

THE BRIEFING

OMK KIDS CALLED TO SERVE

When Adrienne Dickey's husband Don first deployed to Iraq in 2004, their boys were 5, 7 and 9. Living in their hometown of Quenemo, Kansas, a small farming community with fewer than 400 residents, the Dickey boys were the only ones at school with a parent deployed to a war zone. Faced with a pay cut from Don's deployment, Adrienne had to figure out ways to keep their boys active to help deal with the stress of missing their father - but on a tighter budget.

She learned about Our Military Kids and applied for grants for Skylar and Caleb to take wrestling lessons. "It was a tremendous opportunity for them because it gave them a physical outlet to work out their emotions," Adrienne says. She says their boys couldn't wait to talk to their dad about their wrestling during his calls from overseas. Throughout two more deployments, all three of their boys, including youngest Kayden, utilized grants from Our Military Kids to stay active and try new things. Horseback riding, basketball and summer camp were all a part of life when dad was deployed.

Thirteen years later, SFC Dickey has once again returned to the Middle East. And this time, his oldest boys Skylar, 24, and Caleb, 22, have joined him. The brothers now serve in the Kansas Air National Guard. Like many military children, the boys joined the Guard because it offered a way of life they already knew and cherished. But Adrienne thinks the grants from Our Military Kids played a big part in shaping their early, positive memories of their dad's service.

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"Between Our Military Kids, and my husband's deployments, it instilled in them the value of our military community and wanting to give back," Adrienne says.

The boys both are a part of the 190th Air Refueling Wing, which is also where Adrienne works as an Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager. Her job allows her to take care of families, especially during deployments, which she knows about firsthand. While Adrienne has gotten used to the lengthy separations from her husband, she says it's still tough. And having two sons deployed as well makes this deployment a little more stressful. "It's been a whole different ballgame for me this time," Adrienne says. Fortunately, Skylar and Caleb are stationed together on the same base and check in with each other daily, but their dad is deployed in another location and is in touch much less frequently.

Adrienne is comforted knowing that their boys are together and that they all will be home soon. After 24 years of marriage, she is looking forward to having all the men in her family back on Kansas soil. "It's a life change when your spouse gets deployed." In the meantime, she finds ways in her job to make sure other Kansas families know they are not alone. "It's nice knowing there are programs that will help," she says. "You really find out that you have a bigger family than you thought."



Above: Staff Sgt. Skylar Dickey and brother, Senior Airman Caleb Dickey before their deployment last year. Below: Senior Airman Caleb Dickey and his mom, Adrienne Dickey



**OUR
MILITARY
KIDS**

ourmilitarykids.org
703-734-6654





LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

*Founder & President,
Linda Davidson*

As co-founder of Our Military Kids, it has been such a privilege to work with our donors and military families for the last fourteen years. I had no idea, back in 2004, that our organization would touch so many people and become such an important part of life for deploying families.

It seems particularly important to me to not just celebrate the past, but also to ensure the future of Our Military Kids. One of the ways we can do this is by strengthening our leadership team. That's why I'm proud to introduce Angela Burton as our new Executive Director.

Angela has many years of experience in the defense and national security sector, and as a volunteer in the nonprofit world. As the spouse of a career National Guardsman, she brings with her a firsthand understanding of overseas deployments and the challenges they present.

A skilled leader with a desire to make a meaningful difference in the military community, Angela is uniquely qualified for this position and a unanimous choice by the Our Military Kids Board search committee. I very much look forward to working together with Angela to build on Our Military Kids' strengths, grow the organization's reach and ensure its longevity.

WELCOME ANGELA!

*Executive Director,
Angela Burton*



WAYS TO SUPPORT OMK

Over the next few months, our corporate partners are once again championing Our Military Kids through many fundraising and community building events.

APRIL 14

Priority Toyota Charity Bowl and Football Game

For the first time, OMK has been selected as a beneficiary of the Priority Toyota Charity Bowl and Football Game on the campus of Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

We would love to invite any of our OMK families in the Hampton Roads area to join us for this special event, which features celebrities and football legends. This year marks the 50th anniversary for the charity bowl. For information on attending the game and other activities, contact mslockwood@ourmilitarykids.org.



MAY 17-18

Do More 24 Domore24.org

Beginning at noon on May 17 and ending at noon on May 18, OMK is joining the United Way and WUSA 9 in a campaign for a dedicated day of giving to local and national nonprofits. We'll be reaching out to people in the DMV area to support our mission. Media partner WUSA 9 is hoping to boost the United Way campaign by profiling OMK and other local nonprofits in the weeks beforehand. On May 17, our staff will head to the CBS station in Tenleytown to help answer phones, participate in live feeds on social media and spend 24 hours raising money for Our Military Kids.



JUNE 9-10

Armed Forces Cycling Classic CyclingClassic.org

This year's Armed Forces Cycling Classic, presented by the Boeing Company, will take place June 9-10. As the DC region's premier cycling event, the race will feature the nation's top Pro men and women. And for the first time, the Challenge Ride on Sunday morning has selected Our Military Kids as one of its beneficiaries.

That means that teams or individuals can raise money for OMK when they ride. Already, we have an amazing group from Altamira that has agreed to ride on our behalf. If you would like to join the ride or need help organizing a team, contact mslockwood@ourmilitarykids.org.



OMK KID GROWS UP

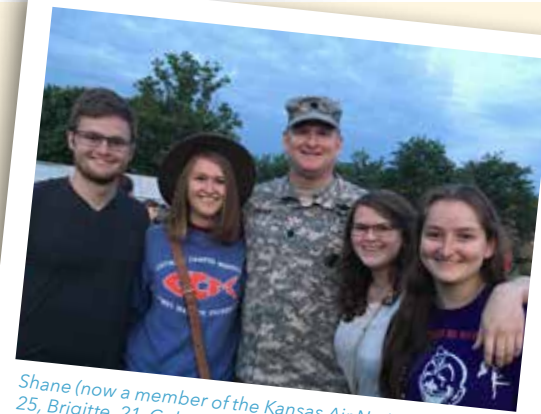
Sometimes, we get the chance to see our military kids grow up. We recently got to know former grant recipient Michelle Criqui of Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, who spent several months volunteering for OMK after graduating from college. She joined the OMK team as our newest employee on March 5. We asked her to share her perspective on being an OMK kid.

When I was a senior in high school, my dad left on a year-long deployment to Kosovo. This meant that my mom, three younger sisters, older brother and I would have to navigate our way through holidays, get-togethers, and all those simple, everyday moments with my dad serving nearly five thousand miles away. My mom was, and still is, a true home-front superhero – making daily sacrifices to ensure that we had everything we needed to be successful, even during this trying time.

When she discovered Our Military Kids, it was as if a huge weight was lifted off her shoulders. She applied for four grants – one for each of my sisters, and they were approved right away. It amazed me that we could get this much support from people we didn't know, but who nonetheless were in our corner, rooting us on and lending a helping hand.

I used my grant to row on the Mount Vernon High School crew team as a member of the Women's Varsity boat. I got the opportunity to race in regattas across Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and even on the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. I earned a varsity letter and a third-place medal for a regatta in which I led the boat in stroke seat. This grant gave me the chance to make so many amazing friends, and receive invaluable encouragement from my coaches that I still carry with me today.

I knew that I wanted to give back to the incredible military community in some way, so it only felt right that I contact Our Military Kids. I know firsthand just how far one grant can go in a child's life, especially when he or she is in a difficult situation that can be hard to comprehend. Our Military Kids made my dad's year of deployment so much easier on my family, and for that, I will always be grateful.



Shane (now a member of the Kansas Air National Guard) 25, Brigitte, 21, Col. Brett Criqui, Army National Guard, Michelle Criqui, 23, Christi, 18.



Michelle Criqui leads her high school crew team in the stroke seat on the Potomac River.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

We're so grateful to our supporters who made it possible to provide almost 4,000 grants in 2017. We gave 26% of those grants to children of severely injured service members and veterans.

“My son was born after my deployment to Iraq. He is the only thing that matters to me in life, but as I am struggling with my everyday pain from my injuries, with my PTSD, my insomnia and so on, it takes a huge toll on him. He also has depression, anger and sadness that no child should have. Our Military Kids grants make a huge difference in our lives. It gives him the means to attend the sport he truly loves – where he learns the meaning of discipline, hard work, honor, and teamwork.”

“The kids miss out on a lot of activities and fun events due to our unique situation. Our Military Kids has been a blessing to our family. This organization has allowed our children to participate in normal activities with their peers. We have felt a burden lifted off of us as parents as well, by being able to provide our children with activities they desire.”

“Our Military Kids grants make a huge difference in our lives.”

HOST AN EVENT FOR OUR MILITARY KIDS

Interested
in hosting a
fundraising
event at
your home,
community
group or
business?



Contact Matt Lockwood:

703-734-6654

mslockwood@ourmilitarykids.org

ourmilitarykids.org/events/host



Save the Date

Annual Celebration for Our Military Kids



**OUR
MILITARY
KIDS**

April 26, 2018 | 6pm

Army Navy Country Club
Arlington, Virginia



Supporting
military families
...one child at
a time.

Our Military Kids, Inc.
6861 Elm St, Suite 2A
McLean, VA 22101

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