

In FOCUS

FOCUS Marines Foundation
Spring 2018



Events Bring Awareness & Support to FOCUS Marines Foundation

We'd like to extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to the organizers, supporters, and guests that attended our most recent fundraising events!

The **Gala and Golf Tournament**, held in October 2017 at the Old Hickory Golf Course, successfully doubled the funds raised the previous year. This event could not have been so successful without the support of its co-chairs Greg Wolf, Dave Guempel, and Chris Winkelmann.

SCCAD once again went "above and beyond" hosting the **8th Annual All in for Life Texas Hold 'Em Tournament**. FOCUS Marines Foundation and our friends at Brace for Impact 46 both benefitted from this much anticipated event.

The **4th Annual Mess Night** took place this past February and was another huge success! This unique dinner, sponsored by BAE Systems, proved to be a successful, fun and memorable event. In fact, the event was so well received and relevant to FOCUS with its natural military theme, that we've decided to bring it to St. Louis as our signature Fall event. Watch your email for details and ticket information!

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to all involved in this year's events!

Here's the Latest

Our new website is up and running!

A lot of blood, sweat, and tears went in to the new site. We hope you'll find it's a great resource for participants, donors, volunteers, and anyone just looking for more information about this life-changing program.

Check it out!

www.focusmarines.org

You can also find us on Facebook!

Stay up to date on what's happening within the FOCUS Family and other news in the veteran community.

"Like" us!

[Facebook.com/focusmarines](https://www.facebook.com/focusmarines)

From the Development Desk

As Vice President of Development, I have the opportunity to speak to many groups and organizations about the great work FOCUS Marines Foundation is doing on behalf of wounded Marines. At the conclusion of most presentations, there is usually time for Q and A. If there is one question I can anticipate it's, "Where, or how, do you get the people that attend your sessions?" Great question. While we are located west of Saint Louis, Missouri, our participants arrive from all across the United States. They don't read an ad in a magazine or receive a postcard and think, "sounds good to me". Quite the opposite. Many are hesitant to leave the isolated world that has become their comfort zone. So, how do we get them to get on a plane and travel to a place many have never heard of?

District Injured Support Coordinators – DISCs are mobilized Reserve Marines who are located throughout the United States. They conduct face-to-face visits and telephone outreach to Marines in recovery and work with them to secure needed resources and provide guidance.

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society – NMCRS provides numerous services to members of the United States Navy and Marine Corps. A Google search of the society will show its long and dedicated history to Navy and Marine Corps veterans and their families. In 2006, the society expanded the traditional Visiting Nurse Program to include those returning from Iraq with physical injuries and traumatic stress disorders.

Past FOCUS Graduates and Mentors – More than half of the participants attending a recent FOCUS Course were referred by members of previous classes. What better testament to the FOCUS program than to have participants return home, call a fellow Marine eager to tell them what they just experienced, and urge them to attend.

YOU – Doesn't stand for anything. It actually means you. How often have we heard about someone knowing someone who knows someone? YOU can be a resource. When you are in conversation with friends or even overhear another conversation at a party or event and you hear someone talk about a friend, or a friend's friend that's struggling due to the effects of Post-Traumatic Stress, interject and let them know about FOCUS Marines Foundation. Our website is an easy one, www.focusmarines.org. We need your help. Suggest our website, where an application to attend one of our sessions can be completed. We will take it from there and it's a pretty good feeling to realize you may have saved a life. It happens. It happens a lot.

Semper Fi,
Norm Harriman



Hearts are heavy with the passing of one of our most dedicated volunteers. Frank Reis made a connection with each and every FOCUS Marine. He never ran out of stories about "the way things used to be."

Semper Fi, Frank. You will always be a Marine's Marine.



amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

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

Visit smile.amazon.com and select FOCUS 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.

Just one more way to support FOCUS and its mission!

SPREAD THE WORD!

Receive monthly "Program Briefs"

Visit focusmarines.org or email
stacy@focusmarines.org



FOCUS Courses are held quarterly and serve veterans from all across the country at absolutely no cost to those veterans. Our participants suffer visible and invisible injuries and, now faced with these challenges, are working to find a new reality. The 7-day FOCUS Course works to reverse the downward spiral in which they are trapped. Instruction begins by addressing the core issues of combat stress, survivor's guilt, victim mentalities, and interpersonal relationships. A new-found self-awareness allows them visualize their personal goals/objectives, obtain tools to achieve their dreams, and regain confidence in themselves and a new, positive outlook.

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. The Graduate Program provides continued support in confronting any and all challenges. Some graduates find the determination to drive a car again or go into a crowded store. Others are motivated to complete a college education, find full-time employment, or even start their own business. Marines know what goals they need to set for themselves. FOCUS gives them a jumping off point. The sense of pride and accomplishment these warriors feel when they take steps to improve their lives is FOCUS Marine Foundation's definition of success.

Since its inception, more than 700 of our nation's heroes have attended FOCUS. As proof of the expanding reach and success of the program, veterans from all branches of the military have benefited. While our primary mission remains Marines and FMF Navy Corpsmen, we welcome other branches of service on a space available basis. Applicants are increasingly referred by graduates of our program. This is further evidence our participants see the benefits of the curriculum and support offered and want their fellow warriors to gain from their own experience at FOCUS.

A graduate made the following statement three years AFTER completing the FOCUS program:

"When you guys go home at night, rest assured, you have saved countless lives every day, including this one."

WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

In their own words...

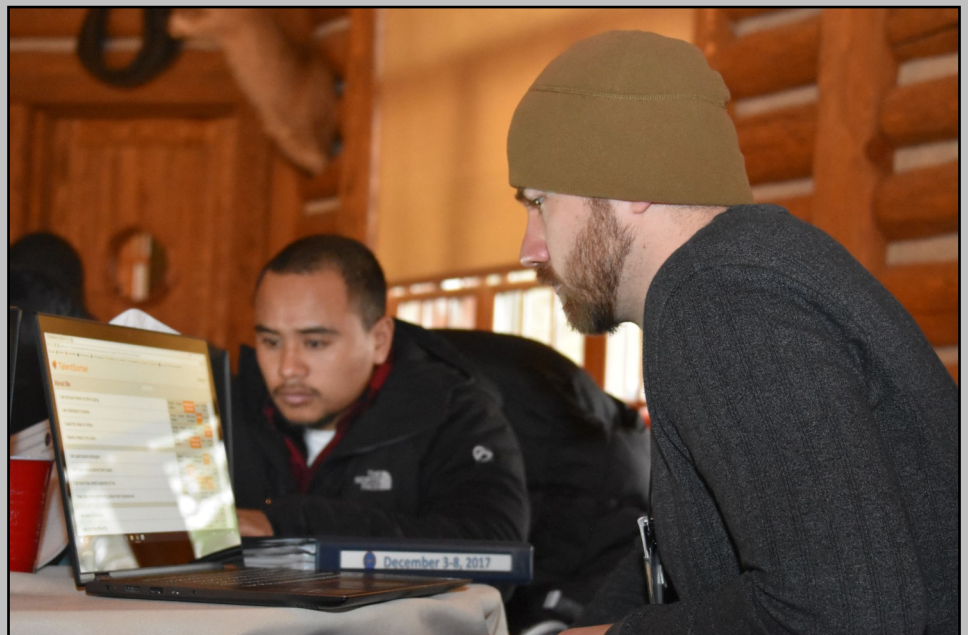
"This place is unbelievable. Truly the perfect setting for veterans to come and focus on their issues. "

"I came to get back on track. My Marine brothers were right there to pick me up and show me how to get back into the fight."

"I wish every veteran could go through a program like this."

"FOCUS changed my life."

"I found peace with my past...I look forward to my life with my wife and kids."



Sidebar Conversations

"Man's best friend." These words ring truer than ever when describing the relationship between a veteran and their service dog. The right service dog, one custom-selected and trained for each individual's needs, can give our veterans, specifically those living with Post-Traumatic Stress, a chance to truly come home. Everyday things most people take for granted, such as going shopping, to a ballgame, to class, to dinner with family, or getting on a plane, are things they often cannot do. Just the simple act of driving can trigger flashbacks. Fortunately, this can be changed.

Researchers are finding that the animals draw out even the most isolated personality and, having to praise the animals, helps traumatized veterans overcome emotional numbness. Teaching the dogs service commands develops a patient's ability to communicate, to be assertive but not aggressive, a distinction some struggle with. The dogs can also calm the hyper vigilance common in vets with PTSD. Some participants report they finally get some sleep knowing that a naturally alert soul is standing watch.

Trained service dogs attend every FOCUS course. These canines support their humans by providing emotional support, protection, and even physical assistance. The consensus from the humans is that these dogs have changed, and in some cases, saved their lives.

Man's best friend, indeed.

We've partnered with PsychArmor Institute!

In addition to receiving our "Veteran Ready Organization" certification, we are building a library of resources for those supporting our FOCUS Graduates back at home.

Families can find their own support system through the Elizabeth Dole Foundation's Hidden Heroes Program.

This first-of-its-kind website makes it easy for military caregivers to self-identify and engage in a compassionate community of their peers, where they can ask questions and support one another. Find valuable resources and helpful support.

Military Caregiver Recognition Award Program



Join the Hidden Heroes
National Registry



Complete five PsychArmor
training courses



Receive a military
caregiver certificate



Made possible through
the support of USAA



Upcoming Events

May 2018

5-12 FOCUS Course
22 Buddy Check – Online FOCUS Session

June 2018

15 A.D. Lift BBQ Fundraiser
17 Wine Country Fest Father's Day Car Show
18 John R. Ferguson, Jr. Memorial Golf Classic
22 McGraw 2nd Annual Open Golf Tournament
22 Buddy Check – Online FOCUS Session

July 2018

15 Wildwood Historical Society Car Show
22 Buddy Check – Online FOCUS Session

August 2018

22 Buddy Check – Online FOCUS Session

September 2018

15-22 FOCUS Course
22 Buddy Check – Online FOCUS Session

October 2018

22 Buddy Check – Online FOCUS Session
27 Mess Night St. Louis

November 2018

22 Buddy Check – Online FOCUS Session

December 2018

1-8 FOCUS Course
22 Buddy Check – Online FOCUS Session

Find more information at www.focusmarines.org/calendar



FOCUS Marines Foundation

15455 Manchester Road #476
Ballwin, MO 63022

www.focusmarines.org

314-243-4140

@focusmarines