

12th Annual Pueblo Home of Heroes Association Essay Contest



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and Pueblo City-County Library District

The mission of the Pueblo Home of Heroes Association is to preserve and expand the memorial dedicated to Medal of Honor recipients; to advance the history of the Medal of Honor; honor the legacy of those who have received the Award nationwide; to promote democratic ideals; and encourage among the people of the United States, and especially its youth, citizenship, character, integrity and selflessness as epitomized by the Medal of Honor.

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Pueblo Home of Heroes Association Essay Contest
“What does patriotism mean to you, and what can you do, as a student, to be a patriot of the United States of America?”

Pueblo Home of Heroes Association, in cooperation with Pueblo City-County Library District, is pleased to announce the winners of its 12th Annual Pueblo Home of Heroes Association essay contest.

The following guidelines were required:

All entries must be typed.

Elementary School – grades 4 and 5; 300-500 words.

Middle School – grades 6–8; 400-700 words.

High School – grades 9–12; 500-1,000 words.

Select a Medal of Honor recipient other than our local Pueblo heroes.

Pueblo Home of Heroes Association judges were Chris Bolt, Don and May Gray, Ray LeMasters, Gary and Karen Micheli, and Jim Stuart.

Pueblo Home of Heroes Association and Pueblo City-County Library District wish to thank teachers and parents for encouraging their students and children to participate in this essay contest.

Winners

Elementary School

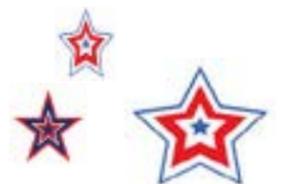
1 st Place	Stephen Clardy – Minnequa Elementary School – Ms. Goddard & Ms. Lane
2 nd Place	Ella Lefebre – South Park Elementary School – Mrs. Saenz
3 rd Place	Bryson Martin – North Mesa Elementary School – Mrs. Powell
Honorable Mention	Isabella Clason – North Mesa Elementary School – Mrs. Powell
Honorable Mention	Isabela Jones – South Park School – Mrs. Saenz
Honorable Mention	Haven Taylor – South Park School – Ms. Andrews

Middle School

1 st Place	Dermot McCarthy – Homeschool – Ms. O’Callaghan
2 nd Place	DeOran Vann Aytch – Colorado Connection Academy – Ms. Fields
3 rd Place	Catlin Bonicelli – Goodnight School – Mr. Moore
Honorable Mention	Logan Morris – Homeschool – Mrs. Morris
Honorable Mention	Jayden Saint – Connect Charter School – Mrs. Saxton
Honorable Mention	Brooklyn Weckx – Connect Charter School – Mrs. Saxton

High School

1 st Place	Bryce Blatnick – East High School – Mr. LeMasters
2 nd Place	Ay’ncon Williams – Pueblo West High School – Lieutenant Colonel Emond
3 rd Place	Letizia Innocenti – Pueblo West High School – Mr. Dilcher
Honorable Mention	Mashonda Bennett – Paragon High School – Mrs. Kitchen
Honorable Mention	Adrian Gonzales – East High School – Mr. LeMasters
Honorable Mention	Tyana Sanchez – Pueblo West High School – Lieutenant Colonel Emond



Stephan Clardy

Minnequa Elementary School – Ms. Goddard & Ms. Lane

As a citizen of this country and state, I feel like I belong here and fit in. Another reason that I like this beautiful country is my friends and family are alive and thriving. This is a special country to me.

Veterans are heroes and I'm saying thank you to them. All the Veterans and the military make America free. They risk their lives for us, and we should be thankful. I know that while I'm walking to school, I am safe. I live in a free country. The military keeps us safe.

First responders are the puzzle piece to our lives. Paramedics help hurting people, police officers arrest criminals, and firemen put out fires. They all save lives. When I am older, I want to be a police officer and help to get rid of crime. I believe this to be an honorable position for a patriot.

Freedom of speech is very important to me. I have the right to have my own opinions about things that I don't like. I can say them or write about them. Our First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States is freedom of speech. I am glad that citizens of our country can speak their truth out loud.

Actions speak louder than words. If I was in the playground and I saw a kid by himself, I would be their friend and play with them. Another thing I can do as a good citizen, is help people who are hurt. I can get them something to eat, like soup, or get them a band aid if they are cut. Also, while I am outside, I can clean up garbage that is on the ground, because littering is disgusting. As a good citizen, I need to take action.

There are many things that I believe are important to be a patriot. Kind- I can help other people with things that they need. This is not always easy, but it is what you need to do to be kind. Trustworthy-It is important to be believed in and to have others have faith in you. If you are trustworthy you can be picked for important tasks. Leader-To be a leader means to do the right thing so other people will follow you. This also means to be a good person and not break promises or any relationships. These are the things that I believe that you must do to be a patriot.

There are many ways that people can be a good patriot. I challenge you to be one!



Ella Lefebre

South Park Elementary School – Mrs. Saenz

Being patriotic is important to me for many reasons. I love living in the United States of America. It is a great country. The definition of patriotism is devotion to and support for one's country. Patriotism is important to show thanks for living in a country with many freedoms and rights. I show patriotism by doing the Pledge of Allegiance and I also show respect by following the laws of our country. I celebrate patriotic holidays like the 4th of July, Memorial Day, President's Day, and Veterans Day.

There are other ways that I can show patriotism as a student. I will help other Americans in need by giving the homeless people clothes and food. I will help other students that need help with their homework or talk to them if they are sad or lonely. Being a good American is helping others.

I will send thank you cards to the men and women in the United States military. I will send the cards to the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and Space Force. Also I will thank the retired Veterans who have served our country. I will clap and say thank you to military men and women in parades.

I will also show patriotism by continuing to read and learn about great Americans. The great Americans that I will like to learn more about are President George Washington, President Abraham Lincoln, Ben Franklin, Martin Luther King Jr., and Harriet Tubman. It is important to learn about our country's history.

I would also learn about patriotic places like the Statue of Liberty, Mount Rushmore, and the White House. I will always stand with my hand on my heart when the Star Spangled Banner is being played.

Being patriotic is loving our country and helping others to make it better for Americans. I am proud to be an American and I will always be patriotic. God Bless the USA.



Bryson Martin

North Mesa Elementary School – Mrs. Powell

When you think of patriotism, what does it mean to you and how can you show it? Even though I'm as young as a sprout, I can still show patriotism. I can also understand what patriotism means and know how I can show it when I'm older.

I know some definitions of patriotism. Patriotism symbolizes love for your country. It also means national pride. I love this country because we're free. I have as much love for this country as a drop of sunshine. I don't think I'll ever leave the U.S.A. I'm proud that our country, the U.S.A., has gone from the Army to the Air Force and from the Air Force to the Space Force. I'm glad we don't have slavery and that we are fair. I'm proud that we get to go to school and we can choose what we want to be.

I know different examples of how I can show patriotism in my life. When I'm 18 and older I can vote and serve in the Armed Forces. My oldest brother is in the Air Force and one of my grandpas is retired in the Army and so is my other grandpa but he is retired from the Air Force. I can donate to the Armed Forces and send them lovely letters. I can tell the people who serve, including my brother and both my grandpas, "Thank you for your service!" I can be a good citizen and stand up for my country.

I know there are many more ways to be patriotic, but these are things that I can even do now. I can wear a shirt with our country's flag, or I can just color a flag. Red white and blue are the colors of the flag, and blue is one of my favorite colors. I can visit a memorial. We have one in our town at the Riverwalk. I can ask to go to it and see the people who got the Medal of Honor. I can decorate on the 4th of July. My friend and her family use red white and blue stars on their lawn. My family doesn't have a front lawn, but we have a u-driveway with rocks. I can spray paint the rocks with red, white, and blue. When I get braces I can get red, white, and blue colored rubber bands. I can stand up and learn about the powerful words of the Pledge of Allegiance.

How would you describe patriotism, and how will you show it? I know I will show patriotism a lot this year. Certainly, everyone can show patriotism as much as I can.



Isabella Clason

North Mesa Elementary School – Mrs. Powell

When I stood up to do the pledge of allegiance I felt a burst of pride come over me and I thought about my country. Even though I'm still young and can't vote, and can't do things adults can to be patriotic, there are a few things I can do.

The first thing I can do to be a patriot is honor our soldiers who have served in our country. I could also visit a memorial or a really meaningful place. Here in Pueblo we have a memorial at the Riverwalk. The memorial we have honors the soldiers. The memorial also has pictures of all the people who were in the war and some weapons they used in the war. I could think of the people that died. If go there I can look at the Medal of Honor and learn why they earned it.

Another way I can be patriotic is asking myself as a kid, how can I be patriotic? The first thing I can do is, on the 4th of July I can use puffy paint and paint a flag on the front or the back of a plain white tee shirt and then wear it. Last 4th of July my mom and I painted matching shirts and we still have them. I also have a bunch of patriotic clothing.

The next thing I can do is think how lucky I am to be an American. The biggest reason I'm proud to be in another country is because we have a lot of rights unlike a lot of people. Another pretty big reason for me to be lucky to be living in the U.S is because we can serve in the Army to protect our people.

My favorite way to be a patriot is think of slavery and all the big things that happened in the past and all the wars like the Civil War or World War II. I can remember those who fought for us and honor them. And I can think about how we have a free education. I can do my best for my country by being a good student.

Finally I love thinking about how we don't have to worry about certain things when I say the pledge of allegiance I feel so special to have freedom. Truly patriotism is important, and I will forever be a patriot of the United States.



Isabela Jones

South Park Elementary School – Mrs. Saenz

Though people have different views of Patriotism, I am going to tell you what Patriotism means to me. To me, Patriotism means to help people in my community, by doing the right thing and being there for people when they need it. Patriotism is having love and respect for the great country that we live in. Taking pride in our work and our country. Our country has its problems, but compared to the rest of the world, we have a pretty amazing place to live in and be very, very proud of.

First, respect your parents and fellow citizens. Be nice to your parents and do what they say and never lie to your parents or fellow citizens. It may not seem that by not lying is showing respect but it is and it is showing patriotism.

Respecting others, ourselves and our country is true patriotism.

Honor the men and women who fight for our country. They risk their lives for us. We need to always make sure that they are taken care of after their service, and always, always show them respect. Once a person was at the airport and they thanked this whole plane load of service men and women for their service. They smiled and said your welcome. That is a very small way to make them feel appreciated and show your patriotism.

Next, obey the laws of the land. Follow the rules and laws and do as they say and don't break the laws or rules. Laws help provide order, so everyone can live peacefully together. We need to be so glad that we have laws that protect us equally.

Then, be a giver not a taker. It is better to give than receive. Give people stuff and gifts and enjoy what you get back, and don't be just a receiver but, be a giver. It is amazing how good it feels to give not just things but giving of ourselves.

Last, yes, people might have differences but, working together in spite of those differences shows patriotism. Working together builds relationships and having good relationships will make our country a better place.



Haven Taylor

South Park Elementary School – Mrs. Andrews

What patriotism means to me is to be loyal, kind, respectful and treat others equally. Patriotism is a great virtue and can be a motivation to some people. Patriotism is a trait every living person should possess, not just soldiers or politicians. Patriotism is a virtue everyone should strive to have. School kids, grandmas, every single person should try to be patriotic.

One of my favorite qualities of patriotism is loyalty. This is true because you can be loyal to America. We should help others when needed. Everyone can stand up for the things that make America good such as freedom of many sorts. Some of those freedoms are our right to vote and our freedom to do anything if it does not break the law or impede on others Freedom. You can do this by helping a homeless person get some food.

Secondly, another great quality of patriotism is equality. Everybody has a chance to go to school. Anybody can be anything. One thing you can do is try to treat everybody fairly. No matter what race, gender or religion.

An additional quality of patriotism is kindness. We as Americans should try to be kind to everyone. No matter what race, gender or religion. Everyone should try to be kind and helpful to anyone and everyone. One way to be kind is to help out by doing work for free. One thing you can do to be kind is to mow your neighbor's lawn.

Hence, the last great quality of patriotism is respect. We as Americans should respect one another. We should care about each other as we would care for our brothers and sisters. We help anyone who needs it. We should care about and respect everyone in the world. Here's a couple ways to have respect for everyone. You can say hi to everyone or you could help someone who fell.

I think that if I, Haven Taylor can live a life of loyalty, equality, kindness, and respect, I think I can live a life of patriotism, I can live a life worth living in this world as a patriot.



Dermot McCarthy Homeschool – Ms. O’Callaghan

In my opinion, patriotism means that you believe in, and are willing to defend, the founding principles of our country. Those principles are declared in the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. I believe that the best of our country’s ideals are expressed in the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.” Patriotism means standing up against those who would harm these freedoms, even if it is our own government doing the deed.

Many people think that patriotism is always a good thing; however, I feel that patriotism can be used for either good or bad. Blind patriotism can be harmful. People can be blinded to the faults of their country or its leaders by excessive patriotism. Patriotism can lead to a sense that your country and its citizens are better than those of other nations. Excessive patriotism can lead to nationalism, which can be harmful. Nationalism can lead to policies that benefit the creating country while harming others.

Patriotism can be a positive force. It can work for good by helping fix problems in our government. Speaking out against the government when it is not upholding our ideals is true patriotism to me. As Samuel Adams wrote in a letter to James Warren, “If ever a time should come, when vain and aspiring men shall possess the highest seats in government, our country will stand in need of its experienced patriots to prevent its ruin.”

Patriotism can bring people from all over America together. For example after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, Americans put aside their differences and worked together for the common good of the survivors. Being an American gives you a bond with other Americans. I get a warm feeling of patriotism when I sing the National Anthem or hear it played. The same is true when I say the Pledge of Allegiance. Our common bond as American gives us a sense of pride in our country and what it has accomplished. We should feel pride in our country for being founded as a democracy. As Abraham Lincoln said, in the Gettysburg Address, “Government of the people, by the people, for the people...” In a democracy the fact that you as a citizen have a voice and a vote helps to give you a sense of involvement. This Increases patriotism in the country.

As a student, I can be a patriot of the United State of America by being an educated citizen. I can learn the history of our country. Knowing our history gives us a sense of how we got to where we are today. It can also help us to not repeat our past mistakes. I can be a patriot by learning about our forms of government and being informed about politics and current events. I can be a patriot by getting involved in politics. I can write my representative when I either agree with a policy, or when I am in opposition to it, or when I have an idea to propose.

I can be a patriot by learning about possible careers that help serve the people and protect the country and its citizens; careers such as law enforcement, military, fire and rescue, or special intelligence. I would like to do a job that helps others when I am older. When I am older, I will be a patriot by being an informed voter and utilizing my right to vote.

Although America is not perfect, I believe that our country is one of the best places to live. In America people are able to succeed if they work hard. I am proud to be a patriotic American.



DeOran Vann Aytch Colorado Connection Academy – Ms. Fields

What does patriotism mean to me, and what can I do, as a student, to be a patriot of the United States of America? There are many ways to display your patriotism. Patriotism to me is that of acting like a responsible citizen. By learning all I can about my country and the history of it. Also by staying informed and being aware of what is happening in my community. I learn this by watching the news. I also live in the city which is known as the “Home of Heroes. For Veteran’s Day last year I made a Power Point presentation for Veteran’s. It was for my home school program Colorado Connections Academy.

A responsible citizen at my age of eleven is that of being honest citizen. Respect for myself and respecting authority figures along with others. Learning how Pueblo has numerous veteran population. We also have a plant which get rid of old chemical weapons which was founded in 1950. Another way that I celebrate my patriotism by honoring those whom have served our country. By flying an American flag on holidays honoring them.

Living in a city which motto is, “Home of Heroes” is pretty patriotic too. I learned from this more of the history of Pueblo. Throughout my research I realized that to be a hero you just have to believe in yourself and your community to make it grow. Which is another form of patriotism. I feel honored to be surrounded by so many good characters and leaders that we have in Pueblo. So as a student and a born patriot of the United States of America I will continue to learn as much as I can about my country and community. Keep honoring my country. Being a good citizen. Try to help others learn about patriotism. Continue flying my American flag which I learned from Google is the most patriotic thing to do. I made an acronym for Pueblo P is for Patriotism, U is for United, E is for Equality, B is for Beautiful, L is for Land and O is for Observance. Plan to also one day be mayor of Pueblo, Colorado. Since that is now a possibility. So I leave you with the thought of patriotism that I display as a student in Pueblo, Colorado.



Catlin Bonicelli Goodnight School – Mr. Moore

Something that is embedded in the everyday life of an American is patriotism. You may ask, what exactly is patriotism? This is what patriotism means to me:

Patriotism is a love for your country, and even more so, willing to stand for what is right and fight injustice in your home. Patriotism is so much more than just thinking that America is awesome, patriotism is speaking out against discrimination, hate, and violence. It is fighting for what you believe in and never giving up on your dreams, it is the will to stand with everyone in your country, no matter the age, gender, race, sex, or religion.

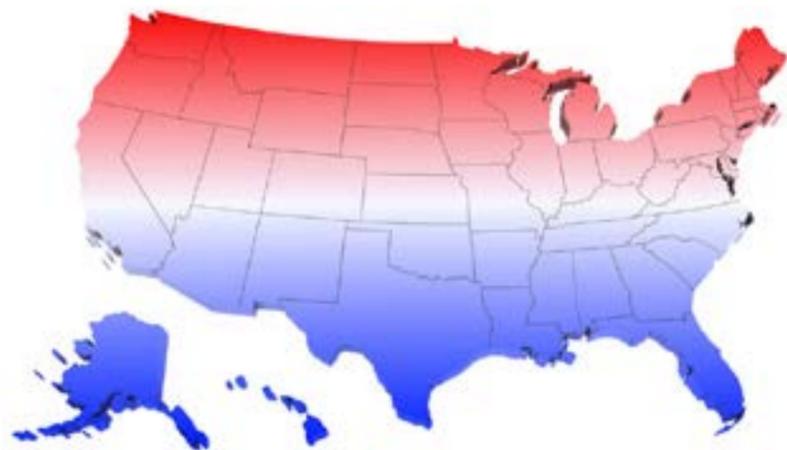
I believe that patriotism is a word to describe Americans' and their positive actions. And by American, I don't mean a specific race or religion, but all of the hard-working, amazing people that contribute to the melting pot that we call home. American is a term to describe a powerful group of people, who should be non-tolerating of discrimination or hate. It describes immigrants, atheists, Christians, LGBTQ+ members, and people of all races and beliefs. Above all, it describes people who love America. And, I believe that patriotism isn't being forced to approve of what is happening in your country, or what has happened. It is not even standing with the leaders or their choices. I believe that it is working hard to fix issues you have, on whatever scale or platform you can, and to stand up for what is important to you, and right.

I would also like to acknowledge all of the men and women who have fought for our country's growth. They are true heroes, willing to put themselves in harm's way to protect the citizens of America. Each and every one of them deserves respect, man or woman, child or adult, alive or deceased, battle-scarred, or emotionally damaged. Standing with them and the standards they fight for is one of the biggest ways to show patriotism. All soldiers deserve respect and love, and I believe that that is something that will always reign true.

The question of "What can you do as a student" is one that implies that students, or children have limited ways to create difference in our world, and I find that that is a common misconception. Often times, kids are told to 'have a voice', and 'get off their phones', to not be 'lazy'. But, when we try to create change, or stand up for ourselves, our voices and opinions are considered 'not valid' because we are young, or it is considered 'disrespect'. People often talk about equality between genders, race, and religion, which is a cause I stand with, but age is often swept under the mat, and ignored. This isn't right. Anyone, of any age, young or old, can make a difference not even just in our country, but in our world. And ways to do so, is to show patriotism. Having a voice, and using it to be heard is a powerful thing, and by using it to speak for what is truthful and correct, is an amazing way to show patriotism.

With that, I believe that that is a way to show patriotism as an adult. Please, adults, give your children voices, and opinions. Let what they have to say be heard. And by no means am I suggesting that you let your children run free and be disrespectful. But, I don't want you passing off "I'm not going to listen because I'm an adult and you're a kid" as "You're being disrespectful, go to your room".

So, overall, patriotism is important, and there are many ways to show it, no matter your age, including standing with America's heroes. Because, after all, Pueblo isn't called the 'Home of Heroes' for nothing.



Logan Morris Homeschool – Mrs. Morris



Making patriotism a personal ambition sounds like such a complicated and unachievable task to accomplish when you are not even old enough to vote. President Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." This simple phrase can easily be applied to patriotism. Even a child can be a patriot in his or her own way. We should all do what we can, with what we have, where we are. Standing for our flag is a simple, yet effective, show of patriotism. Anyone can do that! Giving smile and a wave to a veteran or current service member is another small but powerful show of patriotic pride. Even paying attention in history class is patriotic! Knowing our past is important. Honoring those who fought for our freedom is imperative to patriotism. Maybe fulfilling our individual patriotic duty is not such a complicated task after all.

Showing patriotism to our magnificent country is an important obligation that every citizen, whether they be young or old, should take a prideful part in. Fortunately, there is one way everyone can express patriotism and that is to devotedly learn how to honor and respect our nation's flag. Although some may find demonstrating patriotism to be a difficult task, it is in fact quite easy. Even the youngest of kids can learn to stand up and put their hand over their heart when the flag is raised, and the melody of National Anthem rings out. Such a simple gesture. Such a show of fealty. It is easy to learn basic flag etiquette. When our flag is raised or lowered, as part of a ceremony, or passes by in a parade, everyone except those in uniform should stand and face the flag with their right hand over their heart. Besides standing for the National Anthem, there are other ways for everyone to show respect for our nation's flag. Never allowing old glory to touch the ground is first and foremost. Also, never carry it horizontally or flat, it should always be aloft and free. Finally, when damaged, the flag should be disposed of appropriately, with reverence. Honoring the flag is the easiest way to show respect and patriotism for our majestic country.

Besides treasuring this beautiful banner, there is another way to pragmatically express pride in our nation and that is to honor and respect those who have served under its stars and stripes. These are our veterans and the men and women who are currently in the service of our country. Although there are numerous ways to show unconditional gratitude to these brave men and women, there are a couple that can be expressed in daily life. Keeping them in your prayers and saying, 'Thank you for your service' or gratefully waving when you see them in uniform are day-to-day ways to express your recognition. Visiting history museums to learn about the strife of war and the immense sacrifices made by these brave soldiers is important to understanding what they mean to this great country. Read it. Learn it. Remember it like an elephant. Take the opportunity to speak with veterans and listen to their stories, if they are willing to tell them to you. Never forget the dedication of the wonderful members of our nation's great armed forces. Never fail to convey appreciation when given the chance to do so.

While residing in this land of opportunity, having pride in showing patriotism is something every American citizen should take the opportunity to do. Proudly knowing flag etiquette and demonstrating it to those around you should always be a priority. Learning our nation's history and taking its lessons to heart in remembrance of those who sacrificed their all is of great importance. Quiet, straightforward acts such as waving at old glory as she passes by or thanking someone in uniform for their service whenever you may see them can have a great impact on society as a whole. These are simple, but effective ways to make patriotism personal and honor and respect not only our country, but those who serve under its beautifully bold banner.



Jayden Saint

Connect Charter School – Mrs. Saxton

Patriotism in my eyes is men and women of all colors supporting our country. Its where all races and ethnic backgrounds come together, and band together to show love for our nation. Patriotism isn't just the support of the U.S., it is the supporting of our military and the men and women who have fallen in battle. Patriotism to me isn't just a word, you can't just say you are a patriot or have great patriotism it is a lifestyle. Even if you don't like the president you have to support him and hope that he is doing what is best for the nation.

Although many people show patriotism some show it more than others. People who show the greatest patriotism is the U.S. military. It doesn't matter what branch of the military you are a part of, those men and women are all patriots. They put their lives on hold and put themselves at risk in life and death situations. Personally there were multiple people from my family that were in the military. I talk to all of them about their individual experiences. Though something I heard from all of them is that they met some of the best people in their lives. This makes me almost believe that if we were all like the people they described, than we would be a perfect country. Though this is not how things work, but it doesn't mean that we couldn't at least try individually.

Although there are many things I can do as a student to have little, patriotism they can range from flying a flag to becoming the best person I can be. People have given their lives for my freedom, and the best way I can show my patriotism is by becoming the best me possible. That is the freedom we have and why not use what we are given. I can start by becoming more informed that will eliminate any ignorance I may have. Another thing I can do is be more involved in things like charity or donating. Just some way to support the country, even with the smallest contributions. If everybody including myself did this, it would help support the nation. Even if you dislike the President you don't want him to fail because if he fails our country can fail.

This is what patriotism is to me, not just a word but a way of life. That supporting our government whether you like them or not. Supporting our military on how they put their lives on hold and at risk. So we can take advantage of the freedom they give us, to be the best person we can. Taking advantage of not having to live in fear or pain, and appreciating the freedoms and liberties that this country as a whole has given us. That is how I as a student can show patriotism.

Brooklyn Weckx

Connect Charter School – Mrs. Saxton

There are many ways to describe patriotism. It can mean being brave, having honor, or having the guts to do what is right, no matter the cost. For me, it was the last one. I think that patriotism means that you always try to do what's right. You also do it without any hesitations. You don't think about what the consequences will be, even if it is your life. You do it even if your tale is never told. Sometimes, you have to do the right thing, no matter if everyone else is telling you not to. Peter Marshal once said, "May we think of freedom, not as the right to do as we please, but as the opportunity to do what is right." It's that good conscience that tells you that the right thing might not have any significant reward, but your deed will mean something to someone.

I think of patriotism this way because it's like the golden rule. The only difference is that you do the right thing no matter the cost. Instead of even when no one is looking. This is important because I believe that if everyone were to follow the golden rule, many problems in our world would be gone, or much less. I feel that this would be the same on the field. I feel this way because it only takes one soldier doing the right thing to change the fight. Since I believe this, I also believe that if many soldiers are supportive and/or also do this, they all would be serving with not only great honor, but great patriotism. This would change everything because it would mean possibly more soldiers to fight. More men means not only will at least one family being reunited, but also a better chance of winning the fight safer.

There are many things that I can do as a student to be a patriot. One thing I can do would be to continue my support of our military. I appreciate all that they do for us and our country as a whole, and I believe that the right thing to do is to support them. Another thing I would do would be always doing what I can to help those in need. I personally hate seeing homeless people on the streets, especially those who are veterans. Finally, I can try to do better at always doing my best to help my fellow students should they need it. I've been injured myself many times, and there is always someone there who is willing to help me out. If I could do this for others, it would make me feel that I was repaying my debt to those who have helped me in the past. In conclusion, there are many ways to be a patriot in school, and I wish to accomplish that.



Bryce Blatnick

East High School – Mr. LeMasters

God bless America, my home sweet home. I am proud to be an American! Patriotism means to me that you are proud of who you are as a person and proud of the country that you come from. It is the feeling of love and devotion to your country. Patriotism is to have pride in the value that your country represents. Patriotism means to support and be responsible for your family, your community, and all levels of government with your willingness to work, volunteer, pay taxes and be a good citizen all around and obey the laws. You need to be educated on the issues going on with your community and have input and not just stand by. You need to stand up and be heard. The quote by President Kennedy, “Ask what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country;” is a great showing of Patriotism. His historic words were to challenge Americans to do good for the country and to be good people in general.

Patriotism is to ensure that everybody regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion has the opportunity to enjoy the freedoms of our nation. It's about working not just for oneself but for the good of all. Understanding that equality means everybody, not just a chosen few. It is about helping make everyone have a great life here in America. Unfortunately in today's day and age Patriotism is not as strong as it use to be and more and more people are becoming entitled, rather than working for what they have they are expecting to get what they have. We need to make Patriotism a great thing in America. Patriotism takes hard, thoughtful, informed, dedicated, humble, steady work that we all need to practice.

As a student, I live out my patriotism by helping people wherever and however I am able to. I share what I have with those in need. I try to give more than I take. I try to always be kind and have a smile for everyone. I try to practice patriotism honestly, knowledgeably and quietly every day. It's the little things that count, like holding the door open for an elderly person, sweeping snow for a neighbor, helping your sister with her math. All of these things make you a better person and our country a better place to live. If everyone set out every day to help another person think about how much better our country would be. Even talking nice to one another, picking up trash you see on the sidewalk, or helping an elderly person walk across the street would make our country great. You don't have to serve in the military to serve our great country. You just have to be a good person trying to do the right thing every day. Everyone should wake up every day with the idea of helping another person instead of just themselves. This would make our country even greater. They say this is the land of opportunity, so everyone needs to make it just that.

Ay'ncon Williams

Pueblo West High School – Lieutenant Colonel Emond

Charles E. Jefferson once said, “A man is a patriot if his heart beats true to his country”. This quote epitomizes my beliefs as to what a true American patriot is. Patriotism, to me, means having an everlasting love for your country and being loyal to your country at all times. You don't have to be a service member to be a patriot. Anyone can love and be devoted to their country. A patriot, to me, is something that every American should aim to be. Some of the ways that I am patriotic include serving my community, obeying all laws, being respectful to everyone, regardless of race, religion, gender, or etc. I serve throughout my community by volunteering at my local hospital, Parkview Medical Center for two hours every week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, through the School to Employment Program (S.T.E.P). Through S.T.E.P, I get to do a variety of things and one of the best parts of being involved within the program is seeing the smile on a patient's face after I reassure them that everything will go great and that they have nothing to worry about before a surgery. I obey the laws of my country constantly and I always look for ways to improve myself as a citizen by aiming to serve as a great example for my peers to look up to, so that they can become better citizens as well. I am also respectful to all people. I believe, similar to my school's motto, that respect is a way of life and that all people should be treated fairly and respectfully. While I do all of this to be patriotic and be a great, active citizen to my country, there are always ways that I could improve to be a better citizen, patriot, and American. Some of the ways that I believe that I could become a better citizen, patriot, and American are through continuing to find ways to not only better myself, but also my country. Some of the ways that I can do this include being an active citizen, through voting and voicing my opinion through my right to do so, volunteering more often during my free time and finding as many ways to serve as a functioning member of my community as possible, whether it's through giving to the less fortunate, volunteering my time to help out various organizations in my community, or just simply assisting in keeping the community as a whole clean and safe. These are just a few of the ways in which I could become a better patriot. Overall, to me, patriotism is having a love for your country that runs so deep that nothing could ruin that love. Patriotism is also being loyal to your country, as well as your community, especially in times of need. Being a patriot is something that every American citizen should aim to do, and it is important to be a patriot, because not only you, but your community benefits from it as well.



Letizia Innocenti

Pueblo West High School – Mr. Dilcher

“America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, imagination, and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand” -Harry S. Truman

Patriotism is a form of nativism, except it's supposed to be more relaxed. The key term being 'supposed to be', because Americans take it too seriously. Patriotism means supporting one's country, as well as one can. Harry S. Truman once said” America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, imagination, and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand”. Patriotism is the affection towards one's homeland. There are exceptions to this statement. Like when one's homeland changes, spiritually. My native land, or homeland, will never change. I was born and raised in Mexico until I was nine. That will never change. What has changed, however, is the place I call home, the history I study, and the flag to which I pledge my allegiance. While I will always be proud to be Mexican by birth that will never compare to the pride I feel when I think about what my parents sacrificed for my brother and I, and everything they've achieved since. I have lived in the United States for a little over six years and have been an American citizen for about eight months now. One of the happiest moments of my life was when my mom told me she passes her citizenship test. In that moment I was reminded of the reason we left Mexico. For a better life. Something I am now certain we have achieved.

As a student, you can be patriotic by loving your country like everyone else. I don't believe that everyone should demonstrate their love for the United States with a big action. There are small steps everyone can take to become a better citizen, like donating your time to your community, or informing yourself about the history of your country. Patriotism also brings people together, it forms communities. Anyone can be patriotic without taking it to an extreme. Patriotic actions include, obeying the law, providing a service for your community, respecting your peers, and practicing common courtesy towards the flag and other important American symbols. Patriotism is a multitude of connections to a country. These connections can be a mixture of multiple different emotions associating with one's own homeland, including historical, ethnic, political or cultural aspects.

Being patriotic can just be you quietly worshipping in your home. To be patriotic, you don't need to have dozens of American flags, or partake in any other stereotypical American thing.

That is not what patriotism is. It seems to me that a lot of people have forgotten that. We need to remember that turning on each other over who loves America more is the complete opposite of patriotism. Judging and calling out our neighbors because they are not patriotic enough is not what we should associate with patriotism, and yet for me, it is. This is the kind of patriotism I have experienced in the United States, and it's the most common form of patriotism. Throughout the years, patriotism has become a form of competition, except everyone loses if taken too seriously. Overall, patriotism can be a good thing, but I feel like it's been misunderstood. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said” One flag, one land, one heart, one hand, one nation evermore!” That is something we all need to keep in mind. Our home bonds us, so let's stop trying to be divided.

“One flag, one land, one heart, one hand, one nation evermore!” -Oliver Wendell Holmes



Mashonda Bennett

Paragon High School – Mrs. Kitchen

The English definition of the word patriot says that one should not only be loving to their country but true and respectful. In Mashonda's point of view loving the country means to give support no matter the condition or state the United States may be in. This support goes beyond just a mental support but using the rights given to me as an American citizen. These rights include voting, free speech, paying taxes, and giving up some free will to live in a country where working for what you get is a privilege. Staying loyal to the country is another huge part of being a patriot. Believing that the United States is the best country to live in creates a mentality not among only yourself but with the people surrounding you, encouraging them to also support and be thankful for the things they have. To be a good patriot, one must stand with those veterans who have served to protect the rights of United States citizens are lucky to have. Joining a military branch is one of the highest forms of patriotism someone can have to support. Giving your all to improve and protect what America already has is a major act of patriotism.

A student can help with many of these acts. A student under the age of eighteen can be employed and pay taxes. Those taxes support the United States Government. Other than that, students can serve and reach out to older veterans that may not be able to support themselves or do tasks they once could. This could be as simple as doing some yard work or buying a meal for them. For the students that are eighteen and older, they can take part in the largest form of patriotism. Voting allows citizens to be able control who creates laws, spend tax dollars, and creates world agreements. Voting is the most powerful part of patriotism a person has in their country. These students eighteen and older can join a military branch after graduation to support. If joining the military or voting isn't enough though, each citizen is also required to do their part in participating in jury duty if summoned. Following laws set by the government officials is a respectful way of showing the country you will stand by them.

Patriotism is the act of supporting, loving, and being true to one's country. There are many ways that students can show their patriotism even if they are under the age of eighteen. You can see this when they pay taxes, help veterans, and follow the law. Those above the age of eighteen can join the military, vote, participate in jury summons, and also everything everybody is participating in. Be a patriot and support your country. Being a citizen of the United States of America is such a great opportunity why would anyone want to live in any other country? As a citizen you are granted the right to vote and join the military. Living in the United States is an amazing opportunity as a student and an adult.



Adrian Gonzales

East High School – Mr. LeMasters

As a citizen of the United States of America, patriotism is a big part of our country. From American sports to our military, we always back our country as it should be. The meaning of patriotism is different to many people, depending on backgrounds or just mindsets, whether it is good or bad. My idea, however, is that patriotism means supporting your country no matter what happens. From my brother being in the Air Force to living in Pueblo with multiple Medal of Honor recipients from this wonderful town, I feel my idea of patriotism is different from others.

My brother joined the Air Force the middle of last year and was very excited to join as were we, my family and I. This put the meaning of patriotism in a different perspective because as he graduated from basic training I saw how much the people love America. I respect any and everyone who serves in the military and their family for showing what real patriotism is.

As a student today in America there are multiple ways to be a patriot of the United States of America. For example, standing for the pledge and going to school and learning about our history are simple examples of how we are being patriotic. Schooling in America is also very different in different countries and often sometimes unavailable, meaning when we go to school we show or support the country by bettering our mindsets to make this country thrive in almost everything. Showing support for our country can be something very simple such as hanging a flag or even just standing for the pledge. Another way I can show patriotism as a student is standing and singing the national anthem at our athletic games. For every soccer game I played in I sing the whole national anthem in respect of our great country.

The whole country should show more if not a lot of support for our country because of how great it is. Many countries don't offer nearly as many opportunities as ours does, and to disrespect our country is contradicting if you have a job here. I think that many reasons people disrespect our country is because of the people that influence negative things. The influences that people listen to about the country is a main reason the country is dealing with big problems like anti patriotism. Without issues like that I believe we have a great country that is leading in almost everything. That along should give people reason to support our country and make it even better than it already is. In conclusion I believe patriotism is very important to this country and I think myself, as a student, am definitely doing my part to support my amazing country. The meaning of patriotism is the support for our country and pride to be a part of our country, to me. I am very thankful to be a part of this country and live in a town with multiple Medal of Honor recipients.



Tyana Sanchez

Pueblo West High School – Lieutenant Colonel Edmond

What is Patriotism? Patriotism is a person's devotion to support for one's country. To other people it means love, respect, and a feeling for their country. Some people would like to show patriotism, but they don't know how to show it. Some ways are by putting out the flag, singing the National Anthem, saying the pledge to the flag, celebrating Memorial Day, saluting to people who have fought for our country, and wearing red, white, and blue for the Fourth of July. Those are just a couple of things that we, in the United States, do to show patriotism. Theodore Roosevelt said, "Patriotism means to stand by the country. It does not mean to stand by the president or any other elected official."

Patriotism to me means showing respect to our county; either by pledging to the flag, putting out the flag in front of your home, or by singing the National Anthem. Although, patriotism is towards our country, I also view it towards my family and everyday aspects in my life. I respect my parents and other adults, I help out around the house and at school; I do community service; I do concessions for soccer, football, basketball games, and etc. Jesse Ventura said, "Patriotism is voluntary. It is a feeling of loyalty and allegiance that is the result of knowledge and belief. A patriot shows their patriotism through their actions, by choice." I agree with what he said because I am a very loyal person and I am committed to many things in my life; for example, if it's a project that I am very interested in, I will start a plan and I will keep working on it until the project had been complete.

All people all over the world has a different view on Patriotism. George Curtis said, "A man's country is not a certain area of land, of mountains, rivers, and woods, but it is a principle and patriotism are loyalty to that principle."; "Patriotism is easy to understand in America. It means looking out for yourself by looking out for your country," said Calvin Coolidge; Thomas Paine said, "The duty of a patriot is to protect his country from its government". Those were a couple of quotes to show that not everyone has the same view of what patriotism is. As I was doing research, I read that most people saw patriotism as having pride in themselves, others, and their country. Pride meaning a feeling or deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievements.

Overall, I think that a lot of people show patriotism without even knowing it. Since we were little, we have shown patriotism because in school we would put our hands to our hearts and say the Pledge of Allegiance. Before games start, we sing the National Anthem because throughout the course of the war, and by the time the war was over, the pregame singing of the anthem had become cemented as a baseball ritual, after which it spread to other sports.



