

2019-2020 State Commanders Project

This year's Commanders Project will focus on 3 issues that will improve the lives and wellbeing of New Jersey's veterans along with honoring our own forgotten brothers and sisters. Your donations will be used for the following programs:

MENTAL HEALTH / SUICIDE AWARENESS 40%: It is inconceivable that 22 veterans a day feel so alone and desperate that they believe committing suicide is the answer to their problems. This is not a generational or gender issue, 58.1% of veteran suicide victims are over the age of 55 and women veterans are 1.8 times more likely to commit suicide than non-veterans. I believe it is a priority for us to reduce a veteran's risk for suicide before they reach a crisis point and support those in crisis. We can't combat this alone and we must build networks of support, communication, and care across the communities where veterans live and work. To accomplish this goal, 40% of the funds raised will be used to support:

- Department wide participation of the 4th annual VFW Campaign to Change Direction on September 14, 2019, a national day of service and action to change the dialogue on mental health for veterans and their communities.
- Grants to Districts, Posts, and partnering organizations to implement support groups, awareness campaigns, mentor programs, etc., on the local level.

CONTINUED FUNDING OF THE DEPARTMENT VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 50%: Started by Commander Sarmiento, this important program lends a hand up to veterans and troops in need who do not reside in the vicinity of a VFW Post. I believe this program furthers our goal of assisting veterans before they reach a crisis point by keeping a roof over their head and food on the table.

MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT 5%: Their mission is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed remains of American veterans. Locally the project is coordinated by Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 12 in Oakhurst.

GUIDING LIGHTHOUSE 5%: A transitional homeless veteran facility open to female veterans. The 24 month program includes mental health counseling, financial coaching and job skills training under the supervision of a case manager. The facility is located in Jackson N.J.

I hope you can generously support these projects and I look forward to working together to advance the VFW mission of service, representation and advocacy.

Mail all donations to:

***Chairman Steve Fodor
74 Linden St
Fords N.J. 08863***

Thank you,

Barbara Kim-Hagemann