



**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PHOTOS ATTACHED**

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Cornelia Connelly School

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Connelly Students Honor Veterans in Special Veterans Day Prayer Service

November 9, 2018 Anaheim, CA – Every year, Cornelia Connelly School is grateful to host a beautiful prayer service to honor all veterans who have bravely served our country. The all-girls high school asks students, faculty, and staff to invite family members or friends who are veterans so that the Connelly community can show their appreciation and extend a blessing over them. Fathers, grandfathers, faculty members, and close friends accepted the invitation to come to the special assembly. As a result, Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine veterans were all represented.

Lieutenant Commander Gary McCoy, who served nine years in the United States Navy, gave an emotional speech to the students, thanking them for acknowledging veterans, and imploring them to never forget veterans every year on Veterans Day and Memorial Day. He spoke of his family's long history of military service, which dated back to the Revolutionary War, and continued to present day, only missing the Vietnam War era. He told the students to consider the military as an option, as it not only could help defray the cost of college, but it's also a great honor to serve our country.

Another guest veteran who spoke to the students was U.S. Marine Corps, Private - Chief Warrant Officer, Judith A. Ellis, who was a crowd favorite among the all-girls school population. The petite 5'2" veteran spoke humorously of her initial attempt to enlist, and her subsequent rejection because she didn't meet the weight requirement – she only weighed 95 lbs. at the time. She had to "eat like a pig" for two weeks just to "make weight." Her tenacity paid off. On her next attempt, which was her 18th birthday, she was accepted into the Marine Corps, where she defied anyone who told her women couldn't hold certain positions. In her 20 years of service in the Marine Corps, she held some of the most challenging assignments imaginable, including Drill Instructor and EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) technician. Like Lieutenant Commander McCoy, she also spoke of always remembering veterans and their service.

All of the guest veterans were thankful to be honored at the assembly, saying Connelly was the only school they knew of to hold a special service for veterans.

Cornelia Connelly School in Anaheim Founded and sponsored by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus in 1961, Connelly is a Catholic, independent, college-preparatory high school for young women. The school is a member of the Holy Child Network of Schools and is sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus. The Society of the Holy Child Jesus operates schools – preschool through college level – in the United States, Europe and Africa. Exchange programs offer Connelly's students unique opportunities to study at Holy Child Schools in the United States and Europe. Connelly's exceptional curriculum and programs prepare young women to be leaders based on an underlying philosophy of trust, reverence and respect. For more information about the school, please go to www.connellyschoollanaheim.org.



Caption for above photo 1 (Connelly-veterans-flag2000px.jpg): Connelly students invited fathers, grandfathers and close friends who are veterans for a special prayer service. From l-r: David W. Lobato (U.S. Army), Robert Vincent Perry (U.S. Army), Philip Manfredi (U.S. Air Force), David Jueneman (Navy), Judith A. Ellis (U.S. Marine Corps), John Gary McCoy (U.S. Navy).



Caption for above photo 2 (Connelly-veterans-family2000px.jpg): Connelly students invited fathers, grandfathers and close friends who are veterans for a special prayer service. From l-r: Robert Vincent Perry (U.S. Army) with granddaughter Theresa Perry; Philip Manfredi (U.S. Air Force) with daughter Jenny Manfredi; Judith A. Ellis (U.S. Marine Corps); David Jueneman (Navy), David W. Lobato (U.S. Army) with granddaughter Kris Nguyen; and John Gary McCoy (U.S. Navy) with family friend Sophia Hagerman.