



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 25, 2017**

**United States Naval Academy to Recognize Gold Star Sister Ryan Manion  
As 2017 Honorary Graduate**

**ANNAPOLIS, MD** — The United States Naval Academy's Class of 2017 will hold the official graduation ceremony on Friday May 26, 2017, and an exclusive honor will be bestowed upon a Gold Star Sister. Each year, the graduating Class has the opportunity to select up to three Honor Graduates who have made significant contributions to the success of their Class, and who reflect an outstanding and admirable sense of character as inspiration to the Class. Ryan Manion, President of the Travis Manion Foundation and Gold Star Sister, has been selected by the Class of 2017 to receive the distinguished accomplishment of Honor Graduate from the Naval Academy.

Ryan Manion is the sister of Marine 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Travis Manion, ('04 USNA Graduate) who was fatally wounded by an enemy sniper in 2007 during his second deployment to Iraq, while pulling his wounded comrades to safety. Ryan currently serves as the President of the Travis Manion Foundation, whose Character Does Matter program empowers veterans and families of fallen heroes to develop character in future generations. Ryan has brought this presentation to USNA for several years now, and speaks to incoming classes about the values of character, leadership, and service that all men and women who come through USNA exemplify.

2017 Graduating Class President, MIDN Chosnel Raymond USN, in speaking about the selection of Ryan Manion as Honorary Graduate said: "Ms. Ryan Manion and her work perfectly embodies the spirit of our class. She has dedicated her life to reverencing her fallen Brother, Travis Manion. She used his life's work and sacrifice to not only fuel her flame, but also to ignite the flame of inspiration in the lives of many men and women. Through her, the spirit of Travis Manion lives on forever, as it does through us."

Previous recent USNA Honorary Graduates include Jeff Fair: USNA Football Team Physician, CAPT Doug Borrebach: USNA Supply Officer, RADM Bill Byrne: 84th Commandant of Midshipmen, GySgt Beth Abbot: Brigade Drill Officer, Coach Dave Brandt: Men's Soccer Coach, and Coach Jim: McNally: USNA Boxing Coach.

Along with the graduation ceremony, which is by invitation only, there are a number of public events including a flight demonstration by the Blue Angels, the Herndon Monument Climb, parades, concerts and more. Vice President of the United States, Michael Pence, will serve as the 2017 Commencement speaker.

**About Travis Manion Foundation**

Travis Manion Foundation (TMF) empowers veterans and families of fallen heroes to develop character in future generations. In 2007, 1stLt Travis Manion (USMC) was killed in Iraq while saving his wounded teammates. Today, Travis' legacy lives on in the words he spoke before leaving for his final deployment, "If Not Me, Then Who..."



Guided by this mantra, veterans continue their service, develop strong relationships with their communities, and thrive in their post-military lives. As a result, communities prosper and the character of our nation's heroes lives on in the next generation.

Additional information about the Foundation can be found at [www.travismanion.org](http://www.travismanion.org).

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**\*\*\*Great Photo & Interview Opportunity\*\*\***

**WHAT:** Gold Star Sister Ryan Manion selected by United States Naval Academy Class of 2017 as Honorary Graduate. Ryan will be available to the media for interview opportunities following the ceremony.

**WHEN:** Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 10 a.m.

**WHERE:** Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium, 550 Taylor Ave, Annapolis, MD 21401

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