

# Proclamation



*Jane Castor, Mayor*

**WHEREAS**, our nation's freedoms and way of life are protected by the men and women who bravely serve in the United States Armed Forces and their families, and we should always be mindful of their steadfast dedication and of the ultimate sacrifices many have made on our behalf; and

**WHEREAS**, Tampa, Florida is proud to be home to MacDill Air Force Base and the city enjoys a unique and special relationship with our nation's military, and demonstrates its support and appreciation for the members of the service at every opportunity, including welcoming all military and veteran families to our city and to our neighborhoods; and

**WHEREAS**, each year, approximately 600,000 active-duty and transitioning military families move to new communities, often not to military installations, but to local neighborhoods where they may feel isolated and overlooked, and a sense of belonging to a local civilian community is essential to the well-being and readiness of our country's military families; and

**WHEREAS**, established in 2009 by military spouses, **Blue Star Families** is a national nonprofit organization founded to empower and strengthen military and veteran families, and it is dedicated to supporting them in ways that strengthen communities including creating a connection with individuals, organizations, and their neighbors which helps to foster awareness and understanding of military lifestyle challenges; and

**WHEREAS**, established in 2009 and with a membership of over 280,000 in chapters and communities globally, including the Tampa Chapter, Blue Star Families ensures wherever American military families go, they can feel connected, supported, and empowered to thrive in every community, and in its Military Family Lifestyle 2023 Survey, only 41 percent of military family respondents reported they felt a sense of belonging to their civilian community, so the organization's mission is valuable in creating a feeling of acceptance and inclusion; and

**WHEREAS**, Blue Star Welcome Week (BSWW) was established to proactively improve military families' sense of belonging by forging strong connections between military family members and their neighbors, and to bring awareness to the community about the importance of acceptance and extending a warm welcome; and

**WHEREAS**, during Blue Star Welcome Week, cities across the United States, including Tampa, Florida, will have the opportunity for military families to connect with their new community and for community partners to showcase what makes their city special with inclusive celebrations and planned events.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim September 21 – September 29, 2024, as

## **“BLUE STAR WELCOME WEEK”**

in the city of Tampa, Florida and urge all residents to join me in recognizing and commending all American Military Service Members and their families, thanking them for their service to our nation, and ensuring they are all welcome in our community and neighborhoods.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of September 2024.



*Jane Castor*  
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Mayor