Your support helps Sea Service members stay mission ready no matter the crisis.

Serving Sailors, Marines, and their families.
From the Signal Bridge

For over 116 years the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society has provided support to our Sea Service members and their families in a time of financial crisis. We have seen a lot in those years, but 2020 stands out as one of the more extraordinary times. My last Signal Bridge letter was at the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we were just starting to see the effects of stop orders and lost income on those we serve. We had two major corporations step in to assist with our COVID-19 response. Lockheed Martin and USAA have provided generous grants to the Society allowing us to give interest-free loans to our clients who have been impacted by the pandemic.

Since March, we have watched schools close and working parents become home-school teachers. We have discovered the need for our support in areas we had not served before. In addition to our Quick Assist Loan of up to $500, we created a new COVID-19 Rapid Response Loan of up to $1,500 that can be used for approved home school costs. At the time of this publication we have provided over $1.5 million to those in need due to COVID-19.

While we maintain our daily operations, we are also preparing for what is expected to be a busy hurricane season. Disaster preparedness is always on our mind. On Sunday, July 12, our San Diego office stepped up as the USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) was damaged by a horrific fire and our local staff immediately went into disaster relief mode. Working with the BHR Command Master Chief, they were able to identify those with immediate needs and provide them with $100 gift cards to use at the NEX. Over the course of the next three weeks, NMCRS provided almost $200,000 in grants to those who were affected by the fire. In addition to monetary assistance the local NMCRS thrift shop coordinated the donation of several boxes of uniforms and boots to those who lost everything.

Your support has made it possible for NMCRS to be there for Sea Service members and their families in financial need. In trying times, the Society can be their source of comfort. In this issue of Legacy you will read about how earlier this year, Quartermaster Marvin Augustin used the Society’s services to help pay for his father’s funeral, and you will see how NMCRS was there 63 years ago for a young Hospital Corpsman just starting his Navy career.

The Society is able to respond to emergencies with prompt and effective support thanks to our thoughtful and generous donors. One of our donors is Chief Electrician’s Mate Carl Heard. You will read how CEM Heard had been a client of Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society when times were financially stressful, and years later, when he won a sweepstakes he knew he had to donate the winnings to the Society. He said “I was happy to donate that money, because I know I can trust the Society. It’s an honorable, well run organization that’s devoted to Sea Service members and their families and that means a lot to me.”

Your generosity and those of donors like you allow us to provide support on so many fronts: the COVID-19 pandemic, a devastating ship fire, maintaining the day-to-day mission of the Society, and preparing for what 2020 has in store for us next. Thank you for your continued support!

LTGEN JACK KLIMP, USMC (RET.)
President and Chief Executive Officer

Carl Heard, the Navy, and the Society:
Years of Service and Years of Support

There was never a doubt that Carl Heard would join the Navy. He served for 21 years, retiring as a chief electrician's mate. And recently when he won a sweepstakes, there was never a doubt that he would donate the prize money to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. Here's why.

When Carl was in middle school in New Orleans, LA, where he grew up, he attended a summer camp at a Navy reserve base. Carl and his classmates got a tour of the base and the ship. He was impressed with both. But as a growing teenager at the time, something else struck him.

“We ate breakfast at the mess hall that morning, and I see all this food laid out. And we had lunch on the ship. We had sliders and fries, and I remember thinking, ‘Man, this is the life,’” he says, laughing.

So, one year after he finished high school, Carl joined the Navy, and before long, he was shipping out to San Diego for basic training. After basic, he started as a Navy fireman, and worked his way through the fire room. He switched to the hull technician shop and then later to the electrician's shop. That’s where he spent most of his Navy career, working both as an electrician’s mate and an instructor at Naval Air Technical Training Center in Lakehurst, NJ.

Carl’s first shipboard duty was the USS Julius A. Furer FFG 26 stationed in Charleston, SC, and he was deployed within six months of reporting aboard. In fact, in his first three years, he did a Mediterranean cruise, went through the Panama Canal, did a South American cruise, and many more, including two tours on the USS Lexington AVT 16 and the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower CVN 69. He was even on duty during the Gulf War. “It was all very interesting to me,” he says. “It was exciting. We spent a lot of time in Panama, and I got to know the people there and see the country. I really enjoyed that.”

On his first tour, he also got to visit Paris, France. Then, many years later, on his last tour in the Navy, he again had the opportunity to visit France, and his wife was able to join him. She’d always wanted to see Paris. “That was a very satisfying conclusion to my Navy career,” he says.

Carl has always appreciated his time in the Navy and the opportunities it afforded him. “Not only did I get to see a lot of interesting places,” he says, “but I got my college degree in the Navy. And later on, after I retired, I used the GI Bill to get my MBA and now work in the energy industry. The Navy’s been very good to me.”

During his service, Carl was aware of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. On two occasions, he went to the Society for help – both times for unexpected car repairs. Raising a family on a Navy salary, Carl had to be careful about his budget. Those car repairs would have been a financial hardship.

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But thankfully, the Society was there for him. “I always appreciated the help and especially the kindness of the volunteers at the Society who took care of me.”

It’s something he’s never forgotten. And while he has donated to the Society in the past, when Carl had the chance to do something extra, he took it. At a United Way event at his work, Carl won a door prize, and he immediately thought of the Society as the best organization where he could donate his winnings.

Carl likes knowing that the money will help Sailors, Marines, and their families when they’re in need in the same way that he was helped.

“I was happy to donate that money,” Carl says, “because I know I can trust the Society. It’s an honorable, well-run organization that’s devoted to Sea Service members and their families, and that means a lot to me.”

“Most people, when they’re serving, live paycheck to paycheck,” Carl says. “It can be very stressful on the person who’s serving as well as their family. I found it a great comfort when I was in the Navy to know that the Society was there for me. That’s why I want the men and women who are serving today in the Navy and the Marines to have that too. It’s why I gave – and why I will always support the Society.”

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

The Society has prepared a brief overview of our 2019 activities. In reviewing this, you will discover how much your support means to the men and women who stand watch at home and across the globe to protect our freedom.

We are proud to report that independent auditors and charity rating organizations continue to find our business practices and mission effectiveness to be consistent with the highest standards of nonprofit management. Thank you for your loyalty and compassion.

READ THE SOCIETY’S 2019 YEAR IN REVIEW AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT AT: WWW.NMCRS.ORG/FINANCIALS
Your Support Was There for This Sailor with a Bright Future and a Devastating Personal Loss

What if you suddenly faced a personal crisis? Who could you rely on for help? Who could you trust?

If you’re Quartermaster Marvin Augustin, that would be the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.

Marvin is an able and dedicated Sailor with big dreams and a bright future. But to be honest, the Navy wasn’t his first choice for a career. After high school, Marvin enrolled in college. He wanted to get ahead, and he was well on his way. But then soaring tuition costs made it impossible to continue. Not only that, he had to help support his parents’ household. A good son, he was happy to do it, but the question was how.

Marvin needed a plan, and he found one – the Navy. “I joined the Navy for financial reasons,” he says. “But it wasn’t just that. I wanted Navy training so that I could develop a strong work ethic.”

You can see that this is a motivated young man. Marvin pushes himself because he helps out his mom and his family, and he wants to have a good life for himself too. He wants to finish college and go to medical school.

Marvin began his Navy career as an E2, a seaman apprentice. He served first on the USS Harry Truman (CVN 75), an operational ship. And he’s currently serving on the USS George Washington (CVN 73) out of the Newport News Shipyard in Virginia. So far, he’s gotten three promotions in just over two years. Today, he’s a QM2. “I’m a supervisor now,” Marvin says. “My job is to help the officer of the deck with safe navigation of the ship.”

He loves his job. But just when things were going so well, it happened. Marvin got word that his father had passed away unexpectedly. Marvin was devastated. Suffering with the loss, he had to return home to help take care of things, including the funeral and the burial.

Along with the emotional toll, there was a financial one. On an enlisted man’s salary, Marvin didn’t have the money to pay for his father’s burial. He was ashamed. He was stressed. He was hurting.

At first, he looked into a bank loan, but the interest rates were too high. Then Marvin spoke with his Chief and learned about the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, and you were there for him through your generous support. You were there when he really needed you.

“By that point, I was emotionally numb,” Marvin says. “I was trying not to break down. I was trying to be strong for my family.”

You can imagine how hard it was.

Marvin explained the situation to the Society representative, and before long, he had the money to cover the funeral and burial expenses for his father. It was a huge relief. But he got so much more than financial assistance.

Marvin is grateful for the caring and empathy of the Society representative who helped him. “I felt I could open up and discuss the situation,” he says. “It made me feel very comfortable at a difficult time.”

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Marvin had to make some decisions about the funeral and the burial. He was unsure which way to go, so he was glad to get some good advice from the Society representative. “I talked it over with her, and I really appreciated having her opinion,” Marvin says. “That helped me make the right decision.”

It was the first time Marvin had to deal with a death in the family, and it was painful. “The Society really cared about me as a person and what I was going through,” Marvin says. “They didn’t just go through the motions. They really cared. And I’ll always be thankful for that.”

This is your support for the Society at work to help Sailors, Marines, and their families in need. You’re making a real difference in their lives, just as you have for Marvin. “To deal with a financial burden at a difficult time – it’s extremely stressful,” Marvin says. “I will never forget what the Society has done for me and my family. Now I know I have a Navy family too.”

The Drive to Serve:
Vice Admiral Dan McCarthy and His Generous Gift for the Society

“That’s how two years turned into 38,” Vice Admiral Justin “Dan” McCarthy says with a laugh. In his typically understated way, Dan is talking about his brilliant career in the Navy.

For him, it’s not about one individual. It’s about the team. And it’s about serving. That’s what he’s done in the Navy. That’s what he’s done through his giving over the years to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. And that’s what he’s done with an especially generous gift from his IRA.

It all started in 1969. The Vietnam War was raging, and Dan had just earned his degree in engineering from Oakland University. He joined the Navy with the intention of serving for two years. He went to Officer Candidate School and Navy Supply Corps School, and he was commissioned as a supply corps officer. This is the work he signed up for, and it’s the work he pursued his whole Navy career.

“Once I got into the Navy,” Dan says, “I just really enjoyed it.” That’s why he stayed for 38 years.

But in the beginning, he didn’t realize how eye-opening the Navy would be. “My first plane ride in my life,” he says, “was from Michigan to Rhode Island for Officer Candidate School. It was a bit of a culture shock.” Little did he know what was to come.

Officer Candidate School was a challenge. He remembers getting very little sleep. “It’s a concentrated exposure to Naval history, tactics, procedures, and a lot more,” Dan says. “It’s an intense 90 days – physically and mentally demanding.” Still more was yet to come.

On his first ship, the USS Snohomish County (LST 1126), Dan was the supply officer. “Just like that, I was the department head and in charge,” Dan says, “and that was really exciting for a young officer.”

It was also on this ship that Dan went to Guam. “For someone who hadn’t been anywhere,” he says, “suddenly I was halfway around the world. I couldn’t believe it!”

From that ship, Dan went to the USS Holland (SS 1) stationed in Rota, Spain. Then from there he went to the USS Newport (LST 1179) for the maiden deployment to the Mediterranean of that first ship in its class. “I was getting terrific experience in the supply corps that I couldn’t have imagined as a young officer,” Dan says.

Then there was this: To get to the USS Newport, he was hooked onto a CH-46 helicopter. “There I was, being flown over the Mediterranean for about two miles, hanging a hundred feet below this helicopter,” he says. The pilot gently set Dan down onto the
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Making a difference for Sailors, Marines, and their families — Thanks to your donations

flight deck. “Now that was exciting,” he says, laughing.

All this happened in Dan’s first three years in the Navy. Promotion after promotion followed, leading eventually to flag positions as the senior logistician for the Pacific Fleet, Chief of Supply Corps and ultimately the Navy’s top logistician (OPNAV N4). “I was given unique opportunities throughout my career, thanks to the great people that supported me,” he says.

From the beginning, Dan was aware of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, and as an officer, he often recommended the Society to people who needed help.

One time when they were deployed at sea, a sailor came to Dan because the Sailor’s wife didn’t have the money for a mortgage payment. Dan told the Sailor to have his wife go to their local Society office. They got a loan that allowed them to keep their home while this sailor was deployed. “That was an early lesson in what the Society does,” Dan says.

And that’s why he has always donated to the Society, why he served on the Society’s board for ten years, and why he has just given a very generous gift for the Society from his IRA. The donation is a qualified charitable distribution from his IRA that goes directly to the Society, and because of that, there are no income taxes on his donation. But the main reason for his gift is to sustain the Society’s work in helping Sailors, Marines, and their families. As the COVID-19 situation strains us all, now more than ever, the need is great.

“The Navy provided me with opportunities I never could have dreamed of,” Dan says. “Supporting the Society is a way to help other Sea Service members have those opportunities, too. I know what the Society does, and I know this gift will help Sailors, Marines, and their families when they need it, so they can continue to serve. As far as I’m concerned, that’s all the reason I need to give.”

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.

To learn more visit www.nmcrs.org

SHARE HOW NMCRS MADE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE OR THE LIFE OF SOMEONE YOU KNOW.

“My first contact with NMCRS was some 63 years ago when I was a young, very junior Hospital Corpsman First Class with a wife and two children. I was attending school in Portsmouth, VA when my wife was admitted to the hospital for some 8 weeks. I had to find a way to have my children taken care of so I could finish school. Someone recommended I contact NMCRS, which I did and I was given a grant to hire a babysitter. I hired the wife of a fellow student; he too was a young, very junior HM1 and they needed the money. I finished the year long course and was transferred to Naval Hospital, Oakland, CA. Two years later I was commissioned an Ensign, Medical Service Corps and remained in the Navy for a total of 39 years, retiring as Captain.

I don’t know how long I have been contributing to NMCRS but my guess would be for something approaching 50 years. I’ve never forgotten how the Portsmouth NMCRS chapter helped out a young sailor 63 years ago.”

GEORGE S. HARRIS
Captain, Medical Service Corps
U.S. Navy (Retired)
Manassas, Virginia
WAYS TO GIVE

Donate in the way that works best for you. Each gift you give helps Sailors, Marines, and their families when they need it. Your gift provides service members urgent financial assistance, budgeting instruction, nurse visits, education grants, and so much more.

ESTABLISH A MONTHLY GIFT
Set up a monthly donation to support the Society year round, for an automatic gift you don't have to worry about. This can be done through your credit card, ACH or from your pay by allotment. To learn more visit: www.nmcrs.org/donate

MATCHING GIFTS
Some companies provide matching donations to their employees' charitable gifts to the Society. Check to see if your employer participates.

BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION
Consider naming the Society as a beneficiary of an IRA, 401k, life insurance policy, bank or brokerage account. You can also include the Society as a beneficiary in your will or trust. It costs you nothing to do now, and you will be touching the lives of Sailors and Marines in the future.

FUNDRAISING EVENT
Let us know if you are planning an event or activity to help support the NMCRS mission.

To explore ways you can support the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, please contact Kate Hillas at kate.hillas@nmcrs.org or (800) 654-8364.

VEHICLE DONATIONS
If you have a vehicle you can donate the Society, contact us for instructions or go to our website https://nmcrs.careasy.org/HOME.html. All vehicles are accepted and will be picked up wherever they are located.

STOCK DONATIONS
Donations of stocks & bonds are simple ways to support NMCRS. Along with a tax deduction, you may avoid capital gains tax by making the gift directly to our brokerage account.

GIFTS FROM DONOR ADVISED FUNDS AND IRA PLANS
Many donors have found these gifts to be the most tax advantageous gift they can make. Be sure to know the rules for these gifts, and you may find you can increase your gift while decreasing taxes.

The Society doesn't receive money from any government agencies, so we rely entirely on your donations. Thank you for your support!