



DCF COVID-19 Daily Update Supporting Children, Families and Staff

May 22, 2020

A MILITARY FAMILY, A GIVING HEART, AND A THANK YOU REMEMBERING VETERANS THIS MEMORIAL DAY

Ann Adams - A Giving Heart

Ann Adams, the Department of Children and Families director of the Office of Community Relations, has a heart for social work. But she also has a heart of a military family. Both her parents had long careers serving their country.

Her father, John Hoar, served in the Connecticut National Air Guard. His long military career spanning 40 years included flying as a pilot in the Korean War. Her mother, Frances, served as captain in the Army during World War II where she was stationed in Guam, an island in the Pacific, and in New Zealand. Francis is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Ms. Adams's brother, Paul Hoar, is also in the Connecticut National Air Guard. Three brothers-in-law also serve in the military. It's a military family that honors its past.

Part of that honoring includes Ms. Adams, her brother Paul and her sister Jackie - one of five sisters in the family - all volunteering for an organization called "House of Heroes," which helps veterans by renovating and retrofitting their homes. Through donations and fundraising and a lot of donated services from tradesmen, plumbers and electricians, the organization helps veterans around the nation maintain their homes.

But this year, because of COVID-19 and the need for social distancing, the renovations had to be put on hold. So the giving took another form as many Americans, including military veterans, struggle to put food on the table.

This year, the House of Heroes partnered with the Easter Seals' "Rally Point" to focus on providing veterans with much-needed food during this challenging time.

"We filled 96 boxes of food," Ms. Adams said. Donated funds were used to purchase the food at a discount from a local food distribution company, and veterans came to the Easter Seals site in East Hartford to pick up one box each

"We got there early to fill the boxes," Ms. Adams said, adding The Travelers Insurance donated shirts sporting American flags to be given to the veterans. Some veterans were too old or infirmed to come to the pickup point, so House of Heroes staff made deliveries to their homes.

Ms. Adams said House of Heroes is so important because it meets very practical needs.

"This organization has something tangible that it gives," she said. "So my family's involvement is a way of giving back and to memorialize my parents and others who served. It's our way of giving back to vets."

It is also a way for the family to stay connected to each other and to their parents. "Family is essential," she said. "All my siblings helped take care of each other's kids. They helped raise my kids and vice versa."

Ms. Adams said that veterans require specialized supports given their unique experiences. "They go and serve, and they come back and many are unemployed and have PTSD and struggle to make ends meet," she said.

Ms. Adams said the veterans were emotionally touched by the act of giving. "You could tell for some of them that this was the only food they were getting," she said. "For a gentleman that couldn't come to pick up the food himself, volunteers made a trip to his home. He was moved to tears by the caring and extra effort that House of Heroes made for him."

Thank You Commissioner Saadi - Department of Veterans Affairs

Since Memorial Day is to remember veterans who gave their lives in military service, we are humbled to know that COVID-19 has claimed the lives of 3 veterans serviced by the Department of Veterans Affairs campus in Rocky Hill. Due to the strategic planning and cautions taken, Connecticut has not experienced the same widespread veteran casualties as in some other states' veteran homes.

Commissioner Saadi — Thank you for your service and dedication to those who have served past and present!