



Third Quarter Newsletter!

Our Missions:

- Advocacy
- Education and Training
- Literature
- Connections to Services
- Support Groups
- Service Animals
- Motivational Speaking
- Volunteering
- Scholarships/Education
- Our NEWSLETTER!

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October 2017

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It Was a Productive Third Quarter

Hello everyone! This third quarter had us swamped with work and organizing. We have much to share. First we are really amazed with how much we have been able to get done in just under one year. It has been challenging however we are very thankful to be blessed with members and volunteers who have been up to those challenges.

In a nutshell work continues on the scholarship. Basically the more money we have the more money we can give to our student veterans. We are aiming for our first scholarship to be awarded in Fall 2018. New Mexico State University continues to work with us to ensure this scholarship is as successful as possible.

Our advocacy efforts are gaining strength in many directions and we are working hard on

organizing ourselves to best serve our veterans. We are really putting the pressure on ourselves to set goals and accomplish tasks so that we can provide services and get resources out to our veterans. We anticipate in 2018 will see some very exciting developments in this area.

Another area we have been working on has consumed much of our time this quarter and will continue in the months to come as well. We have not mentioned much about this however in this newsletter we are very excited to share what progress we are making in our advocacy, education and training missions!

As always we thank you for your continued support and the growing attention we are getting out there!

December 2, 2017-A Day of Giving

December 2nd, is a date that we will forever have sorrow in our lives. This year will mark the one year anniversary of our beloved Josh Dunne. Whose life was the inspiration for our organization.

Board Member, and mother to Josh, Patricia Dunne came up with a brilliant idea for us

to spend this day. Basically it's a "what would Josh do? What did he always want to do? What DID HE DO?", concept. He gave to other veterans so selflessly. A Day of Giving is the perfect way we can honor and remember him. It is especially important because he left us so tragically. We all agreed unani-

mously that December 2nd would be a day for us to show appreciation to our veterans. This year we will be hosting a cook out for our veterans in need. And we could be more excited! We will share this day in our next newsletter. We can only hope that this event will grow along with our organization.

NMLEAB??? What?

NMLEAB. What is that? This is the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy Board. This quarter we got accepted to speak in front of the NMLEAB in Hobbs, New Mexico to discuss the need for law enforcement across the state to be adequately trained in dealing with the mental health population. This board is made up of selected law enforcement officer and administrative leaders throughout the state. They work with each academy in the state to ensure that they are providing training in accordance to state statute as well as accreditation measures.

This was exciting for us as it was our first big step at addressing our mission of im-

proving mental health crisis situations involving law enforcement. We are committed to ensuring that our law enforcement officers respond appropriately, professionally, and with the highest of standards in mental health crisis situations, so that no mental health crisis ends with a deadly outcome. We had to learn from experiencing this personally to understand the lack of training and resources law enforcement has when responding to a crisis. It was difficult to learn that what is being taught now is simply not enough. More needs to be done.

Our organization is committed in working with law enforce-

ment and our state legislature on being a leader in the nation to reduce the percentage of those with mental health disorders killed by police. Unfortunately New Mexico is number one in fatal outcomes with the mental ill population. It is a horrific statistic. We should not fear calling police for assistance. We should be able to know that we will be safe as will our loved ones.

There are many models being implemented now in other states. This is our focus. We were grateful to know that members of the NMLEAB listened and are willing to have future meetings. We remain hopeful.

We are now preparing for a presentation to the New Mexico Behavioral Health Subcommittee early next year. We are excited and will keep all of you informed and updated. Please contact any member if you have thoughts or suggestions. We are open to work with anyone who is committed to see change.



Would you like to share a Veteran's Story?

It is important to us that we share the stories of our veterans. Their struggles, progress, success, and even their setbacks. This is invaluable information that not only offers encouragement and inspiration, but most importantly it can offer hope to so many that feel they are lost and alone. If you or someone you know would like to share your story please contact Marissa Miranda at marissam279@gmail.com. Thank you and keep the faith.

Phone: 575-619-0262

Email: thejoshdunneorganization@gmail.com

A Veteran's Story: Larry Ramos-United States Army

My name is Lazaro Ramos aka Larry, I am a 22-year retired Army veteran and recent transplant to Las Cruces, NM. During my 22 years in the Army I was promoted to Master Sergeant and stationed across the entire spectrum ranging from Italy, Puerto Rico, Ft Bliss TX, Ft Bragg NC, and Hawaii. While assigned to these various locations I had the honor of being deployed even further across the world to places like Bosnia, Rwanda, Haiti, Iraq, Mongolia, Cambodia and Afghanistan. Throughout those years I earned various medals and commendations including two Bronze Stars, Joint Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medals, Combat Action badge and the Combat Medic badge to name a few. So, it goes without saying that my military career was exciting, and 22 years went very quickly, but not without a tremendous cost. I unfortunately or fortunately have seen much death throughout my years starting in Rwanda 1994 and ending in Iraq 2011. It is that death and destruction that both haunts me now and also motivates me to live a meaningful and fulfilling life with my family in New Mexico.



As a 100% disabled veteran I have found the struggles of reintegrating into a "normal life", one that society deems as normal seem difficult at times. There are the unexpected loud noises, and the anxiety of trash on the highway possibly being an IED. And although I have been gainfully employed I have found it difficult to find a job that is both rewarding, and provides the same camaraderie outside of the military. My multiple deployments and military skills haven't always equated into ideal employment, especially when you don't want to work in your exact military career path because you are haunted by memories in your old line of work. I have worked away from my family and home more days than I can count to provide for them. I have taken jobs that required extensive travel to places like the US Embassy in Iraq, and now Miami, FL. But I have faith, that I will soon live a "normal life", one that keeps me at home to grow old holding my wife's hand.



So, what can I say to my fellow Veterans. You are not alone! Be proud of your service, less than 1% of Americans serve in the military! Live life honorably for the men and women we have seen give the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms. Realize our sacrifices for freedom are not forgotten, because we remember those times that some say are best forgotten. I do wish I could sometimes forget what my eyes have seen, but as my wife says, "you can't forget those memories, but we sure can make new ones!"



Joshua C. Dunne

CPL USMC

September 15, 1980-December 2, 2016



