and a culminating event hosted by students at a Veterans care facility including music, dance and other forms of entertainment. The centerpiece of this "Salute to Hospitalized Veterans" will be a new documentary film developed by Middle School students, with the support of another district-wide community service project, that will feature photos of the Veterans and music from their youth along with student "reporting" on inspirational aspects of the Veterans stories of service and lifetime challenges and accomplishments. A culminating event, "The Salute to Hospitalized Veterans," will be held at the Veterans care facility. Parents, students and community members will be invited to observe, assist and participate. The student volunteers will share the final documentary film with their teachers and peers after the event at their schools.

7. Timeline -

- November 2006 – Preliminary meetings with student volunteers, teacher volunteers, parents, and administration. Meet with representative of Veterans service agency to finalize schedule.
- December 2006 – Site visit by student leaders to meet with select Veterans to coordinate the filming schedule, interviews and scanning of photos to infuse into the documentary.
- January 2007- Complete all filming and production of documentary. Complete all plans for other aspects of the Salute to Hospitalized Veterans, including decorations, food, music and all student performances reviewed and practiced.
- February 2007- Students conduct "Salute to Hospitalized Veterans" at Veterans care facility

8. New York State Learning Standards Incorporated –

English Language Arts Standards: *English Language Arts Standard 1* is satisfied, as students will use oral and written language to acquire and transmit information. *English Language Arts Standard 2* is satisfied, as students will have to communicate using “oral and written language that follows the accepted conventions of the English Language for self-expression.” *English Language Arts Standard 4* is satisfied in that students will use oral and written language that “follows accepted conventions” for effective social communication with a wide variety of people. This project will require social interaction with numerous veterans and community leaders of diverse experiences. Students will use communication to enrich their understanding of people and their views.

Social Studies Standards: *Social Studies Standard 1 and 2* are both satisfied as students will focus upon major world events which had implications globally, in the United States, and on New York State. *Social Studies Standard 5* is satisfied in that students will see how the laws, government and Constitutions of the United States and New York embody basic civic values including justice, equality, and respect for the rights of others. It will be especially important to this project to use the student experiences to have students see how our common American values and system of government has responded and endured times of difficulty.

Careers: Students will learn about community service, electronic journalism and event planning, coordination and production.

9. Budget -

- \$450.00 - Teacher time in creating project materials and managing community partnerships.
- \$350.00 - Cost of creating new documentary film (editing, music.)
- \$200.00 - Cost of supplies and consumable materials.
- \$350.00 - Refreshments, food and party supplies for participants at celebration.

\$200.00 - Miscellaneous Expenses (awards and commemorative tee-shirts)

\$250.00 - Production cost for event video and creating multiple copies of video.

\$1,800.00 - Total Grant Request *(Total allowed in 06-07)*

10. Assessment - A team of teachers, student leaders, and community volunteers will assess this project. Success will be measured by the response of the students and teachers who participate and by the success of the student leaders in coordinating the Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. We will solicit feedback from participants, throughout the project, to insure that our goals are being met. Project staff will be able to debrief student participant to measure success in meeting project goals.

11. Collaboration - There are several community-based organizations that will be involved in this project. Our major partner on this project is a government agency dedicated to the mission of serving the needs of Veterans. This agency partner is providing an expert outreach coordinator who will work to facilitate the success of this project and can provide access to hundreds of veterans who will be able to work with our students. One of our Veteran volunteers has lifetime experience as a documentary filmmaker. He will work directly with us.