Colleagues and Fellow Veterans,

I wanted to get this note out to you in advance of the upcoming Memorial Day holiday as you, your families, and your communities take the time to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. This weekend, more than 500 children who have lost a Servicemember parent will come together in Washington, D.C. at the 20th Annual Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) National Military Survivor Seminar & Good Grief Camp. At the camp, these military kids will be paired one-on-one with mentors from across the country, many of whom are Veterans and Servicemembers themselves; and will meet other kids who have experienced a similar loss.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and TAPS (www.taps.org) recently started working together to ensure surviving family members are connected to their VA benefits. This includes the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John D. Fry scholarship (http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/fry_scholarship.pdf), which provides Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits to children of Servicemembers who died in the line of duty after Sept. 10, 2001. The benefit includes full in-state tuition and fees, a monthly housing allowance and a books and supplies stipend.

By working with non-profit organizations like TAPS helps us stay connected and ensure all eligible dependents know – and use - the Fry Scholarship, hosting economic competitiveness summits across the country, and launching new online employment tools, we continue to work hard to connect transitioning Servicemembers, Veterans and their family members with meaningful employment and rewarding careers.

Additional information can also be found at, http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/14212/program-works-with-va-to-support-family-members/. I hope you will help us spread the word about these important programs and benefits. Have a safe and enjoyable weekend.

V/R

Curtis L. Coy
Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity
Veterans Benefits Administration
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Please Remember:

- If you would like to review prior messages sent through this listserv, click http://benefits.va.gov/vow/economic_opportunity.htm.

- If you would like to research, find, access, and, in time, manage your VA benefits and personal information please visit and/or register at https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits.portal/ebenefits.portal.

- If you are seeking employment in the federal government, particularly the VA, our VA for Vets high-tech tools and resources can help. Visit online at http://vaforvets.va.gov/Pages/default.aspx or call 1-855-824-8387.