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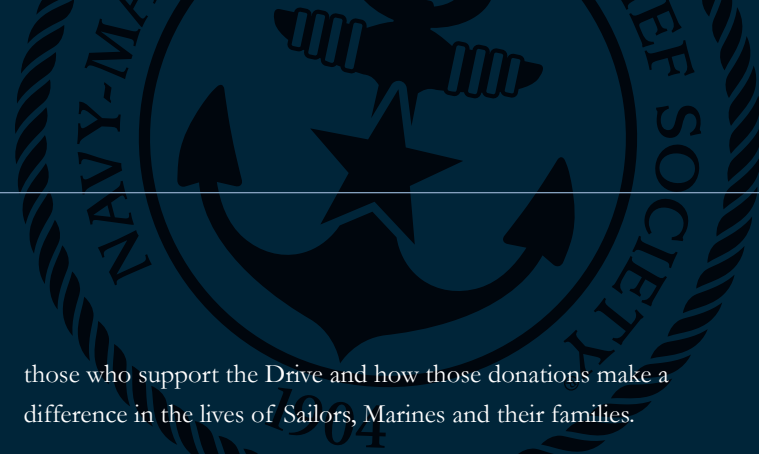
2023 Volume 1, Issue 39

NEWSLETTER

**“NMCRS: A TEAM THAT ALWAYS PUTS SAILORS,
MARINES AND THEIR FAMILIES FIRST”
—ADMIRAL MICHAEL M. GILDAY, USN
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS**



MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR SAILORS, MARINES, AND THEIR FAMILIES



From the Signal Bridge



After leading Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society through three years of the COVID-19 Pandemic, LtGen Jack W. Klimp, USMC (Ret.) relinquished the helm last fall. It's truly an honor and privilege to serve as President, Chief Executive Officer and benefit from the many achievements during General Klimp's watch. Very few non-

profit organizations can claim 119 years of service to those who serve this great nation, and I am proud to continue that tradition and build upon it.

This is truly a special organization, with an exceptional mission to support Sailors, Marines and their families with a variety of programs few organizations could or would. Today, we are fortunate to be in the aftermath of COVID, engaging naval leadership and spreading the good word about our support in person at bases and stations. We recently kicked off the Annual Fund Drive with significant messaging and support from the Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. That the Society supported Sailor and Marine families at the highest financial assistance levels during the worst time of COVID is a real tribute to LtGen Klimp and the Society's incredible team. For many, the Society has been their lifeline in troubled waters. You have my word I will continue in that light.

In this issue of Legacy we are focusing on the Active Duty Fund Drive. This annual fundraiser conducted by the Navy and Marine Corps allows Sailors and Marines an opportunity to learn about our valuable programs and services available to them at no cost, and provides a way to support fellow Shipmates and Marines by donating to NMCRS. We are featuring a special message from General Berger and Admiral Gilday, and highlighting stories from

those who support the Drive and how those donations make a difference in the lives of Sailors, Marines and their families.

I appreciate the invaluable support of our donors. Last year, your generosity resulted in nearly \$46 million in financial assistance while assisting 179,000 clients in various programs and services. Thank you for your commitment to our mission and for ensuring the Society is there as a first resource for Sailors and Marines in a financial emergency.

Semper Fidelis and very respectfully,

LTGEN ROBERT R. RUARK, USMC (RET.)

President and Chief Executive Officer

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Cover photo: Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class John Stratton

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS AND CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

Our Nation takes great pride in the performance of our Marines and Sailors. Whether deployed overseas or training for combat, it is crucial that they are able to focus on the mission at hand without worrying about their financial well-being or that of their families. When circumstances seem overwhelming, our Marines and Sailors need to know there are resources available to assist them. Since 1904, the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) has been one of those resources, providing a lifeline to our Sea Service members facing personal and family emergencies.

The NMCRS Active Duty Fund Drive is our “By Our Own, For Our Own” campaign to raise awareness about the programs and services NMCRS offers. It also provides an opportunity to support NMCRS with a monetary contribution.

NMCRS provides interest-free loans and grants for those with urgent financial needs, such as traveling to the bedside of a loved one, making repairs to homes damaged by natural disasters, or receiving home visits from a registered nurse. Additionally, NMCRS provides education assistance for children and spouses of Sailors and Marines. Society employees and volunteers also offer budget counseling services and education to help our teammates and their families build a plan for financial health and success. In these ways and more, NMCRS is a valuable resource for our Sea Service families when they are in need.

As we kick off this annual fundraising drive, know that your contributions will enable the Society to continue its vital mission-making life better for our Marines, Sailors, and families.

Thank you for your compassion and for your commitment to the Active Duty Fund Drive.

Sincerely,



David H. Berger
General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps



Michael M. Gilday
Admiral, U.S. Navy
Chief of Naval Operations



Being Turned Down... Then Turning to NMCRS

By Ashley Estill

For more than a decade, Bob Phillips has been donating to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. When he was a young man in the Marine Corps, NMCRS provided support at a time when Bob needed it the most.

"I was a Lance Corporal and became involved with a woman who had a baby – he was not mine – but I adopted him and three months and 29 days after Michael Todd was born, he died," Bob explained. "It was a devastating moment for both of us."

Stationed at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego, Bob's Section Head was a Gunnery Sergeant and sent Bob to one organization on base for assistance for the baby's funeral. Bob was refused any aid. Without hesitation, his Gunnery Sergeant sent him to Navy Relief for support. [The Society's name was changed from the Navy Relief Society to Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society in 1990.]

"The representative was so comforting and said they would take care of all the funeral expenses," Bob said. "It was such a relief –

I was barely making it and funeral expenses would have put us in further debt."

"We received support almost instantaneously," Bob continued. "Our families did not have money to assist us at the time – so while we had to still deal with Michael Todd's death, it was a help to have the funeral taken care of. I could never repay their kindness."

As Bob continued his career in the Marine Corps, he always advocated for NMCRS every time there was a fundraiser, and as a retiree, he continues to contribute and made it a priority to give back. Because NMCRS provides a diverse array of support, it makes a big difference in Bob's mind – the Society is not restricted to helping those in need with just one kind of problem. And, Bob says, you don't know the impact you're making with a donation.

"Life is not certain and sometimes there's a tragedy and while it might not be our own, someone out there has no other alternative than to seek aid," he said. "Even if your support relieves part of it, imagine what kind of relief you're providing."

Today, Bob lives in Northern California and in addition to being a lifelong donor to NMCRS, he volunteers four days a week at his local food bank. While Bob jokes that his volunteering is a little self-serving since he's getting exercise, we think his efforts are not only good for his heart, but his soul as well.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

How Did NMCRS Help You Today And What Impact Does This Have On Your Life?

"After 19 years of Service and participating in numerous Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society fund drives, I realized I had never used their services. But the day came when I had pay issues as part of my transition to a new Command, so I decided to seek their assistance. From day one, the NMCRS Representatives were very professional and helped me all along to resolve my situation. They offered me a no interest loan and

enough time to repay it. In addition, I received financial counseling advice for free and a full review of my pay to ensure everything was running the way it was supposed to be.

I will always be forever grateful with the NMCRS for helping me and my family in a moment of need. Thank you!"

— Anonymous Quote

Family Receives Grant for Son's Cranial Helmet: "We Are So Very Grateful!"

Thanks to the incredible support of our NMCRS donors, we were able to help this Sea Service family get the necessary financial support for a cranial helmet for their young son. Read in their own words what the Society means to them.



“ We cannot thank you enough for the grant for our son Henry’s cranial helmet! Henry’s young life has been full of medical adventures and treatments. Henry was born 2 months early weighing 2lbs 4.2oz and spent 71 days in the Walter Reed NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit). Due to his small birth weight and immature lungs he needed a feeding tube and supplemental oxygen. It was necessary for him to spend a majority of his time in the NICU flat on his back. The nurses repositioned him frequently but he developed a severe flat spot on his head and that has limited his head motion range significantly. Even with 2 letters of medical necessity TRICARE and ECHO denied his request for a helmet creating a significant unexpected financial burden. We cannot thank you enough for your general concern for the wellbeing of our son and the willingness to step in and help us in such a meaningful way. **We are so very grateful!** ”

—Testimonial from Danielle B.

In November 2022 NMCRS was honored to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of our Visiting Nurse Program! All of the previous Visiting Nurse Directors, the current Director, and the program’s Administrative Assistant came together for this incredible milestone! The celebration included a virtual party with our NMCRS offices and a special message from Rear Admiral Cynthia Kuehner, Commander, Naval Medical Forces Support Command/Director of the Navy Nurse Corps!

Pictured from L to R: April Pearson (Director, June 2019 – Oct. 2022), Tammy Ackiss (Director, Feb. 2017- June 2019), Ruthi Moore (the first Director of Nursing, 1989-2017), Rosie Perdue (current Director), and Judy Perry (current Administrative Assistant).



Photo Credit: Thelisha A. Woods

Active Duty Sailor, Jarrod Torr, Soars in Flight School and As An NMCRS Volunteer

By Thelisha A. Woods

Ensign Jarrod Torr was meant to be a Sailor, and he always knew he would join the Navy. Growing up in Grand Rapids, Michigan, he heard stories about his family members who served in the military.

“My dad is from the UK originally, and his family all served. My great-grandfather, and great-uncle were in the Royal Navy in WWI. My grandfather was also in the British Army after WWII,” Jarrod said. “My mom is from the US, and her dad was in the US Army from WWII to Vietnam. I was always hearing their military stories and seeing pictures of them, plus I’m really into history. So early on, I began thinking the military would be for me. I leaned towards the Navy specifically because of the people on my dad’s side who served.”

As a middle school student, Jarrod read about the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD., and made attending his goal. In 2021, Jarrod graduated with honors with a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from the Naval Academy. Soon after, he began his journey with flight school in Pensacola, FL, and with Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society by an interesting chance.

“All through my time in school, I never knew anything about the Society, and when I first came to Pensacola to start flight school, there was a wait to even start the first phase. Funny enough, I still didn’t know anything about the Society,” said Jarrod. “However, as a temp job, we call them stash jobs here; I got assigned to go work at the Society while I was waiting to start flight school.”

December 2021, Jarrod first joined the Society as a Client Service Assistant (CSA) volunteer and Thrift Shop volunteer. He continued volunteering for five months until he took a short break for classes, but Jarrod soon returned to NMCRS.

“Over the course of those five months, I really learned what the Society was about. I knew I’d want to come back after seeing what



Jarrod Torr volunteering at the NMCRS Pensacola Office.
Photo Credit: Joy Barnes

the Society did,” said Jarrod. “Being able to help people made me see how important the mission was, so that made me want to come back as a true “volunteer” in June.”

Jarrod continued, “I’m not a huge believer in fate, but I am very glad out of all the things I was told to do, I was sent to the Society. It’s definitely something I’ll try to stick with for years to come.”

Even with his busy schedule and flight school, Jarrod finds time to volunteer once a week in the NMCRS Pensacola Office.

“Jarrod is really a stellar young Sailor, and I’m proud to have him as one of our Pensacola volunteers!” said NMCRS Pensacola Director Joy Barnes.

Besides volunteering as a CSA and at the Thrift Shop, Jarrod also volunteered to support the Active Duty Fund Drive (ADFD).

“While I was a CSA in the Spring, I was always trying to branch out and see what else I could take on, which was why I was also volunteering at the Thrift Shop. The command I was with was pretty large and involved multiple schools. So the key person for the Fund Drive at the time was one of the rescue swimmer instructors, a Petty Officer, who reached out and said, ‘the command is really big, and since you volunteer at the Society already, would you mind helping me reach out to the flight school side of the command?’ I said absolutely, and another Ensign, Zac Swindell, and I volunteered to help him raise funds with the flight

Making a difference for Sailors, Marines, and their families — Thanks to your donations

students specifically because we could appeal to them more easily,” said Jarrod.

Jarrod and the Zac devised a plan to raise the most donations they could during the ADFD.

“Something Joy told me straight off the bat is that one of the goals is 100% meaningful contact. I knew that just sending out a mass email or leaving out information with the donation slip isn’t really meaningful contact, even if everyone technically sees it,” said Jarrod. “Zac and I set up a tracker that listed all the flight students at the command who the key person asked us to take care of. We set up a list to track who we had gotten in contact with, and through the support of the command, we set up a few briefs. There would be anywhere from 15, 20, 30, or so people at a time, and we could slowly track people off our list. We just did it in a group setting where I would take five minutes of their time to talk about the Society, volunteering, and where the money went.”

This method was so successful that the flight school raised over \$30,000.

“Jarrod eloquently and effectively shared about our programs and services, and the Naval Aviation Schools Command (NASC) team raised a remarkable \$30,957. This was an unbelievable 1500%

increase from the year before when the command donated \$1889,” said Joy.

“When you see where the donations are going to, it compels you to donate,” shared Jarrod. “This was my approach to raise money for the fund drive. I told stories of how I saw firsthand how Sailors were struggling. All it takes is one or two cases to convince you, and you see right then and there that the check is going straight into the hands of the people we work alongside every day. There are some considerable troubles facing the people we work with and possibly even the people in the room [during my briefs], and the ADFD is a perfect way to support them.”

What’s next for Jarrod? He is continuing flight school and volunteering at the Society.

“Volunteering at the Society has been so moving to see the stories, and aside from personally how it feels good to help people, professionally as an Officer, it’s been eye-opening to see this as a resource that’s available,” shared Jarrod. “Even though right now I’m just a student as well, as someone who will one day have Sailors under my charge, it’s good to know that NMCRS is an option for support. Being an Officer in the Navy one day, taking care of your Sailors is part of being in that role. I know all the things the Society can do, so hopefully, that will help me be a better leader one day.”

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK April 16 – 22, 2023

The Society is grateful for all of our volunteers!



We love our
**NAVY-MARINE CORPS
RELIEF SOCIETY**
Volunteers!



Navy- Marine Corps Relief Society is humbled by the support of the Marine Corps Exchange, the Navy Exchange Service Command, and the generosity of their customers through the bi-annual benefit ticket sales. The impact of so many shoppers donating \$5 for a benefit ticket is exponential! Last year the combined total given to NMCRS through the Spring and Fall sales was \$1,166,638.

In 2022 the Society assisted over 38,000 active duty and retired Sailors, Marines and their

families who were facing unforeseen financial need. We are so grateful for the proceeds of the benefit tickets. They were put to immediate use.

NEX and MCX customers can support NMCRS by purchasing \$5 benefit tickets in April and October 2023. The benefit tickets give customers \$5 and a 5% discount applied to a one-time purchase.

Look out for the benefit tickets at your NEX and MCX, and know that you will be supporting a Sailor or Marine in need while you shop.

NMCRS EARNs FOUR-STAR RATING FROM CHARITY NAVIGATOR

NMCRS is proud to announce that its strong financial health and ongoing accountability and transparency has earned a Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator. Thank you to our staff and donors who have helped make this possible!



Staff at NMCRS HQ celebrates Charity Navigator rating
Photo credit: Paris Williams



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