

From Editor’s Corner
G Adams-Square



G. Adams-Square sharing October Birthday flowers

Are you as amazed as I am that we are now in the month of December 2023. Do not get me wrong, I have no regrets. Instead, I am basking in all the accomplishments. Why not use this time as a kaleidoscope and reflect on what was a fantastic moment for you this year. I am confident you will find something or one fact/moment to embrace and be proud of.

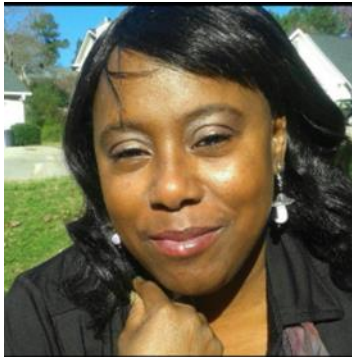
This Edition of the Student Veterans Esprit De Corp is a bit different. In the past we showcased student veterans who wish to share their experiences. Instead, I have asked students in my class to share their tributes to veterans. Our last story highlighted a student’s experience with an international flair. I assure you that you will enjoy each entry. So, let’s begin!

The first student to pay tribute to our veterans is Leonta Iverson. Her focus for the assignment was Viet Nam veterans.



**African-Americans,
Civil Rights, and
the Vietnam War**

*By Leonta Iverson MGA Student-
Perspectives on Diversity*



The Vietnam War era was a time that the United States and its people were dealing with their own racial injustices, inequalities, and prejudices. Despite the anti-war sentiment, many African Americans joined the military at their own recognizance. They were patriots and wished to support their country during the war. On the other hand, many saw this war as the vehicle used to escape the oppression they were facing in America, while seeking opportunities that would allow them to advance in society. (National Museum of African American History) This being

said, 16% to 25% of servicemembers in the military were African Americans. They suffered higher casualty rates as combat roles paid more, and only 2% were represented in the roles of leadership. (African Americans Veterans Monument)

Unfortunately, African Americans were fighting a war overseas and still facing discrimination in a non-segregated military. Were they any better off?

As the Civil Rights movement loomed at home in the United States, African American military men suffered their own atrocities abroad. There was no distinguish between the groups and every area of the military; Army, Navy, Marines, had their own methods of separatism. Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt (Chief of Naval Operations, 1972) said it plainly. “It is self-deception to think that American servicemembers come to the military untainted by the prejudices of the society which produced them. They do not.” (African Americans Veterans Monument) Clinging to their pride, African American soldiers reinforced their ideologies of self-awareness, black existence, and black culture. Daps, known today as fist bumps, Afro hair styles instead of the shaven head

recommended, Daishiki clothing and Black Power demonstrations persisted as the soldiers were continuously being held back from advancement and given the deadliest of assignments. Racial riots were a norm at the bases in Vietnam, while survival in the field depended on the cohesion of the group and the guy standing next to you, no matter his color. Thus, fights amongst white and black soldiers were less likely to occur while in combat, but they still happened. However, almost half of the prison population in the U.S. stockades in Vietnam were African Americans. (Vietnam War 50th Anniversary)

They started all the trouble amongst their peers, it would seem.

The experience of African Americans in the Vietnam War eventually opened the doors of reformation. The military re-evaluated its policies and implemented reform programs that included reviewing the military justice system. In 1971, the Defense Race Relations Institute was established to educate its leadership on tolerance and diversity. (Vietnam War 50th Anniversary).

Therefore, during the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam war,

African Americans servitude and dedication to the cause is clearly something to be noted and remembered, especially the veterans. While facing inequality and death abroad, they had to come home and deal with not only the African Americans that disagreed with their inclusion in the war, but the continued discrimination that plagued their people. Yet, they remained steadfast and resilient. The sacrifices that were made during the war paved the way for reforms that improved the conditions of the military for future generations of African American servicemembers. Though today, many African Americans insist they are still being discriminated against in one way or another, the gap that had once divided them from their counterparts, grows smaller; evidence in the many veterans honored for their service, (deceased and alive) and those elevated to seats of power. (i.e., Colin Powell) Racial progress in the military has come a long way thanks to those veterans that stood up and fought; not just in the war for their country; but in the war for the rights of every man to exist and have freedom and equality.

Thank you for your service and your sacrifice.



The next article comes from a student in the Perspectives on Diversity class on the Warner Robins campus- Hannah Browning. Hannah focused her research on Viet Nam



How the Vietnam War Scared Men in to Going to College

Hannah Browning MGA Student- Perspectives on Diversity



The 1988 Vietnam War Memorial at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois, the second-most-visited cemetery in the United States, after Arlington Cemetery in Virginia. The memorial honors the almost 3,000 Illinoisans killed or listed as missing in action during the Vietnam War

Beginning in 1940, the United States required all able-bodied men aged twenty-one through forty-five to register for the draft under the Selective Training and Service Act (Department of Defense par. 2). While there has been some opposition to the draft since its inception, defiance had reached new heights during the Vietnam War. As the war progressed during the mid-1960s, a growing percentage of men who signed up for the draft were called to serve in Vietnam, which reinforced growing antiwar sentiments, especially among the youth. However, upon arriving at their local draft boards, men could be granted deferments if they enrolled at or were attending a college. Fearing the possibility of being conscripted to fight in the Vietnam War, young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five enrolled at colleges so that they could avoid, or delay, being considered for service. College deferments were a low-risk approach to resisting the draft. There were enough men who saw college as a viable avenue for avoiding the draft that the number of male college attendees rose to four to six percent in the late 1960's,

according to researchers David Card and Thomas Lemieux. Card and Lemieux published a paper, titled, "Going to College to Avoid the Draft: The Unintended Legacy of the Vietnam War." As per their reporting, they were able to find a compelling link between men who were the likeliest to be drafted into the Vietnam War and the rate of college enrollments. As the war intensified throughout the late 1960's, men who were born between the years 1942 and 1950 had the highest risk of being conscripted. Card and Lemieux found that the rate of men who were between twenty to twenty-one years old and were born in 1947 had a 6.5 percent increase in college enrollments, a 4 percent increase in some college completion, and a 2 percent increase in graduating college with a degree due to draft-avoidance (100). In late 1969, the United States Selective Service department implemented a draft lottery system to minimize inequitable conscription. First conducted on December 1st, 1969, the Selective Service department assigned numbers to draft signees who were born from 1944 to 1950 and based the numbers on date of birth (Card and Lemieux 98). In 1971, a little over a year after the

first draft lottery was carried out, the United States Selective Service decided to stop providing school deferments, although they allowed men who were still attending college to have deferments up until they reached twenty-four years old. However, by the early 1970's, the Vietnam War had been slowing down, thus reducing the need for draftees. As it became apparent that men were being drafted at a continuously diminishing rate, men who were older than twenty no longer felt the need to enroll in college or complete their degrees. The lottery system also contributed to the alleviation of dread among men, as the men who were most at risk for being drafted at this time were a small percentage of men who received low lottery numbers.





A woodcarving in Coeur d'Alene, the principal city of the northern panhandle of Idaho, not far from the Canadian border, honors Fred McMurray, a U.S. serviceman shot down and then imprisoned by the North Vietnamese during the Vietnam War



Vietnam War veteran Larry Roye makes it a point to spend some contemplative time in the town square, decorated with American flags, each Veterans' Day, including this one in 2017, in Pontotoc, Mississippi



A view of the Arkansas Capitol Dome, with a portion of the city's Vietnam War memorial in the foreground, in Little Rock, the capital city of the southern U.S. state of Arkansas
Digital ID: (original digital file) highsm 64854
<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/highsm.64854>

As the Vietnam War eventually came to an end, everyone reeled in shock and horror from the images they saw, news they read, and stories they heard. Both the Vietnam War and the draft were seen as objectionable by the public, causing the United States to decide to cease the draft in 1973, ending involuntary military

service (Department of Defense par. 8). Although there are many veterans who take pride in being Vietnam veterans, it can also be rewarding to be a veteran on one's own terms rather than being one due to being forced into service.

In Appreciation of Veteran's Day



Robert Patrick Bleier

<https://www.loc.gov/item/afc200101.106914/?locldr=blogflt>

Veterans History Project Service Summary:

War or Conflict: Vietnam War, 1961-1975

Branch of Service: Army

Unit of Service: 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 196th Infantry Brigade, Americal Division

Location of Service: Fort Gordon, Georgia; Fort Riley, Kansas; Chu Lai, Vietnam

Highest Rank: Specialist Four

Collection Number: AFC/2001/001/106914

"...but you have to understand this - this was 1968, this was playing for the Pittsburgh Steelers. Nobody knew who existed on the Pittsburgh Steelers at that time." (video interview, 00:15:02.0)

By late 1968, Robert "Rocky" Bleier had been a championship-winning player for Notre Dame and a draft pick for the Pittsburgh Steelers. But 1968 would also be the year his draft notice arrived, and he very quickly found himself in infantry training, with a one-year tour in Vietnam ahead of him. Bleier would twice be wounded in the thigh and foot during the same engagement outside Hiep Duc. Such wounds might have ended his football

career, but as soon as he was discharged, with shrapnel still in his foot, Bleier went back to training with the Steelers and played for the team throughout, what many consider, their greatest decade in football.



Before we leave our final edition for Fall 2023, I have an interesting story to share with you. It involves one of our students at Middle Georgia State University. This story comes full circle. Our men and women enlist in the military to serve our country. Many are deployed overseas with the goal to keep Americans safe. This heroic effort also opens the door for persons from other countries to come to the United States. Which is exactly the story of MGA student Moos Zwerts a student enrolled in American Government on the Cochran Campus and an MGA soccer player. Here is his story in his own words in third person:

Moos's MGA Story

All his life, Moos never knew what he wanted to do as a grown up apart from being a football(soccer) player. Unfortunately, the chances of becoming a professional in this sport is considerably small because of the huge competition all around the world. Moos knew this all along, even though he knows he is talented, this would probably not be enough to make it as a professional. During the last year of his highschool career,

Moos had to think about what he wanted to study and where he wanted to go to university. Before attending university, he did not really know what he wanted to study. The year before he attended college, Moos visited a lot of open houses at different colleges. Even after different visits at different schools, he still was not convinced by one of those universities. Eventually, Moos went on to go to college in Amsterdam, for the reasons that it is close to his hometown and Moos knows the city well. The study he started to follow was a sport-related study. He made a lot of good friends, but after a few months in college, he noticed that he could not keep up with the amount of homework and tests. After having a few talks with his parents, Moos came to the conclusion that it was time to try something else. Moos got in contact with people he knew from his soccer club. These people told Moos about something which made him very excited; playing soccer and following a study in the United States. Moos decided to do research about this, he saw in that this was his opportunity and decided that this is what he wanted to do.



At this point, it was the end of December 2022, and Moos promised himself to go to the United States in the fall of 2023. Basically, Moos had half a year for the procedure of finding the school that was suitable for him on academic and athletic level. To get this journey started, Moos had to find a agency who could help him with important matters, such as: making a recruitment video, contacting schools, and getting a Visa. So he got in contact with Made Scholarships, which is an agency in The Netherlands that helps student-athletes with recruiting services. After a few talks with Dennis De Boer, who is founder of Made Scholarships, Moos agreed on a partnership and the recruitment proces started. All student-athletes who want to go study abroad in the U.S. or make a transfer need to have a good looking “highlight video”. This concludes film of your games with your best moments. Moos’s father already had a lot of experience with camera’s working for television so he decided to film his games at Sdo Bussum, Moos’s hometown club. Every Saturday, his father would show up before kick-off. He would set his camera ready and

filmed Moos for 90 minutes. He did this for three months and there was a lot of film collected. With all the game-footage, Made Scholarships made a highlight-video with all of the best moments Moos has had during his games. This video lasted eight minutes, which is not too long and not too short. After this video was posted on the



website of Made Scholarships and Youtube, Moos already started to receive a few e-mails from schools who wanted to have a call with him. After a while, Moos had almost 30 offers from different schools all around the United States. He spoke to multiple coaches through the phone, which gave him a perspective of each school and how a day in the life at the school would look like. Moos had to reckon with a lot of different things considering picking the right school, such as how much the tuition was going to be, the location, which major Moos was able to follow, and other peripheral matters. Every few weeks, Moos and his parents had calls with his agency to discuss the options. At first, it seemed that Moos was going to a school in the north of the state Georgia, called Dalton State College. This school participates in the NAIA and are

in the top 3 teams in the country. After some issues, the scholarship that Moos should have got was not available anymore. At this point, it was May 2023 and Moos had to decide what other school he was going to pick. The same week that Dalton State from Georgia got annulled, another school from Georgia came in for Moos, Middle Georgia State University. Moos got on the phone with the coach and a



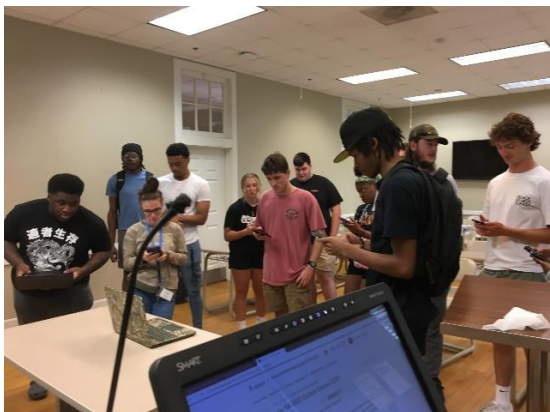
player at MGA, who is also Dutch. Moos got excited when he found out that there were a lot of benefits, such as the tuition costs which were low in comparison to other schools, and the level of competition. At the end of May, Moos decided to go to Middle Georgia State University starting in the fall of 2023. During this point in time, Moos almost finished his first semester at MGA. So far, Moos has made a lot of new friends from all over the world and the soccer-season has ended. The overall results were not to good, the team lost a lot of games. Eventhough this was disappointing, Moos enjoyed this new experience. He played in all of the games and made away trips to states such as Alabama, Missisipi, and Tennessee.

Schoolwise, Moos had to understand and speak the English language as quick as possible. In the beginning of

this first semester, he had some difficulties understanding it. After a few weeks, it started to go better and better. Moos got decent grades, eventhough Moos has been dealing with sickness this last month. Now during thanksgiving break, Moos and three of his friends from the soccer team are going on a trip to New York City. This will be a dream come true for Moos because he dreamt of going there since he was a child. When he comes back he has finals to take and then he will go back home to his family and friends for winterbreak. So far, this first semester has been an enjoyable experience, overcoming fears and maturing a lot.



Moos involved with Constitution Day on the Cochran campus Sept 2023



Wreaths Across America

On Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023, Wreaths Across America will remember and honor our fallen heroes by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at more than 2,500 locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea, and abroad. You can sponsor a wreath or volunteer online wreathsasscrossamerica.org



From Editor's Corner

G Adams-Square

To all our contributors thank you. To all our readers keep reading. Let's continue to remember our troops: those who are currently serving. You may not be able to send a care package but a card or a letter of kind words and encouragement speaks volumes. Always remember those who have served and those who gave their lives for us to enjoy life and the pursuit of happiness. We hope our tribute during fall Holiday Season, 2023 is a reminder to veteran students how valuable to MGA each of you enriches us. Our mission is to assure you that we are here for you. May peace, safety, and wellness surround each of you and your family! Thank you for your service. We look forward to serving you in our next edition in March 2024.

This spot is for you! If you were missing in our December edition, 2023, we can help. We invite you to share your military-to-college experience with us. For consideration in the Spring 2024 issue, please submit your story and pictures to

grace.adamssquare@mga.edu





Hallmark Christmas Nashville TN