

MORE THAN A MUSEUM

NATIONAL
VETERANS
MEMORIAL
AND MUSEUM



NEW HOME OF THE BRAVE

ONE YEAR AGO, the National Veterans Memorial and Museum opened as the nation's first and only museum dedicated to telling the story of the Veteran experience. Housed in an award-winning, iconic building, we are the *New Home of the Brave*, representing the stories of service and sacrifice from Veterans from all branches of the military and both wartime and peacetime service.

We have welcomed nearly 60,000 visitors in this first year—from Veterans and their families, to students on school tours, to non-Veterans of all ages, as well as business and community leaders. Many have come to experience our core exhibit: a multimedia narrative journey told by Veterans of military service and return to civilian life. Hundreds of guests have marked significant events at the museum, ranging from a rooftop Memorial Day remembrance ceremony to a Veteran Voices panel featuring firsthand experiences from a D-Day Veteran. And still others have joined us for more intimate experiences, like our monthly Rally Point breakfast gathering for local Veterans or our members-only events.

For both Veterans and non-Veterans alike, this museum provides the platform to begin important conversations about what it means to serve our nation and commit to something larger than yourself.

The National Veterans Memorial and Museum is a powerful reminder that freedom is never free. At this point in our

nation's history, less than 1 percent of the population is serving in the military. The stories of Veterans told through the museum demonstrate the power of people coming together for the good of our nation. There is so much more that bonds Americans than divides us.

None of this would be possible without the vision of the late Senator John Glenn and the leadership of the Columbus community who stepped up to create this national treasure. It is fitting that the National Veterans Memorial and Museum is located in Columbus, near the center of the country

and within a day's drive of more than 50 percent of the population.

Our mission is to Honor, Connect, Inspire and Educate, and this makes us much more than a museum. We are on an incredible trajectory to touch and impact millions. We are grateful to the Columbus community for the incredible support in our inaugural year, and we look forward to building upon that base as we connect with Veterans and civilians across this great nation.

Sincerely and Hooah!

Lt. General Michael Ferriter
(U.S. Army, Retired)
CEO and President
The National Veterans Memorial
and Museum



NATIONAL
VETERANS
MEMORIAL
AND MUSEUM

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BUILDING THE BRIDGE

SINCE OPENING its doors on Oct. 27, 2018, the National Veterans Memorial and Museum has placed heavy emphasis on its four pillars, including connecting Veterans with one another, with services that they might need and with the public at large.

Jennifer (Loredo) Ballou, who served in the Army for more than 20 years before retiring in 2015, experienced the power of those connections firsthand over Memorial Day weekend. Also a Gold Star Spouse, she traveled from her home in Texas to give a keynote presentation about her late husband, Edwardo “Eddie” Loredo, who died in combat.

“I was blown away at how great of a job the museum does at telling the stories of Veterans. I walked through it several times over the weekend, and I was just brought to tears every single time ... seeing the different ways that they tell stories and connect you in that way is absolutely amazing,” she says. “It means more than I can really put into words.”

But the museum and memorial’s pillar of connection goes far beyond connecting visitors with Veterans’ per-

sonal stories. Programs like Rally Point (pictured above) connect Veterans with one another and with organizations that can provide vital assistance.

In the military, a rally point is a place where a unit can meet to regroup if things go south, says chief of staff Colonel Bill Butler (U.S. Army, Retired). “It’s kind of a space for Veterans to connect and to regroup to help one another,” he adds.

The free monthly programs have different themes, from recognizing Purple Heart recipients to presenting alternative, holistic physical and mental health therapies. Regardless of the topic, Butler says, the mission is the same: meeting Veterans’ needs, whatever they may be.

Scott Horsington, a helicopter mechanic and pilot who retired from the Army in 2007 after serving 21 years, has attended nearly every single Rally Point to date. He says he didn’t know what to expect at first; after just one meeting, he was hooked.

“It’s not just a museum and a memorial. [General Ferriter] is making it a community gathering place, a focal

point,” Horsington says. “To be able to meet other Veterans [from] all different branches and different times of service ... it’s been huge for me.”

Other events focus on other needs. For example, a Nov. 8 hiring event at 10 Topgolf locations nationwide “stands to really help Veterans tremendously,” says Butler. “Upwards of 2,500 or 3,000 Vets could get hired.” He adds that another professional program—a leadership certificate through Ohio State University’s John Glenn School for Public Administration—will launch in the spring.

In many ways, the National Veterans Memorial and Museum is bridging the gap—any gap—that any Veteran might be facing. And it’s doing it in a way that no other organization has before.

“To my knowledge, there’s nothing like it ... that represents all services, all Veterans at the national level,” Ballou says. “All of the [military] services are working toward one common goal of protecting and defending our nation, so it only makes sense to tell all of the stories at the same time in one place. It’s so much more powerful that way.”

GRAND OPENING EVENT

General Colin L. Powell (U.S. Army, Retired) spoke
at the public ceremonies on Oct. 27, 2018.



56,500
VISITORS FROM
38
STATES

RALLY POINT MEETING

Veterans representing multiple post-service
organizations chat during a Rally Point meeting.



A YEAR IN REVIEW



MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

Gold Star Spouse Jennifer (Loredo) Ballou spoke
before 350 guests in a rooftop ceremony.



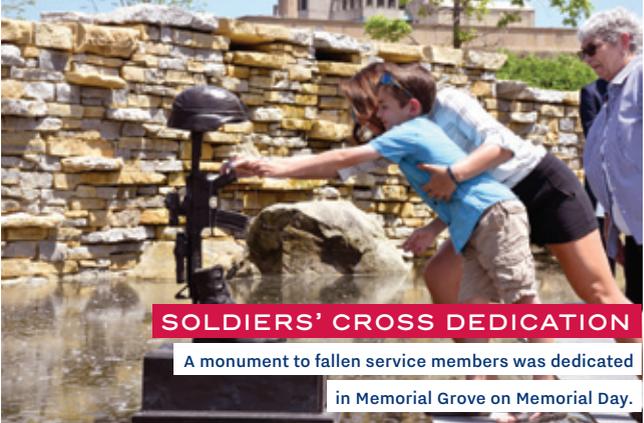
VETERANS PORTRAIT PROJECT

Photographer and Veteran Stacy Pearsall
takes Lt. General Michael Ferriter's portrait.



PURPLE HEART
MONUMENT DEDICATION

Memorial Grove's first monument, honoring
Purple Heart recipients, was dedicated in May.



SOLDIERS' CROSS DEDICATION

A monument to fallen service members was dedicated in Memorial Grove on Memorial Day.



WORLD WAR II PANEL

A panel of Veterans spoke to a packed house on June 6 for the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

148 PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS



RED, WHITE AND BOOM

Families enjoyed Independence Day fireworks in front of the memorial and museum.



9/11 CEREMONY

The museum partnered with the city of Columbus and Franklin County to honor lives lost 18 years ago.

91 HOSTED EVENTS

207 GROUP VISITS



TOPGOLF HIRING EVENT

A mid-September job fair connected Veterans with open positions at 10 local companies, including Battelle, Nationwide, Abbott and Airstream.



COMMUNITY CELEBRATION OF HONOR

Families gathered for a July 5 fundraiser featuring food and fun in support of the museum's mission.



FLAG DAY

The museum planted American flags on its lawn to celebrate the day in 1777 when the Stars and Stripes became our national flag.

SPREADING THE WORD

THE GIFT OF TIME

WHERE WOULD THE NATIONAL VETERANS MEMORIAL and Museum be without its volunteers?

“My opinion is, we wouldn’t exist without them,” says Laurie Manley, internship and volunteer manager. “Every visitor, every person that comes in for a tour, every person that comes in for a group meeting or rents our space has contact with the volunteers.” Manley adds that ideally, she’d like to see the volunteer corps increase to 180 members or more; currently, there are about 100 volunteers, about 60 percent of whom are themselves Veterans.

Read on to meet three volunteers who help keep the museum and memorial running.

WHEN THE NATIONAL VETERANS

Memorial and Museum opened, Battelle donated an impressive \$500,000 to fund educational programming. At the science and technology-focused organization, “we don’t necessarily see STEM specifically as ‘science, technology, engineering and math,’” says Aimee Kennedy, Battelle’s senior vice president for education, STEM learning and philanthropy. “We like to think of STEM as ‘strategies that engage minds.’”

The museum’s public programs manager Stacey Queen ensures the funds are well-appropriated, implementing customized curricula for each visiting school group, creating a fellowship program for college students and first-year teachers, and curating interactive carts with artifacts that visitors can see and touch.

“Our museum curriculum is heavily based on the state of Ohio standards of learning,” she says. From the symbolism of the American flag with kindergarteners to architecture with students from the Columbus College of Art & Design, thematic topics can cover a wide range.

John Glenn High School teacher Patti Logan brought her class to the museum in May. “Another teacher in our building ... had raved about it,” she says. From initial contact with museum staff to creating a theme to a follow-up satisfaction survey, planning the trip “was just like clockwork,” Logan says. She and her students especially enjoyed the interactive elements of the museum, such as the ability to post questions for Veterans to answer in the future. “It’s just very, very rich,” Logan says. “We’re very fortunate to have this so close to home.”



JOHN POSEY

*College student
and corporal,
Army National Guard*

WHY HE VOLUNTEERS:

“I love the sense that everybody is welcome. A big part of that for me is ... I haven’t been overseas yet. I don’t serve a certain amount of time; we’re part-timers, so I was struggling with, ‘Should I even really consider myself a Veteran?’ But they really put out open hands and said, ‘You’re wearing a uniform, you want to serve; you’re a warrior for our nation.’”



KATHY SIMCOX

*Retail employee
and photographer*

WHY SHE VOLUNTEERS:

“I love serving the community, and I have six men in my family that have served in various branches going all the way back to World War I. I am a huge history buff, and there’s history all over the place. ... [Veterans] come in, and we get to experience and talk to and interact with living history, people that we have read about in textbooks. ... The whole experience has just been an honor and a privilege.”



STEVE JONES

*Lt. Colonel
(U.S. Air Force, Retired)*

WHY HE VOLUNTEERS:

“I’d been through military museums and battlefield museums, and they’re all impressive in their own regard. But this is really a very personal story, the kind that touches people in a way that no other museum that I’ve ever been in does. It’s almost a spiritual connection that really kind of tugs at your heart. Even to this day, as I go through, there are times that I get emotional when I see people and see their stories.”



THE ROAD AHEAD

WITH SO MUCH accomplished in just their first year, the staff of the National Veterans Memorial and Museum already are looking to the future.

“The vision begins with growing to a national stature,” says President and CEO Lt. General Michael Ferriter (U.S. Army, Retired). “We want to reach coast to coast and north to south, impacting the lives of 1 million Veterans a year. And it’s not brick and mortar, and it’s not necessarily physically in Columbus, Ohio.”

Whether via an online virtual tour or the Airstream rolling exhibitions set to deploy next year, the facility aims to connect Veterans from Tacoma to Tampa to one another and the “big idea of their selfless service,” Ferriter explains. Similarly, there are plans to bring touring exhibits from other museums in to Columbus beginning in 2020.

In the short term, a Veterans Day celebration on Nov. 11 and a 2020 Memorial Day weekend ride by Rolling Thunder—the motorcycle group that advocates for prisoners of war and missing in action service members—are both in the works.

“We’re developing an amazing team that wants to deliver the ‘greatest show on earth’ to the public and the guests that come in our doors,” Ferriter says, “all the while building out the next creative, innovative idea and fully expanding those opportunities.”

CELEBRATING SERVICE THROUGH STORYTELLING

“IN MY TIME HERE, part of my work has been to educate communities across the country on the fact that, while we are proud to have a national designation, we do not receive federal funding,” says Candace Brady, vice president of advancement for the National Veterans Museum and Memorial. “We are a nonprofit, and we appreciate the support of all to propel our mission—including our membership program, which is 100 percent philanthropic. We have Inaugural Members from all over the country—25 states, D.C.—and Denmark and England.”

These Inaugural Members—those who have committed to give a fixed amount over one to two years—receive such benefits as unlimited admission, exhibition previews, private tours and more, to say nothing of the satisfaction that comes with supporting such an institution.

For Army Veteran Carl S. Ey, one visit was all it took to convince him to become a member. The interactive

features were particularly impressive for the Alexandria, Virginia, resident.

“I really get the sense that I’m talking to my neighbor, as opposed to walking through and reading a plaque,” Ey says. “You really get [a sense of what featured service members] did if you go see this museum—more so, even, than at a lot of museums I see here in Washington, D.C., that are honoring the military. They really hit the nail on the head.”

Memberships, individual gifts, grants and corporate sponsorships support such initiatives as free access for Veterans and active-duty service members, education programs for students, events and more.

“Every donation has been so impactful in our first year,” says Brady. “Gifts given to this museum and memorial are put to immediate use to empower our mission: Honor all Veterans, connect our communities, inspire our nation and educate every generation.”

Visit NationalVMM.org to join us in our mission.

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300 W. BROAD ST.
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BECOME AN INAUGURAL MEMBER
AT [NATIONALVMM.ORG/MEMBERSHIP](https://nationalvmm.org/membership)