

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

September 2023



Shelly Phinney

United States Navy

Sponsored by:
Prairie Chapter, NSDAR

In 1988, Shelly Phinney lived in a small town and did not have plans for after high school. The US Navy sounded fun, so she joined “to see the world”. Her boot camp was in Orlando, Florida with additional training in San Diego, California.



Her first duty station was in Washington, DC where she had top secret clearance as a data processor for three years. She then went to San Antonio, TX to train as a security guard and was stationed in Puerto Rico Roosevelt Roads as an MP for two years. She states her experience and training to become an MP was extremely difficult, adding it was physically harder than any training she has ever done. She is very proud of her experience though—particularly as the only female in her in class and in her unit. Her work was very similar to what the Army and Marines do but the Navy typically does not.

Shelly received the Desert Storm and Desert Shield National Defense Service Medals as well as the Good Conduct Medal. She was honorably discharged after five years at the rank of E5, Petty Officer, 2nd class in 1992.

Shelly began her civilian career working in the billing department of Truman Medical Center in Kansas City, MO. She returned to school and earned her MBA in Healthcare. She is proud to be the first one in her family to earn a college degree. As a result of her education, she was selected by Truman Medical Center to train in Lean Six Sigma, a data-driven methodology using statistical analysis to identify and eliminate defects resulting in improvement in quality and cost. She earned the top-level certification--Black Belt. Utilizing this training, she helped Truman Medical Center Lakewood’s Family Medicine program receive NCQA recognition as a patient-centered medical home. All this was only possible due to the GI Bill helping her during school.

She has been active in her community through her work with Pet Project Rescue and the Boy Scouts of America. Currently she is active in her church as part of the hospitality team conducting outreach. She has one son, Brandon, who joined the Marines immediately after high school where he served for four years.

Shelly’s best piece of advice -- for any young person who doesn’t have a plan for their future, join the military! It provides extra time to grow up and teaches you structure.