

# Our Community Salutes - USA



## OCS MISSION

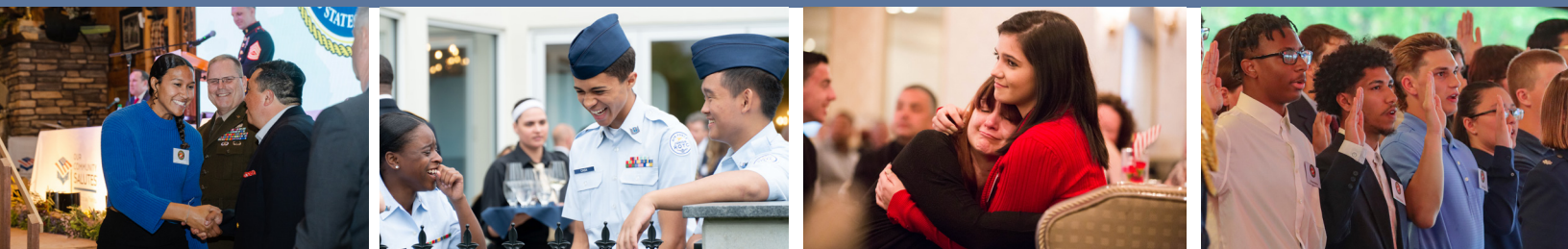
Founded in 2009, **Our Community Salutes - USA (OCS)** is the only national, nonprofit organization that recognizes, honors, and supports high school seniors, and their families, who plan to enlist in the military following graduation.

Reconnecting American communities with our nation's military is central to our purpose.

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*OCS has inspired me tremendously to do great things with my new career...OCS has made me want to be the best version of myself and give my all.*

- New Enlistee



## OCS PROGRAMS

### OCS Ceremonies

Each spring, OCS honors thousands of military-bound high school graduates in Enlistee Recognition Ceremonies across the nation. These ceremonies bring communities together to recognize the selfless decision these young adults have made, while creating strong networks of support and resources for new enlistees and their families as they embark on their military journey.

### OCS Connect <sup>SM</sup>

OCS Connect is a free, online initiative designed to provide our nation's newest service members, and their parents/guardians, the advice and resources needed to navigate their military journey. OCS Connect provides guidance on the earliest steps of the military journey, such as a basic military training and essential life skills, to assisting with early college and post-military career planning.

### OCS Virtual Thank You Card

The OCS Virtual Thank You Card serves as a public forum for individuals and local communities across the country to come together to share messages of appreciation and well wishes to our nation's newest enlistees. New enlistees and their families are able to read the messages of support when they need it the most.

### OCS Educator Awards

High school guidance counselors and teachers are key to a military recruiter's ability to meet with high school students who may be interested in military career opportunities. To help strengthen the important relationship, OCS Awards enable recruiters to nominate local guidance counselors for the General Colin Powell Memorial Service Award, and to nominate high school teachers for the OCS STEM Award.

# TODAY'S REALITY

Today, 90% of young people are unlikely to consider military service. This military recruiting crisis, the most substantial since the creation of the all-volunteer force 50 years ago, is a threat to US national security, and will require a “whole of nation effort” to be reversed, according to published reports.

OCS is the only national non-profit organization that, since 2009, has brought communities across America together to celebrate patriotism and honor our nation’s newest and youngest service members.

## OCS CEREMONY IMPACT (2024)

97%

of parents surveyed state the OCS ceremony reinforced their comfort level.

96%

of enlistees surveyed state the OCS ceremony reinforced their decision.

86%

of military recruiters surveyed state OCS prepared enlistees for service.

20 states + Puerto Rico and the USVI

42 ceremonies

3,100+ enlistees

11,100+ other attendees

1,000+ military recruiters



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*“I SAW THE RESULTS: This was not just some ‘feel good’ event, it had meaningful and long-lasting ramifications. Parents who had been “disappointed or ambivalent” about their child’s choice were now asking details about preparations and ship dates! Classmates and teachers had a new respect for both the individual students and their choice.”*

-Major General Pete Lennon (USA Ret.)

