



## 2019 Veterans Day Essay Contest High School Winner: Caroline Vernon

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### **Justin Vernon: My Inspiration**

Selfless, courageous, dedicated, heroic men and women serve our country every day. From the Army to the Air Force every man and every woman makes a sacrifice for our freedom, a sacrifice that most people can not even fathom. Not only do these men and women sacrifice time spent with their family and time spent near their homes, some make the ultimate sacrifice. Without our Military our country would not stand and our homes would be war grounds. These inspirational and determined men and women are the base of the USA.

Inspiration brought on by other people is one of the greatest forms of motivation anyone can encounter, especially when the person that is most inspirational to you is your brother. My brother's name is Justin Vernon, and he is a Captain in the Army and works in the EOD force. Justin has been deployed once to Iraq for nine months in 2016, serving for the Operation Inherent Resolve. Justin is soon to be a Commander for an EOD Company in January.

My brother has a wife named Courtney and a one-year-old baby boy. When Justin was deployed, he and his wife had only been married for two months and were living in Tennessee with no family or friends near them. After he left for Iraq his wife stayed in Tennessee by herself for nine months until he returned, and soon was pregnant with my nephew. Now my nephew and his mother will be left by themselves yet again this coming spring as Justin leaves for another deployment in May.

Justin endured military school and intense training to get where he is now. Unimaginable schooling and training are required to become an EOD, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, officer. EOD officers are specially trained to disarm, dispose of, and construct bombs. The amount of selflessness and courage required for this field is extremely high and not for just anyone. I cannot imagine leaving my family for months at a time to go to a foreign land. Veterans give their lives every day so that we as Americans can live in peace and freedom.

My brother is ten years older than me and has always been the best big brother I could ever ask for. He excelled in school and was in the top of his senior class while juggling honors classes and sports.



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All of his accomplishments in life have made me proud to call him my brother and look up to him as my biggest role model, but in my opinion, Justin's heart is what makes him stand out the most.

Like all Veterans of the United States, Justin has a heart of gold. He has always believed in me and everyone around him. Being in the Military is not just any job. It is one of the most important occupations that exist in America and demands strength, integrity, and a passion for what you love the most, our country. He is my real inspiration as he has excelled and overcome so many obstacles including fighting for our country and freedom.

### Works Cited

Vernon, Justin. Personal interview. 16 Sep. 2019.