

Frequently Asked Questions

How are you good without god?

Compassion for others, the lessons of history, and reasoning to the best solution are the best ways to a live a just and ethical life.

Don't atheists just hate religion?

Atheists don't believe in god. That does not imply any animosity toward religious beliefs or adherents. Everyone should respect others, regardless what religious tradition they follow.

What happens when I die?

Science shows that death is an end to the brain functions that create our personalities, and we cease to exist when the functions cease. Our mortality inspires respect for the life we lead, our impacts on others, and the legacy we build during our one life.

How are humanists comforted and consoled?

Comfort arises from resolving or at least facing problems. Stress is relieved by making meaning in life, the company of friends, and the advice of mentors.

How does justice happen in the universe?

Without a supernatural definition or enforcer of justice, humanists see justice created where humans police each other, fulfill obligations toward each other, and join with others to improve the world.

Where did it all come from?

Through science we have learned about the formation of stars and planets, the evolution of life, and the functioning of our bodies. The yet-unanswered mysteries excite and inspire us to continue to explore our world.

How do humanists find purpose?

Humanists recognize that the natural world has no predetermined purpose, so we make our own meaning by applying our skills and interests in ways that help our family, friends, and the world around us.

For more information,
contact your local MAAF
affiliate or chaplain's office:

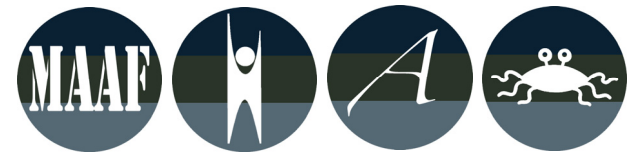
Or email community@militaryatheists.org

This brochure is produced by



The Military Association of Atheists & Freethinkers provides a supportive community of like-minded individuals for humanists, atheists, freethinkers, and other nontheists in the military. MAAF is a 501c3 non-profit community organization.

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Living Well through Humanism

Find Support for humanists,
atheists, agnostics, freethinkers,
and other nontheists.



Calling all humanists, atheists, agnostics and other freethinkers!

Find fun and support from like-minded service members.

Read more to get involved in your area and nationally.



Atheists are in foxholes ... always have been

Pat Tillman inspired a nation with his heroic rejection of NFL millions to serve the nation.

Hans Kasten led thousands of prisoners in a WWII POW camp to protect fellow soldiers from religious persecution and execution.

Ted Williams was a hall of fame baseball player who earned 3 Air Medals and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Phil Paulson, an infantry paratrooper in Vietnam, spent his life, even in war, seeking the ethical high ground, quite literally.

Ernest Hemingway was a famous author and WWI veteran.

These few examples add to the hundreds of atheists in foxholes listed at the MAAF website. Ranging far and wide in rank, specialty, and tours of duty, we can be sure that there is a long history of patriotism and service from the nontheist community.



Those hundreds on the Atheists in Foxholes list represent the tens of thousands of humanists, atheists, and other nontheists in the military now, both those willing to speak up and those still in the closet.

I hope that if you are one of those secular humanists looking for a voice and a community, you will reach out to MAAF or your local chapter or even your chaplains and leaders to find acceptance and support.



Reach out to your local on-post group or start your own

MAAF has supported atheists and humanists in forming groups from Japan to Italy, Diego Garcia to Lajes, Portugal, at each Military Academy, and across the US. You can find or start a community in your location.

The local chapters provide the opportunity to find community and family support in times of need. Military activities and chaplains are available, but support from humanist peers can be very helpful.

The local chapters also provide for character development, lectures, movie watch parties, and philosophical studies from a humanist perspective in an environment with fellow humanists.

You will find a diverse community



While ‘nontheist’ or ‘freethinker’ is often used as an umbrella term, there are many facets to our community. Atheists simply do not believe in any gods. While that is sometimes taken to be an anti-religious assertion, their personal lack of belief is all that is claimed. Those who want to focus on the uncertainty might choose the term agnostic.

The term “humanist” highlights what we do believe: Science is the best way to understand the world, human-based rational ethics is the best measure of goodness, and we must make our own meaning in life.



Other terms such as Pastafarian may be preferred by some, but the labels are less important. We associate by virtue of our shared values and beliefs.

How can chaplains support me?

Chaplains should help everyone. While some chaplains may not provide the right support, most will help, and MAAF can provide additional guidance and support if needed.