



**Beyond the  
Yellow Ribbon**



## Minnesota Military Teen Panel Quarterly News *Fall '17*



### In This Issue

United Heroes League  
Military Day at the MN State  
Fair  
New Teen Summit Logo  
August Teen Panel Meeting

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Contact Lead Child and  
Youth Program Coordinator,  
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651-242-6938  
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Find more information about  
the Teen Panel [here](#).

### We're on Facebook

Be sure to visit the  
[Minnesota Military Teen  
Panel on Facebook!](#)

**We're on Instagram**



**Teen Panel members with some NHL  
United Heroes League Ambassadors**



**Removing Burdock and Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary.**

## New Member Bios:



### Jace Schoon

Hello, my name is Jace Schoon, I'm from Belle Plaine. My mom and stepdad are officers in the National Guard, and I'm one of the newest editions to the MN Military Teen Panel. I'm 16 years old and I will be going into my junior year of high school. I attend Belle Plaine Senior High and I keep myself busy with: cross country, speech, FFA and track. I'm really excited to be a part of the Teen Panel and I look forward to a great year representing and connecting with military youth!



### Brooke Isaacson

## United Heroes League

This past meeting the Teen Panel went to visit the United Heroes League headquarters in Hastings, MN. We met Shane Houdella the founder, and President, of United Heroes League. The United Heroes League (formerly Defending the Blue Line) main mission is to keeping military kids active and healthy while their parents serve our country. They accomplish this goal by giving away free sports equipment to military kids because they know that sports are expensive and its hard for military families to support kids in sports when a family member is deployed. The United Heroes League partners with pro athletes and pro sports teams. Partners and sponsors provide sports equipment, donate sports camps, subsidize association fees, and distribute NHL, NBA, MLB, NFL, MLS and NCAA game tickets to military children. The United Heroes League is a non-profit organization that sends sports equipment to the US, Canada and even over seas to soldiers. The Teen Panel also got to meet current and former NHL players, who are ambassadors for the United Heroes League, in April at Purple Up Day hosted at Mall of America.

To see what United Heroes League events are upcoming, donate sports equipment, or to register for free equipment visit the United Heroes League [website](#).

*By: Cole Estes and Cailey Isaacson*

## Military Day at the MN State Fair

We hope that the weather on August 29th is good because it is Military Appreciation Day at the MN State Fair. There will be various military related booths including one with the Teen Panel members. At our booth, we will have a variety of games, such as Giant Jenga, bean bag toss, and side walk chalk. After each game, the kids will have the opportunity to pick from a selection of prizes. There will be tattoos, books, and other toys to choose from. Our booth will be open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come pay us a visit to play some games and win some prizes! We hope to see you there!

*By: Zara Meyer*

## New Teen Panel Logo

The Minnesota Military Teen Panel has had the same logo for seven years now. Finally, we decided to switch things up and create a new look. During our August meeting, the panel voted on a new design. Our logo will now be an outline of the state of Minnesota, with the American Flag inside it. We all agreed that it was time for a change, and we are excited to present the final product. We are looking forward to another great year on the Teen Panel.

Hi everyone, I'm Brooke Isaacson. I'm 14 and I live in St. Michael. I will be a freshman at St. Michael-Albertville High School. I enjoy playing soccer and volleyball with my friends. I also am on a air rifle team from Anoka. I am very excited to be on the Teen Panel and to plan the 2018 Teen Summit.

### **Graduating Members:**



#### **Emma Merricks**

Hi everyone, my name is Emma and I am 17 years old, and going into my senior year at Farmington High School and part time at Inver Hills Community College. After I graduate I plan on going to college, my top choices are the University of Wisconsin River Falls, the University of Wisconsin La Crosse, and the University of Minnesota. I plan on majoring in some type of business degree or sports medicine. This will be my third year on the Teen Panel and it has been such an amazing experience. I have made so many new friends and connections that I never would have had the opportunity to do without the Teen Panel. These past few years have been so amazing and I am so thankful for this

### **August Teen Panel Meeting**

This August, the 2017-2018 Teen Panel had their first meeting. Returning members were reunited and new members were introduced. At this first meeting we did a service project. We went to a park located in St. Paul and helped out by cutting down burdock. We were able to clear out most of the invasive species from a certain area in the park. We also joined together and planned out some of the Teen Summit as well as the Region 5 Summit. Our hard work payed off by going to dinner at Yarusso Bros Italian restaurant. We also worked on our team building and communication skills to escape an "escape room" at Mission Manor (highly recommended). We learned each other's strengths while trying to accomplish our goal. We learned how to use our communication skills in a different way with our MRT training. We also met an amazing person, Shane Houdella, who founded the organization of the United Heroes League. It provides sports equipment and other opportunities for military families. All in all we had a great first meeting and are looking forward to many more. Make sure to keep an eye out for the 2018 Teen Summit registration because this year is going to be the best one yet!

*By: Kerrigan Merricks*

### **Graduating Members:**



#### **AJ Steinmetz**

My name is AJ Steinmetz, I am 17 years old, and I am going into my senior year at Park high school in Cottage Grove. After high school I plan on going to college and majoring in business. I have started looking and touring colleges, but plan on looking at more options during my senior year. In my free time I like to run on my school's track team, where I participate in hurdles! This is my fourth year on the panel and I am so excited to see what this year brings. I always love planning the Summit and going to all the

opportunity.

events that I can. Being on the Teen Panel has been such an amazing opportunity, I can't wait to see what life brings after this year!

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