

Blue to Gold Program  
Revised 6/21/22  
Prepared by National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President

After the September 11 terrorist attack on American soil and impending War on the horizon, fear and sorrow entered of the hearts of Blue Star Mothers. Memories of the Vietnam War surfaced. Determined to not let our Nation mar the sacrifice of the Warrior or the family left behind, the Blue to Gold Program was borne out of honor, love and respect.

In military tradition, when a man or woman enters the Armed Forces of the United States of America, pledging to defend America with their life, a Blue Star Banner may be displayed by their family.



The Red Border of the Banner represents the blood shed by past warriors in defending our Nation.

The Field of White symbolizes the purity of Spirit – the price of Peace that only a Warrior understands.

The Blue Star signifies the loyalty, honor and duty entrusted in our Defenders.

If Fate causes the Death of a Defender, a smaller Gold Star for Valor and Sacrifice is placed over the Blue Star. In earlier years, the border of Blue is a constant reminder the Warrior and family will always be remembered and honored by the brothers and sisters who lived to tell the tale. We, the Blue Star Mothers, stand beside our children in this legacy. The new Gold Star Banners do not contain the Blue Border and instead just contain the Gold Star.

The presentation of the Gold Star Banner is a solemn obligation of comfort and love to another parent and spouse. The decision to receive and how to receive



the Gold Star Banner is always the decision of the family. It may not be possible for a member to present the banner. Options are the CAO, another organization, such as TAPS or the Patriot Guard. Under rare circumstances, the Gold Star Banner may be mailed.

Chapters should designate a Blue to Gold Liaison. If Chapters overlap the general area, it is encouraged that they work together and share the honor of the presentation. Occasionally, there is a personal relationship between Members which are outside of the designated boundaries. Much compassion and understanding should be given in these circumstances to allow relationship to take precedence. Remember, this is not about the Chapter, but about the Survivors of the deceased Defender.

It is also very important to remember, the Organization has been entrusted with the honor of presenting the Gold Star Banner. Privacy of information must be protected.

A database has been kept of Blue to Gold Liaisons in the past. Currently the webmaster has a list that includes the liaisons. Each year after chapter elections and when your compliance documents are submitted, your name should be updated and the webmaster will include you in the emails. If you wish your name and contact information to be included on the distribution list and you are not the Blue to Gold liaison, written authorization must be submitted to the National Third Vice President. If a member needs assistance to locate another Blue to Gold Liaison, contact the National 3rd Vice President.

# Guidelines

## Chapter Liaison Guidelines

- Commit to abiding by the wishes of the family and the instructions of the Casualty Assistant Officer (CAO). **Note: More than one CAO may be assigned to the family. Make sure to Coordinate with all.**
- Commit to follow the guidelines and protocol of the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.
- Commit to work with the National 3rd Vice President.
- Commit to a standardization of presentations within the Organizations.
- Commit to ensure that all arrangements and details are finalized with the CAO.
- Commit to the privacy of the family.
- Commit to train others in the Chapter of the responsibilities and duties of the Chapter Blue to God Liaison.

## **CHAPTER PRESENTATION GUIDELINES**

- Contact the National 3rd Vice President for instruction if your Chapter or Chapter Blue to Gold Liaison does not know the protocol for the Blue to Gold Program.
- Read the Blue to Gold Program before you attempt to arrange a Gold Star Banner presentation.
- Do not approach a family member directly, nor attempt to locate a family member by social media.
- Contact the Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO). The duty of the CAO is to protect and honor the family. The CAO answers to the family and the DOD.
- If you are not able to contact the CAO, contact the funeral director, or National 3rd Vice President for assistance to make the contact.
- If you have attempted three (3) times to contact the CAO to arrange a Gold Star Banner presentation and they have not responded to you, do not continue to reach out
- Dress appropriately for the presentation. Dress code is: Navy Pants or Navy Skirt, White Blouse, Navy Blazer (optional), Garrison Hat recommended but optional, and white gloves.

## **DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION GUIDELINES**

- If your Chapter falls under a Department, the Chapter Blue to Gold Liaison contacts the Department 3rd Vice President.
- The Department 3rd Vice President then orders the Gold Star Banner(s) through the National 3rd Vice President.
- The Department 3rd Vice President works with and assists the Chapter Blue to Gold Liaison for the presentation.
- Chapters that fall under a Department, must go through the Department 3rd Vice President and not contact the National 3rd Vice President directly.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR THE GOLD STAR BANNER

### BSMA, INC follows the Eligibility requirements used by the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

- Families of active duty military personnel killed in battle, as well as military personnel who pass away while serving in our nation's military, during a time of conflict are eligible to receive the banner.
- Families of an active duty Service Member who dies while on active duty, no matter how they pass.
- Families of a Service Member who dies as a result of service determined by the VA with a documented DOD Rating, as defined by the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and as reported by the VA through a DDI300 – Report of Casualty.
- Families of a Service Member who, while on Active Duty, is deemed MIA.
- Families of a Member of the National Guard who are on active duty, ADT individual job specific training, drill status, or while on deployment.
- Families of a Member of the Reserves who are on active duty, ADT individual job specific training, drill status, or while on deployment.
- **\*\*NOTE:** It is important to remember that once a service member begins basic training, they are considered on active duty. However, this does not apply to National Guard or Reserve.
- **\*\*NOTE:** If there is any question regarding eligibility, it is the responsibility of the National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President to contact the Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO) who will verify, with the Veterans Administration (VA) and/or the Department of Defense (DOD) to confirm eligibility.

- **\*\*NOTE:** “Academy Cadets” is included as long as it is a U.S. Military Academy and not a private institution like VMI or the Citadel. “Active Duty”, according to Federal Law, the term “Active applies to anyone serving full-time duty as a Cadet or Midshipman at the United States Military Academy, or at any of the other Military Service Academies.”

### **ORDERING A GOLD STAR BANNER**

- All Banner requests must be processed through the National 3rd Vice President via the BSMA, Inc. Office Website at [www.bluestarmothers.org](http://www.bluestarmothers.org).
- Chapters are NOT allowed to present a Gold Star Banner that has not gone through the proper protocol through the National 3rd Vice President and wherein the National 3rd Vice President has not approved your request.
- DO NOT Order a Banner if you have not arranged and been approved by the CAO that the family wishes to have the Gold Star Banner presentation.
- After logging in to your profile on the BSMA, Inc. Office Website, click to the right-hand side where it states “Blue to Gold”.
- This takes you to the Blue to Gold Program Page. [www.blue to gold.net](http://www.blue to gold.net). Click on “Request A Banner”
- You will be prompted to again log in using your profile log in user name and password.
- Complete the Form in its entirety – being careful to check the correctness of all information.
- All information on the form must be completed accurately.

- The name of the fallen should be listed as it is in the DOD listing or as the parents or spouse have requested. NOTE: If name is different from DOD listing, explain on form citing reason for change.
- When you have completed the form, click the “submit” button.
- The National 3rd Vice President will receive the request via the website.
- After checking the information for correctness, the National 3rd Vice President will research and verify from 2 different sources.
- You will receive an email from the National Third Vice President with detailed instructions in the email for you to finalize your Order.
- Your Order is not finalized until you complete the instructions in your confirmation email and pay for your shipping or your Banner.
- You may order your Gold Star Banner from any source. Service Flags Is no longer providing this service.

### **INFORMATION THAT MUST BE COMPLETED ON THE BANNER REQUEST FORM**

- Contact Name: Yours
- Email: your email should be placed in this area.
- Number of banners requested
- Date of Death
- Date of Funeral
- Date Banner is needed
- Name of Deceased Service Member (How you wish the name to be printed on the Gold Star Banner. Make sure your spelling is correct).
- \*When you are ordering a Gold Star Banner, to also include a Blue Star for a second child serving, list the Name of the Surviving Sibling you wish to have placed under the Blue Star.
- The Branch of Service for the Surviving Sibling.
- Mother’s Name
- Mother’s Street Address



- Mother's City
- Mother's State
- Mother's Zip Code
- Father's Name
- Father's Street Address (\*If the parents are still together, only the Mother is presented the Gold Star Banner. If the parents are divorced, the Mother and the Father are presented a Gold Star Banner each.)
- Father's City
- Father's State
- Father's Zip Code
- Spouse's Name (if applicable)
- Spouse's Street Address
- Spouse's City
- Spouse's State
- Spouse's Zip Code
- Your Name
- Your Street Address
- Your City
- Your State
- Your Zip Code

\*The Chapter Name will automatically appear as Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

- \*Your Chapter State and Number will automatically appear.
- Ship to Name (if different from address of person ordering the banner).  
If you want the Banner(s) shipped to a different address than yours.
- Address
- City
- State Zip Code
- Your chapter will pay the full cost of the banner.

## GUIDELINES FOR PRESENTATION

- Always check with the CAO as to the wishes of the family and whether they would like a Gold Star Banner or not at this time. Some family members do not wish the Gold Star Banner right away because they are very overwhelmed with everything going on.
- Coordinate with the CAO when, where and how the family would like to receive the Gold Star banner.
- It is preferred that the 'official' Blue Star Mothers uniform (white blouse, Navy jacket, pants or skirt, Garrison Hat and white gloves) be worn.
- Jewelry should be limited to the BSMA official pin and your child's service pin. If a uniform is not available, suitable funeral attire should be worn.
- When presenting the Gold Star Banner, white gloves should be worn.
- Hold the Gold Star Banner with the Star facing the family.
- It is best to remember to state one sentence during your presentation. We suggest the following Sentence. Please remember that the families are going through so much at the time of the funeral and they probably are not hearing anything that you are saying at this moment because they are so overwhelmed.

**“On Behalf of the Blue Star Mothers, Inc. and a grateful Nation, we present this Gold Star Flag in honor of (Name of Fallen Hero) service in the US (Branch of Service) and (his/her) sacrifice.”**

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT CHAPTERS AND CHAPTER BLUE TO GOLD  
LIAISONS GO THROUGH THE NATIONAL 3<sup>rd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT FOR ALL BLUE TO  
GOLD PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS**

- The National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President maintains the BSMA, Inc. Fallen Hero Database. In the event that Chapter Blue to Gold Liaisons do not go through the BSMA, Inc. Protocol, the name of that Fallen Hero will not be added to the Master DataBase.
- The National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President lists the name of the Fallen Hero on her monthly report that is remitted to the BSMA, Inc. NEB. If the name is not given to her, their name does not get reported.
- The National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President assists the National 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President in the yearly BSMA, Inc. Yearbook listing the names of the Fallen Heroes for that fiscal year. If the name is not given to her, their name will not be recognized and honored in the annual Yearbook.
- The National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President maintains for the National Chaplain a master list of the name and address of each Gold Star Mother that obtained a Gold Star Banner for that fiscal year. The National Chaplain recognizes on Gold Star Mother Day each Gold Star Mother for that fiscal year by remitting a hand-designed card on behalf of BSMA, Inc. If the information is not given, the Gold Star Mother will not receive our card recognizing their child's loss.
- The Blue to Gold Program is an honor and a privilege bestowed on behalf of BSMA, Inc. When a Chapter presents a Gold Star Banner, please remember you are representing BSMA, Inc.

## **Blue Daisies**

When a Chapter Member passes they become a BSMA , Inc. Blue Daisy. It is important that Chapter's advise the National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President ([3vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:3vp@bluestarmothers.us)), National Chaplain ([chaplain@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:chaplain@bluestarmothers.us)), National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President ([1vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:1vp@bluestarmothers.us)), and National Webmaster ([webmaster@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:webmaster@bluestarmothers.us)). The National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President maintains a master list of all Blue Daisies for that fiscal year and also recognizes all Blue Daisies in the BSMA, Inc. annual Yearbook. We encourage Chapters to also send in photos In Remembrance for us to use.

## **DOD NOTIFICATIONS & NON-DOD CASUALTY NOTIFICATIONS**

The DOD remits notification to the National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President of DOD Combat-Casualties and DOD Non-Combat Casualties that happen during deployments. This information is then remitted, via email, to Chapter Blue to Gold Liaisons and Chapter Presidents. This email will have the contact information of one of the CAO's if available.

The DOD does not remit notification of non-combat casualties and/or stateside casualties. Therefore, the National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President may not remit a non-combat casualty email to the Chapter Blue to Gold Liaisons or the Chapter Presidents. The National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President doesn't have the CAO information for non-combat, stateside, casualties.

Any non-combat casualties or stateside casualties that your chapter is made aware of are to be reported to the National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President for her records. She relies on each Chapter Blue to Gold Liaison to remit this information to her.

## **ENGRAVEMENTS ON THE BANNERS**

Ranks are no longer listed on the engraved Gold Star Banners because fallen heroes are promoted, post-humorously. When a Chapter orders the Gold Star Banner, then they are promoted, the banners prepared would then be incorrect for the families.

## **IN-PERSON PRESENTATIONS**

EFFECTIVE: March 31, 2020, BSMA, Inc. issued a suspension of “No In-Person” presentations. All States have their own specific guidelines due to COVID-19. BSMA, Inc. Chapters, your State may be ‘open’, but another State may not be. Many National Cemeteries are closed to the public and possibly remain closed at this time. Due to COVID-19, Military Funerals were limited to under 10 people in attendance, which has since been increased.

### **\*\*IMPORTANT REMINDERS – RECAP\*\***



- If you have in your possession the white mini “Blue to Gold Liaison Handbook” please destroy. On February 29, 2020, the BSMA, Inc. National Executive Board voted to remove this Handbook from the BSMA, Inc. website due to the BSMA, Inc. Blue to Gold Program changes. The Blue to Gold Program Guidelines and Protocol are those that have been outlined above and are available on the BSMA, Inc. website.

- It is never okay to question a Gold Star Mother of their status or qualifications. If a Gold Star Mother states they are a Gold Star Mother, we accept their word. Please remember that no Mother wants the title of Gold Star Mother.
- Under NO circumstances are any Members of BSMA, Inc. to contact the families of the Fallen Heroes directly or search for them using social media. Rare exceptions are if a Chapter Member or Chapter Blue to Gold Liaison is friends with the Gold Star Mother or she is a Member of that individual Chapter.
- If your Chapter has never done a Blue to Gold Presentation, please educate yourself with the BSMA, Inc. Blue to Gold Program Guidelines and Protocols. For additional questions and guidance, please email the National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President at: [3vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:3vp@bluestarmothers.us).
- Our Governing Documents mandate that any and all Blue to Gold Banners presented by “Chapters are not to order the Gold Star Banner until they have obtained approval of the Blue to Gold presentation to the Families.”
- Chapters may present Gold Star Banners obtained through any source and must complete the form on the BSMA, Inc. website through the National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President prior to the presentation and receive an ok.
- Chapters are not to present Gold Star Banners until they have received notification from the National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President that their request has been approved and processed.