

# VFW Grant Means More Than Money for Veteran's Family

## ‘If I paid the bills, I couldn’t feed my family’

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The McKinney household is a bustling hub of love and activity. Veteran Stormie McKinney of North Carolina and her husband Tyrone, have six children and five dogs. Life has been a mix of happy times and intense trials for McKinney.

Joining the Navy in search of a prosperous career, McKinney achieved the rank of petty officer. However, a terrible sexual assault while she was working in the shipyards in France forever changed her path.

The horrific experience caused McKinney to be diagnosed with post-traumatic stress (PTS) and she’s now on disability. She was paying the family’s bills with her checks and getting by, but the loss of her husband’s pay put the family in a desperate situation.

McKinney had enough to pay for household expenses, but there wasn’t enough left for things like food or clothes for her children. “I couldn’t take care of them on my own. If I paid the bills, I couldn’t feed my family,” she said.

However, during a conversation with an online veteran community chat group, McKinney found out about the VFW’s Unmet Needs grant. She filled out the online application and shortly after, her request was approved.

“The grant meant the world to me. I could feed my kids, I could take them to school. I could provide them a roof over their heads,” McKinney stated.

The money from the VFW covered the McKinney’s mortgage, phone bill, car payment, and car insurance. But McKinney felt it did so much more than pay for a few bills.

“When you donate to the VFW, you’re not donating money ... you’re saving lives. You’re feeding babies and making sure veterans aren’t becoming homeless. It is a blessing to my family,” she concluded.

### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111

Office 816.756.3390  
Fax 816.968.1157

### WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Office 202.543.2239  
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org  
www.vfw.org