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On Veteran's Day, Rite of Passage programs take special time to honor our nations heroes and to remember their service and sacrifice. At Ridge View Youth Services Center, we have a longstanding volunteer relationship with the Disabled Veterans Association where staff and students volunteer time to help veterans with various activities.

Ridge View employee Michelle Stefancic was honored with the opportunity to volunteer on the 2017 Honor Flight as a "Guardian." The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization, created solely to honor American veterans for their sacrifices. They transport our nations heroes to Washington, D.C. to visit and reflect at the memorials. Top priority is given to the senior veterans— World War II survivors, along with those veterans who may be terminally ill. Guardians are asked to treat these heroes as if they are family and ensure that every veteran has a safe, memorable, and rewarding experience.

Michelle served as a Guardian for Mr. Phillip Joiner, Army veteran, who served in the Korean War from 1950 to 1951. He was stationed at Lakenheath Air Base, England, where he lived in a tent for 18 months guarding a B-29 bomber. While on the trip, Michelle also assisted Marilynn (Betty) Doenges, a WWII Army Nurse from 1944 to 1946. During her 19 months as a nurse, she was sent to White Sulpher Springs, West Virginia; Rheims, Normandy and Marseilles, France. She also sailed on the USS General A. E. Anderson.

Rite of Passage is grateful to the many staff and students who have stepped forward to help honor our nation's veterans.

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