

The Road to Recovery Report

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

Volume 79 ★ March 2022

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



Help the Coalition Feed Struggling Disabled Veterans This Easter!

“I cannot thank you enough . . . Through my darkest moments, [the Coalition] has been there for me and my family.”

— Marine Corps Veteran
Fernando C.

”

With spring right around the corner, we are hard at work on our **Easter “Thank You” Meals Project**, sending \$60 checks for a special hot meal to disabled War on Terror veterans across the country.

Surprise Holiday meal checks are one of the many ways we help our heroes – but their impact goes beyond “just” food on the table for our combat-wounded veterans. The gift of a special hot meal brightens the day for military families struggling to pay their bills and feed their families after a long dark winter . . . and reminds our heroes that grateful Americans around the country haven’t forgotten their sacrifices,

20 years after the War on Terror began. (Turn to page 8 to read heartfelt thank you messages from a handful of the 1,000 veterans we sent a holiday meal check to this past Thanksgiving!)

This Easter, we’re asking you to help feed our heroes again. And your Easter gift today is more important than ever as the ongoing Coronavirus and economic uncertainty force an unprecedented number of our heroes to face financial insecurity, including affording the skyrocketing cost of food. So, thank you for your generosity to America’s disabled veterans and their families, who have sacrificed so much – and who desperately need our help this spring!

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Letter from President David Walker

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Dear Friend of Our Wounded Heroes,

I write to you with a heavy heart. Major General John K. Singlaub, U.S. Army (Ret.), a tireless warrior for freedom, America's troops, and our disabled veterans and their families, passed away on January 29, 2022.

Jack was a dear friend to me personally, and I am so very blessed to have known him. But bigger than that, Jack was a great American hero! He never met a challenge he didn't embrace, and selflessly committed himself until the day of his death to help disabled veterans and their families.

Our nation has lost a true patriot, I have lost a dear friend, and the Coalition has lost a wonderful ambassador. But with this loss, we must continue to march forward.

As you know, the War on Terrorism launched on September 11, 2001, has gone on for 20 years and counting. Today our forces are called upon to battle the forces of darkness all over the world. Our troops still need and deserve our support. We hope and pray that the casualty lists will disappear, but there is faint hope of that.

The wounded may not command as much media exposure today, but they are still coming home with missing limbs and broken spirits. They often must wait weeks or months for the benefits they have earned and depend upon. We remain one of the few organizations available to fill that void, in addition to helping wounded veterans cope with post-traumatic stress and acquire useful employment in the private sector.

Our work, like the war on terrorism, is far from finished. Recently we launched something new – the Veterans Caregivers Alliance – to support the legions of caregivers who dedicate their lives to our wounded warriors. Most are spouses of wounded warriors who bear extraordinary burdens caring for husbands unable to work due to their injuries. They take care of the kids, pay the bills and otherwise keep the home fires burning.

These quiet heroes need and deserve all the support we can give them. We are devoted to serving those who bear the burden of our freedom and will continue to do so for as long as we have your support – without which we would have to close our doors.

Today, as always, we – and the veterans we serve – depend on your support. So, I hope you'll consider giving again to help a hero's family this Easter. And I hope you know just how grateful I am to have the support of patriotic Americans like you as we do everything in our power to help those who gave so much to defend our freedom, especially when they need our help the most. It only takes ONE person – YOU – to make one veteran's day easier and life more hopeful!

In this time of ongoing war, pandemic, and economic disruption, our work is needed more than ever. Thank you for standing with the Coalition and America's veterans, in good times and bad – as together we look forward with hope to better times ahead!

Gratefully yours,

David W. Walker
President & CEO



Remembering An American Hero

Major General John K. “Jack” Singlaub, U.S. Army (Ret.), 1921 - 2022

Our hearts are heavy as we share with you the passing of an extraordinary Coalition ambassador – and even more exceptional American. On January 29, 2022, the world lost a military hero and heaven gained an incredible protector when Major General Jack Singlaub passed away at the age of 100 years old, surrounded by his wife Joan and other family members.

For the past 11 years, General Singlaub has worked with the Coalition in a variety of roles, including Chairman, fighting every day for the care and safety of servicemen and women and their families. We are truly grateful for the wisdom and direction he provided as he helped introduce millions of Americans to the Coalition’s mission to serve disabled War on Terror veterans and their families.

General Singlaub enjoyed a long and distinguished military career, beginning when he was commissioned as a second lieutenant on January 14, 1943, during World War II. After being recruited by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), he parachuted into Nazi-occupied France as a covert operative to prepare the French Resistance fighters for the D-Day invasion. After WWII, General Singlaub headed CIA operations in Manchuria during the Chinese Communist revolution, served as supreme commander of all U.S. troops in South Korea, and performed intelligence missions in Vietnam.

For his dedication and bravery, General Singlaub

was awarded many military honors, including the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Air Medal, the Bronze Star and the Silver Star. In 1991, he published his autobiography,

Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century, which recounts his exploits during more than four decades of unconventional warfare, espionage, covert missions, and front-line action.

One of the many amazing things General Singlaub accomplished during his distinguished career was saving hundreds of Allied prisoners of war on Hainan Island following Japan’s surrender, rescuing them from certain death and years of torture. General Singlaub never left a man behind – and up until his death at age 100, General Singlaub’s care for the men and women of our Armed Forces never changed. He continued to fight for them and their families to the very end of his life.

General Singlaub’s wisdom, support, and friendship meant the world to us at the Coalition – and was instrumental in helping thousands of War on Terror veterans and their families. We were blessed to know him and call him a friend, and our prayers are with Joan and the rest of the Singlaub family during their time of mourning.



The Coalition Welcomes New Ambassador Lieutenant General Ronald R. Blanck, D.O. U.S. Army (Ret.)

The Coalition is pleased to introduce you to our new military ambassador **Lieutenant General Ronald R. Blanck, D.O. U.S. Army (Ret.)**.

Dr. Blanck’s distinguished military career began in 1968 as a medical officer and battalion surgeon in Vietnam. He retired 32 years later as a Lieutenant General, **Surgeon General of the U.S. Army**, and commander of the U.S. Army Medical Command – commanding over 46,000 military personnel and 26,000 civilian employees around the world.

Dr. Blanck also served as commander of Walter Reed Medical Center North Atlantic Region Medical Command and director of professional services and chief of Medical Corps Affairs for the U.S. Army Surgeon General, among other assignments. He also holds many

academic credentials, including a teaching position at Georgetown University and other notable colleges.

Dr. Blanck’s military honors include Distinguished Service Medals, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star and Meritorious Service and Army Commendation Medals. Dr. Blanck continues to be consulted as an advisor on bioterrorism issues and an expert in preparing the medical community to respond to mass casualty incidents or those involving weapons of mass destruction.

It is an honor to have Dr. Blanck represent the Coalition, and his partnership will truly be an asset to the disabled War on Terror veterans we serve together!





Salute to a Special Hero Marine Veteran James King

My name is Beth King and I met my husband Jimmy, a proud USMC veteran, at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 2004. Jimmy was an injured Marine, and I was volunteering at the hospital.

In February 2004 Jimmy's company shipped out to Iraq as part of OIF 2, to continue efforts to secure and rebuild Iraq. While in country his company sustained the highest amount of casualties for a company-size unit since the Vietnam War.

On May 29th, 2004, Jimmy was leading one of his squads on a foot patrol in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, as part of their daily mission to search out insurgents. On the ride back, as Jimmy's vehicle rounded the final corner to head back to his base, **a parked station wagon packed with C-4 blew up next to them.**

Jimmy sustained heavy injuries to his left leg when blown from the vehicle, along with a head injury. He also lost four of his Marines that day to the blast. To this day, it brings tears to my eyes, listening to his mom tell the story of receiving that phone call in the middle of the night, telling her that her only son was severely injured, and that they had no other information to give at that time.

Jimmy was stabilized at his base, medevaced to Baghdad, drug-induced into a coma before being medevaced to Germany for a week, then finally transported to the National Naval Medical Center in Maryland, where he remained in a coma for another two weeks. **Just before he was brought out of the coma, the decision was made to amputate his left leg above the knee.** The infection that had set in was so

severe it had become a situation of "lose his leg or lose his life."

Jimmy retired in November 2006, but continued to be seen for surgeries and prosthetic work up through 2010. **Through it all, Jimmy never showed any anger or depression at the loss of his leg,** at being almost deaf in his left ear due to nerve

damage, or at the loss of vision sustained from the injury to the back of his head. He always says that there was no point in being mad – it would not grow his leg back!

To this day, Jimmy will tell everyone that getting blown up was the worst physical thing that ever happened to him, but also the best thing that ever happened. If he had not been blown up, he wouldn't have been at Walter Reed, and if he hadn't been at Walter Reed, he wouldn't have met me, and we wouldn't have had our three beautiful children, who he loves and adores.

My husband's positive outlook on what happened is what drew me to him. **Since the day we met, being with him has made me want to strive to be a better person.** Still, our road has been far from easy. Jimmy has had several revisions, each causing him to lose more and more of his residual limb, and ultimately making him a hip amputee and unable to wear a prosthetic.

Despite all this, Jimmy never gave up. For seven years Jimmy participated in the Marine Corps Marathon and the New York Marathon back-to-back (the races are just seven days apart) on his handcycle. He felt he needed to show our kids that no matter what life throws at you, you can do whatever you want if you put your mind to it. **He truly is our kids' and my Hero.**

Our family has been blessed to know the Coalition for a number of years now. In the past, the Coalition provided us with emergency financial aid when we fell on hard times. **The assistance they provided paid for a few bills, allowing us to utilize what money we had for groceries without worrying about losing power or our vehicle.**

I also work for the Heroes Thanking Heroes Program, and **the income has helped support and sustain our family during these rough times with the pandemic.** The feeling of joy I get when seeing the pride in my children's eyes when I tell them mommy is working for such a great organization can never be replaced. We cannot express how much these things mean to us, and are immensely proud to support and have the support of the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes and its generous donors.



Coalition Celebrity Friends Help Raise Awareness for America's Disabled Heroes

The Coalition is proud to have the support of these patriotic men and women who use their position as household names to raise awareness on the issues facing America's severely disabled War on Terror veterans. From musicians to athletes to actors, our celebrity friends are partners with you as together we serve our heroes in need!



The Many Ways the Coalition Supports Our Heroes (With Your Help!)

Our **Emergency Financial Aid program** is at the heart of our mission to serve America's severely disabled War on Terror veterans. And our Easter and Thanksgiving "Thank You" Meals and Christmas Secret Santa programs always provide such joy and relief to our wounded warriors. But did you know the Coalition has a number of other programs designed to provide practical and emotional assistance and healing to support our heroes and their families on their long road to recovery.

- ★ **AMERICA'S LITTLE HELPERS** – America's Little Helpers launched in 2021 to provide the children of disabled veterans with resources, support, and outlets to help them cope and thrive while living with the effects of their parent's mental and physical war wounds. We use in-person and online educational support, virtual and in-person art therapy, day camps and multi-day retreats, and equine, music, and recreation therapy.
- ★ **VETERAN'S CAREGIVER ALLIANCE** – Through VCA we work to improve the quality of life for the caregivers of our nation's combat-wounded veterans by guiding them through all services available while identifying and filling gaps in those services. We work with like-minded veterans service organizations, government agencies, and community initiatives to ensure caregivers' needs are being met.
- ★ **NATIONAL FOOD TRUCK PROGRAM** – We are proudly partnered with national non-profits *Feed the Children* and *Blue Star Families* to host food truck events across the country for military families in need. Together we have fed over 9,200 veterans and active-duty military families in the past few years. This program has become even more urgently needed due to the long-term financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the skyrocketing cost of food and other everyday essentials.
- ★ **HEROES FREEDOM WEEKEND** – Heroes Freedom Weekend is an all-expenses-paid retreat that presents 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. A core part of our mission is to encourage hope, healing, and re-connecting. Through HFW we strive to create life-changing experiences for our severely wounded veterans and their families from all across the U.S. as they continue on their road to recovery.
- ★ **HEROES THANKING HEROES** – Our internal employment program provides a six-month transitional, flexible, part-time employment to wounded veterans or their primary caregivers. This unique job enables them to make phone calls from their homes, most often to personally thank donors for their contributions to the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes. The program also offers qualified participants basic training and experience working in a "virtual call center," thereby preparing them for other potential jobs requiring similar skills. Since the program's inception in 2006, more than 332 wounded veterans or their primary caregivers have participated, helping heroes and caregivers find increased self-worth and continued healing, especially those who otherwise could not work due to ongoing medical appointments and treatments or caregiving responsibilities.



Make 2022 the Year You Leave Your Legacy As A Veteran Supporter

“To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan.”
— President Abraham Lincoln

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?

By leaving a charitable bequest to the Coalition, *you* are helping care for those who bore the battle to defend our country, our freedom, and our families. Your legacy gift to the Coalition in any amount is more than a donation; it’s an investment in your ongoing commitment to our heroes.

To talk about how to make a gift annuity, or to donate stocks, bonds, property, or insurance, email us at info@saluteheroes.org or call (703) 348-9914. Now is the time to call – don’t wait!

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.



Jack Zimmerman and his beautiful family. Jack lost both of his legs to an IED.

Become a Partner for Heroes and Make Your Gift Do MORE in 2022

Partners for Heroes is a simple and secure way you can make an even bigger difference for struggling disabled War on Terror veterans during these challenging times. So join **Partners for Heroes**, the Coalition’s monthly giving program – and enjoy the great benefits that make it as easy as possible to continue your faithful patriotic support for America’s heroes.

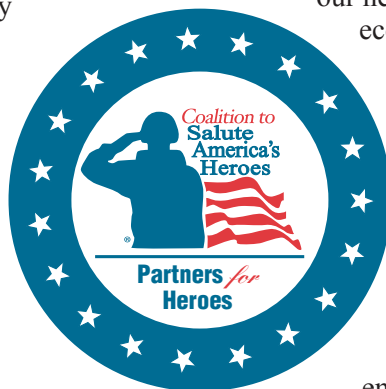
- ★ Your monthly donation is conveniently debited from your checking account or charged to your credit card each month, so you don’t have to spend time writing checks or searching for stamps.
- ★ We track your monthly giving; at the end of the year, you receive a convenient statement of donations for tax purposes.
- ★ You’ll receive less mail from us – and the money we save on postage and printing helps your gifts go further each month. (We’ll

continue sharing important program updates and newsletters like this one.)

- ★ You’re free to cancel your Partners for Heroes membership at any time.

Your monthly gift is life-changing in any amount – especially today, when more veterans than ever need our help because of the coronavirus crisis and economic challenges. Because when you’ve lost a limb and can’t work, or your spouse has quit his or her job to care for you as you battle PTSD, every dollar counts . . . and every minute is agony when you’re facing homelessness, or your child is going hungry.

So, I hope you’ll become a **Partner for Heroes** today – to help ensure we have the funds we need to provide emergency aid to wounded heroes and their families right away, when they need it most. To enroll, please see your enclosed reply form.





By the Numbers: Your Generosity in Action!

Emergency financial aid is at the heart of our mission to serve our struggling disabled War on Terror veterans – and during these days of pandemic and economic disruption, they need that help more than ever. No doubt about it: One of the most rewarding moments we experience is when we're able to deliver emergency financial aid to a struggling hero – meeting their specific financial need, down to the penny.

The list below highlights a handful of severely disabled veterans who recently asked us for help. And while the average amount we gave each veteran we helped in 2021 was \$1,684.84, you'll quickly see that the requests we receive are as varied as the veterans we help. Take a look at the practical and immediate ways your gift goes to work to help our heroes, penny by penny, and dollar by dollar.



Army veteran William L. from Sussex, New Jersey, suffers from PTSD and was honorably discharged after serving in Iraq. He asked us for \$345.72 to help pay his gas bill to heat his home this winter.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$345.72

Retired Army Sergeant Michael P. from Maysville, Kentucky, served in Afghanistan and suffers from PTSD. Michael asked for \$700.00 to help pay his rent.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$700.00

Army veteran Shaun H. from Abilene, Texas, suffered a back injury while serving in Iraq. He desperately needed \$800.00 to pay his auto loan and keep his vehicle from being repossessed.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$800.00

Army Sergeant Syraya W. from Smithfield, North Carolina, suffers from PTSD after serving in Iraq, and desperately needed \$850.07 to pay overdue utility bills and buy food.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$850.07

Marines Corporal Joshua W. from Sweetwater, Tennessee, suffers from PTSD after serving in Afghanistan. He asked for \$1,200.00 to pay his rent and keep a roof over his head.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$1,200.00

Air Force Technical Sergeant Mikell M. from Atlanta, Georgia, served our country in Iraq. He desperately needed \$1,820.17 to cover his rent and auto insurance payment.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$1,820.17

Army Sergeant Michael R. from Sparks, Nevada, suffers from PTSD after serving in Iraq and has a 100% permanent disability rating from the military. He desperately needed \$1,851.15 to pay his rent and avoid eviction.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$1,851.15

Marines Sergeant Jerrod L. from Spokane, Washington, suffers from PTSD after serving in Afghanistan. Jerrod urgently needed \$2,380.26 to make his mortgage payment and pay past-due utilities.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$2,380.26

If you or a loved one need assistance, please email us at info@saluteheroes.org. If you are facing eviction, a shut-off of utility services, or an emergency need due to a natural disaster, please call our emergency hotline at (703) 291-4605 and choose option 110 to speak with a Case Manager.

One More Reason to Give CONFIDENTLY: The Coalition is a Top-Rated Nonprofit 3rd Year Running!

The Coalition was named to the prestigious list of best nonprofit organizations in the world by the website GreatNonprofits.org. The Top-Rated Nonprofit award was based on the number of positive reviews the Coalition received from volunteers, donors, and clients. We work tirelessly to support our veteran community and it is incredible to be recognized!





These Heroes Thank You for the Gift of a Special Holiday Meal

It's difficult to put into words the difference the gift of a special holiday meal can make to a disabled veteran who's lost all hope. So, we'll let them tell you themselves – by sharing the heartfelt thank yous we received from heroes you and I helped together last year with \$60 Thanksgiving Meals Checks. I hope they inspire you to give generously again this Easter season and give more severely disabled veterans the simple but outlook-changing gift of a holiday meal!

"I wanted to thank you for your generosity. Today I received the card and enclosed gift. It came at a time when I really needed it. **Prior to receiving this check I didn't think I'd be able to buy anything for Thanksgiving** but thanks to you I will be able to pick up a few things to make Thanksgiving nice for my young daughter and myself and will be able to get by for the week. Your kindness will not be forgotten and I am very grateful for your support."

— Disabled veteran Candace

"I wanted to take a moment and say on behalf of my family, thank you so much for the generous gift we received today. **Feeding a family of six (and five boys in the house) is a challenge on a good year; however, this year it has been even worse.** This was totally unexpected, I had returned from the grocery store purchasing our Thanksgiving turkey for next week and this check was in the mailbox. What an absolute blessing! We are sincerely grateful and thank you so much!"

— The Henderson Family

"This Thanksgiving Holiday of 2021, I received a check for \$60 dollars. As I am mostly a single parent, I have to travel to get my little one. My folks help watch her so I can provide for our family. The money I received was able to help provide for some of travel expenses so I could see her. The Friday I was heading out I knew I kind of fell short on funds until I saw this gift. Really made my day that someone was thinking of me. I am not much for words but **as I was once a hero to many, the donors are my hero** and I thank you. Thanks for the assist Coalition to Salute American Heroes. Good to know there are still people that have my back covered."

— Disabled veteran Eugene H.

"Thank you for the holiday meal check . . . My husband was recently laid off from his part-time job, and **we have struggled just making ends meet** even with my income and his VA retirement checks. We have three teenagers and wanted to be able to have a Thanksgiving party for our family and their close friends but with money tight it was canceled. With this gift we can now enjoy our holiday with family and friends! Thank you so much for brightening our Thanksgiving!"

— Tasha E., wife of disabled veteran
SSGT Steven E. (Ret.)

"From the bottom of my heart, thank you so much for your generosity for this Thanksgiving. **It comes just in time as I battle cancer and was trying to figure out how I was going to have a Thanksgiving meal.** I truly appreciate your willingness to help veterans and our families."

— SSG Hodari B. (U.S. Army)

