

Muskegon Chronicle
981 Third Street
Muskegon, MI 49442

To the Editor:

Hello, my name is Zack Zimmer. My friends, Stefanie Ackerman and Kaily Parks, and I are involved in a special interest group. The special interest group is “Students Hollering Against Military Recruiting on Campus.” We would like to inform the community on this issue.

Our mission is to stop military recruiting in our high school’s cafeteria. Seeing military recruiters in our cafeteria week after week trying to recruit our friends aggravates us. They become friendly with the students and do anything to persuade them to look at their displays. We also believe that our students records should not be distributed without the student’s consent. We plan to inform student’s families about what is going on and tell them about their opt-out options.

It is important for us to make more people aware of this growing issue. According to the Boston Globe, dated November 29, 2004 “the Defense Department spends \$2.6 billion each year on recruiting.” \$2.6 billion each year is way too much to spend on just military recruiting on campus when billions of people don’t have healthcare. President Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act, Section 9528, requires two visits a year for every military service to all high schools. It also requires the schools to give a list with every student’s name, address, and telephone number. Two visits a year from each branch is ridiculous when most high school seniors go to college anyways. And giving out private information such as names, addresses, and telephone numbers, violates people’s right to privacy. In our opinion this is unacceptable.

The military targets students of lower class families. Discrimination in our eyes is wrong. Stated in The Los Angeles Times, April 5, 2005, “at San Marino High School, in an affluent San Gabriel Valley neighborhood, career center director Shanna Soltis said she has seen one military recruiter so far this year. They rarely stop by she said, because about 98% of San Marino graduates attend college.” The military also actively discriminates against gays, bisexuals, lesbians, and homosexuals. They encourage the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy, which violates many high school and college non-discrimination policies. If gays, bisexuals, and lesbians, or homosexuals want to openly practice their sexual beliefs, they should be able to do so freely and still be able to choose to join the military.

As students, we plan to make our city more aware of what the military is doing with our peers. We will continue to fight for this issue until we see a change at local high schools. If you or your child would like to have their name removed from the military recruiting list, then go to your high school’s counseling center and ask to fill out an opt-out form. It is your right to have your name removed from the military recruiting list.

Sincerely,

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