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Mayor proclaims Gold Star Mothers' Day in Lafayette

By Pippa Fisher



From left: Jonathan Vega Yelner with his mother, Yolanda "Jolie" Vega, grandmother Santia Vega Montalvo, aunt Synthia Vega Montalvo, and brother Mathew Vega Yelner. Photo provided

The Lafayette City Council issued a proclamation to declare Sept. 30 Gold Star Mothers' Day - a day for residents to acknowledge and honor the sacrifice of gold star mothers and families.

Gold star moms include mothers, stepmothers, grandmothers, mother-in-laws and guardians whose son or daughter died during active-duty service in the United States military during a period of war or hostilities in which the U.S. Armed Forces were engaged.

These young men and women include those who died not only in combat but also in the hospital, on training, by suicide and at home while on leave from service.

As Lafayette resident Yolanda Vega, president of the Golden Gate Chapter and herself a gold star mom says, "It's a distinction none of the mothers/families want," but says they accept the recognition since they are proud of their children.

The tradition of the gold star began during World War I. Gold star mothers and families raise funds for veterans, active-duty service members and their families as well as other gold star families.

Locally the group visits veterans at the Martinez VA hospital, letting them know they are honored and not forgotten. Gold star mothers and families support Veteran's Court, sit on boards, which provide healing, training, coaching, recognition, counseling and career placement. They march at parades, speak at public events and meet with civic leaders to raise the visibility of military men and women. They have formed foundations to identify and assist veterans who need a helping hand and they lay wreaths at the cemeteries and military monuments during Wreaths Across America.

Gold Star Mothers' Day is observed in the U.S. on the last Sunday of September each year.

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