Does your parent center need volunteers to expand and continue your work?

Military family members are super-volunteers!

According to the results of the [2017 Military Lifestyle Survey](https://bluestarfam.org/survey/), military spouses place high value on their civic responsibility. 78% of those respondents volunteer in their civilian communities. The military strongly encourages service members to volunteer, and military children and teens are active volunteers as well.

Benefits of military family volunteers

Military family members are truly a diverse group. They’ve lived in communities across our nation and countries around the world. This brings a unique set of life experience and skills to any endeavor. The best thing about them? They are eager to help! Over half of the [survey respondents](https://bluestarfam.org/survey/) explained that they would like more opportunities to “meet people, make friends, or expand professional networks in the civilian community”.

Building connections with military families may have another, and exciting outcome. Military families move frequently and tend to share information “by word of mouth” with other military families. Since many military families have children with disabilities, this may help military families who need assistance to find your parent center.

Find military service and family members to volunteer with your parent center

**Military and Family Support Centers** usually have a Volunteer Coordinator. You can find that point of contact using our [Interactive Maps](https://branchta.org/maps/) or at your local military installation (active-duty or Reserve).

Military and Family Support Centers may also be called:

* Armed Forces Community Centers
* Army Community Services
* Marine Corps Community Services
* Navy Fleet and Family Support Center
* Airman and Family Readiness Centers

**Military groups or clubs** that regularly participate in volunteer activities may be active at installations in your state. When you speak with staff in one of the offices above, ask for contact information for these groups:

* Spouse’s club (any branch of service)
* Family Readiness Group (Army)
* [Ombudsman program (Navy, Coast Guard)](https://branchta.org/contact-an-ombudsman/)
* Key Spouse Program (Air Force)
* Unit, Personal, and Family Readiness Program (Marine Corps)
* You can also check in with your local [Exceptional Family Member Program](https://branchta.org/exceptional-family-member-program-efmp/) Family Support staff for permission to post or list your volunteer opportunities

“Outside the military” ways to recruit military family volunteers

Military families also look to their local civilian communities for volunteer opportunities but may be more likely to use nationally-based organizations to find them, as volunteers can find opportunities in any state.

Some military family websites mention:

* [VolunteerMatch](http://Volunteermatch.org)
* [United Way](https://www.unitedway.org/get-involved/volunteer)
* [Create the Good](http://www.createthegood.org/)
* [Points of Light/Hands on Network](http://www.pointsoflight.org/handsonnetwork)

Other ways to reach out to both military and civilian families may include free “volunteer opportunity” listings in area newspapers, especially those with distribution areas near an installation, local schools, libraries, and faith community newsletters and bulletin boards.

Need volunteers in a part of your state that isn’t near an active-duty installation?

* The volunteering “bug” doesn’t stop when a family leaves the military- families who have recently left the military often actively seek ways to connect in their communities.

Each [State Department of Veterans’ Affairs](https://www.va.gov/statedva.htm) has a *Veterans’ Services Officer* (or Office), and these individuals know where veterans and their families are located in your state. Many states, especially those with large veteran populations, have Service Officers assigned by county, and that can help you pinpoint your volunteer recruitment.

* Other military families are already embedded in their local civilian communities-those whose service members are in the National Guard.

Your point of contact for finding volunteers is the *Family Assistance Coordinator (FAC)* for your state. They coordinate Family Assistance Specialists across a state and keep National Guard families up to date on all types of events and opportunities. (*Family Assistance Coordinators are also your point of contact for offering training to National Guard families or participating in National Guard family events!*) Find your state’s FAC on our [Interactive Maps](https://branchta.org/maps/) for your region and state.

For more information, or assistance connecting with a point of contact, please feel free to [contact the Branch.](mailto:thebranch@wapave.org) We’d love to help you find some military family volunteers!