

Veterans Day Presentation for Howard County **High Schools**: 30 – 45 minutes

- Recommend a team of Veterans attend: a presenter and an assistant presenter
- All presenters must be approved by the VSRC.
- All presenters must have a bio on file

I. Introduction of the speaker by the School official/program coordinator.

- *Use Veteran's Bio*

- *Liaison Student then leads all in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance **

II. Speaker will acknowledge any/all veterans/military families in attendance (stand and be recognized, round of applause)

III. Speaker's Presentation:

A. Briefly define a U.S. Military Veteran: *A Veteran is an individual on Active duty in one of the branches of the military, or a Reservist, or a Retiree, or discharged after one or two tours of duty who upon enlistment wrote a check to the US Government for an amount up to and including his/her life in the defense of our country and way of life.*

B. Briefly discuss the history of Veterans Day and distinguish from Memorial Day: **Memorial Day**, an American holiday observed on the last Monday of May, honors men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971.

Armistice Day: World War I ended in 1918 on Nov. 11, the 11th hour of the 11th day in the 11th month of the year. This prearranged time — 11-11-11 — ended the slaughter and chaos of a world war that had raged for more than four years. This day was called Armistice Day and was to honor WW1 Veterans.

Veterans Day: In 1954, after having been through both World War II and the Korean War, the 83rd U.S. Congress -- at the urging of the veterans service organizations -- amended the 1938 Act establishing Armistice Day a national holiday by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation on June 1, 1954, Nov. 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

C. Briefly and generally discuss the role Veterans have played in the U.S:
*From the founding of our country in 1776 both in peacetime and wartime, our veterans serve to protect 4 essential *freedoms of:*

- *Freedom of speech*
- *Freedom of worship*
- *Freedom from want*
- *Freedom from fear*

As well as our Constitution, democracy and our way of life. These freedoms flow from our founding fathers.

When most of us think of “rights,” we imagine things we are free to do, like speak our minds, or practice a religion, or sell something that we have made. We assume, when we imagine these actions, that there is nobody stopping us from doing them. When we study history, however, we realize that many people in the past lacked—and a great many around the world today still lack—the freedom to exercise many of the rights we take for granted.

The American Founders, however, argued that people have God given rights regardless of whether they are able to put them into practice. This is why they called these rights “natural or inalienable” They are part of what it means to be a person, an American and protected by Veterans. For these reasons Veterans deserve to be honored and protected.

D. Briefly discuss why we celebrate Veterans Day and its significance

Today: there is an estimated 24.9 million military veterans in the country. These people deserve utmost respect and appreciation for their significant contributions to the success of past military actions. In return, society can do nothing much better than to offer them a special day in honor of their effort, bravery and courage.

E. Briefly discuss the speaker's own military service and experience. Limited to:

- *Branch of service*
- *Length of service*
- *Occupational specialty*
- *Mention any operations you were involved in and at what capacity*
- *Proudest experience*
- *Most defining experience*

G. Provide a brief overview of Veterans resources in Howard County (perhaps also a handout listing the numerous resources)

I. Entertain any questions (repeat the question so all can hear)

H. Concluding remarks and thanks to those in attendance

- *The Freedoms that grant us our way of life is not free*
- *Future generations will be responsible for maintaining our freedoms and some of you may very well be future Veterans.*
- *The Flag of our Country is a symbol of our Veteran. When our flag is disrespected, our Veterans and their accomplishments are also disrespected. The flag represents everything that we stand for. Therefore, we have flag etiquette to include the proper handling and retirement of war flags. We all should be familiar with flag etiquette including the proper handling and retirement. Howard County has a flag retirement program.*

Footnotes:

*The **Four Freedoms** were goals articulated by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt on Monday, January 6, 1941. In an address known as the Four Freedoms speech (technically the **1941 State of the Union address**), he proposed four fundamental freedoms that people "everywhere in the world" ought to enjoy: