

Send Holiday Greetings to an Active Service Member Overseas

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Godfrey, Ill. – Lewis and Clark Community College’s Veterans Services Department is encouraging members of the community to reach out to active service members this holiday season and year-round with friendly greetings and care packages.

“We are compiling a list of active service members who are connected to Lewis and Clark through our faculty and staff and posting their names and addresses on our website. We would like to encourage our campus and community to consider corresponding directly with these service members through letters, gifts, care packages, etc. as a way of saying "thank you" for all that they do throughout the year,” said Terry Lane, manager of the Veterans Services Department.

JoEllen Baker, administrative assistant at Lewis and Clark, has several family members currently stationed in Germany, and has included them on the list.

Baker’s son, WO2 Tyler J. Hartsock, has served 10 years in the Army. He just returned from his third deployment in Iraq and now serves as a Blackhawk helicopter pilot in Ansbach, Bavaria, Germany. Her son-in-law, SSG David M. Hokenson, has served 11 years in the Army as a Military Police officer and drill sergeant. He and his wife Cheri (Baker’s daughter) and their three children are also living in Germany.

“As a mother, it’s hard to see your kids go off anywhere out of reach. It is one thing to hear from your parents but it’s quite another to hear from friends and family - people that you’ve known or your parents have known for years,” Baker said. “They’re apart from their families, and because they’re there for such a short period of time, it’s hard to make friends. It’s hard to deal with a new culture and to live in a place where the people

don't speak your language. A familiar face or words from home can be a source of comfort.”

For those interested in participating, Lewis and Clark's running list of service members is available online at <http://www.lc.edu/aid/VeteransServices/servicemembers.aspx>.

“Although being apart is especially difficult for families and friends over the holidays, these service members would like to hear from us anytime. So, we will maintain the list year-round to make it easy to reach out whenever we can,” Lane said. “We are not necessarily attempting to facilitate a ‘pen pal’ relationship by this endeavor; we are merely trying to facilitate communicating our appreciation and gratitude to those now serving.”

Community members and friends who would like to include a service member on the list can contact Lane at tdlane@lc.edu. Those who agree can have their relationships to the service members noted on the website as well. Please keep Lane advised of any address changes as they occur so the list can be updated accordingly.

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