



**Independence Day 2016:
Celebrating 240 Years of Service and Sacrifice**

Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism.

—George Washington

Our Founding Fathers came together 240 years ago to proclaim a common ideal: that all Americans are created equal and they have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These first citizens risked treason and death to gain the freedom we enjoy today. Since then, our Nation has continually called on its citizens to uphold the legacy of service and sacrifice, and our Soldiers, Civilians, and Families answer that call today.

As we observe our Nation's 240th birthday, we ask that you remember the service and sacrifice that previous generations gave to safeguard this Nation. Their extraordinary courage and commitment for the cause of freedom is a debt we repay through our service today.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, we thank each one of you—the Soldiers, Civilians, and the Families of our Total Army team—for your bravery and patriotism defending this great Nation and the ideals, traditions, and liberties that we all enjoy. Army Strong!

Daniel A. Dailey
Sergeant Major of the Army

Mark A. Milley
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Eric K. Fanning
Secretary of the Army