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## TIMELY TOPICS

Capitol Area Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America  
Chapter Website: [www.cacmoaa.com](http://www.cacmoaa.com)

Vol 2026 No 1

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## January Program

Colonel (Ret) Jim Allen will provide a bird's-eye view of his role as a group coordinator during a recent refugee resettlement effort supporting Afghan families in the Lansing area following the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. Colonel Allen brings more than 30 years of service in the Michigan Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve, along with civilian service at Michigan State University.

### January 2026 CAC MOAA Dinner Meeting (\$32)

When: Thursday, 8 January 2026

Our dinner meeting will take place at Coral Gables, located at 2838 East Grand River Avenue, East Lansing MI, Thursday, 8 January. Social hour begins at 5:00 and dinner begins at 6:00. The meal is buffet style which includes: Baked Buttered Scrod, Baked Meat Lasagna, Mixed Vegetables and Oven Brown Red Skin Potatoes, with a Tossed Salad and Ice Cream with Chocolate Sauce. **Cost is \$32 dollars.**

Please RSVP by Monday, 5 January to [www.cacmoaa.com](http://www.cacmoaa.com) or contact Tony Kruckeberg at (517) 575-9386, or email at [armyblkhawk@yahoo.com](mailto:armyblkhawk@yahoo.com)



Past president Jim Sigmon presents the CAC MOAA Certificate of Appreciation to Susan Reedy for her December dinner meeting presentation on Christmas Calligraphy, and her own creations of family Christmas greetings over the past 50 years. Susan shared examples of the poetic inspirations behind her cards, as well as exquisite examples of cards she has produced. Susan also shared cards for each member present. Thank you from all of the CAC MOAA attendees for this delightful and inspiring presentation. Keep them coming!!!

### Chapter Scholarships

Scholarship Applications are due 15 March. The size of our Scholarship fund will determine how many scholarships we can grant. We had over \$11,100 available to award in each of the last two years thanks to your generosity.

Now is the time to make a donation and help us reach a goal of providing a scholarship or book award to all eligible applicants. Make checks payable to Capitol Area Chapter MOAA and bring to the next Chapter Meeting or mail to: Maj DeLee Dankenbring, 4775 Village Dr Apt 133, Grand Ledge, MI 48837

## Governor Whitmer Signs Bipartisan Bills to Lower Costs for Michigan National Guard Members and Their Families

Today (9 December), Governor Whitmer signed Senate Bills 370, 540, and 542. These bills will lower the cost of health care and child care for members of the Michigan National Guard and their families. These bipartisan bills will strengthen the support systems service members rely on and ensure they can focus on their missions knowing that their families are safe and cared for. Including today's legislation, Governor Whitmer has signed a record 1,539 bipartisan bills into law since taking office.

"These bills reaffirm our commitment to fight for those who fight for us," said Governor Whitmer. "We are lowering the cost of health care and child care for members of the Michigan National Guard, ensuring they can carry out their missions to keep us all safe and provide for their families too. I'm proud that legislators worked across the aisle to pass these commonsense bills, building on years of bipartisan progress we have made to help our National Guard balance their service and their daily lives. Let's keep working together to make health care and child care more affordable for everyone and stay focused on getting things done that make a real difference in people's lives."

**Senate Bill 370**, sponsored by state Senator Sam Singh (D-East Lansing), will require the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) to create and operate a Tricare premium reimbursement program, lowering the cost of health care for Michiganders who serve in the National Guard.

**Senate Bill 540**, sponsored by state Senator Kevin Hertel (D-Saint Clair Shores), will create the Michigan National Guard Child Care Assistance Program within the DMVA. The new program will help eligible Michigan National Guard members pay for child care costs during weekend drills or annual training.

**Senate Bill 542**, sponsored by state Senator Veronica Klinefelt (D-Eastpointe), is tie-barred to SB 540 and will require the balance remaining in the Michigan National Guard Tuition Assistance Fund at the end of the fiscal year to be transferred to the Michigan National Guard Member Benefits Fund.

"Michigan National Guard members selflessly serve our state and nation, making sacrifices on a daily basis to keep our communities and loved ones safe. It's incumbent upon us as elected officials to do all we can to protect them in return," said state Senator Sam Singh (D-East Lansing). "I'm proud to see this legislation signed into law, ensuring our guardsmen and women can access the health and dental care they need, when they need it, while improving troop readiness, recruitment, and retention along the way."

"National Guard members have the same day-to-day responsibilities and costs anyone else does, including child care," said state Senator Kevin Hertel (D-St. Clair Shores). "When they take the selfless step to sign up for service, their actions deserve to be honored with our fullest support. This legislation helps us meet their needs by providing critical child care benefits to our guardsmen and women so they can serve our community with the peace of mind that their families are cared for."

"Our National Guard members put their lives on hold to serve and protect our state," said state Senator Veronica Klinefelt (D-Eastpointe). "Providing them with tuition assistance is one way our state can give back, helping them pursue their goals, build their careers, and continue serving our communities in and out of uniform."

Last month, Governor Whitmer signed bipartisan legislation to establish the [Michigan National Guard Benefit Fund](#), putting more money back into the pockets of our service members. The three bills signed today complete the four-bill package and ensure the men and women who serve Michigan in uniform save more money and get the benefits they deserve.

## Welcoming Our New Board Members

The Capital Area Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America recently welcomed and formally swore in a new slate of board members. These individuals have stepped forward to serve in leadership roles that are essential to advancing the chapter's mission of advocacy, service, and support for our military community.

Each new board member brings valuable experience, perspective, and a shared commitment to serving those who have served. Their willingness to volunteer their time and talents strengthens our chapter and ensures continued engagement and support for our members, veterans, and families in the Capital Area.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our incoming board members for their dedication and to our outgoing leaders for their service. We look forward to the year ahead and the continued positive impact of our chapter under this new leadership team



## Honoring Our Fallen: Wreaths Across America – Lansing

Members of the Capital Area Chapter joined communities across the nation in honoring our fallen heroes through Wreaths Across America. Several chapter members joined nearly 100 participants who braved strong winds and sub-freezing temperatures at Little Arlington at Evergreen Cemetery.

The ceremony opened with a moving helicopter flyover by the Michigan State Police, setting a powerful and solemn tone for the morning. What followed was a heartfelt program of prayer, recognition, song, and the sounding of Taps—each moment serving as a reminder of the sacrifice and service of our nation's heroes.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, evergreen wreaths adorned with red bows were respectfully placed on the graves of servicemembers, each wreath a symbol of remembrance, honor, and gratitude. For those in attendance, the event was a meaningful reminder that service does not end with the uniform and that remembrance is a responsibility we all share.

Thank you to our chapter members who participated and helped make this a special and memorable day for all who attended. Your presence ensured that these heroes are never forgotten.



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## Support our Sponsors

The individuals and companies below provide support for our Capitol Area Chapter. We encourage you to support them through your patronage. When doing so, please mention that you saw their advertisement in our monthly newsletter!!

Executive Board Meeting  
Thursday, 8 January 2026 @ 4:00 pm @ Coral Gables, 2838 East  
Grand River Ave, East Lansing

2026-2028  
EXECUTIVE BOARD of DIRECTORS

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### State of Michigan Commanders Group

The Michigan Commanders Group is the coalition of Michigan's congressionally chartered Veterans Service Organizations. Collectively, these organizations represent Michigan's 550,000+ veterans and their families, and have been the state's leaders in successfully advocacy for this population for nearly 100 years. The following link takes you to state and federal legislative priorities as well as the ability for you to contact your State and Federal legislatures: <https://michigancommandersgroup.org/Contact.php>



#### Membership

For membership inquiries please use this link: [www.cacmoaa.com](http://www.cacmoaa.com) For eligibility or other questions regarding membership please contact Bruce Bahr at (517) 526-2406. **Why join?** <https://youtu.be/42YD9d8W15Q>

#### CAC Mission Statement

Our mission is to support legislative and charitable initiatives at the local, state, and national levels to enhance our families, communities and country.

#### Support our Scholarship Program with a Kroger Card!!

We continue to increase our enrollment in the Kroger Community Rewards Program! Thank you for all of your support in signing up and shopping with Kroger. For those interested in beginning the program, our chapter non-profit organization number is: JR311, use this number when contacting Kroger for admission to the program and Kroger will donate a portion of your purchase to the CAC MOAA chapter scholarship fund.

#### Veterans Crisis Line

The Veterans Crisis Line connects veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call (800) 273-8255 and press 1, chat online, or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available.

Your local Capitol Area Chapter and National MOAA are nonpartisan groups representing all members regarding legislative issues and current events affecting you and your community! For more information regarding issues that affect you and your family members please use this link: <http://takeaction.moaa.org> or call (800) 234-6622/(703) 549-2311

#### \*\*REMINDER\*\*

Bring your cleaned and bagged bottles and cans to our next meeting to support chapter initiatives!