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Russian commanders and their troops operated on faulty intelligence Putin received from his Defense Ministry that said they would be welcomed as liberators and take over the country in a matter of days. Instead, the Ukrainian army, bolstered by foreign military aid—including \$1 billion from the U.S.—has held nearly every major city and pushed Russian troops 20 miles further east of the capital, Kyiv. Moreover, the Russian army is dangerously low on food and fuel due to poor planning by higher-ups. NATO says that between 7,000 and 16,000 Russian soldiers have been killed, a staggering number when compared to the 2,401 Americans who died during the 20 year war in Afghanistan.

Similarly, most Russian civilians hate what is happening to their fellow Slavs.

Joshua Shumskiy, who is both Russian and Ukrainian, says there is no disagreement among his family members about the war.

"No one [in my family] would dare support the Russians. My mother's very distressed about it, she's always praying," he said. Josh's mother grew up in Siberia.

Soon after the war broke out, one of Josh's cousins fled Ukraine to Poland with her baby while her husband stayed behind to fight. And his great uncle is still living in the country. Indeed, war has affected Josh to such a degree that he's dreamt about it.

In one dream, he was a Ukrainian soldier pushing a cannon with three of his comrades "which we decided we were going to give to the Russians Trojan horse style and then it would explode," he said. In another, he was an American soldier crawling through deep snow. He said he didn't know whether he was in



Ukraine or Russia until he stumbled upon an abandoned convenience store, where he found a vending machine filled with traditional Russian drinks.

"I think [the dreams] show a subconscious occupation with the war in my mind... because you have to think about something a lot in order to dream about it," he said.

The war in Ukraine has stirred up international outrage like nothing else. Thousands of Ukrainians who live outside of their homeland have trekked across Europe to join the country's Territorial Defense Forces. Even foreigners with no ties to the conflict are joining the fight. Among them are American veterans who feel that their sacred duty to protect American values was wasted in an unjustified war in the Middle East. Now, they seek to

fulfill their vow by helping wage a just war against a clear enemy.

However, as a military man himself, Sam said Americans should support Ukrainian troops through peaceful channels.

"[U.S. citizens] should be supporting humanitarian groups, not so much militarily but more just humanitarian," he said. "We should not be involved in the war except for helping the civilians who need food, water and medical supplies."

As the war rages on, Ukrainians will need supplies to endure what could end up being a monthslong siege. Supplies, and prayers, says Joshua Shumskiy.

"If anybody who's reading this wants to do anything, prayer, please, is one of the strongest tools that we have for this," he said.

Fresh Batch of Middle School Students Join the NJHS

By Brad Hill and Lydia Sperry

The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) welcomed new inductees in a ceremony on March 1, 2022, after a careful examination of each new member. The inductees were evaluated for a range of characteristics which make up the five pillars of the NHS: citizenship, character, leadership, scholarship and service. Students were also required to hold a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

During the ceremony, current members gave speeches on the five pillars and lit candles representing each. Students were grateful to be recognized for their high achievements and be inducted into the NJHS. "It is an honor to be inducted into NJHS because it gives me a chance to be an example to others," said eighth grader Isaac Souza. Students at PVCA displayed excellence and Christian behavior with guidance from their teachers and encouragement from their peers.

Teachers have worked hard throughout the students' middle school career to better their academic and spiritual walk. Speaking on the subject, seventh grader Nate Hill said, "My teachers have spiritually and academically prepared me for NJHS, allowing me to exercise my faith and service to others."



2022 Harold C. Duff National Junior Honor Society inductees (L-R) Gracen Baxter, Aleannys Centeno-Cruz, Charlie Funchion, Elora Gilbert, Nicholas Graziano, Nathan Hill, Nathan Rivera, Isaac Souza, and Anna Sprecher.



"A citizen's objective should be to serve his or her community. Someone who shows good citizenship does their best to serve the Lord in all they do and is kind to their peers. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, 'The time is always right to do right.' What I think Dr. King meant is there is not a specific time to do right. You should do right all the time, even when others are not looking."

~Joshua Henry, Citizenship

"God calls us to be salt and light of the world. Matthew 5:14 states, 'You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.'



We, as children of God, should be different compared to others; leading others to show the fruits of the spirit. The famous football coach, Vince Lombardi,

once said, 'Leaders aren't born, they are made.' Leaders choose to be who they are. To be a leader, you have to care for others and not be selfish. As a leader, you are called to inspire others."

~Yelias Mateo, Leadership



"Benjamin Franklin made himself look like a fool standing in the middle of a thunderstorm willing to be electrocuted, holding his kite and key. Humiliation did not stop him from achieving his goal; Franklin was a scholar. As a middle school scholar, this will not be easy. You will have to be able to take criticism, constructive or

not. You will have to accept that others may be smarter, or more successful, than you are, but you cannot let that stop you. These people can bring you closer to achieving goals of your own."