

VFW National Home for Children

Press Release

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Announcing the 2006/2007 National Home Graduates

Eaton Rapids, Mich. – The VFW National Home for Children is pleased to announce the Class of 2007! Two National Home residents will complete their high school education in June and two continuing education students have recently graduated from college.

The graduating class of 2007 includes high school graduates Samuel and Alex, and 2006 college graduates Cathy and Danielle.

Alex

“The National Home means a home and community to be a part of. It has made me appreciate everything the VFW does!”

Alex has been a National Home resident for more than two years. He stays busy performing in marching, jazz and concert bands. During his high school years he was involved with theatre and participated in the Boy Scout Honor Guard at Mackinaw Island. At the National Home, Alex sang in the Patriot’s Chorus, raised pigs for 4-H and worked with the Summer Work Crew. Alex’s favorite National Home memories are of the trips to Cedar Point, National Convention and the Veterans’ Hospitals.

Alex is graduating from Eaton Rapids High School. He plans to enlist in the Army.

Samuel

“The National Home displays a very good support system by always being there, supporting any worthy causes completely and giving time and compassion to all the residents. The VFW National Home for Children will be a large part of my life because it has pushed me along through hard times and helped me cherish the good times.”

Sam has lived at the National Home for the past nine years. He keeps busy with Martial Arts, football, dual enrollment at Lansing Community College (LCC) and working part-time. At the National Home he was involved with the Patriot’s Chorus, 4-H, piano lessons and working for various National Home departments.

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A Community of Promises Kept.

Sam has received seven first place trophies in Martial Arts competitions. At LCC, he received perfect attendance for the first semester. At the end of this semester, Sam will have a total of 16 college credits. He has also received numerous awards for football.

Some favorite National Home memories of Sam's include getting to know the National Home staff, having the opportunity to go to VFW National Convention in Reno and going on trips to Cedar Point.

Sam plans to attend Western Michigan University to study Criminal Justice with a goal of becoming a Drug Enforcement Officer.

Cathy

"I am truly blessed to have been raised at the National Home. I was given opportunities not available to many children. I learned valuable lessons from my house parents and the staff at the Home that have shaped my future for the best. Most of all, I had people who cared and loved me and still do today!"

Cathy lived at the National Home from 1986 to 2000. She graduated from Eaton Rapids High School and went on to Grand Valley State University to be an elementary teacher. She graduated with honors in December of 2006.

Cathy has many favorite National Home memories. She loved Cootie Christmas and spending time at the Community Center after school. She remembers all the trips that her house parents took the kids on. While living at the Home, Cathy was the Buddy Poppy Girl, Citizen of the Year (twice) and was involved with 4-H, took piano lessons, played many sports, sang in the school choir and did a lot of community service.

Currently Cathy is applying for teaching positions in a Christian school. This summer she is getting married and buying a home.

Danielle

"The Home means that I have a chance to succeed. I was given discipline and sense of respect for both myself and those around me. I was taught that hard work and honesty pay off. I was given the chance to attend college and get an education. The Home means that I was surrounded by those that loved me, and I felt it everyday. From the National Home staff to the thousands of VFW, Ladies Auxiliary, Cooties and many others who support the Home, I was always shown love and grew up in a positive and beneficial atmosphere. The Home means that I have patriotism and a respect for our veterans and service men and women. The Home means that I have a family."

Danielle lived at the National Home from 1986 to 2002. She graduated from Eaton Rapids High School and went on to Western Michigan University to study Political Science with a concentration on public law. While attending college, she was involved in intramural volleyball, worked 45 hours per week and volunteered at a local hospital emergency room. Danielle graduated in July of 2006.

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A Community of Promises Kept.

Danielle has many National Home memories. She remembers spending a lot of time at the Community Center and playing sports in the Cootie fields. Danielle loved Cootie Christmas and all the State Days. She reflected on these memories and said, "Looking back now, we had it made, and we were loved. We got to be kids and didn't have to worry about things that we might have had to if we weren't living at the Home. It was the feeling of love and community that allowed us to live a happy childhood."

While living at the Home, Danielle was involved with the Patriot's Chorus, 4-H, piano lessons, track, kids catering, community service, marching band, floor hockey, was the Buddy Poppy Child, went on church missions, worked at a local fast food chain, gymnastics, church choir, hand bells and participated in the National Home work program. She often sings the National Anthem for National Home special events.

Danielle plans to attend law school in the fall. Her goal is to one day be a judge.

The National Home community will celebrate the graduates' achievements at a Community Celebration on June 7, 2007. The educational accomplishments of the residents will be recognized, including scholastic improvements, honor roll achievements and Single Parent Family Program successes.

Donations for National Home graduates should be sent to the VFW National Home for Children and earmarked for "graduates." Monies will be distributed to this year's seniors upon successful completion of their graduation requirements.

Since 1925 the VFW National Home for Children has been providing for the children and families of our nation's veterans, while at the same time serving as a living memorial to our nation's heroes. For more information on the National Home, please call (517) 663-1521, toll-free at (800) 424-8360 or visit www.vfwnationalhome.org.

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