Teachers! Win a trip to NYC to visit the 9/11 Memorial & Museum. To enter, go to: http://911day.org/NYCTrip. Deadline Sept 30.
Students will learn facts that dispel the damaging myth that many military veterans are in some way “broken heroes.” Students will discover first-hand that returning members of our military in fact are invaluable and ongoing leaders every day in thousands of communities across the nation.

Activities will include: powerful learning opportunities supported by easy-to-access videos and reading materials; letter-writing to veterans, and even veterans visiting to speak in class, through such programs as Take a Veteran to School: http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/take-a-veteran-to-school-day. Dispelling harmful myths about our nation’s heroes begin by educating our young.

Learn! Questions to investigate before getting started

- Ask students to share what they think they know about veterans, such as what it means to be a veteran and if they know any veterans. Search out common misconceptions.

- Engage students in a discussion about the misconceptions that people may have about veterans as a group. Begin by showing this short animated film from the organization Got Your 6 featuring the penguins from Madagascar: http://www.gotyour6.org/penguins-of-madagascar.

- Have students discuss the film. What are some of the myths about veterans or the military shown by Smythie Mythie? What are some of the truths about veterans shown by Faction Jackson and Truthie McRuthie? What are some jobs that veterans can have? What are some skills that veterans have? Learn more about the myths about veterans by going to http://www.gotyour6.org/dispelling-myths-about-veterans.

Plan! Helpful hints to prepare for your 9/11 Day Project

- Explain the project to students.

- Find veterans to participate in the project by contacting a nearby American Legion chapter, The Mission Continues, Veterans Affairs office, military base or by asking students to contact veterans they know in their families or neighborhoods.

- Have students create a list of questions to ask the veteran in their letter. Some questions could include: when did you serve in the military and for how long? Where did you serve? What skills did you acquire in the military? How do you use those skills and apply what you learned in the military to civilian life? What are some of the common misconceptions that they encounter in the employment world?

- Create a questionnaire to include in each letter to a veteran. This will help the veteran be sure to answer each of the students’ questions.

Share your good deed on Twitter and Facebook using #911Day or #911DayTeacher.
**Do! Ready, Set, Go!**

- **Write your letters.** Have students write a letter to a veteran that includes a short introduction (first name only, age and a few sentences about their life at school); a sentence explaining that they are writing to the veteran in order to learn more about veterans in their community and would appreciate it if he/she could answer a few questions; and finally, a few words of gratitude for their military service, for taking the time to respond to the letter, and as an extension of thanks an invitation to have lunch with your classroom at your school.

- **Make copies or scan** each student letter before sending it and have students create a folder where they can store the correspondence they exchange with their veteran over the course of the year.

- **When letters from veterans arrive,** allow students time to read and discuss them with classmates. What did they find most interesting? Were any of the common myths about veterans dispelled through this letter? What did they learn about the veteran as a valuable member of the community? Did anything the veteran write surprise them?

- **Have students brainstorm** follow up questions they would like to ask and create a new questionnaire to include in a second letter to their veteran. Ask students to consider how the information they get from their letters with veterans could be used to help others better understand veterans.

**Share your Good Deed on Twitter, #911Day and #911DayTeacher, and other social media channels.** Let the world know what your class did to pay tribute on 9/11 by sharing your good deed (and pics) on Twitter or Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or other social media channels, using the tag #911Day. The 9/11 Day organization will look for the best and feature them on its website throughout the week of 9/11 and beyond.

**Keep It Going! Ideas to continue your 9/11 Day Project or inspire others to get started.** Have students write a brief profile of the veteran with whom they exchanged letters. Using magazines, online images and clipart, invite each student to create a visual to accompany their text that highlights aspects of the veteran’s military service and his or her life after the military. Create a bulletin board to share what your class learned about veterans in the community.

- **Share** the veterans’ stories in the school newsletter or a local newspaper. Remember to always ask permission from school administrators, parents and the participating veterans before sharing anything publicly.

- **Create** a video sharing what students learned about the common myths about veterans and about the real veterans with whom they corresponded.

- **Interview** veterans from different branches of the US Armed Forces or veterans who served in different military conflicts.

- **Have students** keep in touch with the veteran they interviewed by sending a letter or postcard each quarter.

- **Visit** [https://www.gotyour6.org](https://www.gotyour6.org) for more ideas.