



Military Outreach USA

Stand By Me Heroes

3020 Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062

SUMMER 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

The season is changing. In fact, it is flashing by here in Chicago with summer temperatures into the 90s. Stick around; if you don't like it, it will change tomorrow.

My wife and I recently attended a performance of the "Sound of Music." It was a beautiful production in a theatre in the round with wonderful singers and choreography. We invited a 92-year-old widow of an Air Force Veteran who my wife voluntarily serves six days a week. As we were enjoying the performance, I had a totally unexpected reaction when I was moved to tears with the inspirational songs, especially "Climb Every Mountain." Why did I have such a reaction? As I was in the moment, I related the story line of the Austrian reaction to the Nazi takeover of their homeland to what is going on today in the Ukraine with the unprovoked invasion by the Russians. And then I thought of

the sacrifices and courage of our men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States of America who have fought in service to our nation from the Revolutionary War to the present. What has caused our citizens to rise up in service to their nation often in foreign lands with no purpose of conquering others, but rather to defend our friends and our homeland?

The United States of America is the most successful multi-racial society in the history of the world through the creation of a nation based not on individual ethnic or racial identities but on the revolutionary concept of a nation of free individuals; it is a republic based on three key principles embodied in our nation's founding documents. The first key is a belief in a Creator who bestowed unalienable rights to all humanity. Second is liberty, the freedom of individuals to determine their own destiny with limited government safety and security functions, but with guaranteed individual rights. The third key foundational principle is a republic representing the interests of all individuals and states.

Let us keep these principles in mind as we honor the memory of our fallen service members and as we continue our programs and activities to support our active military, veterans, first responders and their families



A message from Chappy

Chappy Ferrer
Executive Director & Operations

Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP)

Our mission continues to positively impact our veterans and first responders guarding the gates of freedom locally and abroad. No matter your faith, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or age we honor your service as a grateful nation.

Military Outreach USA serves communities through two key programs. Please take a few minutes and go onto our website [MILITARY OUTREACH USA.org](https://www.militaryoutreachusa.org) to listen to a video from our founder and CEO MG (retired) James H. Mukoyama for an overview of what we are doing for our nation's heroes.

Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP). We are proud to have provided **1,335,571** move-in-essentials, **2,290** beds and helped over **50,000** veterans to date and expect that number to rise dramatically by the end of 2022 with your help and support. After a temporary pause of providing *Beds For Vets* due to inflation and record demand, we will soon resume thanks to the generous donations from this grateful nation.

Also under our VEHP program we have an excellent team managing our ***Move-In-Essential (MIE) project***. They partner with local houses of worship, corporations and community organizations to collect the basic essentials needed to move into an apartment - personal hygiene products, cleaning materials, pots, pans and dishes to name a few. After a slow down due to Covid, we are happy to see renewed efforts to provide these “Welcome Home” gifts to veterans who have qualified to transition into housing.

Stand-by-me Heroes Program. This unique program focuses on actions to reduce the number of 22+ veterans' suicides per day and the rising number among our first responders. We train and certify individuals to engage veterans and first responders one-on-one. These heroes have issues from post-traumatic stress, moral injury, rape and other traumas and are pleading within for someone to “Stand-by-me.” Our certified ***Foxhole Soul Counselors*** are the after-hours team who meet at our corporate offices (Dunkin Donuts) to listen and empathize; we DO NOT provide medical assistance. However our one-on-one approach has helped many who were on the precipice struggling;. by walking together we averted tragedies that could have negatively impacted family and community.

Volunteers are needed to become Foxhole Soul Counselors (FSC) We are recruiting veterans, first responders, counselors, physicians, chaplains and others who can be a friend to individuals struggling with traumas. The solution is simple as those in need of help are provided an FSC to listen, emphasize and guard that person’s mind-body-soul. Simplicity is the solution, not just a monthly clinical solution that offers one day counseling and drugs. If interested send an email to Sue.Brown@militaryoutreachusa.org and get involved.

Partners are needed. We continue to recruit volunteers who have a heart to take on a project such as our SBMH or VEHP programs in their area. We are hoping Posts like the American Legion, Combat Veterans, Disabled American Veterans, Rolling Thunder, Veterans of Foreign Wars or others will partner with us across the nation and change lives through action not talk. We can assist you to build a team.

Suicide Prevention. Any organization interested in hosting a Great Lakes Suicide Prevention Workshop contact Sue.Brown@militaryoutreachusa.org. Veteran and civilian organizations can partner with us to sponsor a suicide workshop in their area. What is needed is a facility for instruction, sponsoring individuals who attend and providing breakfast and lunch. The workshop can be hosted on a Saturday and Sunday.

We are Blessed!

Philip Chappy Ferrer
Executive Director & OPS
<https://www.militaryoutreachusa.org/>
(224) 434 – 9207



**We welcome Leah Gwen McCool
Veteran Sergeant, US Air Force
to our Military Outreach USA
Board of Directors.**

Leah McCool is a high school teacher in a private school in Pinellas County, Florida. A graduate of Liberty University, she holds a Bachelor of Science in Education and a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT). As a mother of four children, her highest calling, she believes children are a gift from God and that all children have the right to learn, in safe and nurturing environments.

Born in Huntsville, Alabama, Leah appreciates her roots where she learned to respect authority, developed integrity, and gained tenacity from family members who invested themselves in her life. Faith and family have been and continue to be essential elements to success.

Leah answered the call to serve in the United States Air Force and credits the military for the discipline and motivation that led her to become a non-commissioned officer (NCO) at Vandenberg AFB, CA. As a military veteran, married to a career Marine who served as a drill instructor for enlisted and officer personnel, a mother of a Marine, and mother-in-law to a Marine officer, Leah is passionate about military matters. She understands the military way of life and values all who have served or currently serve in the United States Armed Forces and their families. Freedom is not free; it is gained and maintained through sacrifice.

Leah's philosophy holds that people are to be valued, respected, encouraged and elevated in mind, body, soul and spirit. Compassion and empathy are motivators for positive change and growth. Education is life-long, and a teachable spirit is a prerequisite for success. Her greatest joys in life are three perfect granddaughters, who inspire her to reach higher and be the best version of herself, created in the image of God.

Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP)



Beds-for-Vets Program

Our Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program includes our Beds-for-Vets program. Since our effort began in 2016, we have supplied **2,290 beds** to veterans in 19 states, thanks to the support of people like you!

Funds for these beds come to us from a grateful nation - individuals, schools, VSOs, civic, social and faith-based 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.

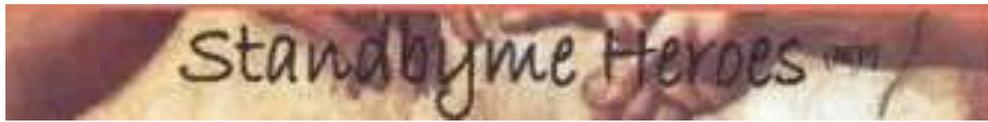
We recently received a \$20,000 grant from an anonymous donor which will enable us to resume this program soon. Thank you to all who hold this program in prayer and to those of you who financially support this way of honoring the men and women who served us so well.

Move-in-Essentials Collections

Houses of worship and other organizations, individuals 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 \$1,335,578 to veterans from the Jesse Brown, Edward J. Hines and James Lovell VAs in the greater Chicago area.

Thank you to St. Emily Parish in Mount Prospect IL for their recent donation of \$775 worth of Move-In-Essentials and to First Presbyterian Church in Arlington Heights, Immanuel Lutheran Church in Crystal Lake and Holy Family Church for their upcoming or recent MIE collections.

Want more information on how to do this in your area? Leave a voice message for Sue Brown at 877-734-4244 or email JimDunne@militaryoutreachusa.org



How you can reach us!

SBMH Help line - 877-734-4244

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

Five new **Substance Use Disorder Critical Support Tools** (CST) are available. Click here for more [information](#)

Thank you to the 30+ people who have donated \$4,496.58 to the **Adam Brown memorial fund** to help reduce the number of suicides among our nation's first responders, veterans and active military. We are grateful for the life and memories of Adam and will use these funds carefully to provide intervention, training and awareness of moral injury, PTSD, depression and other issues which can lead to suicide.

Stand by me Heroes (SBMH) Chapters



SBMH Northern Illinois

Contact us

Voice Mail: 877-734-4244

3020 Milwaukee, Northbrook IL 60020

General Mukoyama met in May with Commander Paul Dillard, American Legion and Commander Wayne Fisher, American Legion Department of Illinois at the Hines VA Fisher House in Maywood, IL.

Fisher Houses offer between 7 and 21 suites and can accommodate 16 to 42 family members. They feature a spacious common kitchen, laundry facilities, dining room and living room with a library and toys for children. Newer houses are 100% wheelchair accessible and include elevators. A Fisher House is a temporary residence and is not a treatment facility, hospice or counseling center. For more information and locations across the country, click [here](#)



Remembering Our Fallen Traveling Photographic Memorial

Remembering Our Fallen photographic memorial arrived in Arlington Heights IL for three days in May. This profoundly moving memorial displays the photos of nearly 5,000 US military from around our country who died in the service of our nation after 9/11. For more information on this traveling memorial and their schedule of events across the country [click here](#)

All memorials honor veterans with their picture, name, rank and where they served; all attendees are in an honoring and solemn mood paying respect, leaving a memento and a prayer. However, this



memorial was different. Many civilians, veterans and first responders were immediately moved to tears as emotions could not be contained. This memorial features individual photos of the fallen soldiers and at the bottom right of each photo was another picture that clearly provided insight into that hero's life: The second photo featured a picture of their baby, wife, husband, parents or high school photo. This served to "humanize" the soldiers - these were the boys who mowed your lawns, the girls who babysat your own kids, who sang in your church choir...



Military Outreach USA joined the 4th Degree Illinois Knights of Columbus in a moving memorial to honor our fallen heroes who sacrificed their lives in military service after September 11, 2001. Juan Huerta was Master of Ceremonies and Chappy Ferrer led a non-denominational team including Reverend Brian Simpson and Scholar SH Nazir Chahin. Speakers included Katie Stack, MG (ret) James H. Mukoyama, Colonel (ret))Wayne Kirkpatrick, Mayor Tom Hayes, Jean Harris and CWO (ret) Ty Simmons.



As we walked the memorial with visitors, they talked about the sacrifices it takes to guard our gates of freedom. Foxhole Soul Counselors engaged with others who were also showing emotion. No one could look at these pictures and not be moved. The success of this event was expressed by the many visitors, many of them civilians, who left with a greater respect for those who gave their all for this nation's freedom.

Each day ended in prayer. We continue to pray for the families of these brave heroes whose children are now in their twenties and thirties and have never forgotten their loved one. Our heroes will never die as long as we continue to remember them and tell their stories.





Support Over Stigma, one of our partners founded by Zoeie Kreiner, focuses on reducing the number of suicides among veterans and first responders. Her team of volunteers provides care packages to deployed troops and first responders to remind them that they are appreciated. 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.

Volunteer to donate items or pack boxes in Geneva, IL. [For more information, click here.](#) or call 630-492-0308

First-responders, active duty and veterans struggling with anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, moral injury? We can help! Call 630-492-0308.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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



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. Major General Mukoyama and Medal of Honor recipient Allen J Lynch will be guest speakers for this family event for veterans and first responders. Contact Robert Dorn, Senior Vice Commander of American Legion Post 171 [\(815\) 459-0481](tel:8154590481) for more information. [Or click here](#)



June 23 and 24 Summer Standdown at General Jones Armory, 5200 S Cottage Grove, Chicago. 7:30 am-3:00 pm. Contact Patrick.gleason@va.gov or 312-569-6334 for more information.



July 7-10 The Wall That Heals, Chicago Heights, IL
Go to <https://www.vvmf.org/The-Wall-That-Heals-TourSchedule> for info about the traveling Vietnam Memorial and dates and locations across the country



Fifth Annual Combined Veterans Luncheon & Expo and Job Fair: July 16 Noon-6 pm. Morton West High School Football Field/Track, 2400 Home Avenue, Berwyn IL. All Vets eat free with proof of service.
[Combined Veterans of Berwyn](#)



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.



Salutes SBMH Missouri



Toni and the SBMH Team in West Plains, Missouri

Welcome to Facility Directors Kevin and Bethany Falkner! 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 center also added a country music and dance on Saturdays in the community room. This not only helps with donations, but includes the surrounding communities.

We continue to pray and lift up this West Plains SBMH Veterans Community Center as they provide many supports as part of the recovery process and eventually toward full-time employment . Strong partnerships include Pine Bluff VA, Sheriff's department, combat veterans and others.



SBMH Florida



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



Chapter Directors Rick and Gwen (Leah) McCool are in Seminole FL

South Carolina



Eunice Morris and her team have 1,200 members on their Facebook page who are involved in helping Veterans transitioning into housing,

Veterans are Heroes,

one of our new partners, has been faithfully serving veterans in the Greenville and Spartanburg areas of South Carolina and we are grateful for them!

They typically provide Move-in-Essential items (quilts, towels, dishes, pots and pans, food for the first few days, toilet paper, paper towels, personal hygiene items, dish soap and hand soap, etc.) for about 50 veterans each year as "Welcome Home" gifts from a grateful nation.

The Chaplain's Corner

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

HOPE is the most essential ingredient for mind, body and soul. Lose all hope and the outcome for veterans (22+) and first responders and all will never end in victory. HOPE is the only ingredient that supplies strength from deep within whose output strengthens the mind and body. Our challenge is to stand by our brothers, sisters, friends feeding the godliness and HOPE that surpasses our understanding.

A team known as **Foxhole Soul Counselors** are experienced in this kind of Hope that delivers and overcomes any trauma. Go onto our website at www.militaryoutreachusa.org and let's get your team certified and equipped. Help us expand our partnerships with houses of worship, veteran organizations, active duty and first responders and change the outcome of lives, the outcome of our communities, the outcome of our nation. Severe grief is not the loss of hope, but we can feel like all is lost. We do not have a choice as the darkness will come inconveniently. However, we must walk through dark valleys and experience the states of grief, denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance though not in this order and certainly we will experience grief across multiple stages. We will cry often and at inconvenient times. We will wake throughout the night for a while. We will grow angry at God, but know that our Father understands. We may fall into

depression, and we need a brother or sister to watch and help. After a cycle of time, we may accept the past and have an opportunity to volunteer and give onto others experiencing grief for the first time.

Our hearts and prayers go out to the families of Uvalde, Texas and we extend our prayer to our law enforcement who, like our soldiers, run toward chaos. It is ok to openly grieve as this is what heroes do and it reminds our children we are human.

Now, for a simple solution. There are millions of retired police and veterans and many continue to volunteer to help our communities daily. To those of us veterans and first responders who are managing our post-traumatic stresses and other traumas, DO NOT accept any opinion that states violence is a complex issue. This is a deflection and cowardly. When we except mediocrity, we become mediocre.

Our military have seen much in war and continue to survive and manage their memories. We know how to manage these post-traumatic stresses with a little help from our friends and Foxhole Soul Counselors. We know there are millions of veterans and retired cops who can secure any parameter. Throughout our communities these retired heroes would gladly walk around any school to ensure the safety of all the school children. Remember the neighborhood watch teams that would walk neighborhoods with a radio and ensure safety? Complexity is a phrase used by too many politicians more concerned with an agenda and not focused on 'We the people.'

Brothers and sisters, gather together and start pushing common sense solutions and return our communities to safer days. To my brothers and sisters who are NCOs, just as we are the backbone of the military, let's stretch and exercise our way back to an activity we are most familiar with. Start by walking the parameter of a school, speak with local law enforcement and do not accept no for an answer. Gather your brothers and sisters and bring the safety back that we had in the last century. All it takes is one person to lead the way. Stand too!

Let's walk as one, into a mission of restoration, safety and HOPE. Stand at the ready and call (877) 734-4244 for assistance. Like the Ukrainians, stand too as we are greater in number than the evil. Also, know our Foxhole Soul Counselors will assist and together we will provide HOPE! To strengthen mind-body-soul we can stand too, together. If you need some guidance and hope, contact us and allow our Foxhole Soul Counselors to fulfill their mission which is to stand-by-me, stand-by our heroes throughout our nation.

We are Blessed!

Contact us via email at info@militaryoutreachusa.org or call our Helpline (847) 734-4244. There is HOPE!

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

CONTINUING EDUCATION: Foxhole Soul Counseling



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 ((877)734-4244. Conversations are private, names are never released and you can use call sign.

Recalling our Stories:

Healing, Surviving, Transforming

*by Oluwatoyin Olabisi Hines, LCPC, NCC
Brigade Chaplain, Army, Retired
FSC, SBMH Illinois Chapter*



Enough is enough!

Enough is enough! So there I was.... imagining a life worth living, and then I had to make a life-changing decision. It wasn't as if life wasn't already changing. If we think about it, we're always going through change. This time it was enough.

In the midst of change and transition we often reflect on our quality of life and our values in life; some of us even set goals. I've learned in the midst of my transition that *living by my goals only leads to temporary satisfaction*. I accomplish something and move on to the next. I've learned that *when I live by my values, I'm more fulfilling*. I decided in my transition that enough was enough; enough of making decisions about my healing, my career path, about my life..... they only led to temporary satisfaction.

In the midst of change and transition, instead of saying “enough is enough,” I began to say “*I am enough.*” I began to deeply explore my values. What Am I living for? What am I changing for? What is the transition about? What's the purpose of all of these experiences, pleasant and traumatic? Enough is enough. How do I align my values to live my “best values-driven life?” I began to reassess and enlightenment directed me to living a life aligned with my hopes and dreams, my passions and desires, and wish- fulfillment. Healing was authentic, deep and real. I became alive again. Even in the midst of transition and change, enough was enough.

I am enough. As you journey through your life experiences, as you flow through the process of change, as you trust the transitions, ask yourself, What values are you living by? What values align with living your best life? Remember *you are enough*, when enough is enough. If you are, or if you know someone who is a survivor of sexual assault, or any military trauma reach out for support. We are here.

UNKNOWN

Worthwhile Women

*Leah Gwen McCool, SBMH Florida Chapter
Co-Director with Rick McCool
Veteran Sergeant, US Air Force
MAT in education from Liberty University*



The wedding planner, the head of school, the surgeon, the pilot, and the manager at the local fast-food restaurant all have something in common; these individuals must plan for the future. Most people make plans for the future. Individuals check the 10-day weather forecast to determine the best time for the sporting event or the weekend get-away. The best plans can often change because of **THE UNKNOWN [emphasis added]**. Several books offer guidelines for planning, but the bottom line remains the same, the unknown is unknown. There are no limitations to the unknown. The unknown can be anticipated or may arrive suddenly, but the unknown or unexpected happens to everyone. There is not a secret formula, or a one size fits all remedy for the unknown, but there are truths to hold onto during the storm.

The first truth is that **you are NOT alone**. Someone somewhere has endured or is currently going through a similar life event. Allow yourself *TIME*, time to remain silent, time to cry, time to be angry, more time to cry, time to process, time to be frustrated, time to remember, time to grieve, time to talk if you feel like talking, and time to mend or heal. Allow yourself to be cared for by others. Your pain is real, and your suffering is heartfelt. Others may not fully understand your heartbreak, but many will demonstrate empathy and offer support, let them help. You may have a friend who knows that you may find comfort going for rides in the country, or simply sharing a cup of tea or coffee, but when you need time together or alone, be honest. It is acceptable to grieve according to *you*, because as much as fingerprints are unique, grieving is unique to every individual.

The second truth is that **time does NOT heal all wounds**. In time, physical wounds may heal, but some mental and emotional wounds require more than time for healing. Many people find peace and comfort in their faith. Some people develop relationships with others in similar situations and join or provide support groups to help others. Many individuals inspire and encourage others through non-profit organizations committed to enhancing the lives of those in need. You have a purpose, and your experiences, trials, and triumphs can inspire others.

The third truth is that **YOU ARE LOVED**. I can only share what I know, and I know that you are a person of great worth, YOU MATTER. Your fingerprints, your voice and your smile are unique. Your smile can light up a room, your voice can speak words of encouragement to someone and your kindness is needed in the world today. YOU are one of the most resilient creatures on planet Earth! You may be down, but you are NOT out! You will never know how important you are to all you encounter, and you have been created to do GOOD WORKS! You are a jewel, you are priceless, and you can and will make a difference for the good. Be kind to yourself, be patient with yourself, and forgive yourself so that you may be a light for someone in need. From the wisdom of a Dove dark chocolate wrapper, "Spread kindness like confetti!"

Need Help?

SBMH Help line - 847-734-4244

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

To receive our newsletter electronically every other month, click on the Newsletter box on our website at [Military Outreach USA](#)

If you're interested in helping out, [***DONATE HERE***](#)