1272 Mill Dam Road

Virginia Beach, Virginia

April 13, 2015

Judges, Senior Project Board

First Colonial High School

1272 Mill Dam Road

Dear Judges:

When the year began, I was still uncertain of my topic because I was told that the topic I had chosen to do last year that was about the PATRIOT act was too broad, and I needed to narrow it down a bit. After discussing with my parents and my teachers, I decided to change my topic from the PATRIOT act to the Veteran’s Benefits System and how it needs help. I narrowed it down to how the backup and delay of the benefits effects the veteran’s.

I live in a neighborhood that is full of retired military personnel. I started talking to them and I heard so many interesting war stories. One man was in WWII and the Cold War. During the Cold War, he was a Captain of a submarine, and it became the first American sub to force a Russian sub to surface. What amazed me more was that a lot of them weren’t getting the help they need. During my research, I discovered that the Veterans Administration (VA) is the one that is in charge of the benefits. I also found out that some veterans who have PTSD have committed suicide because of the wait to get there benefits, which could have gotten them the help they need.

When I came to this realization, I decided to try and help them with my senior project. I decide to look up organizations that help veterans. The one that came up the most was the DAV or Disabled American Veterans. They have thrift stores all around that give portion of their profits to the DAV. The DAV will help any veteran if they come into any of their agencies. During this I found that the VA’s President had stepped down. This threw out my first idea of doing a petition signing to increase the budget for the VA so the problems could be fixed or handled better. After that I can up with the Idea to do a donation drive for the DAV Thrift Store.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and feel free to browse my website.

Miles Coutts

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