



Military Outreach USA

Stand By Me Heroes

3020 Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062

January 2022

OUR MISSION

Military Outreach USA is a faith-based Judeo-Christian organization focused on Veterans and First-Responder Communities, regardless of their denomination or beliefs, demonstrating the compassion, love and healing of Christ our Lord



WHEN YOU CAN'T RUN YOU WALK,
WHEN YOU CAN'T WALK YOU CRAWL
AND WHEN YOU CAN'T CRAWL
WE WILL CARRY YOU.



A message from the General

MG (Ret) James H. Mukoyama

President & CEO

Looking forward to 2022, we have reason to be optimistic as the Good Lord has been giving us encouragement regarding our successful 2021 efforts and the progress on programs that will enable us to better meet the increasing needs of our military community moving forward.

The Omicron variant of the COVID virus has continued to place restrictions on our activities just when we were picking up momentum to getting back to working in our communities and scheduling of churches, schools, Veteran Service Organizations, and other community partners with our Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP) . Many of our network members have contacted us regarding collections of Move-in-Essential items during the spring months and thereafter.

Our Beds for Vets program has expanded dramatically delivering beds to veterans, VAs and other organizations supporting our homeless veterans in dire need of beds, pillows and linens. We provided more beds in 2021 than the total delivered in the previous two years. Please continue to contact and encourage potential donors. Military Outreach USA does not receive any government funding and relies solely on the heartfelt generosity of our supporters. We do not have any full-time staff nor physical offices and we are extremely careful stewards of the funds contributed. Your donations will permit us to avoid having to turn down requests in the future.

There is good news regarding our Stand-by-me Heroes and Foxhole Soul Counselor training programs. We are receiving inquiries regarding offering more Centers of Hope training to equip our volunteers who want to walk alongside military, veterans and first responders and their family members who suffer from physical, psychological, social, or spiritual stresses and are in need of knowing that they are loved and that hope and help are available if they will take the steps to reach out and connect.

Our activities with the SBMH Salutes program in Missouri are expanding in terms of programs and persons served. We are working with Veteran and community leaders in two areas of Northern Illinois exploring establishing similar serving centers that would be self-funded through the income from a community thrift center operation.

Finally, there has been positive response from the articles provided in our bi-monthly newsletter. We are blessed to have experienced professional psychologists, chaplains, and community volunteers who are sharing important information and advice on key issues affecting our military, first responders, and their families in these crucial times for our nation.

We are grateful to God for his blessings upon our efforts and ask that you join us in praying for His continued provision, guidance and encouragement.



A message from Chappy

Chappy Ferrer

Executive Director & Operations

Despite many obstacles we remain focused on our mission and we are impacting the lives of our veterans, first responders and those guarding the gates of our freedom. As a grateful nation, no matter your faith, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or age we honor your service. As we continue to serve communities through our Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP) and Stand-by-me Heroes (SBMH) program, testimonies continue to come in on the differences we are making. We operate in 100% unanimity as servant-leaders thus our growing impacts. Please take time to [view the short video from Major General \(retired\) James H. Mukoyama](#) on our website .

Our **Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP)** includes our **Beds-for-Vets** project. To date we have provided over 2,130 new beds and linen, mainly from referrals from VA HUD-VASH partners across the country, to veterans who are no longer sleeping in an alley, street or woods. With continued donations from a grateful nation we seek to impact more in 2022. The second part of the VEHP focuses on a project we call **Move-In-Essentials** where community organizations gather and donate basic household items needed to move into a residence. To date we provided over \$1.3Mworth of essential items.

Our **Stand-by-me Heroes** teams, despite COVID, continue to impact the lives of our heroes. We do this via our dedicated teams of Foxhole Soul Counselors

(FSC). These volunteers are veterans and civilians, doctors, nurses, counselors, chaplains, NCOs covering all branches and first responders. We engage these heroes one-on-one, meeting at coffee shops. We listen and understand the urgency of those silently calling out for someone to Stand-by-me. We are focused on Mind-Body-Soul.

Great Lakes SBMH Workshops. If you are interested in sponsoring one of these workshops contact us via our website. This is NOT a speaking conference, but a workshop. We follow a framework to restore those who are struggling from Moral Injury, Post Traumatic Stress, Military Sexual Trauma and more. Our mission is to reduce this number of 22+ suicides per day. Organizations can team together to sponsor veterans and first responders at a post/hall. These workshops build small groups that help each other one day at a time.

HOPE. We seek veterans, first responders and civilians with a calling to serve. We provide a Foxhole Soul Counselor certification program via zoom to volunteer 4-10 hours a month meeting at a coffee shop or simply calling to let our heroes know there is HOPE! Our grass-roots approach continues to prove effective as our volunteers are people of action, not words. Contact us via our website and volunteer to change and save lives.

WE ARE BLESSED!

Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP)



BEDS-for-VETS Program

Veterans Existing Homelessness Programs includes our Beds-for-Vets program. In 2021 we were able to provide 542 beds with sheets and pillows to veterans transitioning from homelessness into housing. Funds for these beds come to us from a grateful nation - people, schools, VSOs, organizations - to honor veterans for their service and sacrifice and to encourage them in their new lives now that they are off the streets and out of the shelters. Since our effort began in 2016, we have supplied more than 2,130 beds to veterans who are no longer sleeping on the floor, thanks to the support of people like you!

Move-in-Essentials Collections

Houses of worship and other organizations and groups provide hope and encouragement to local veterans transitioning from homelessness into subsidized housing through a program called Move-in-Essentials (MIE) coordinated by Jim Dunne's team of volunteers for Military Outreach USA. To date, we have distributed items valued at \$1,331,15 to veterans from Jesse Brown, Edward J. Hines and James Lovell VAs in the greater Chicago area.

A Hero's Story



NORMAN ZUCKERMAN **Battle of the Bulge**

Prisoner of War in Stalag IXB **near Bad Orb, Germany**

Norman Zuckerman was an infantryman in Alpha Co, 395 Inf Reg, 99 Division. Captured during the Battle of the Bulge in 1944 he became a Prisoner of War in Stalag IXB near Bad Orb. He experienced and survived the brutality and sufferings that words cannot describe at the hands of the Germans.

When the Stalag Commander heard there was a Jew amongst the prisoners he increased the sufferings and tortures to identify this Jew. None of the prisoners would identify Norm even into death. Norm protested to his POW Commander and men to ease the sufferings of his friends and comrades, but a resounding NO was the response from all which rallied all to protect their own. From a most horrible experience this man trusted his faith, loved friends and family impacting all lives that would come to know him. A great moment in his life came as he forgave despite the horrors.

Norm confidently looked the world in the eye and felt an extra heart tug when the American flag went by, stood taller to the National Anthem, was not embarrassed by tears when Taps played to name a few. Norm epitomized patriotism speaking to groups or individuals as a former POW. He never shied away from any because of their religion, rich or poor or anywhere in between. He had great respect for all people. He was a man who loved peace because he saw the price tag of war in ways most could imagine. Norm realized that the headstones at any National Cemetery across America and throughout Europe, reflected the real cost of democracy. He was proud of his American heritage, appreciative of any who served our Nation to include medical practitioners, firefighters and first responders.

Norm liked the legends like Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt, Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, Patton, Eisenhower, MacArthur, John Wayne and all the patriots who marched through American history. He had a unique appreciation for those who bivouacked at Valley Forge, charged the hill at Gettysburg, stormed the sands at

Guadalcanal, swarmed ashore at Omaha Beach and fought in the jungles of War Zone C in Southeast Asia, Khe Sanh, the Ashau Valley and the Mekong Delta. He had great respect for all warriors who shed blood in Beirut, the streets of Panama, the Middle East, Desert Storm, Iraq and in the mountains of Afghanistan.

You see Norm is a perfect example of one of America's most honorable citizens and a member of history's most exclusive fraternity....a proud American Veteran and patriot. I tell you that each of us holds a different, yet cherished, impression of him. Some have serious memories, intimate and wonderful memories; a privileged few had an insight into his dry wit and sense of humor.

We were dedicating a POW/MIA Chair of Honor at Anthony's Barber Shop in Algonquin a few years ago and I was talking with Norm about nothing in particular when the topic of headstones came up. Medal of Honor recipients have a Medal of Honor engraved on their headstone in a National Cemetery. We were considering whether former POWs should have the National POW image engraved on their headstone. Norm said that the only thing that he wanted engraved on his headstone was..."Vacant".

A man that Norm admired, General George S. Patton III, said "It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather, we should thank God that such men lived." So it should be with Norman Zuckerman.

Excerpts from the eulogy presented at Norm's memorial service in January 2022 by Commander Wayne Kirkpatrick. COL, US Army, retired, Board Chairman Chapter 2 Illinois Rolling Thunder[®], Inc.



Our Foxhole Soul Counselors (FSC) from our SBMH Chapters attend events and engage any who ask for 1:1 Soul Counseling. Not only are those who lost comrades continuing to hurt, but we must not forget their families and friends. We hear souls crying out for someone to 'Stand-by-me.' Our Foxhole Soul Counselors are there to speak with anyone suffering from a soul pain, moral injury or PTSD.

Foxhole Soul Counselors focus on faith, not religion, to restore one's whole person and to walk with them as friend, as family. Help Line (847) 378-8262. Conversations are private, names are never released and you can use call sign.

How you can reach us!

SBMH Help line - 847-378-8262

For additional information please email us at Info@militaryoutreach.org or leave us a message on our website by [clicking here](#).

Stand by me Heroes (SBMH) Chapters



Major General Mukoyama with his Sailors for Christ class at the Great Lakes Naval Station Recruit Training Center Chapel. The

General has been leading this class for 20 years, so he considers that his blood runs part blue (Navy). The class equips these recruits to go out into the fleet and live as examples of people of faith. It also enables them to deal with the rigors of deployment and potential combat. General Mukoyama is encouraged by the quality of these recruits who have volunteered to serve our nation!

Christmas at Great Lakes Naval Station –

On Christmas Day, FSC's Mildred Abonce & Zoeie Kreiner, along with their spouses and Zoeie's daughter Sarah, spent Christmas Day with Sailors at Great Lakes who were unable to get home for the holidays. We shared a wonderful meal supplied by Judy's Pizza (Mildred's family restaurant) and each Sailor was given a stocking and gifts from Support Over Stigma. We spent time fellowshipping with them and spreading the word that they are not alone. We spoke with them about Stand-By-Me-Heroes and how we support all military, Veterans and First Responders. They were excited to have some homemade treats as well.

At Rush Hospital in Chicago, nurses still talk about their feelings of guilt from the early months of treating Covid-19 patients. How they hadn't known how to best treat desperate patients. How worried they were about bringing Covid home to their own families.

Chaplain Schimmelfennig noticed that phrases nurses were using echoed those he had heard from troops who had served in combat zones.

To Help Battle Covid-19 Rush University Medical Center Borrows Tactics from Combat Veterans



Mark Schimmelfennig, Army Veteran and hospital chaplain with colleagues Dr. Kim Sangster and a nurse from Rush.

Mr. Schimmelfennig months ago noticed that phrases nurses were using echoed those he had heard from troops who had served in combat zones. Dr. Kim Sangster, the

hospital's bereavement specialist started a program called Growing Forward to bring group counseling sessions to nurses and other hospital clinicians and staff on the wards where they work. As Mr. Schimmelpfennig made his rounds, he was recruited by Dr. Sangster, to bring his skills to the pilot program she was developing.

Nurses at Rush can attend six sessions of the Growing Forward program where they learn techniques to cope with the trauma from the pandemic. One of the nurses said, "It actually brought me to tears to know that there's another group of people that feel like this, that can almost lead us out of this or show us the way, because we haven't experienced this (before the pandemic)." Another nurse said it has helped her cope with more than a year of trauma and has made her a better instructor for junior nurses. "I think I'm able to train nurses better because I have the words for what I'm processing, too....the training we have to give them now is also emotional armor and emotional resilience. That's just as important as teaching them how to place an IV or how to give the medications or how to administer oxygen."

For the past five years "Chaps" Schimmelpfennig has been the staff chaplain for a program at Rush called "The Road Home", part of a network of programs funded in part by the Wounded Warrior Project, a military advocacy group. Military Outreach USA's General Mukoyama partnered with Rush as they were establishing "The Road Home" program for Veterans.

Adapted from a Wall Street Journal article Jan 19, 2022

Support Over Stigma is one of our partners, founded by Zoeie Kreiner to reduce the suicide among veterans and first responders. Her team of volunteers recently gathered items, packed and mailed 1,500 care packages to deployed troops to remind them that they are appreciated and gave 250 gift bags to local first responders. Each care package, gift, snack and visit includes cards and letters of encouragement and resources on where to find help if they or someone they know is struggling with thoughts of suicide.

Homeless Veterans - What Can We Do?

These two words - homeless veteran - should never be in the same sentence, let alone next to each other! According to the VA there are over 40,000 homeless veterans in the US; other sources estimate upwards of 60,000. Some estimate that 1.4 million are on the verge of homelessness.

The three greatest risk factors for homeless veterans are isolation, lack of a support system and mental health issues like PTSD and Moral Injury. The lockdowns from the Covid-19 pandemic have led to a greater number of veterans losing what little social interaction they had - whether it was with a counselor, a 12-step meeting, coffee with a friend or a beer at the VFW or American Legion. They are now finding themselves more isolated, alone and stuck in their head with their stress.

How Can We Help? Try getting the veteran to talk with you. Instead of asking "How are you?", try asking these questions that may open the door to more discussion.

- *How are you taking care of yourself these days?*
- *I've been thinking about you. What's new?*
- *What's been on your mind lately?*

- *Tell me about your day.*
- *Are you holding up okay?*
- *Are you free for coffee or a call?*
- *What's bringing you joy right now?*
- *Is there anything I can help you take care of?*
- *What are your highs and lows this week?*
- *How can I support you?*

Just BE THERE for them! That is what shows you care and makes this work.

If you or someone you love is struggling with the War that followed them home, please reach out to Support Over Stigma. They will connect you to a Battle Buddy, provide resources that might interest you and remind you that you DO NOT fight alone! They are here! [Visit their website](#) or call 630-492-0308

UPCOMING EVENTS

Here are links to some events you might like to attend in the greater Chicago area:

Veterans Suicide Prevention Training: American Legion Post 36 - February 3 in Des Plaines IL 6:30 pm. Reservations are required and can be made by emailing Post 36 at americanlegion36@gmail.com. Please include your full name and phone number. The training is intended for Post Commanders, Service Officers, Veterans, Community Leaders, Public Officials and anyone concerned about the current suicide rate. The training will be presented by Kristy Bassett, LCSW Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator, Suicide Prevention Program, Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital. The program is conducted as a joint effort of the Lake County VAC (Veterans Assistance Commission) and the Lake County Health Department. [Register for this event here!](#)

Mental Health and First Aid workshop/training on February 26 at the VFW in Antioch IL 8:00 AM-5:00 PM. This workshop teaches adults how to recognize the signs and symptoms that suggest a potential mental health challenge, how to listen nonjudgmentally and give reassurance to a person who may be experiencing a mental health challenge, and how to refer a person to appropriate professional support and services.

Military Families - 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30 pm CST in person or via Zoom. Maria's Tribe, a support group for veterans' spouses, caregivers, partners and loved ones offers an opportunity for members to share personal experiences, feelings and coping strategies. Bodyworks for Vets, 1448 Old Skokie Valley Road, Suite A, Highland Park IL 60035 [Bodyworks for Vets](#) RSVP @ 312-818-9721.

Remembering Our Fallen Traveling Memorial, Arlington Heights IL May 12 to May 15. Organized by the Knights of Columbus and the Arlington Heights community, sponsors are welcome. This is a profoundly moving memorial to the 5,279 American military who died for our nation from 9/11 to present. [For more information](#)

[on the Moving Memorial click here.](#)

Be sure to stop by the Military Outreach USA tent and say "hi"!

Second annual Vets 4 Veterans and BLUE Families will be held on Saturday, June 11, 2022 at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Crystal Lake IL as part of the solution to mitigate the suicide epidemic in our military and first responder communities. Contact Robert Dorn, Senior Vice Commander of American Legion Post 171 for more information.

Jesse Brown VA in Chicago needs gently used or new coats and gloves, mostly needed for men, but also for female Veterans. Call/email Pat Gleason for more information at 312-569-6334/Patrick.Gleason@va.gov.



SALUTES SBMH MISSOURI



Toni and the Salutes SBMH Team

Toni's team and the local community continue their efforts to provide a self-supporting Community Center and residence for homeless veterans in West Plains, Missouri. The model is simple: provide an opportunity for veterans to regroup and follow a process of recovery.

The goal is not to just supply housing, but for residents to work as volunteers, take the training, work toward a job and ultimately move into their own residence and assimilate into the community.

If you would like to sponsor an SBMH project in your state and change the lives of local veterans, contact Chappy Ferrer at Military Outreach USA 877-734-4244 or ChappyFerrer@militaryoutreachusa.org



SBMH Florida

Chapter directors: Phil Jelen is in Englewood;
Rick and Leah (Gwen) McCool are in Seminole FL

Christmas Wreaths for Veterans

On December 18 at the Sarasota National Cemetery, Phil Jelen participated in the annual distribution of Christmas wreaths. On the third Saturday of December every year across our nation grateful patriots place a wreath at each veteran's grave and as they do, they say the veteran's name. Phil always hand salutes each one, reads their name aloud and thanks them for his freedom as he places the wreath at each gravestone.



Phil is a proud member of American Legion Post 113, Rotunda West, FL and VFW Post 5151 in Streamwood IL.

The Chaplain's Corner

A Message of HOPE from Chappy Ferrer, Founder of Stand-by-Me Heroes

"For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10 KJV

As a person of faith I believe the Word of God over any other. Much I do not understand, but not understanding will not cause my soul to slow. I thank God every day and work hard to stay focused in prayer, praise, reading and doing according to His ordination in my life.

When I accepted God's calling to rescue veterans, first responders and others it became clear God requested "crazy." Let me clarify. I am a paratrooper, thus filled with plenty of "crazy" which Marines relate to. I have jumped, day and night, and will continue to do so.

Today, I am a Foxhole Soul Counselor working with veterans and civilians. Some are at the point of giving up and ending their lives. However, God never gave up on me, so I will never give up on others. When a person is intent on quitting life, my soul is stirred to action. What can compare to impacting lives and sparing a family the pain and grief of this type of death? With a little help from friends anyone can survive.

In the veteran community there are at least 22 (plus) suicides per day and the numbers are increasing for first responders. This past month has been difficult knowing individuals, one close, who chose death over life. When losing a friend to suicide your heart stops, your thoughts are filled with confusion and emotion overwhelms you. There is a time to mourn, weep, then get up and walk in pain focused on saving one more soul from moral injury, post-traumatic stress, military sexual trauma or other causes of deep distress. The Airborne way is to go and complete the mission, and with good planning and training we will be successful.

Interested? You can save lives by becoming a certified Foxhole Soul Counselor. But know that you will need "a little crazy" to survive and rescue.

We are Blessed!

Contact us via email at info@militaryoutreachusa.org or call our Helpline (847) 378-8262. There is HOPE!

Leave a short message and let a Veteran return your call.

Foxhole Soul Counseling

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS to save lives of our veterans and first responders:

Many have asked for more information on the role and activities of our Foxhole Soul Counselors (FSCs). Their mission is to reduce the daily suicide rate of 22+ among veterans the a growing number of first responders.

A certified FSC offers community-based one-one-one support to active duty military, veterans and first responders We meet in public spaces - Dunkin' Donuts, McDonalds - to listen, empathize with their struggles. We offer help and best practices in a no-judgement and safe zone to those struggling with Moral Injury, Post-Traumatic Stress, Military Sexual Trauma and other stresses. We hear the call from within asking for those who can come and Stand-by-me.

For more information on the FSC program [click here](#).



Putting Your Past In Its Place

Francis "Doc" Beeman

Doc Beeman is an SBMH director in the greater Chicago area and provides pro bono biblical counsel and soul care to active military, veterans, first responders and their families. His professional education includes general and surgical medicine, clinical psychology, neuropsychology, and group & individual therapy. Serving with the MACV-SOG in Vietnam as U.S. Navy Combat Corpsman, he experienced firsthand the impact combat has on a person.

This article first appeared in our March 2021 issue, but bears repeating...

I've spent most of my life studying and practicing the medical and mental health profession. My degrees and certifications in general and surgical medicine, clinical psychology and neuropsychology have given me an insight into the complex organism we know as a human being. Later in my career I took a slight turn to the right and studied the spiritual side of being a person, which led me to my current therapeutic methodology known as biblical counseling.

Foxhole Soul Counseling is not any of the above; nor does the application of friendship, empathy, brotherhood, knowledge and wisdom require a degree or license

to apply in the life a fellow veteran who is looking for answers. Before I entered my current vocation I was a sailor, more specifically, a hospital corpsman. I joined the Navy in 1967 as things were heating up in Southeast Asia. My thinking was that if I deployed to RVN, it would be aboard ship - clean sheets/hot food - sort of assignment. I was wrong. It's a long story, so if you're interested, give me a call and we'll talk.

My assignment with MACV-SOG brought me to the Vietnam/Cambodian border, and a ton of grief. What I experienced there, and the 50 years I've spent sorting it all out, brings us to why I'm here right now. I want to help you take the success you've experienced sorting out your own "stuff," the empathy you have for a brother or sister in arms, and apply a few approaches I've learned to help accelerate their healing.

[In this column] we will be discussing the application of a unique mindset and approach to caring for one another. The role of Foxhole Soul Counselor is fundamentally different than what most one-on-one "sessions" provide, because you - the provider - are different. It is true; you have never walked in the boots of that man or woman sitting next to you, but I'm willing to bet that you have a pair of boots that look a lot like the ones they are wearing. They know that, too, and that makes a difference. If they're stuck in the mud right now, they know you've been in a similar spot. Now you're in a better place, and you're here to help them out of their unpleasant spot. One of my favorite books reminds me that "a brother was born for adversity" (Psalm 17). If you're still reading this, it is highly likely that you are that brother/sister who was born for the adversity that the man or woman you will meet is battling. And just as on the battlefield we fought so that no man/woman would be left behind and alone, so you are called today to fight alongside them and bring them to a safe and better place. We're in this together - welcome to the fight!

Anxiety

Dr. Leigh Sawtelle, SBMH, North Carolina. She has a Ph.D. in psychology and is a licensed minister. Dr. Leigh has worked with an ambulance service, served in a head trauma/rehab unit and assisted-living homes as well as 1:1 counseling and patient care. Her passions include the special needs community, veterans, autistic individuals and rescuing pets.



The definition of anxiety is the fear of the unknown. And right now we are in a time when everything feels unknown, so anxiety is a normal emotion. The biggest question caregivers and ministers ask is, "How do I minister to so many with today's social limitations?" Due to social distancing, wearing face masks and not hugging, the personal touch is not so 1:1 anymore. What can we do to connect with those in need?

How do we care for the veterans, their families, those who are homeless or deployed? How do we care for our patients or families who cannot be with loved ones while they are dying? How do we care for this and the next generation? How do we calm the anxiety, the fear that rises that is the new norm? How can we help when we ourselves are feeling the same anxiety? Psalm 56:3-4 tells us, "When I am afraid, I will trust in God. In God I will praise His word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do to me." How many times a day do I say this prayer? As many times as needed!

When anxiety comes a-calling, have a list of what to do. Take a walk, watch funny animal YouTube videos, listen to K-Love, breathe ... learn and teach self-mindfulness. Remember reading a real book? Listening to real albums, taking real walks without self-help podcasts playing in our ears? Enjoy your pets, food, saying "hi" to strangers. Compliment people in stores for their shoes or their smiles. This is how we minister in today's world. A new bed for a vet, a welcome basket on top of that bed. God will show you your way of ministering in this media-drier, over-stimulated world. Are you listening?

Need Help?

SBMH Help line - 847-378-8262

**For additional information please contact us at
Info@militaryoutreach.org or email us on our website by [clicking here](#).**

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