



# The Patriot

Richmond Area Chapter - Military Officers Association of America - May 2025



## The President's Corner by COL Vince Cammarata



Dear Board and Chapter Members of RAC-MOAA:

Spring is upon us, and with it comes renewed energy and opportunities to engage with our community and our RAC-MOAA Board. May is a month of action, whether it's supporting fellow veterans, honoring our past, or giving back through service. Thank you to all who participated in our March event at the Virginia War Memorial. Your dedication continues to make a difference. Let us keep that momentum going by attending and participating at our 21 May 2025 annual Junior ROTC Awards night with a buffet dinner at the Meadowbrook

Country Club. We will be honoring the COL Mel Drisko Leader-Scholar Award winners for 2025. See page two for details about the event and our winners this year.

RAC-MOAA also presents an award to an outstanding Junior Cadet in each school in the JROTC and Senior ROTC programs in our area. Page two lists the winners of the senior ROTC winners this year. We are currently in the process of presenting the awards to all of the JROTC winners in area high schools.

Many of you know Rosemary Salcedo who currently serves on our Board and has served on our board for over 20 years as our Surviving Spouse Director. Please join me in wishing Rosemary a Happy Birthday. She turned 90 years young on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

### Military Signing Day at the Virginia War Memorial

Join in the celebration with the Virginia Department of Veteran Services for Military Signing Day as high school students enlisting in the U.S. military are recognized.

The event will take place at the Virginia War Memorial on Friday, 16 May 2025 from 5:00 p.m.- 6:30 p.m.

Learn more here: [Military Families | Virginia Department of Education](#)

**Next Member Meeting is on Wednesday, May 21st!**

**We will be meeting at the Meadowbrook Country Club for a buffet dinner. More details on page 2.**

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Click the TAKE ACTION graphic above to see Active Legislative Campaigns

**OUR MAILING ADDRESS**  
**Richmond Area Chapter—**  
**MOAA**  
**P. O. Box 985**  
**Chesterfield, VA 23832-9998**

Read this newsletter on our webpage at: <https://www.racmoaa.org/Newsletter>

# 21 May 2025 Annual JROTC Awards Night

The 21 May 2025 Member Dinner Meeting is our annual Junior ROTC Awards night with a buffet dinner at Meadowbrook Country Club. Social hour will begin at 5 PM with dinner at 6 PM and the meeting immediately following. The price per person is \$45 to help cover the meal cost of our award winners. The reservations deadline will be Monday, 19 May. All guests are welcome. Dress will be business casual. This event is a highlight for our chapter community outreach with area youth.

The winners of the COL Mel Drisko Leader-Scholar Award for 2025 are:

- Cadet Hayden Cariglio from New Kent High School NJROTC - Instructor, CPO Zachary McDonald. Cadet Cariglio will be joining the Corps of Cadets at Virginia Tech in the Air Force ROTC program.
- Cadet Malachi Montgomery from Goochland High School MCJROTC – Instructor LTC Kevin Williams. Cadet Montgomery will be joining the Corps of Cadets at Virginia Tech in the NROTC program.
- Cadet Laila Seward from Manchester High School NJROTC - Instructor, CW3 Aiesha Rasulla. Cadet Seward will be joining the Army ROTC program at Texas A&M University.

All of these cadets are currently serving in key leadership positions within their respective JROTC units. All have outstanding academic records, and received glowing letters of recommendation.

## MOAA ROTC Awards Presentation

The 2025 MOAA ROTC Awards were presented at the Virginia War Memorial on 17 April to outstanding Junior Cadets in the six schools making up the ROTC Spider Battalion headquartered at the University of Richmond. The photo at right shows COL Alan Cunningham USAR, Ret, Past President of RAC-MOAA, presenting one of the six awards to Michael Lansing, University of Richmond.

Here is the complete list of award winners:

- Cadet Michael Lansing
- Cadet Nicholas Lewis
- Cadet Nicholas Delpesche
- Cadet Mary Barnes;
- Cadet Jacob Williams
- Cadet Colin Radcliffe.



### Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance 01 January 2025:	\$24,306
Receipts	5,526
Expenses	(5,196)
<b>Ending Balance 15 April 2025:</b>	<b>\$24,636</b>
<b>Encumbered Funds</b>	<b>(9,219)</b>
<b>UNENCUMBERED BALANCE</b>	<b>\$15,417</b>

### Membership Report

As Of	Regular	Surviving Spouse	Life/Honorary	TOTAL
14 Apr 2025	161	21	4	186

17 members did not renew and were removed from the active roles. They will no longer receive any future communications.

Volunteer members willing to assist with Membership are vitally needed. If you are willing to learn and work with our Membership Chair or need to know how to join, please contact CAPT Mary Lou Wassel at 804-551-1878 or by email at: [membership@racmoaa.org](mailto:membership@racmoaa.org).

### The Patriot

The Richmond Area Chapter (RAC-MOAA) is an independent nonpartisan affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), a member of the Virginia Council of Chapters (VCOC-MOAA), and a non-profit, non-stock corporation registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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## MOAA Members Mobilize for Advocacy in Action 2025

Below are excerpts from the 9 April 2025 article by Tony Lombardo, MOAA.

Click this [link](#) to go to the full article on the MOAA.org website.



MOAA members from all corners of the country arrived in Washington, D.C for the 9 April 2025 Advocacy in Action (AIA) campaign. More than 150 members canvassed House and Senate office buildings, meeting with lawmakers and their staffs to promote MOAA's legislative priorities for the 119th Congress. MOAA members also shared an important message regarding ongoing government efficiency efforts.

[MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD: [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#)]

"This event definitely displays the power of our voice, and of our grassroots advocacy," MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), said after the event. "To be able to be part of this, with 150-plus members fighting to preserve and protect our earned benefits, it's an honor and an inspiration."

[FROM MOAA: [Key to Efficiency Efforts Is Not Breaking Faith With Troops, Veterans](#)]

Nora Durham, a member of [MOAA's Surviving Spouse Advisory Council](#), said it was an "amazing" day of advocacy.

"Everybody has been very receptive. Everybody's interested in what we want them to be interested in," Durham said, adding that MOAA's nonpartisan approach added to the positive experience as she met with Arizona's delegation.

The 2025 Advocacy in Action issues are shown on page 4.



# Advocacy in Action Issues

This year's Advocacy in Action focused on the following issues. To learn more about each item, and to find out how you can still amplify MOAA's voice by writing to your legislators on these topics, visit our [Advocacy in Action page](#), or register at our [Legislative Action Center](#):

- **Unaccompanied Housing Improvements:** MOAA seeks to improve funding and condition transparency by requiring an annual, publicly available report, which will highlight areas that need the most attention from DoD and Congress. [Learn More](#) | [Make Your Voice Heard](#)
- **Ending the Wait Report:** MOAA will proactively partner with other veterans service organizations to advance legislation that will lessen the time that veterans must wait before their toxic exposures are acknowledged by the VA. [Learn More](#) | [Make Your Voice Heard](#)
- **Military Spouse Hiring Act:** Passage of this bill will allow businesses that hire military spouses to claim a tax credit, incentivizing them to hire more military spouses. [Learn More](#) | [Make Your Voice Heard](#)
- **Military Health System Access to Care:** MOAA seeks legislation for a digital access assistance platform that would allow beneficiaries to report challenges accessing care. [Learn More](#) | [Tell MOAA Your Story](#)
- **Veterans Caregiving Support Improvements Legislation:** This bill includes enhancements to the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers and expansion of home health and long-term care services. [Learn More](#) | [Make Your Voice Heard](#)

## Remarriage Rules: What Surviving Spouses Should Know

When a military retiree passes away or a servicemember dies on active duty, their surviving spouse remains eligible for all benefits that were previously authorized, including TRICARE, TRICARE For Life, and commissary and exchange privileges. However, surviving spouses who remarry may become ineligible for many military benefits, with a few exceptions.

- Spouses who remarry lose access to TRICARE unless they marry another servicemember or retiree.
- Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) payments are suspended if a surviving spouse remarries before age 55, but they can be reinstated if the new marriage ends in death or divorce. If the remarriage occurs after age 55, SBP benefits continue uninterrupted.
- Like SBP, VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments are suspended if remarriage occurs before age 55, but they can be reinstated if the new marriage ends through death or divorce. If the remarriage occurs after age 55, DIC benefits can continue without interruption.
- Surviving spouses retain commissary and exchange privileges, but lose them if they remarry. These benefits are reinstated if the remarriage ends in death or divorce.
- Surviving spouses are eligible to receive Social Security survivor benefits based on the work record of the deceased worker. Survivor payments continue for remarriages after age 60 (or age 50 if disabled). At age 62 or older, a beneficiary could receive benefits based on their new spouse's work (if those benefits would be higher).

See [moaa.org](http://moaa.org) for more information about the remarriage rules for surviving spouses.

## 16 February Member Meeting Highlights

On Sunday, 16 February 2025, the chapter hosted a member meeting, luncheon, and memorial service at the Virginia War Memorial (VWM) at 621 S. Belvidere Street in Richmond. The luncheon and presentation were held from 1 to 3PM with time available following to tour the VWM until 4PM closing. Our guest speaker was Colonel Diana Kupchella, USAF, Ret, President of the Virginia Council of Chapters of MOAA (VCOC). She updated us on the activities of the VCOC and upcoming events. The luncheon was provided by Mission BBQ.

The photo on the right shows the Guest speaker, Colonel Diane Kupchella in the middle flanked by LTC Terry Moore and CAPT Mary Lou Wassel.



## Annual Memorial Service

The RAC-MOAA Chaplain, LTC Ken Ruppar, led the annual memorial service recognizing the five members who passed away in the last year.

These are the chapter members who passed during 2024.

- Ronald M. Grignol, LTC, USAF, Ret - 10/14/24
- William Manning, CAPT, USN, Ret - 09/20/24
- George E. Ward, MAJ, USAF, Ret - 07/07/24
- Sherman (Mick) Weisinger, COL, USA, Ret – 04/21/24
- Betty Williams, Surviving Spouse – 09/23/24



Assisting Chaplain Ruppar were (from left to right) CAPT Hardy Josephson, LTC Owen Waltman, and LCDR Wayne Sine.

## September Membership Meeting

RAC-MOAA is in the process of finalizing the program for the September Meeting. The date will be 3 September 2024 at the Meadowbrook County Club, 3700 Cogbill Rd, Richmond, VA 23234. The meal service will be their usual Wednesday night buffet including three entrees, sides, and a dessert bar. A cash bar is available. We will send out an email with the particulars for the meeting so reservations can be made in advance. Details of the meeting will be provided in the next newsletter when it is published in August. As usual, on-line reservations are preferred.

# Chapter News

## Chapter Contacts - 2025

### Elected Officers & Directors

President	COL Vincent Cammarata	804-338-8975
1st Vice-President	CAPT Mary Lou Wassel	804-551-1878
2nd Vice-president	LTC Craig Pinsker	804-301-1222
Past President	COL Mark Rich	804-706-6650
Secretary	LTC Terry Moore	804-739-8112
Treasurer	LTC Owen Waltman	804-796-1113
Director-at-Large	MAJ John Nahm	804-839-5635
Director-at-Large	CDR Cliff Noe	804-931-7894
Director-at-Large	LtCol Curt Powell	703-999-5816
Appointed Editor	COL Alan Cunningham	804-307-7815

### Appointed Directors

Member Services	CAPT Mary Lou Wassel	804-551-1878
Legislative Affairs	LCDR Wayne Sine	804-363-5406
Youth Programs	LCDR Wayne Sine	804-363-5406
Personal Affairs	Vacant	
Transition Services	CAPT Hardy Josephson	804-883-5955
Publicity	MAJ John Nahm	804-839-5635
Surviving Spouse	Mrs. Rosemary Salcedo	804-938-9945
Hospitality	LTC Terry Moore	804-739-8112
Special Programs	LTC Owen Waltman	804-796-1113
Chaplain	LTC Ken Ruppar	804-639-0179
Webmaster	MAJ John Nahm	804-839-5635

## Chapter Database or E-mail Address Corrections ([Login to the Website](#) to make Updates is Preferred)

Please make the following changes to the RAC-MOAA Membership Database and/or my e-mail address:

Request you add Zip Code Plus 4. The Plus 4 is needed by the Postal Service and gives you faster mail delivery. It saves the editor time having to look it up for mailings. Thanks, keeping us informed of address changes saves money.

## Reservations for the 21 May Dinner Buffet Meeting at the Meadowbrook CC

Please make reservations for \_\_\_\_\_ persons for the buffet Dinner on Wednesday, **21 May 2024, social at 1700, dinner at 1800.**

My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (**\$45.00 per person**) payable to "**RAC-MOAA**" is enclosed. **Please respond by 19 May!**

Rank and name: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Are you attending a RAC-MOAA Event for the first time? \_\_\_\_\_

If you are mailing a check, please call 804-796-1113, or email the treasurer (treasurer@racmoaa.org) to let him know to expect your check. Registration on web page is preferred method.

## COL Mel Drisko Leader-Scholar Awards Contribution

I wish to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the *Drisko Memorial Leader-Scholar Awards Fund*. This fund provides monetary awards for senior-year JROTC cadets who have demonstrated the leadership and scholastic ability to pursue collegiate degrees and careers as military officers.

Enclose check payable to RAC-MOAA & put Leader-Scholar in comments. *All contributions are tax-deductible.*

Print Name and Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL!!!

ALMOST THERE!

KEEP GOING!

WE CAN DO IT!

ACCELERATE!

START!

COL Mel  
Drisko Leader-  
Scholar  
Award

Goal  
\$4,000

By 1 May 2025

Achieved

\$4,000

As Of 15 Apr  
2025

Achieved 100%  
of Goal

## Military Community Assistance Program (MCAP) Contribution

I wish to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the Military Community Assistance Program (MCAP). This fund provides money to support one or more of the following initiatives: Virginia Veterans Services Foundation; the VA National Guard Foundation; The Fisher House at Richmond VAMC and Sitter-Barfoot Veterans Care Center; The Spinal Cord Injury Unit Recreation Services; USO; and other worthwhile military and veterans' organizations of Virginia.

Enclose check payable to RAC-MOAA & put MCAP in comments. *All contributions are tax-deductible.*

Print Name and Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL!!!

ALMOST THERE!

KEEP GOING!

WE CAN DO IT!

ACCELERATE!

START!

Military  
Community  
Assistance  
Program  
(MCAP)

Goal  
\$4,000

By 31 Dec 2024

Raised

\$2,153

As of  
25 Feb 2025

53% of Goal  
Achieved!