

VFW Post Assists National Guard Family Programs

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VFW National Military Services Update

North Carolina VFW Post 10001 is working with local businesses to provide much needed support to soldiers and their families through the North Carolina National Guard Family Programs.

The idea for the project came after a member of Post 10001, Thomas Skidmore, read a newspaper article about veterans' struggles. "I read about veterans living off of food stamps, and that was a disgrace," Skidmore said. He decided to take action.

On behalf of his Post, Skidmore contacted local businesses that could offer donations to the cause. For his efforts, Food Lion awarded him \$5,000 in store gift cards. Lowes Food Corporation also contributed with a \$10,000 donation, providing soldiers and their families with gift cards for groceries in Raleigh-area Lowes Foods grocery stores. Skidmore says that because the cards can only be used in the stores, it's a win-win situation for the companies. It ensures their donations are used in their businesses.

Diane Coffill, Director of State Family Programs for the North Carolina National Guard, is very appreciative of Post 10001's help. "The Guard can't go out and solicit for donations. Having partners like the VFW, who can, who want to, and who are willing to do so, is a Godsend."

The contributions were organized in a joint effort with Guard Family Programs and Family Assistance Centers (FACs) to help soldiers and their families with grocery items. Nearly 400 families have benefited.

Coffill believes this effort is making a difference for families who might not otherwise be able to make ends meet. "It is a wonderful feeling to know that if we have a service member

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in need, we have an immediate way to assist them," said Coffill.

Skidmore said Post 10001 will continue to send proposals to local businesses seeking their assistance. When Family Programs needs help, all they need to do is call. The VFW will help them provide for families in need.