

## 2017 Annual Report

# AMERICAN FREEDOM FUND

ATHLETICS. EDUCATION. ADVOCACY.

*“We are dedicated to empowering Veterans through athletics, education, and advocacy in Washington, D.C. and across the nation.”*



## 2017 Annual Report



### A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Patriot –

As I reflect on the past year, there are three things that stand out; community, empowerment and endurance. Community because in 2017, the *American Freedom Fund* (AFF) brought the spirit of service and the efforts of several people together to fulfill a vision of bringing our veteran family together as MAJ Rob Miller, Petty Officer Gabe Stecker, and myself combined our missions into one so that we could collectively better serve our brothers and sisters who served at our side. Thus, the *American Freedom Fund* was born!

Through the unity gained through AFF, *Patriots Softball* was able to build upon its successes for a third year by empowering nearly 40 veteran athletes through a place to connect and compete at tournaments in more than 9 states eventually fielding two teams to the USSSA Military Softball Worlds Tournament hosted at Ft. Gordon, GA. The support of our donors and sponsors provided, not only, the opportunity for these athletes to compete but also the uniforms and much needed equipment. Many of whom, would not have been able to participate without such tremendous support.

Additionally, the *Patriots Shooting Team* had its inaugural year as we were able to provide the funding and support to send our very first team of Veterans to nationally recognized competitions for marksman and snipers. The success of the program gained national attention and laid the foundation for our team to educate others, compete and bond at events on both sides of the country.



Finally, for its 4<sup>th</sup> year, *Manhattans, Martinis & Mistletoe* continued its tradition as the signature event of the holiday season bringing more than 350 patriots together for one night to honor and celebrate the courage and service of our men and women in uniform. It was an amazing evening that was attended by the Secretary of Interior, countless Members of Congress, and military leaders from across the region. We were honored to have 34 Members of Congress stand-up as Honorary Co-Chairs while we recognized the outstanding service of the Travis Manion Foundation, Student Veterans of America and Wreaths Across America.

Looking to the horizon, I am extremely excited by what lies ahead for 2018 as each of our current programs continue to grow and new programs come online to empower our Veteran

## 2017 Annual Report



community. One such program is the *George H.W. Bush Internship for Defense Policy*. Having served as an appointee under the administration of President Bush, I hope that his *spirit of second service* will inspire a new generation of leaders in our country.

In closing, I want to say **thank you!** Thank you to the co-founders of AFF who selfishly brought their visions together so that they may endure and develop our programs through unity. Thank you to our sponsors, donors, and corporate partners whom without them we could not sustain our mission of growth and inspiration to those who have served by our side. We are optimistic towards the future and hope you'll stand with us as the AFF community grows and our mission of fellowship, family and comradery changes lives!

With regards,

*Donald R. Bramer*

Donald R. Bramer  
Executive Director

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*"Travis Manion Foundation (TMF) is honored to be a two time charity benefactor of AFF's M3 event. With AFF's additional support, TMF is able to continue strengthening America's national character by leveraging the strengths and skills of our military community to inspire the next generation to lead here at home by embodying Travis' mantra, 'If Not Me, Then Who'. AFF and TMF are very much aligned in providing empowerment opportunities to our veterans to live meaningful and purpose driven lives after military service by connecting and leading in their local communities."*

-Amy Looney, Vice President of the Travis Manion Foundation

## 2017 Annual Report

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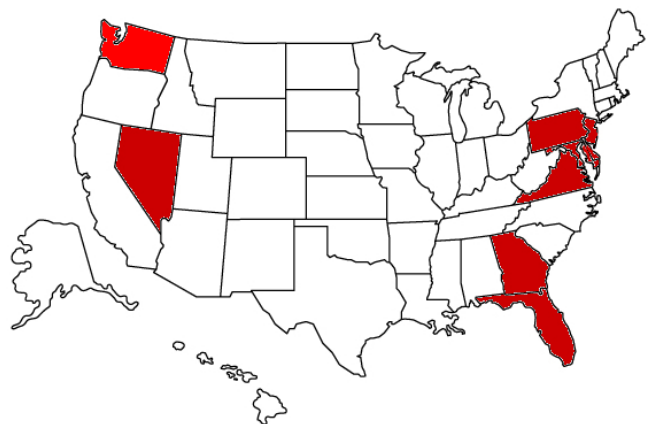
ATHLETICS. EDUCATION. ADVOCACY.

### 2017 – A Year of Milestones

In our Inaugural Year, close to \$80,000 was Raised in Support of Our Veteran Programs!



The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual *Manhattans, Martinis & Mistletoe* saw bipartisan support as more than 34 Congressional Members came together to serve as Honorary Co-Chairs in recognition of Active Duty and Veteran Service Members at our Holiday Gala in Washington, D.C.



*... and we sent nearly 40 Military Athletes to 10 States for national competitions ... including the USSSA Military Softball Worlds!*



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*A big, big thank you!*

Over the past year, countless volunteers, community leaders, advocates, and Veterans came together to make 2017 a very special year for our community. If not for them, our events, fundraisers, and programs would not succeed. We at AFF appreciate the sacrifice, devotion, and spirit of each and every Patriot.

### AFF Leadership

**Don Bramer, Executive Director**

**Rob Miller, Director**

**Gabe Stecker, Director**



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### Over the Horizon

Through our Five-Year Plan of Sustainability, AFF is committed to continue our mission of providing increased opportunities for the Veteran community to become just that . . . a community. Whether through athletics, adaptive sports, scholarships or partnership with other like-minded VSO's, our charge is to continue the sentiment set forth by Abraham Lincoln many years ago, "honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere."

This is only possible through the amazing support we received from volunteers, donors, corporate sponsors and grants we rely on to sustain and perceive. Together, through this much needed funding, we can change the lives of those who shared the cloth of this nation.

We hope you'll become a part our team. The Patriots are counting on you. Join the revolution!

