



VETERANS DAY SPEECH 2025 (*young audience*)

Good morning/afternoon, [name of school/group].

[Thank event hosts and any special VIPs]

<PAUSE>

I am honored to be here in celebration of Veterans Day.
To begin, I'd like anyone here who has a family member
who was or is in the military to raise their hand.

If your mom or dad, grandma or grandpa, aunts or uncles,
brothers or sisters, or anyone else in your family served,
get those hands up.

<PAUSE>

If your hand is raised, ***thank you.*** I, and so many of our fellow Americans, appreciate your family member's service, and we recognize that having a loved one in the military can be difficult. So thank you.

If you don't know whether any of your family members served in the military, I encourage you to ask. If they served, ask them when and where and what they did in the military. I promise you'll be better for it, and it will mean the world to the veteran in your family that you care.

<PAUSE>

[Briefly talk about your own military service (branch, era, military occupation) and/or that of a family member]

Millions of men and women have served in the military since the founding of our country. All of them had different reasons for joining. They held different jobs and served in different places across the world. Some of them went to war. Many were injured or otherwise changed in service. Whatever their story is, they took a great risk and protected our country and our freedoms.

That's why we celebrate Veterans Day—to recognize and honor their courage, sacrifice and contributions. One simple but meaningful way to do that is to say “thank you for your service” to a veteran you know or meet.

But an even more powerful way to show your gratitude is to help the veterans in your families and your communities. An act of service can change their lives and yours.

Just ask Nihar Kummetha [Knee-har Koo-meh-tha].

The summer after his freshman year of high school, Nihar started volunteering at Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities in his hometown. These facilities are where veterans go for nearly all of their medical needs, including for injuries and illnesses caused by their military service.

Nihar returned as a volunteer every summer after. He escorted veterans in wheelchairs from surgery and around the hospital. He helped set up a library where veterans could hang out, play games and read. He also helped organize events for homeless veterans and wellness programs.

Nihar said his summers volunteering for veterans and hearing their stories gave him a new appreciation for the men and women who served in the military. It also inspired him to want to work in medicine, specifically with veterans.

“Initially, I thought I was helping the veterans,” Nihar recently said. “But I think the veterans have truly helped give me a deeper sense of purpose.”

This fall, Nihar started his freshman year of college, where he plans to take the pre-med track. He can picture himself one day working at a veterans hospital as a doctor. And it all started as a summer volunteer.

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This Veterans Day, I encourage you to follow Nihar’s lead. You can start by volunteering your time helping a veteran in your family or neighborhood. You can help them with yard work or errands, or you can volunteer at a local event for veterans. There are also opportunities to volunteer at your local medical center for veterans.

If you're 21 years old or younger and log a certain number of hours, you could qualify for one of DAV's college scholarships that recognize those who volunteer their time for veterans in DAV's name, like Nihar did. DAV recently awarded him a \$30,000 scholarship for his volunteering.

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Or you could show your appreciation and raise money to support programs for veterans by participating in DAV's Field of Flags. Based on how much money you raise, you'll be sent a box of flags to display in your yard or anywhere you'd like. Schools and businesses can also participate.

If you like getting outside, consider participating in the annual DAV 5K race where veterans, families and supporters run, walk, ride or roll over 3 miles in support of veterans. The event is an opportunity to raise money and awareness for veterans. You can participate in person in Cincinnati or join the virtual race right here in your hometown. You can even organize your very own running team when you sign up at [DAV5K.org](https://www.DAV5K.org)

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Lastly, if you raised your hand earlier, you can help support veterans like your family members by becoming a junior member of the DAV Auxiliary. The Auxiliary is made up primarily of veterans' family members and supports DAV's larger mission to ensure those who served are cared for. The Auxiliary offers more opportunities to volunteer for veterans and to say thank you with action.

<PAUSE>

I want to thank [event host/school/group] again for having me here today. Have a wonderful Veterans Day, and don't forget to reflect on what today is all about and how *you* can help veterans.

Thank you.

<END>