Taking Care of Our Own
Society Visiting Nurses Carry Out the Mission
From the Signal Bridge

November is Wounded Warrior Month, a joint-service event to honor our nation’s wounded, ill and injured service members. Since 2006, the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society has honored these men and women everyday through our Combat Casualty Assistance (CCA) Visiting Nurse program.

Because of generous people like you, Society visiting nurses provide the connection these men and women deserve. Through home visits, phone calls, emails and text messages our nurses help Marines and Sailors who are recovering from wounds, dealing with the emotional trauma of PTSD, trying to rebuild relationships, and just learning to cope with the “new normal” of their lives.

In this issue, you’ll read about a remarkable piece of technology that is making a difference for our visiting nurses and our returning wounded. It’s called the Nightingale Project, and it’s changing the way our medical professionals interact with clients – improving their ability to provide sound medical education and assistance. You’ll also read about how we’ve expanded our CCA Visiting Nurse program to reflect our commitment to wounded Marines and Sailors, their families and caregivers.

In this season of thanksgiving, we pause to reflect and say thank you to each and every donor who make our work possible and enable us to help Sailors and Marines and their families when they need us most. We hope you consider what the Society has meant to you, your family, your Shipmates and fellow Marines over the years - and that you’ll express your gratitude.

Thank you to the men and women who serve our great nation - yesterday, today and in the days to come.

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

Nightningale Project Improves Care

New Technology Reduces Paperwork for Visiting Nurses

Thanks to an innovative collaboration with Microsoft, Society visiting nurses can now spend more time and better focus on their clients during home visits using Microsoft’s Surface Tablet and a newly designed “Nightingale” software developed exclusively by Microsoft for—and at no cost to—the Society.

When a Society nurse visits a military family’s home, whether to help a young mom learn to breastfeed her newborn, help a retiree get his or her medications straightened out, or assess the needs of a combat-injured veteran, clients benefit most when they receive the visiting nurse’s full and complete attention. To be most effective, visiting nurses need to focus on their clients’ words, facial expressions, and body language as they describe their everyday challenges and needs. At the same time, visiting nurses need to create a client record and make notes to efficiently manage the client’s care. In the past, Society visiting nurses had hours of paperwork to complete after they finished traveling to see their clients. Transferring client records to another visiting nurse or submitting client records for review by the Director of Nursing required copying and mailing files. Not anymore.

Society Visiting Nurses are introduced to the Nightingale Project and their new Microsoft Surface Tablet.

Cover Photo: Society visiting nurse checks vital signs, and reviews medications during a home visit to a Navy retiree.

This organization has earned the Guidestar Exchange Seal, demonstrating its commitment to transparency.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society’s Legacy Newsletter is published three times each year. Its articles are intended to 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. If you would prefer to receive Legacy in electronic form please notify us at legacy@nmcrs.org

Got a story? Submit it online at communications@nmcrs.org or to NMCRS at 875 N. Randolph Street, Suite 225, Arlington, VA 22203. We cannot be responsible for returning photos or documents.

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This year the Society’s board of directors authorized the hiring of nine additional CCA visiting nurses – meaning the Society now employs 25 registered nurses who travel throughout the country to the homes of combat-injured Marines, Sailors, their families and caregivers. Most nurses cover a geographic region of two or three states, and the extra nurses have helped to reduce average caseload for our nurses from 170 clients to 100.

Society CCA visiting nurses make hundreds of house calls and thousands of phone calls each year to more than 2,300 families. “Our goal is to visit them as often as they need,” said Ruthi Moore, Society Director of Nursing. Moore explained that in-person visits are critical to really understanding what’s going on with a Sailor or Marine and his or her family. Very often, their facial expressions and body language communicate a very different message than their words.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is the only organization in the United States that employs registered nurses to make home visits to combat-injured Marines, Sailors, and their families – all free of charge, and for as long as there is need. “We don’t ever close out client records,” Moore explained. “We always stay in contact, even after they’ve told us they don’t need us anymore - just in case.”

Moore said the program expansion, “significantly improved our clients’ quality of life and our nurses’ effectiveness.”

If you, or someone you know is a combat-served Marine or Sailor, their family or caregiver who could benefit from a call or visit from a Society visiting nurse, contact us at (703) 696-0032 or www.nmcrs.org/visitingnurse
CCA CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

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*E-5 is Average Rank

CCA CLIENT STORIES

SSgt Marcus Chischilly, USMC was injured in Afghanistan when his unit incurred significant blast injuries from an IED. He suffered significant limb and head injuries and is a single amputee with a lower limb prosthesis. Here, he is competing in a recent triathlon, where he placed 8th. He also plays wheelchair basketball with other OEF/OIF veterans. He expects to be medically retired within the next year and transition to a civilian job. Marcus attributes his amazing recovery to his competitive nature and his Society CCA Visiting Nurses who helped him navigate the military medical system and will continue to support him and his family during this challenging transition.

Sgt Kyle Garcia, USMC (Ret.) lost his left leg below the knee to an IED explosion while on deployment in Afghanistan. He and his wife, Krystal, are adjusting to life with a newborn. Kyle is taking pre-law coursework and works part-time. Society CCA visiting nurses were instrumental in helping Kyle find local prosthetic and healthcare resources in northern California so that he and his family would not have to travel to Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego, at their own expense, to receive medical benefits. The Society will continue to support this military retiree and his family to ensure continued success.
DONOR HIGHLIGHTS

GySgt Paul T. Kuras, USMC (Ret)

R
etired Gunnery Sergeant Paul Kuras completed boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina in 1946, and served in Virginia, California, Illinois, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam, North Carolina, and Tennessee during his Marine Corps aviation career. Wherever he was, Kuras knew the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society had his back, and he and his family relied upon the Society for critical help that we were glad to provide on a few important occasions.

“I had to come back from overseas a couple of times because my wife was having health problems,” Kuras said. “The Society helped me out. When I was in Vietnam, she became very ill. The Society made arrangements for my four children to fly from California to Illinois where my relatives could take care of them.”

Kuras has always made monthly contributions to the Society from his retirement pay, but recently decided to make a larger gift in the form of a charitable gift annuity. This type of gift was a way for him to support the Society, get a charitable tax deduction, and receive income for the rest of his life. The Society will use the remainder of his gift to assist Sailors and Marines when the annuity ends. As a result of his generous gift, the Society has welcomed Kuras into the Clarence Dillon Society, an honorary organization for donors who have chosen to make the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society a beneficiary of their estate.

“Everyone has a favorite charity,” explained Kuras. “Mine has always been the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. They supported me when I needed them, and I’m in a position now where I can support them.”

The Society is grateful for the thoughtful generosity of GySgt Kuras and the 102 other members of the Clarence Dillon Society who have made plans for estate gifts in support of Sailors, Marines and their families.

Navy Nurses and Corpsmen - Caring Across the Miles

fter treating injured Sailors and Marines in a combat zone, Navy nurses often wonder where those patients end up, how they’re doing, and who’s caring for them.

“Once a patient leaves the combat zone, we don’t hear any more about them,” said Lieutenant Commander Debbie Brindley, a 17-year Navy reservist who recently returned home to North Carolina after serving as a nurse in Kandahar, Afghanistan for seven months.

“The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is very well-known in the Navy,” Brindley said. “As a Navy nurse you know it’s one of those organizations Sailors and Marines can fall back on for help. If they’re at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and need help finding a place for their families to stay, or if they fall on hard times, the Society is the first place they’ll go for help.”

So when Brindley and her colleagues in Kandahar prepared to celebrate Nurses Day and the Navy Nurse Corps birthday last May, they decided to support the Society in the process. Brindley commissioned the creation of a challenge coin to sell as a fundraiser. The coin features the gold oak leaf that is the emblem for Navy nurses. On the back are flags of the countries participating in the coalition operating in Afghanistan. Another nurse created a commemorative t-shirt to be sold. The nurses’ efforts raised more than $1,500 for the Society.

“It was a group effort from all the nurses at Kandahar,” Brindley said.

“As nurses and corpsmen, we take care of lots of injured servicemembers,” Brindley explained. “We know they will need help at home. So we wanted to continue caring for them once they leave our medical facility - by contributing to the Society.” The Society is grateful to Brindley and all Navy nurses and Corpsmen for their service and thoughtful contribution to help make our work possible.
In July 2012, Willie Williams, Society Chief Information Officer, shared a speech by Ruthi Moore, Society Director of Nursing, about the work Society visiting nurses do. The Microsoft managers he met with were inspired, Williams said, and wanted to help. Microsoft assigned a team of developers to work with Williams and Moore to first gain a better understanding of what would be most useful to Society visiting nurses. They learned that, in order to maximize the nurse’s ability to maintain eye contact with clients while gathering information, they needed a software program which primarily used check boxes and multiple choice fields so information could be entered in a matter of seconds, notes could be added later and client records could be easily transferred. The Nightingale Project took shape!

A pilot phase of the Nightingale Project was conducted by eight Society visiting nurses this past summer, and, in October, all 56 visiting nurses received their Microsoft Surface Tablets with the Nightingale Project.

Response from the visiting nurses has been overwhelmingly positive, including one who admitted to being afraid of technology. “I can see how this technology will become a timesaver and ultimately almost effortless,” said Visiting Nurse Esther Valier. “When [I am] no longer confused and error prone, it will even be fun.”

Microsoft Practice Manager, Mark Dowd, said the Society’s Visiting Nurse Program is deeply respected by his team, and that they’ve used the Nightingale Project to show other military-centric clients how this kind of technology could also benefit the people they serve. “This is truly a great partnership,” Dowd said. “We partnered and came up with the best solutions that allow nurses and staff to be more productive.”

CIO Williams said the Society has tested a variety of devices over the years to help reduce the nurse’s paperwork, but none was the right fit. “Our nurses are in and out of the office all day,” he explained. “They need to have connectivity and it has to be secure.” As a result of the Nightingale Project, Williams said, “Our nurses spend less time on paper work and more time helping their clients and their members understand how to assist in their recovery.”

Another timesaving advantage, Moore explained is that “once the client records are in Nightingale, I can see all the client charts and conduct quality assessment. I can identify nurses who need extra help and provide it. But the most important advantage is that the Nightingale Project gives our visiting nurses more time to listen and care for our clients.”

The Society’s 3-year strategic cycle culminates in an International Conference when our Directors and Volunteer leaders from around the globe come together with headquarters personnel. This year’s keynote speaker was Mrs. Holly Petraeus, Assistant Director of the Consumer Finance Protection Board (CFPB) leading the Office of Servicemember Affairs.

Mrs. Petraeus began with a brief history of the CFPB which was established in July 2011 as a result of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010. An independent federal agency, the CFPB is funded from the Federal Reserve Bank as a Federal regulator.

The CFPB performs regulatory oversight and enforcement authority over a whole range of institutions that provide financial services and products, not just banks and federal credit unions but also non-bank financial players like mortgage brokers, pay-day lenders, private student lenders and the largest players among debt collectors and credit reporting agencies. Her office is specifically tasked by federal statute to:

- Ensure military personnel receive strong financial education to make better informed consumer decisions.
- Monitor and respond to military personnel complaints to the CFPB about consumer financial products and service.
- Work with other federal agencies to ensure military personnel are protected under the consumer protection rules and regulations.

A military spouse, Mrs. Petraeus is keenly aware of the financial challenges and consumer issues faced by active duty, National Guard, reservists and military retirees. She shared her priorities and her office’s early accomplishments. She also helped Society Directors understand the CFPB complaint process and resources available for service members to file complaints.

“Consumer financial issues are not a stand-alone problem,” Mrs. Petraeus stated, “but are inextricably involved in the mental health issues and other related problems faced by our combat veterans and service members and their families.”

For more information about consumer protection for service members, visit www.consumerfinance.gov
Surprisingly, a majority of Americans die without leaving a will or another written statement explaining how they would like to have their estate handled. What’s also remarkable is that even those who do make a will or a revocable trust often keep the contents secret from other family members, even those named in the document as a trusted “fiduciary,” that is, one who acts on behalf of another, such as an executor or trustee. Unfortunately, if the document cannot be found, or if it is found but is unclear in any way, an estate may be handled contrary to an individual’s wishes.

How can you avoid making your family members and beneficiaries struggle through preventable estate problems?

- Prepare your important estate planning documents with a reputable and trusted professional. This is not a do-it-yourself task. You don’t know what you don’t know. Be open and honest about your intentions in your confidential relationship with the lawyer and let him or her guide you to the right language and formulas.

- If you include a charitable institution or foundation in your legacy plans, let that organization or entity know about it. You don’t have to let them read through a complete copy of your estate plan, but the charity needs to know about your intended gift and how it is to be used. The charity will not be on your “heirs-at-law” list, the designation used most commonly among states to notify in the event of your death, and your other beneficiaries might not fulfill that bequest without prompting.

- Once your estate documents are in final form and signed, place them for safekeeping in a secure location. There are several good choices, including the courthouse in your jurisdiction. Most court probate offices offer storage of these documents at nominal cost.

- Also, make a record of important documents and other information your administrator or trustee will need. Think how lost your beneficiaries will be if they don’t know any of your User IDs and passwords for all your electronic accounts.

Craig Anderson has practiced law for over 35 years, 20 of which were as an active duty Air Force JAG. He earned his JD from the Indiana University Mauer School of Law and has a Masters of Law degree from the George Washington University Law School. He now focuses his practices on trust and estate law and issues of concern to military veterans and their families.

It’s wise to devote some effort to planning for what happens after you’re gone, to make sure your loved ones know exactly what you wanted your legacy to be, and that your wishes are followed. If we may be of any help in this process, please contact Kate Hillas, Director of Planned Giving Programs at (800) 654-8364.

FREE Estate Planning Information For You
www.planwithnmcrs.org
WAYS YOU CAN GIVE TO HELP OTHERS

Here are some ideas to consider when deciding how to make your charitable contributions:

**Credit card**
Go to [www.nmcrs.org/donate](http://www.nmcrs.org/donate) or call (800) 654-8364 to use your credit or debit card.

**Check**
Mail your gift to:
NMCRS
875 N. Randolph Street, Suite 225
Arlington, VA 22203-1767

**Securities**
Appreciated stock can be a wonderful gift, as you will get credit for the full market value of the stock and may avoid paying capital gains tax. Please contact us at (800) 654-8364 for transfer instructions.

**Charitable Gift Annuity**
Support the work of the Society with a gift and receive annual payments for life.

**IRA Direct Transfer / Charitable Rollover**
The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 allows Qualified Charitable Contributions to be made from an IRA to charities through the end of calendar year 2013. This rollover provision allows individuals 70 ½ and older to withdraw funds from their qualified IRA accounts and directly donate it tax-free to a qualified charity. Contact your plan administrator for instructions on making a charitable transfer.

**Gifts in Your Will or Trust**
Consider including the Society in your will, trust or other estate planning documents and touch the lives of future Sailors, Marines and their families.

**Retirement or Insurance Plans**
Include the Society as a primary or secondary beneficiary of a retirement or insurance policy, and leave a gift when you no longer need the funds.

**Matching Gifts**
Increase the impact of your gift by requesting a matching gift from your employer’s human resources office. Spouse and retiree gifts may also be eligible.

For information about bequests, charitable gift annuities or other estate gifts, please call Kate Hillas or CAPT Shelley Marshall, USN (Ret.) at (800) 654-8364, or email legacy@nmcrs.org.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED A CHARITABLE GIFT IN YOUR WILL?

To ensure that Sailors and Marines are given compassionate support in their time of need, please consider the following language:

I give and bequeath to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, a non-profit, charitable organization (EIN 53-0204618) which is incorporated in Washington, DC, and whose headquarters is located at 875 N. Randolph Street, Suite 225, Arlington, VA 22203-1767, (choose one) the remainder of my estate after all other distributions have been made, OR___% of my estate, OR $___(specific dollar amount). This gift is to be used by the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society for such purposes and in such a manner as deemed appropriate.

**Trying to decide what to give family members, friends or co-workers this holiday season?**

We can make it easier – make a donation in their honor in lieu of a gift. When you give to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, you directly benefit our servicemembers in their time of need while honoring a friend or relative.

If you provide us with the name and address of the person you are honoring with your gift, we will be happy to send them a letter notifying them of your gift, along with our special thanks.

NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY

875 N. Randolph Street, Suite 225
Arlington, VA 22203-1767
www.nmcrs.org
(800) 654-8364

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society does not provide legal or tax advisory services. Work with your attorney and financial advisors to plan charitable arrangements that work best for you and your estate. The information contained herein is intended solely for general informational purposes.