Facing a bright future – because of donors like YOU.

NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY®

Serving Sailors, Marines, and their families
Society donors are generous. In 2016, your charitable gifts to Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society totaled more than $17.9 million! Your support, and a $10 million withdrawal from our Reserve Fund, meant the Society was able to provide $45.1 million in interest free loans and grants to more than 56,000 active duty and retired Sailors, Marines, and their families. We never turn away a client in need and expect the Society’s financial assistance to be at similar levels this year.

2017 has been a year of financial challenges for Sea Service families and your Society. Evacuation and recovery from floods, wildfires, and Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria resulted in more than $1 million in disaster assistance for more than 1,700 clients. The collisions of USS Fitzgerald and USS McCain saw Society volunteers respond with quick action to ensure Sailors had access to free clothing, uniforms, and personal items as they departed their ships upon return to port.

The Society plays a role in our nation’s readiness. We provide a lifeline when service members face the unique financial challenges of military life, deployments, and Mother Nature. We provide sound budget counseling and access to community resources when preparing for marriage, children, and the end of life. We also save lives. But we cannot do it without your support, especially as we close out 2017.

As the Dow has hit record levels in recent months, this may be an attractive year to consider charitable gifts of stocks, mutual funds and other appropriate non-cash gifts. Establishing a charitable gift annuity with the Society may also be of interest if you:

- Want fixed payments for life that will not fluctuate.
- Have assets that would be advantageous to give away during your lifetime, such as cash or funds earning low interest rates, or appreciated securities.
- Want reduced current income taxes with an income tax charitable deduction.

In 2018, we promise to keep you informed of how your support is making a difference for Sailors, Marines, and their families.

Best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a healthy and prosperous 2018.

Sincerely,

Admiral Steve Abbot, U.S. Navy (Retired)
President and Chief Executive Officer

Photo: Meyer Inspired Photography

Your Support Saves Lives

No matter how many times it’s happened, “one of the most terrifying things is to answer the phone or read a text from someone who says, ‘I’ve got a loaded weapon in my hand and you need to give me a reason to live,’” explained NMCRS Director of Nursing, Tammy Ackiss. Twenty American veterans die from suicide each day, according to the VA. Veterans are more than 20% more likely to attempt suicide than the general population.

This tragic statistic, and the experiences of many NMCRS visiting nurses, is the reason why the Society felt the need to provide suicide prevention training for all NMCRS visiting nurses – those who support combat-served Marines, Sailors, and their caregivers; and those supporting mothers with newborns, elderly retirees, and widows. “Our combat-served client population has a higher risk of suicide due to post-traumatic stress (PTS), traumatic brain injury (TBI), or simply depression related to their own physical or emotional losses - or the loss of someone they cared about,” said Ackiss. “Our visiting nurses deal with suicidal ideation frequently. We knew we needed to equip them with the training and tools to respond appropriately.”

While suicidal thoughts or actions may be more common among combat-served veterans, our traditional visiting nurses must also be vigilant about the warning signs of suicide, especially among new moms suffering from post-partum depression. “Currently, one of our visiting nurses is working with a service member and his family. His wife’s post-partum depression went undiagnosed and she took her own life. Unfortunately, they didn’t know about the Society’s visiting nurse program until it was too late. We don’t want that to happen again.”
had an argument with his wife, and she was planning to leave him and take their son. She also learned that his medications had recently been changed causing him increased physical and emotional pain. “Several times, he became agitated and hung up, but he kept calling me back” recalled Kotora.

“I encouraged him to talk about his current medical symptoms, and about his young son,” she said. “I pointed out that his pain and inability to sleep were acute and, with proper medical care, he could get some relief. We talked about his son, and his concern about not having a future with his son. Again, this was the ‘turning point’ in the conversation. He’d already told me how much he wanted to be with his son, that he wanted to live but he needed relief from his emotional and physical pain. I repeated these statements back to him to validate that I was listening – another skill I learned from the ASIST training.”

Eventually, Kotora’s client pulled his car off the road, threw his weapon out the window, and surrendered. Because Kotora had been communicating with the police, the officers allowed him to surrender peacefully and Kotora was able to facilitate a quick transfer of her client from police custody to a mental health treatment center. “Prior to the ASIST training, I believe I would’ve handled this situation very differently. I probably would’ve delayed contacting 911 because I knew they were already engaged in this incident. Instead, I made the decision to call them so they could listen in on my client’s conversation with me. I believe that was a significant factor in his safety and surrender.”

Recently, an NMCRS office received a call from a young military wife. She told our volunteer that her husband was in the field training with his unit and she was “planning to drive her car into a tree.” Our volunteer caseworker kept the client on the phone, while the visiting nurse, Yani Dilag, called 911. The dispatcher immediately directed the local police to the client’s home. Dilag had been working with this military spouse and knew she had a history of PTS. The local police arrived, calmed the client, and took her to the nearby hospital where she received treatment. “I think this situation went like a drill,” said Dilag, “because I was prepared – thanks to the ASIST training made possible by USAA Bank.”

Making a difference and saving lives — thanks to donors like you.
When Mike Nicholson met Katie, in 2013, he was in the habit of sleeping all day and bar-hopping at night. “I wouldn’t go out of my house unless the sun was down,” he recalled. Mike learned to navigate the Tampa, FL nightlife in his wheelchair – the mode of transportation he had transitioned to after spending two years at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center recovering from a fateful step on a 40-pound IED while on a mission in Afghanistan in 2011. Mike lost both legs and his left arm below the elbow.

“It was a horrible time,” Mike said. “I was angry and self-destructive. I didn’t have a direction or plan for my life. I felt like there was no future for me.”

Fortunately, Katie could envision a future for Mike. “Before my injury, I’d always played sports. Growing up in Florida, I swam before I could walk,” Mike said. “Katie pushed me to get back into physical fitness. I started going to the gym and swam an hour every day.” In 2016, now married, the couple attended the Invictus Games in Orlando, Florida where many of the participants – veterans from around the globe with combat injuries - encouraged him to get involved. Mike began to find purpose and a sense of accomplishment from competing in swimming, track, basketball, and golf against other wounded warriors. Mike also credits Callie, Katie’s 12-year-old daughter, and also an athlete, with motivating him to train.

Yet, daily life still challenged Mike - life as a triple amputee can be physically and mentally daunting.

Katie is Mike’s caregiver. “My husband had been through a really rough period,” recalled Katie, “when we found out I was pregnant.” “MSgt Michael Carter, my husband’s USMC District Injured Support Coordinator (DISC) from the USMC Wounded Warrior Regiment, knew we needed help and connected us with Stacey Fisher, a Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Combat Casualty Assistance Visiting Nurse,” she continued.

“Since day one, Stacey has been super helpful in all aspects of our lives—mental and physical health, emotional stability, and just guiding us in the right direction to get our lives in order,” said Katie. “We’d try to do something, then get behind, and Stacey would help us.”

Fisher’s moral support has been particularly meaningful for Katie. “Having someone to talk to, someone I can call anytime - someone who will listen to me when times are tough, is important.” Since Mike and Katie’s baby boy, Sawyer, was born last spring, Fisher’s emotional, medical, and logistical support have been invaluable. “I can get overwhelmed at times,” Katie said. “And when my son was first born, I was really overwhelmed and emotional. I knew I could call Stacey anytime and ask her about anything. That brought me peace of mind.”

“Stacey has really provided an extra set of hands,” Katie said. “I couldn’t have traveled to Chicago to support Mike in the DoD-sponsored Wounded Warrior Games without Stacey. I was there with two kids to take care of, while my husband and the other athletes stayed in a different hotel. Stacey helped me keep it together. Having Stacey on our side is like having an extra tool in our toolbox.” Mike adds, “Knowing Stacey was helping Katie helped me concentrate on my events.”

While the Nicholson family effectively manages their health care and medical needs, there are times when they need additional resources, health care education and emotional support.

“They know I’m readily available to assist when needs arise,” Stacey explained.

“A lot of military families need additional support, someone they can talk to, someone who can help them come up with solutions.” Katie said.

At the 2017 Warrior Games in Chicago, Illinois, Mike earned six gold medals—three each in swimming and track, as well as silver and bronze medals in track, swimming, and basketball. He even set records with his times in the 800-meter wheelchair racing and 50-meter freestyle swimming events. Because of donors like you, this Marine and his family are facing a bright future.

Watch Mike’s recent interview on NBC and hear more about his success at the 2017 Warrior Games:
www.legacy.planwithnmcrs.org/mike-nbc-video
www.legacy.planwithnmcrs.org/mike-abc-video
Providing more than $1 million to 1,700 Sea Service members and their families affected by natural disasters in 2017

25 Runners Raise More than $28,000 for NMCRS
355 donors supported these runners and their names were listed on signs carried by cheering family and friends along the 26.2 mile course.

Thank you, team NMCRS!

United in Service
One of the benefits you’ve earned as a current or former member of the military is access to high-quality, low-cost life insurance—available through Navy Mutual. Protect your family and the ones you love. Get a Quote today by visiting navymutual.org

Insuring Those Who Serve
A Living Legacy: Captain Celine Finn, the Navy, and the Society

I t was 1950 when a young nurse in New Haven, Conn., saw a newspaper article about a Navy recruiter in town. Celine Finn thought she’d look into it.

“I had a nice talk with the recruiter,” Celine says. “She told me I’d go all over the world. I thought the opportunity to travel would be exciting.”

And just like that, Celine was off on an adventure – one that would span almost three decades. She started at the Naval Hospital in Newport, R.I., then she received orders to the Naval Hospital in San Diego, Calif. “There were 12 other nurses with me when I joined,” she says. “We felt very honored to be members of the Navy Nurse Corps.”

Then, it was off to Inchon, South Korea, aboard the hospital ship, USS Consolation (AH-15). That was at the end of the Korean Conflict. “We took care of Sailors and Marines,” Celine says, and we took care of some of the people in that area. We were a goodwill ship.”

After Korea, other stateside assignments followed, including Naval Air Station Quonset Point, R.I., and duty at Boston College School of Nursing, where Celine earned her bachelor’s degree.

The whirlwind adventure continued. Celine served in Sigonella and Catania in Sicily, Yokosuka, Japan, and in Puerto Rico.

All in all, she served in 13 duty stations. Having entered the Navy as an Ensign, she rose to the rank of Captain. “I had a wonderful career,” she says. “I would never have had those experiences if I hadn’t applied to the Navy Nurse Corps.”

In Japan, for example, she didn’t just learn the culture, she lived it. “I rented a small home,” Celine says. “I slept on a futon, and I heated the house with a kerosene heater. I lived like the Japanese. My landlord didn’t speak English, and I spoke very little Japanese, but we were able to communicate.”

She wasn’t far from Tokyo, and made frequent trips there by Bullet Train. During the Christmas season, stores were decorated and festive. “When they’d wrap a gift for you, they’d carefully miter the corners,” Celine says. “It had to be absolutely perfect. And they were – the packages looked absolutely beautiful!”

Celine even had the chance to see the 1972 Winter Olympics in Sapporo, Japan. “I was the Chief Nurse’s assistant,” Celine says, “and she suggested that I attend the Olympics. That was wonderful – so exciting.”

On one of her many stateside tours, Celine served at the Naval Hospital in Pensacola, Fla., during the Vietnam era. “We received patients from Vietnam,” Celine says. “There were such terrible injuries. It was heartbreaking.”

Around this time, she also had the opportunity for more education, and attended the University of Washington School of Nursing. She earned a master’s degree in Maternal Child Health.

With all the different countries and assignments in her career, one constant for Celine was the Society. “I knew some of the nurses working for the Society who went out to visit our patients in their homes,” Celine says, “I thought they did outstanding work.”

Because of her admiration for the Society and her love for the Navy, Celine has always donated to the Society. Recently, she spoke with her financial advisor about a special gift.

“I told my advisor that I appreciated everything the Navy did for me and what a wonderful career I had, and that I wanted to give back and say thank you,” Celine says. So, she and her advisor set up a very generous gift of stock to the Society. This is a special act of generosity that will help Sea Service members and their families.

“I’m happy to do it,” she says. “I’ll always want to support the Society.” This is Celine’s legacy – serving her country, caring for others, helping however she can. We’re proud that she’s part of our community. Her Navy career demonstrates a heartfelt commitment to duty and mission. Her gift honors each and every one who serves.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society’s Legacy® Newsletter is published three times each year. Its articles help donors understand the impact of their gifts. It also informs active duty and retired Navy and Marine Corps members and their families about the programs and services available to them. We value your privacy. The Society does not rent or sell names, addresses, or e-mails to third parties.
Jean Beardsley’s Gift: Celebrating Family, Community, and Service

It was a place and time that are almost forgotten now. The year, 1917. The place, a rural community outside of Portland, Oregon.

This is where Jean was born. And where we can trace a lifetime of devotion to family and community that led to her generous support for the Society. Throughout Jean’s life, her values were celebrated in good times and clung to in the depths of The Great Depression.

“The best part of her childhood,” says Jean’s niece, Kathy McCabe, “was in a tiny, remote town in Oregon called Pedee.” Jean’s dad rented a farm there.

“There were fields and pastures surrounding the house,” Jean would write later, “and a forested area some distance below the house where a branch of the McTimmons Creek ran. It was small, sparkling, cool, and shaded by trees.”

They were a small, close family in a rural community. It’s where Jean and her brothers learned what it means to stick together through thick and thin.

Sadly, the farm didn’t work out, so the family had to leave their idyllic life in Pedee, moving to Milwaukee, Ore., then a small farming community. They wanted a home more than anything, but the Depression held them trapped in poverty.

But with hard work, they finally bought a home in Milwaukee, where Jean grew up. Graduating from Milwaukee High School in 1935, Jean spent a year at Pacific University, then transferred to a business college in Portland, becoming a legal secretary. She married her husband, Loren Beardsley, in 1941, and in 1953, they adopted John, their only child.

The family moved to Seattle, Wash. in 1960. Loren did well as a salesman, and the family prospered. Soon, they moved to Medina, Wash., where Jean worked as secretary of the St. Thomas Episcopal Church. After that, it was off to La Conner, Wash., where Jean was active in the St. Paul Episcopal Church.

Their son, John, joined the Marines right out of high school. Suddenly Jean was a military mom, and she sensed that the Marines would be good for her son. “Jean always felt that it was probably the best four years of his life,” Kathy says.

John served in Vietnam and Okinawa, among other duty stations. He believed the Marines stood for something important, and he liked that. The high point of his service came when he was selected to be a member of the honor guard on a Marine helicopter for the Apollo 18 splashdown. It was a moment in history and a moment John always treasured.

After Jean’s husband passed away in 1998, she began thinking about her future and her son’s. So she created a plan that included a gift for the Society while providing for John. He received a stipend from the estate, and then, after both John and Jean passed away, the remainder of the estate became Jean’s generous gift to the Society. In this way, Jean was able to take care of her son and, at the same time, show her compassion for Sea Service families.

“I think Jean gave the gift to the Society because she wanted a way to express her fondness for the Marines because of what they did for John,” Kathy says. “And knowing about Jean and her sense of family and community, I think she’d see the gift as lifting burdens from people serving the Navy and Marine Corps. That would have been important to her.”

This is the lasting impact a legacy gift can make – helping tomorrow’s Sea Service members. We’re grateful for Jean’s extraordinary generosity as well as for John’s service in the Marines. This is their legacy, and it will continue to help Sailors, Marines, and their families for years to come. Just as Jean wanted.

If you would like to learn more about ways to support tomorrow’s Sailors, Marines, and their families through a gift in your will, please visit www.myimpactwithnmcrs.org

Were you inspired? Pass your copy of Legacy® Newsletter to a friend!
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Here are two easy ways you may avoid some taxes and support the Society:

1) With a gift of stock or mutual funds you may avoid capital gains and investment taxes and enjoy a charitable income tax deduction.

2) Use all or a portion of your Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA to make a gift directly to the Society and you don’t pay income taxes on the amount you donate.

Visit www.myimpactwithnmcrs.org/avoid-taxes to learn more.

“I give gifts of appreciated stock because it benefits the Society, helps Sailors and Marines, and provides tax benefits – everyone wins. I’ve been fortunate to serve, and in the simplest terms, it just makes me feel good to give.”

Rear Admiral Steve Maas, SC, USN (Ret.)

For assistance in making a gift of stock, mutual funds, or a Charitable IRA Rollover gift, please contact Kate Hillas at 800-654-8364 or philanthropy@nmcrs.org, or visit www.myimpactwithnmcrs.org/avoid-taxes.

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY BEFORE DECEMBER 31. VISIT NMCRS.ORG/DONATE TO MAKE AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT.