



The Road to Recovery Report

An Update for Supporters of the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes

Volume 69 ★ Christmas 2018

Providing Emergency Aid to Severely Disabled War on Terror Veterans and their Families



Please Give Again to Make the Holidays Bright for Our Heroes

“Your organization gives me hope for the future and reaffirms that we do in fact have angels that walk among us. Thank you for your generosity and for your service.”

— Disabled veteran
Matthew I.

Too often the holidays are anything but joyful for America's wounded servicemen and women. Instead of decking the halls and trimming the trees, many of our War on Terror veterans are worrying about keeping a roof over their family's head.

It's difficult to think about putting a present or two under the tree for your children when you're worried you may not be able to pay the electric bill and keep the heat turned on during the cold winter months.

Which is why, at “the most wonderful time of the year,” your generosity

is needed now more than ever. Because no veteran who put his life and his future on the line defending America from Islamic extremists should face homelessness and hunger at Christmastime.

Your giving helps turn fear, despair, and hopelessness into JOY through holiday gift checks – and helps avert the foreclosures, evictions, and utility disconnections that might otherwise leave American veterans homeless or without heat in the dead of winter.

So thank you – and Merry Christmas!

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Letter from President David Walker

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Dear Friend of Our Wounded Heroes,

Many years ago now, President George H.W. Bush spoke glowingly of “a thousand points of light,” referring to a vision of lighting up our country by serving others. His words still ring clear and strong across the years – and their imagery brings a special meaning at this festive time of year, when candles and twinkling lights remind us of the joy of Christmas.

The citizens like you who reach out to others, who give of themselves and their time, are truly “points of light” – and patriots in the finest sense of the term. You are serving humanity, and you are serving our country as well. The government on its best day cannot remedy all our social ills. It cannot recognize everyone who falls through its net nor respond immediately to people in crisis. But among our many blessings in this country – and we are blessed beyond measure – is a widespread sense of caring and willingness to take the initiative in reaching out to those in need.

During an election year, it is always a challenge to raise money for charitable causes, as donors turn their attention to candidates and their political issues. And many veterans’ organizations, ours included, are already struggling to raise money to help our disabled War on Terror veterans as the war – and these heroes’ stories – fade from the headlines.

The holiday season offers an excellent opportunity for the rest of us to stand up and express our appreciation for the sacrifices these heroes have made, by listening to their stories, praying for their healing, thanking them for their service, and giving generously to support their needs.

So my plea to you today is to seek to be your own “point of light” this Christmas, by refusing to forget our War on Terror veterans – and their struggles – as you celebrate the holidays with your friends and family.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from your friends at the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes ... and from the wounded veterans you’ve done so much to help this year.

With gratitude,

David W. Walker
President & CEO

P.S. A true “point of light” for our wounded warriors was my good friend, Lt. Colonel Tom Orłowski, who passed away recently. As you may recall, Tom was the Chairman Emeritus on our Board of Directors at the Coalition. He was a loyal supporter of the Coalition and the veterans we serve, and a long time dear friend of mine. He will sorely be missed. Please read more about Tom on the top of page 3.





Coalition Mourns Board Chairman Tom Orlowski

We are saddened to share the recent passing of our Chairman Emeritus Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. Orlowski (U.S. Army, Ret.), a stalwart champion of the Coalition for many years. Tom was a Vietnam veteran who earned a Purple Heart, and a man who felt great empathy for the veterans we serve. On the Board,

he was known for asking the tough questions and providing sound advice. The prophet Isaiah said, “Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death.” Tom walked uprightly and brought integrity of purpose to everything he did. He was a good man and a good friend, and will be sorely missed.



Lieutenant Colonel Tom Orlowski

Coalition Awards \$25,000 Grant to Madison House Autism Foundation

In late September, the Coalition awarded a grant in support of the Madison Fields Commercial Greenhouse Project. Madison Fields is a 400-acre farm in Maryland used

to help veterans gain employment skills, while also supporting adults with autism. The donation will provide therapeutic support for combat-wounded veterans with

post-traumatic stress (PTS) and other intellectual and developmental disabilities. Please read more about this exciting program on our website (www.saluteheroes.org).

Coalition Bestows \$7,500 Grant to Wounded Warrior Homes

Coalition President & CEO David Walker recently presented Wounded Warrior Homes (WWH) with a \$7,500 grant. The grant will be used primarily to help house and feed combat-wounded service members in the WWH program. “Homelessness in the veteran population is a national

disgrace,” says Coalition President David Walker. The Coalition has been extremely active in supporting transitional housing programs which are important in keeping our wounded and disabled veterans from being homeless. We believe in the mission of Wounded Warrior Homes and are happy to support such a worthy cause.



Shop at smile.amazon.com
amazon.com
 Smile
 and Amazon will donate to:
 Coalition to Salute America's Heroes

Quite Possibly the Easiest Way to Support Our Veterans this Holiday Season ...

As you do your last-minute holiday shopping, consider this easy way to give a little back to America’s disabled War on Terror veterans by supporting the Coalition. Please consider shopping on AmazonSmile. When you use AmazonSmile, you get the

same great products, prices and service – and Amazon donates 0.5% of your purchase price to the Coalition. It’s so easy. All you need to do is visit smile.amazon.com and select the Coalition as your charity of choice. Then shop as you normally would!



Heroes Thanking Heroes representative Joy Marshall is pictured with her husband, Trey, a disabled Army veteran, and her youngest son who also served in the military.

The Heroes Thanking Heroes (HTH) program provides transitional part-time, flexible employment to wounded veterans or their primary caregivers. This flexibility accommodates disabilities and allows caregivers to continue caring for their disabled veteran partners, while providing employment experience and income for their struggling families.

HTH representatives make phone calls from their homes, most often to personally thank donors for their contributions to the Coalition. The program also offers qualified participants some basic training and experience working in a “virtual call center,” thereby preparing them for other potential jobs requiring similar skills.

Salute to Special Heroes: The Marshall Family

I am Joy Marshall, a military wife and mother. I work for the Heroes Thanking Heroes (HTH) program while I provide care for my wounded veteran husband, Trey, and my veteran son with post-traumatic stress (PTS). We live in Fort Hood, Texas, an active duty town, as we continue to rebuild our lives after the military following Trey’s being severely injured overseas.

Trey enlisted with the United States Army in September 2007 at the age of 28, and deployed to Iraq the following June. His deployment was a high point in his life, and today he misses the comradery with his unit and being able to serve alongside them.

“I’d do it again in a heartbeat,” Trey tells me -- but I’m not as sure, as our lives were completely changed when he was wounded by a mortar that hit 35-40 yards away from his Humvee in March 2009. The blast threw him from his gunner’s seat and onto the ground at a weird angle. With the heavy gear he was wearing, it was a massive fall, twisting his neck while his body went the other direction. Trey ruptured several discs in his spine and was knocked unconscious for almost 10 minutes. He doesn’t remember being injured, only waking up.

Trey was able to complete his year-long deployment,

not realizing the extent of his injuries until he was back home. Some of the challenges he has faced are short-term memory loss, chronic pain, dependency to pain pills, PTS, isolation, and depression.

We’ve also learned he has severe nerve damage in his body from the blast, and it has been a long process of fighting the VA for the correct treatment. It’s been a learning process and a difficult journey at times but after recently seeking care from a clinic we were more comfortable with and him making the decision to come off the opioids, Trey feels healthier than he has in a long time, and is learning what it’s like to not be on so much medicine.

On top of Trey’s road to recovery, our family also lives daily with the effects of my youngest son returning from Iraq with severe PTS. It’s a struggle but having the opportunity to connect with other veteran families has helped. VA appointments are a big part of our lives now so the flexibility of my HTH job and being involved with the Coalition have been huge blessings for me and my family. We’ve met many wonderful people and gotten to participate in some really cool activities and programs that have helped restore hope for our family.

Veteran Circle: Coalition's Membership Program for America's Disabled Heroes!

The Veteran Circle membership program is an innovative way for the Coalition to connect with our disabled veterans to help them more effectively. Veteran Circle (VC) offers a wide range of benefits to support our nation's War on Terror combat-wounded veterans, including eligibility for holiday meals checks, scholarship opportunities, participation in Skillssoft online education, and updates about local events.

To be eligible for VC membership, a veteran must have sustained an injury during combat in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), or Operation New Dawn, or in support of those operations in a hostile environment, and have a disability rating assigned by the Department of Defense or the Department of Veterans Affairs of 30% or greater from a single, sustained injury.

If you or someone you know is an OIF/OEF combat-wounded veteran, you can apply for Veteran Circle membership at www.saluteheroes-vetcircle.org.

If you meet the requirements above you are eligible for free membership to the Veterans Circle. Pricing may change in the future but once you join you will not be charged for membership. Cancel your membership at any time by contacting us at 888-447-2588. Becoming a member of VC does not guarantee you will be selected to receive holiday meal checks or scholarships, but it does make you eligible. All members will be screened for approval through our criteria listed above.

Just another reason for veteran families to be a part of our FREE Veteran Circle Membership: our awesome scholarship program! Throughout the year, we award college scholarships to the children of the severely wounded veterans registered to the Veteran Circle program.

During the summer, we change it up and help our families get their little ones into summer camp! These smiling faces are Levi (11) and Lilee (9), the children of John and Jessica from Bowling Green, Kentucky. John is a U.S. Army veteran and Jessica works in our Heroes Thanking Heroes program. Levi and Lilee couldn't have been more excited to attend camp this past summer!

“Thank you for allowing me to go to camp. I got to make all kinds of new friends and hang out with old friends. My favorite part at camp was ... [getting] sprayed with shaving cream and silly string. Thank you for sending me to camp.”

— Levi

“Thank you for sending me to camp ... This week was a great break. It was one of the best weeks of my life. Thank you so much for making this possible.”

— Lilee



Reminder: Coalition is a CFC Charity!

If you're a federal employee, we'd like to remind you that the Coalition is on the National/International Combined Federal Campaign Charity List. Selecting the Coalition as your CFC charity is an easy and exciting way to support our disabled heroes!



#12523



Combat-Wounded Veterans Gather for Heroes Freedom Weekend

Coalition to Salute America's Heroes hosts 28 married couples at extraordinary event

This fall, the Coalition hosted over two dozen combat-wounded veterans and their spouses from across the nation in New York City for the 2nd annual Heroes Freedom Weekend, a four-day event.

The all-expenses-paid retreat was an extraordinary opportunity for veterans to develop stronger bonds with their spouse, build camaraderie and tour some of America's most sacred and historic landmarks. Among other once-in-a-lifetime highlights, participants were led on a tour of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum by retired FDNY Lieutenant Joe Torillo, who was buried twice when the World Trade Center towers fell. Following the tour, the group had a tour with members of FDNY Company 10 in the famed

firehouse at Ground Zero.

"Thousands of patriotic men and women joined the U.S. Armed Forces as a result of the 9/11 terror attacks, and too many of them, like me, returned from the battlefields with life-altering physical and/or mental wounds," said Donny Daughenbaugh, vice president of field operations for the Coalition. "This event was a life-affirming getaway for these couples and was cathartic for all of us."

Last year's inaugural event drew 14 veteran couples and, due to its success, the Coalition doubled this year's participation. With the support of our generous donors, we hope to be able to increase the number of participants in 2019.



How Will YOU Be Remembered? Leave a Legacy to Secure the Future of Heroes Who Went to War to Defend Yours

“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction.”

— President Ronald Reagan

During your lifetime you've dedicated your voice, time, and money to defending America's veterans. And your past generosity has proven your commitment to helping America's disabled War on Terror veterans. Don't you want to continue that legacy of patriotism and support long after you're gone?

Take your giving to the next level by supporting our heroes for years to come. It's simple and effective to do so by making a bequest to the Coalition in your will, insurance policy, or other planned giving option! Meaningful and generous options include donating stocks and bonds, transferring a life insurance policy, donating your home or other property, purchasing a gift annuity, or contributing part of your retirement plan.

Your legacy, in any amount, is a testament to your enduring commitment to America's disabled War on Terror veterans. Now is the time to call – don't wait! For a private and confidential discussion of how to leave the Coalition a charitable bequest, contact:

Zondria Seeley, Donor Relations Manager • Coalition to Salute America's Heroes • Toll Free: (888) 447-2588, Ext. 103

The Coalition to Salute America's Heroes does not provide legal or financial advice to prospective or current donors. Always consult with your attorney and financial advisor before making any important decisions regarding your estate.



Your Generosity at Work

Our emergency financial aid program is at the heart of our mission to serve veterans who were severely disabled in the War on Terror – and are now struggling to make ends meet. And your giving allows us to respond quickly and generously to help our heroes in need.

Your gift to the Coalition goes to work right away to help a severely disabled veteran facing financial disaster – and is especially needed during the holidays and cold winter months. The list below highlights a handful of heroes who recently asked us for help – and whose lives we were able to change for the better together.



Army veteran Sgt. Ralph K. from Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania, suffers from PTS after serving in Iraq. He desperately needed \$500.00 to buy food for his family.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$500.00

Retired Army Sgt. Justin W. from Pekin, Illinois, suffers from PTS after serving in Afghanistan. He asked for \$500.00 to purchase necessary school supplies.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$500.00

Emily I., a retired Army veteran from Las Vegas, Nevada, suffers from PTS after serving in Iraq. She desperately needed \$790.98 to keep her electricity from being disconnected.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$790.98

Air Force Senior Airman Daniel A. from Joliet, Illinois, served our country in Iraq. He asked us for \$2,238.80 for emergency auto expenses.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$2,238.80

Navy Petty Officer Third Class Nikolaus O. from Garibaldi, Oregon, suffers from post-traumatic stress after serving in Iraq. He needed \$2,250.00 to pay his rent and keep a roof over his family's head.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$2,250.00

Veteran Marine Sergeant Allen M. from Waterville, Maine, suffered a traumatic brain injury (TBI) while serving in Iraq. He called asking for \$2,398.70 to pay his mortgage.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$2,398.70

Important Update on a Letter General Singlaub Sent You ...

This summer you may have received a letter from us about an exciting matching grant opportunity that would double the impact of your gift.

Some extremely generous Coalition friends (who asked to remain anonymous) offered \$210,000 to match the gifts of other supporters to help military families facing hunger, homelessness, and other financial disasters.

The Coalition relies solely on voluntary donations to fund our efforts to help America's wounded sons and daughters. And this generous matching grant came just in time to provide a boost during the summer – our critical slow season for donations when many of our good friends are away on vacation or spending time with

family, not reading their mail from us.

Faithful Coalition friends like you responded generously, to the tune of over \$143,000 (with donations still trickling in).

We are so grateful for the continued support of friends like you who don't hesitate to give generously to rescue a hero in need. They protected us against the threat of Islamic extremists in the global War on Terror and you and our other generous supporters continue to show your appreciation ... even as their struggles fade from the headlines and many others forget their sacrifice. Thank you for not ignoring them -- and thank you for your generosity!



Thank Yous from Veterans Who Were Desperate at the Holidays ... Until Generous Friends Like YOU Stepped in to Make a Difference!

It's difficult to enjoy the holidays when you're worried about losing your home or watching your children go hungry. But that's exactly what the disabled War on Terror veterans whose names are below were experiencing last Christmas ... before the Coalition and generous friends like you stepped in to help. I hope these heartfelt words of thanks inspire you to give again and help more struggling heroes this holiday season!

"It was a much needed and unexpected gift to my two kids and I. We don't ask for much and at a time when we needed support you were there for us. I was short on my lease payment and groceries and that surprise letter came through at the right time. We didn't celebrate Christmas with lots of gifts or entertainment but to know we were able to have bills paid was the best gift of all."

— Disabled veteran William T.

"Thank you ... for the generous donation receive during the holidays. Your donation came at the perfect time ... I have been trying to catch up with home and vehicle payments. I was diagnosed with numerous medical conditions following a lung biopsy due to burn pit exposure which forced me to medically retire from state and federal service."

— Captain Le Roy T. (U.S. Army, Ret.)

"I am writing this letter with my eyes filled with tears and heart warmed. I received the donation in the mail last night, I still can't believe it. I just want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your amazing heart-warming gift. This gift has truly brightened my holidays, I am a wounded warrior that is suffering from severe PTSD and TBI. I have had eleven jaw surgeries since February ... I recently lost my vehicle and will be evicted out of my home in three days and I had no idea how I was going to live and where I was going to go. I gave up all hope and was not in a holiday mood. Then I received your letter ... not only did it give me holiday cheer, but it gave me shelter for a couple days during Christmas. It is a good feeling to know that there are people that still care about us even after we have been wounded and can no longer serve. I just want to thank you for this wonderful surprise."

— Disabled veteran Donnis G.

THANK YOU ... for helping complete strangers [with \$2,200 in emergency financial aid for rent and car payments]! Just when I had given up hope, you called. November was a rough month for my wife and I, a lot of stress, fear and a lot of crying. Last month when all these issues came up I contemplated suicide. I just couldn't see the point of trying so hard anymore when all this bad stuff keeps happening to us. Towards the end of November with the help of my amazing wife and therapist, my thought process got a little better. But those thoughts and ideas of suicide were still there ... I felt lost and I was ready to give up our car and home ... when I said you are my 'guardian angel' I truly believe it."

— Disabled veteran Steven M.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Coalition to Salute America's Heroes Foundation Achieves Accreditation from BBB Wise Giving Alliance Highlighting Excellence in Leadership, Finances and Mission-Driven Work



give.org

Meets all 20 BBB Charity Standards

By meeting key standards of board oversight, finances, results reporting and fundraising appeals, the Coalition achieved accreditation by the BBB Wise Giving Alliance. This signifies that the Coalition is deserving of donor trust as they are a well-run nonprofit organization.