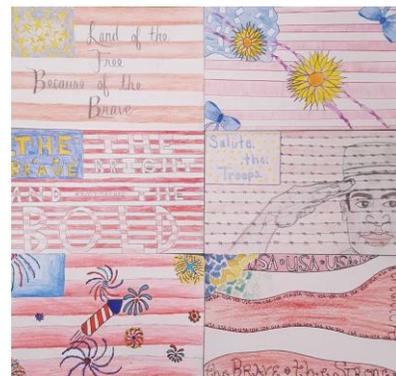


# Ponca City School Students Reaching Out to Veterans Through Art

Ponca City Senior High School students in Melinda LittleCook's art class are reaching out to community Veterans through their art. They created American Veteran Post Cards with poems or letters on the back to be given to local Veterans in appreciation for the service to our country.

Melinda LittleCook, Po-Hi Art Teacher, said, "I loved working with the students on this project. It is good to visit the American Flag and our country. I love these small unique American Flag inspired post cards. The students are introduced to American Artist Jasper Johns, known for his work of flags. We have a discussion about the American Flag and the folks who have served in the military. These small pieces of art are to be given as a Thank You. On the back of each card is a personal note as well. Some of the students ended up sharing stories about their family members that had been in the service. Imagine being the recipient of one of the American Veterans Post Cards."



Sue Allen, Oklahoma DAR Oklahoma State Regent, hand delivered the cards to local Veterans. She explained, "Flag cards with letters on the back were handmade by Po-Hi art students in Mrs. LittleCook's class and were delivered to Veterans of WWII, Korean, Vietnam who were in the nursing home in Tonkawa and four nursing homes in Ponca City. Representatives of Veterans of Foreign Wars, Daughters of the American Revolution, Vietnam Veterans of America, and Ladies Auxiliary of VFW and American Legion visited the nursing homes presenting cards, Veteran flyers, parade buttons and ribbons and visited with each Veteran. I was fortunate to present the cards with the poems. It was a delight to see their eyes light up and the smiles on their faces. Many of them were excited that the students thought enough of them and cared enough to make them the picture and to write something. The Veterans felt loved and blessed by this kind gesture."

Each of the Po-Hi art students who created the cards wrote heartfelt letters telling the Veterans how much they appreciated the sacrifices they made for them and our country. Emma Kimbrel, 10<sup>th</sup> grade student said in part, "The flowers in my drawing represent a bright light of hope – that of which our country should have. We are all bonded together without even knowing it. I want them to know they are my role model."

Kamryn Burns, 12<sup>th</sup> grade student, said, "I felt sad that our troops have to be shipped across the world and be away from their families, but they sacrificed everything for us. I couldn't be more grateful for them making our world a better place."

Kaden Swords, 9<sup>th</sup> grade student, said in part, "I was thinking about what the flag means to me and I was heavily inspired by my step dad who has PTSD from a car bomb that blew up beside him. Whilst he loves fireworks, he can't watch them because of his PTSD."

Emma Tyson, 10<sup>th</sup> grade student, said, "I felt a sense of pride for our country and our accomplishments as a country. I felt honored to be able to give something as small as a picture and a letter to someone who did so much for us for our freedom and rights. They deserve more than we can give them."

Morgan Didlake, 12<sup>th</sup> grade student, said, "This project really inspired me because our troops go out and fight for our freedom. I wanted this card to have as much thanks and gratitude in it as well as history. The stars in my drawing represent different wars in different colors. Nothing I can ever do would amount to what they did for our country, but I hope this shows my gratitude."

Taryn Carter, 11<sup>th</sup> grade student, said, "I felt proud making my art for my brother. I am very thankful for everyone who is serving our country. It gave me a feeling of pride to be a part of this country and to show honor to those who serve."

**Below are the actual hand-written (typed) letters from each student explaining the project and how it made them feel.**

**Emma R. Kimbrel**  
**Flowers – Bright Light of Hope**  
**10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

What I felt when I worked on this project was feelings that most youth don't have. In the top corner there are tiny squares and rectangles. To me, they feel like memories that are floating around - maybe even ones that are forgotten. The flowers on my drawing show a bright light of hope - that which our country should have. We all are bonded together without even knowing it. After the Veterans had served, we all felt at peace. Some people might not be respectful, but on the inside they are because we would not be where we are now without our Veterans.

What it meant to me to be able to have my card given to a Veteran meant a lot. All that mattered to me was that I made their day and that they know they are my role model. They changed this country for the better, and that is the best thing anyone could have done for this country. I wanted them to know that someone is thinking about them.

**Kamryn Burns**  
**Salute to the Troops**  
**12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

When I was working on this project, I felt sad that our troops have to be shipped across the world and be away from their families. They sacrificed everything for us and I couldn't be more grateful for them making our world a better place.

It really means a lot to me giving my art work to someone that has served our country because my uncle is in the Air Force and I know he really would have appreciated knowing that no matter where you are, we are always with you and grateful for your service.

**Kaden Swords**  
**Fire Crackers**  
**9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

I was thinking about what the flag means to me and how Jasper Johns created this works. I was also heavily inspired by my step dad who has PTSD from a car bomb that blew up beside him. Whilst he loves fireworks, he can't watch them because of his PTSD. It makes me feel happy to be able to give something back to the people who have risked everything for me and millions of others to stay free.

**Morgan Didlake**  
**America the Brave & Strong**  
**12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

This project really inspired me because our troops go out and fight for our freedom. I wanted this card to have as much thanks and gratitude in it as well as history. The stars represent different wars in different colors. This project was amazing. Nothing I can ever do would amount to what they did for our country, but I hope this shows my gratitude.

**Emma Tyson**  
**The Brave, Bright & Bold**  
**10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

I felt almost a sense of pride - pride for our country and our accomplishments as a country. After talking about what the flag meant, I felt deep feelings for our country and all that we've done.

I felt honored to be able to give something as small as a little picture and a letter to someone who did so much for us for our freedom and rights. I felt better to at least do that, versus nothing at all, for the people who risked so much for us. They deserve more respect than we give them.

**Taryn Carter**  
**Land of the Free Because of the Brave**  
**11<sup>th</sup> Grade**

I felt proud making my art for my brother. I am very thankful for everyone who is serving our country. My artwork was inspired by the Jasper Johns. It gave me a feeling of pride to be a part of this country and to show honor to those who serve.

