# In\_FOCUS

FOCUS Marines Foundation Fall 2017





## December 2017 marks our 25th FOCUS Class

700 and counting. That's the incredible number of veterans who have attended the life-changing FO-CUS Course. Given the nature of their injuries and individual progress toward transitioning into the civilian world, each warrior will have a unique FOCUS experience pertaining to what they carry home and apply to their everyday lives. For some, FOCUS gives them the support, courage, and determination to drive a car again or go into a crowded store. For others, they are motivated to complete a college education or find full-time employment. The pride and sense of accomplishment these warriors feel when they take steps to improve their lives is the program's definition of success. FOCUS provides graduates with continued support and encouragement as they strive to meet their full potential.

The course includes a host of motivational speakers that encourage participants to rise above challenges, reject victimization, and adopt positive habits. They realize they are not alone in their challenges while building a vast support network. Participants are encouraged to leave their comfort zone and set/ realize the goals to which they aspire. They are also coached in practical life skills such as networking, resume writing, mock interviews and other important talents. Participants find renewed hope and direction, develop positive characteristics, experience enhanced self-worth, and commit to themselves and their families.

We are making a difference!

## Here's the Latest

FOCUS Marines Foundation is expanding its outreach and further increasing the support offered to our caregivers.

Like FOCUS Participants, caregivers will receive communication before, during and after their loved one attends the FOCUS program. This will allow a shared understanding and common language to help everyone use the tools offered by the program.

Additionally, caregivers will be linked to national programs offering peer support, resources and advice to help them succeed in this unique and invaluable role.

We'd like to extend our appreciation to the FOCUS Caregivers that are helping in the development and delivery of this much needed expansion of the FOCUS Program. Your strength and perseverance is truly inspiring.

### From our Chairman, Walt Suhre

Greetings All -

Lots of changes have occurred at FOCUS Marines Foundation since our last InFOCUS newsletter in December of last year. Briefly, the most significant of those changes include:

In January, our former Director of Development, Ted Kretschmar, and his wife Mary Lou moved from St. Louis to the Dallas, Texas, area. Ted, one of the founders of FMF back in 2010, began our Development Program from scratch. His dedication and tenacity grew that program exponentially. Ted leaves to his most able successor, Norm Harriman, a solid foundation upon which to expand further. Norm is no stranger to FOCUS. He is totally dedicated to our mission and has served as a Team Leader at numerable FOCUS sessions. Norm joins the Board of Directors and the Executive Management Committee.

Other organizational changes include the election to the Board of Directors of Mr. Cottrell Fox, a highly successful St. Louis area businessman. Cot served with The Corps in Viet Nam adding yet again to the significant number of Viet Nam vets on our team (Three among them, Harry Hegger, Vice Chairman of the Board, Jack Bickerton, and Cot Fox were awarded three Purple Hearts each. WOW!!) We thank all of you for your dedication to, and generous support of, our FOCUS program.

Mr. Bob "Ferg" Ferguson has enthusiastically taken on the task of further defining and implementing our too-long-neglected Volunteer Program. His efforts will be huge for FMF as we are heavily depended on the dedicated service of many, many volunteers.

Nathan Laupp. Lecturer on Money and Spending each Thursday during FOCUS sessions has joined our Advisory Board, our future leaders of FMF.

Under the gifted leadership of our president, Dennis Simpson, we continue to tweek our FOCUS program in order to maximize the value we provide to our participants in the limited time we have with them. Hurricane Irene totally disrupted our September session, which we were forced to cancel because of her then uncertain course through Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas. Most, if not all, participants accepted for that session will attend our December course.

Denny has also provided significant leadership in improving our Graduate Mentoring Program, in revamping our internet website, in initiating a marketing program to more widely publicize our name, mission and the FOCUS program, and other initiatives too numerous to mention. We are indeed fortunate to have Denny at our helm.

So for now, never, never, ever quit! Fall down seven, get up eight. Semper Fi.





### Giving Back

FOCUS Marines continue to make a difference in their own communities.

Four FOCUS Graduates from the St. Louis area played in a Wiffle Ball Competition to Benefit a partner organization, Brace for Impact 46. A great time was had by all.

Learn more about how FOCUS Graduates continue to use Marine Corpsinspired leadership skills under the "In the News" tab on our website at focusmarines.org.

### You CAN make a difference!!!

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support FOCUS Marines Foundation every time you shop!

Visit smile.amazon.com and select FO-CUS Marines Foundation as the organization to receive donations from eligible purchases. Your selection will be remembered and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.

### SPREAD THE WORD!

Just one more way to support FOCUS and its mission!



Receive monthly "Program Briefs" Visit focusmarines.org or email stacy@focusmarines.org



### Looking to the Future

As FMF's new Vice President of Development, I want to thank everyone for their support and encouragement as I begin my new position with this amazing Foundation. I especially want to thank former Vice President, Ted Kretschmar, for his mentoring, professionalism and friendship in seeing to it that my transition was a smooth one. I realize that I have some mighty big shoes to fill and future successes we experience as an organization will be in no small part to Ted's efforts.

Recently, many of us celebrated the 242nd birthday of our beloved Marine Corps, and, coming from a family of Marines, November 10th is one of the first dates I circle on the calendar. While Marine Corps Birthday celebrations are legendary, the day that follows, Veterans Day, is an opportunity for a grateful nation to pay tribute to the men and women who served or are serving in our nation's military. On behalf of the FOCUS Marines Foundation, I would like to say Happy Birthday Marines, and to those who wore the uniform of all our nation's military, Happy Veterans Day. We honor your service and sacrifices made in ensuring our freedoms.

In future newsletters, it will be my intention to update everyone on the continued development of FMF, along with our success and vision for the future. As of now however, I want to offer our amazing volunteers, donors, and most importantly the men and women all across the United States and beyond who attended the FOCUS program, a safe and joyous holiday season and all the best for 2018.

Semper Fidelis

Norm Harriman Vice President of Development

### In their own words...

"You have given a broken man the tools to repair himself. "

"It has been transformative to be able to be with my brothers and sisters and realize they are going through a lot of the same trials and tribulations that I am. Thank you so much for this opportunity."

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart. This program will help me to become a great husband."

"I will always be so grateful. I know what I have to do. Thank you."

# Making a Difference

FOCUS Graduates are continuing to change lives. Learn more about these wonderful non-profits created by FOCUS Graduates and perhaps find inspiration to take on a similar mission.

### Heel the Heroes-

### Lyndon Villone (FOCUS Grad, 2014)

Mission: Heel the Heroes, Inc. is compelled to aid in the successful recovery, integration, and empowerment of Veterans; uniting specially trained therapy dogs and horses to improve quality of life, and reduce symptoms from the wounds and disabilities of our Heroes. Learn more at www.heeltheheroes.org.

#### Vets2Success-

### Bryan Jacobs (FOCUS Grad, 2014)

Vets2Success is a Non-profit program that creates programs for veterans to rehabilitate to their communities through food an brew programs. This organizations purpose is to inspire, mentor, educate, and change the lives of homeless and displaced veterans and impact the communities in which they live. Visit www.vets2success.org.

### Warrior Surf Foundation-

### Andrew Manzi (FOCUS Grad, 2016)

Warrior Surf Foundation provides warriors with quality surf instruction that may, as a result, give the individual another weapon to battle a new and forever enemy: life after combat. Manzi is also a finalist for CNN's Heroes. Find out more at www.warriorsurf.org.





### **Upcoming Events**

**DECEMBER 2017** 

2-9 FOCUS Course 22 Buddy Check - Online FOCUS Session

JANUARY 2018 22 Buddy Check - Online FOCUS Session

FEBRUARY 2018 1 Mess Night Fundraiser in Kansas City, Missouri 22 Buddy Check - Online FOCUS Session 24-March 3 FOCUS Course

APRIL 2018 21 Augusta Brewery Annual Chili Cook Off for FOCUS Marines Foundation 22 Buddy Check - Online FOCUS Session

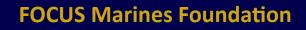
MAY 2018

5-12 FOCUS Course 22 Buddy Check - Online FOCUS Session Be on the lookout for info on Trail Smokehouse's Annual Catfish Tournament for FOCUS Marines Foundation Be on the lookout for info on AD Lift's Annual BBQ Fundraiser for FOCUS Marines Foundation

Watch your Mailbox

Information about our 2017 Annual Campaign will be arriving over the next couple of days. Take a minute, make a donation, and change a life. More details can be found at

focusmarines.org



15455 Manchester Road #476 Ballwin, MO 63022

**Scholarship Opportunity** 

FMF has been given a unique opportunity to award a scholarship in the amount of \$2,500 to a FOCUS Graduate enrolled in an accredit-

Please see our Graduate Facebook page or email sheri@focusmarines.org for an applica-

ed IT program.

tion and more information.

888.553.0078

www.focusmarines.org

