

LEAD

Neatnik Veteran Parents Give an Edge to President of Molly Maid

Here's how the military service of Meg Roberts' parents impacted her life and the lives of countless others at Molly Maid.



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CREDIT: Getty Images

As we celebrate Veterans Day, let's remember that it's not always what our veterans did during war time that have the biggest impact on our lives. In addition to the [incredible work that veterans do directly in the corporate world](#), many of these heroes have a profound impact on their children who embody their lessons throughout their careers.

I had the opportunity to [interview Meg Roberts, President of Molly Maid](#), as she shared how her parents had a profound influence on her standards of neatness that followed her throughout her career at Molly Maid.

"I was raised by two parents in the military," says Roberts. "My mother was a Lieutenant in the Navy and my father was a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy, who served in Vietnam after they both finished their schooling in university. They brought their military standards of neatness home. A notecard called the Navy E, would be posted over the bedroom door of which one of us four kids had the neatest room. It was a high standard of cleanliness that our parents expected in our house. We couldn't make the beds so tight that you could bounce a quarter, but pretty close."

Veteran Parents Install a Deep Sense of Discipline and Personal Responsibility in Their Children

One of the greatest gifts during childhood is having a "beginners mind" that allows children to absorb all sorts of lessons from their environment. Have you ever stood back in amazement as you watch a child under ten years old speak multiple languages (and seemingly with ease)?

A child's beginner's mindset allows her to absorb without judgment and quickly pick up important life lessons that typically take adults much longer to learn. This is why having veteran parents is such a gift. Disciplines that are often drilled into individuals who are new to the military (usually in the form of boot camp) are often passed down to the children of military parents. Military disciplines picked up naturally at home can have a profound impact on these children and not only impact their own careers, but also the careers of the employees who work with them. Roberts explains:

"It was really important that cleanliness, orderliness and really taking care of and respecting the home and the things that we were given, but didn't necessarily deserve, was really how my parents wanted us to perceive and be gracious growing up. So the Navy E was a really important aspect of your youth. You either had it or you didn't. And if you didn't you were not in the officer's good graces, lets put it that way."

While each veteran parent will raise his or her children differently, the common bond here is instilling a deep sense of discipline and personal responsibility in their children.

As a father, my wife and I used to joke that none of our kids came with an instruction manual. We all do our best to raise our children the way we were taught. What I have noticed in the children of veteran parents is that many of the core values that the military teach are further absorbed by their children and continue to have a positive impact on their careers as adults.

Supporting Transitioning Military Personnel and Veterans By The Numbers

In addition to the impact Roberts experienced directly, Molly Maid's parent, Dwyer Group, has a [strong veteran mission](#): "We strive to become the leader in franchising with transitioning military personnel and current veterans in order to help them achieve their dreams and goals by being in business for themselves."

Since its inception, the VetFran programs, the Dwyer Group of franchise companies has awarded more than \$2.1 million in discounts to 374 veteran franchise owners and more than 500 franchisors currently participate in the program. More than 6,300 veterans have acquired a franchise business through the program.

Thankfully, the Dwyer Group isn't alone in this effort. Brian Zimmerman, founder and CEO of Vet Hustle, teaches veterans how to apply five key levers to just about any business, no matter how small (see [How Veteran-Owned Businesses Can Get Customers, Fast!](#)). And retired Navy Seals Jocko Willink and Leif Babin have helped thousands of veterans apply the principle, [Discipline Equals Freedom](#) to every aspect of business and personal life.