Military Spouses Take On The D-word

New Label, Old Stereotype.

TAUSHA HAMILTON
2016 Patuxent River NAS Spouse of the Year

- Military wife of 18-year Navy service member

-Graduate of Florida State College of Jacksonville

-Volunteers as a Caseworker for Navy Marine Corps Relief Society, as Executive Assistant at Abundant Life Christian Outreach Center, and as Team Leader of a Compass Team in PAX River.

Tausha Takes On the D-word

My initial Thoughts...

- My first emotion is not that of anger, but of compassion for those writing these hateful things.
- They can't truly know the extent of what they are saying and the effect they may have on others.
- I am dismayed by the boldness of judgement & criticism of the military spouse.

To "D-word" Users...

- Imagine a year without your spouse & possibly being an off & on single parent.
- Unwillingly sojourn all over the world at sometimes a moment's notice.
- Fiercely stand behind & support your spouse as they give themselves to our country even if it means to the point of death.
- Maintain a smile while going through all of these transitions.
- Take your feelings & negative emotions & use that to help another spouse.
- Be a help for the cause, not a cause for the help.

To Fellow MilSpouses...

- Don't invest your time or energy consuming such hatred.
- Surround yourself with others who lift you up, not tear you down.
- Being part of an elite group that is sometimes misunderstood does not diminish the beauty of your sacrifices.

For more information about Tausha, her work and her mission visit: www.bit.ly/2b34Fel
or follow her on social media:

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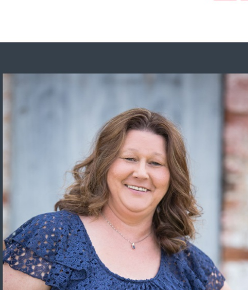

CARA LOKEN
2016 National Guard Spouse of the Year

- Military wife of 17 years

-Graduate of Kaplan University

-Founder of non-profit organization, Nebraska Arts for Vets

-Volunteers as a Key Spouse and with the Yellow Ribbon Program

Cara Takes On the D-word

My initial Thoughts...

- Learning what the word means, I do not like that word.
- Social media is a place where people come to say things they might not say in person.
- It's easy to judge others when we assume that we know how they live, when in reality we have no idea.

To "D-word" Users...

- Military family life is not always easy.
- Keep in mind that some spouses may not be able to work away from home because of regular & sometimes very long deployments.
- Our spouses deploy for several months to a year at a time or go on shorter deployments more often.
- Please make sure to do your research before you make comments shaming others about military life.

To Fellow MilSpouses...

- Just remember, it's someone's opinion.
- It's best to move on & stay positive.
- It is hard to find a good paying job, because you have to move every 2-3 years.
- If you have the opportunity to receive free/discounted schooling take advantage of it.
- Never let others make you feel bad for getting an education to help start or further your career.
- With all of the negative in the world right now, BE THE POSITIVE!

For more information about Cara, her work and her mission visit: www.MilitarySpouse.com/MSOY/Cara-Loken
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Lindsay Bradford
2016 Navy Spouse of the Year

-Military wife of 3 years

-Graduate of Arizona State University

-Vice President of Military Spouse Programs at Victory Media, Publicity Chair for the Military Spouses of Newport & Command Ombudsman

-Volunteers with Habitat for Humanity, Feed My Starving Children, Toys for Tots & local law enforcement agencies.

Lindsay Takes On the D-word

My initial Thoughts...

- Honestly, these comments don't bother me.
- They make me shake my head & laugh at how much they try to be hurtful, yet create the opposite effect amongst a lot of us milspouses.
- The name calling makes me want to try even harder to prove that times are changing, focuses for the military family is different & households look different.
- It's eye-opening how uninformed some people are about actual benefits, pay & what the overall daily life looks like for the military family. I want to change that.

To "D-word" Users...

- Take a step back & apply the concept of "a single person or action doesn't define an entire community."
- This concept is applied to many situations, from religions to career choices. So why is it forgotten when it comes to military spouses?

To Fellow MilSpouses...

- Brush it off.
- They are making a naive & uneducated assumption of who you are & your private circumstances.
- There is a reason these stereotypes/names were created, so break that mold & use grace & forgiveness.
- Remember we don't know their private situations. Maybe they were hurt by someone or something related to the military.
- Prove them wrong through class & kindness. Otherwise the fighting will continue the cycle.

For more information about Lindsay, her work and her mission visit: www.NavySOY16.wixsite.com/LBNSOY16
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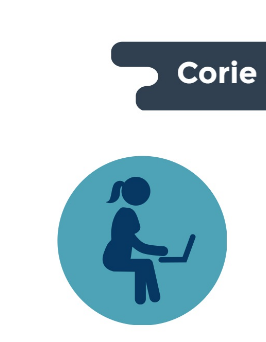

Corie B. Weathers
2015 Military Spouse of the Year

-Military wife of 12 years

-Graduate of Gardner-Webb University and Asbury Theological Seminary

-Licensed Professional Counselor, Speaker, Consultant & Media Correspondent

-Author of Sacred Spaces: My Journey to the Heart of Military Marriage

Corie B. Takes On the D-word

My initial Thoughts...

- It saddens me that we would attack each other.
- It is distant hate enabled by "digital courage".
- Digital Courage is the false courage to say things from a distance when you cannot see the hurt in the person you are harming.
- This is not courage at all. We all have the right to say "what" we want, but it doesn't make us "right" for doing so.

To "D-word" Users...

- The best military spouses are strong, supportive, compassionate people - giving everything sometimes to serve their community.
- All of us find ourselves dependent on someone, like our community and spouse, for love and support while striving for our best.
- Dependency is not weakness; it acknowledges a relationship rather than an island.

To Fellow MilSpouses...

- Ignore them, walk away & do not provoke. Do not insult back.
- Instead turn them into authorities when a real threat of harm has been communicated.
- Do not search for the negativity that may exist out there.
- Focus on the many people in need, those you serve & your calling in life.
- Remember you are never as good as your best press or as bad as your worst critic.

For more information about Corie, her work and her mission visit: www.CorieWeathers.com
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MICHELLE AIKMAN
2016 Air Force Spouse of the Year

-Military wife of 14 years

-Graduate of Colorado School of Mines & Washington State University

-Co-founder of Cerno, Career Management Specialist & Certified Resume Writer

-Contributes to Military Spouse Magazine & teaches fitness classes at YMCA

Michelle Takes On the D-word

My initial Thoughts...

- Reading comments that stereotype entire groups of people makes me extremely disappointed.
- It's sad that people feel justified to bash an entire group of people based on the lifestyle choices or decisions of a few people.

To "D-word" Users...

- The military community is extremely diverse, just like Americans.
- To cast such a large net over the military spouse community is like casting a net over all Americans.
- We have many shared values when it comes to patriotism & honor but we are all over the map on most other things.

To Fellow MilSpouses...

- Let the haters hate, even if it comes from within.
- Focus your energy on uplifting others, holding or participating in civil discussions that will lead to positive changes.
- When we restrain ourselves from retaliating with anger, we don't fuel the flames.
- When we hold ourselves to a higher standard, we will create a more inclusive & respectful community in which we can all thrive.

For more information about Michelle, her work and her mission visit: www.MichelleAikman.com
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KIMBERLY MERRITT
2016 Kadena AB Spouse of the Year

-Military wife of 7 years

-Founder of Project Bloom, Senior Director at Lemongrass Spa & Diamond Representative at Purium Health Products

-Contributor to Military Spouse Magazine

Kimberly Takes On the D-word

My initial Thoughts...

- That word triggers an eye roll response from me.
- The word is typically intended to bully, make fun of, or tear a spouse down. To make a spouse feel less than he/she is and powerless.
- The word makes me sad because most spouses deal with a lot on a regular basis & deserve to be treated better than a derogatory stereotype.

To "D-word" Users...

- Remember that every military family is different.
- We are unique & we are individuals, as is our life situation.
- Don't think that because we are military, & you have a friend who is military, that you know & understand us all.

To Fellow MilSpouses...

- You are more powerful than you know.
- You are bigger than your situation & you have the power to move mountains.
- Work together to change the world for the better.

For more information about Kimberly, her work and her mission visit: www.about.me/KimberlyMerritt
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