

In 1961, John F. Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what **you** can do for your country”. Although millions of people have heard this famous quote, not many have truly **listened** to it. They didn’t take the time to fully understand how deep the meaning of these words go. Well, these veterans have taken this quote to heart and **truly** put it into motion. They have sacrificed **everything and more** to make sure that **our** country’s future is secure. Veterans have the courage to risk **their lives** in order to protect a cause that they may not even live to see. To serve a purpose **bigger** than themselves. This is the **bravest** action a human being can do.

When thinking about your average day, what do you do? You get up, go to school, you come home and watch TV, maybe hang out with friends, and then eat dinner with your family, and go to sleep in your bed. While you’re doing all these daily activities, these veterans were out there **serving by defending our** country and having to be away from **their own families**. They didn’t get a home-cooked meal every night. **No**. They were risking **everything**...for us. And while you’re doing your activities, do you feel safe and secure? That is because of these veterans, **they secure** our protection and without them, our lives would be **completely** different.

When thinking about how life would be without veterans, I automatically picture a board game, where the only thing protecting us is the luck of a dice. However, for us, we don’t

have to rely on luck or think about whether or not we are protected. We **know** that **no matter what** life throws at us, our veterans are **always** there for us. **By** us. **With** us. And although we don't know every veteran's name, they all deserve to be respected, honored, and valued. Not only as people, but as true heroes. Now, while writing this part of my speech, I came across a dilemma. This is because I was going to describe to you all what these veterans went through and the sacrifices that they made. But the truth is, I don't know. None of us do. And even though there are over **one million words** in the English language, not a **single combination** of them can **truly** describe what these veterans gave up and what they got in return. So the least we can do is thank them when they walk by, and always remember that **they** are the modern heroes in our society with the super power of **courage**. When people think of the US, they automatically think "the home of the free and the brave," but really, we are the home of the free **because** of the brave. So to all the veterans here today, the ones that weren't able to make it, and the ones soon to come, we **thank you** for being **that brave**.

Thank You