

Our leaders have long understood the important contributions of our military spouses. In 1984, President Ronald Reagan established May 6 as Military Spouse Appreciation Day to recognize the sacrifices of these unsung heroes. This day is our opportunity to express our deep gratitude to them. As President Barack Obama recently noted, spouses are part "of the force behind the force...[and they], too, are the reason we've got the finest military in the world." So today, we recognize military spouses, the wives and husbands of more than one million active, guard and reserve service members.

The 6<sup>th</sup> of May is their official day of recognition, but every single day we recognize just how much our military spouses do for our men and women in uniform. The strength and love of our military spouses are critical to the continued success of our Army and our Families. In fact, Army spouses are the very foundation of our Army Family, and that is why we recognize and celebrate these heroes. Recently, our 37<sup>th</sup> Chief of Staff of the Army, General Martin Dempsey, designated the Army Family as one of his top priorities. He clearly values the contributions of our Army spouses, describing them as "the glue that holds us together."

I am personally blessed with the love and support of my wife, Jill; and I like to tell her that although I chose to serve, she chose to love and through that love she serves in a capacity far greater than mine. All Army spouses are truly the unsung heroes of our great Nation. Soldiers volunteer, but Army spouses willingly support; and, it is only through the love and labor of our spouses that our force can succeed. In short, our outstanding All-Volunteer Army would simply not exist without them.

Today, I join all of America in saying thank you for your selfless support to your Soldiers. I know the price you have paid, and I will never forget your sacrifice. The strength of our military and that of our Nation is linked directly to the strength I see in each of you.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America!

***Victory Starts Here!***

Robert W. Cone  
General, U.S. Army  
Commanding