



WAR MEMORIAL CENTER 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

HONOR THE DEAD – SERVE THE LIVING



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War Memorial Center

DEAR FRIEND OF THE WAR MEMORIAL CENTER,

Since our dedication on Veterans Day of 1957, there have only been three leaders of the War Memorial Center. So it was a very big moment when, in 2019, we embarked on a search for the fourth. Last fall we announced Dan Buttery as the next President/CEO of the War Memorial Center. Buttery started Fisher House Wisconsin, is a U.S. Army Bronze Star veteran, and past Assistant Deputy Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

With new beginnings come fond farewells. The final day of 2019 marked the end of Dave Drent's tenure at the helm of WMC. Drent had been with the War Memorial Center since 1972, when he took a job straight out of high school on our maintenance team. Since then, he worked as lead mechanic, operations manager, executive director and President/CEO. We wish Dave a very happy retirement.

This year, we embarked on an ambitious project to research and tell the story of every name on the Honor Roll located in Veterans Courtyard. That's 3,481 people from Milwaukee who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. The Honor Roll lies at the heart of the War Memorial Center, encompassing the reflecting pool and the Eternal Flame. We invite local school classes, community groups, and military/veteran organizations to adopt a soldier so that we may share these Honor Roll stories of service and sacrifice.

Outside of Memorial Hall, you will see another new addition. A mural installation honors our core values, our donors throughout the decades and those who serve. One wall features this quote by G.K. Chesterton:

"The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him."

This quote has resonated with many who visit the War Memorial Center. We've seen it photographed and posted on social media this past year. Let us all remember the sacrifice of our military men and women to protect our country's highest ideals. We honor them here.

Sincerely,
DANIEL BUTTERY, *President/CEO* (left)
PETER P. POCHOWSKI, *Chairman* (right)



2019 HIGHLIGHTS



HONOR ROLL RESEARCH

We started the monumental task of gathering information – full name, service details, personal letters and photos – for each person listed on the Honor Roll, which lies at the heart of the War Memorial Center. These National Guard officer candidates are one of many groups helping us research all 3,481 names.



SERVICE EXPERIENCE DAY

Our inaugural Service Experience Day was a huge hit with 400 students interviewing 30 veterans at the War Memorial Center. We produced a powerful video showing the connections students made by learning history from the veterans who lived it.



COMMUNITY ART PROJECT

Just in time for the 4th of July, we unveiled a new exhibit featuring this community-created flag mosaic mural. 300-plus tiles were decorated by visitors and school groups. Thanks to I Pledge USA for donating all labor and materials for the project.



MEMORIAL HALL MURAL

Our 3rd floor hallway mural honors our core values, donors throughout the decades and those who serve. Visitors reflect on the values of commitment, honor, service, duty, courage, respect and excellence.



SIJAN SCREENINGS & TOURS

We held two film screenings and a memorial tour to honor local Medal of Honor recipient Lance Sijan. We teamed up with Lance's sister, Janine Sijan, who produced a film about her brother's life and service in Vietnam. More than 100 people took a bus tour which visited the memorials connected to the Lance Sijan story.



VETFEST/BREWERS/SUMMERFEST

Our salute to service and all military men and women continued to grow in 2019. VetFest was held August 8 on Fitch Plaza. Our outreach programs with the Milwaukee Brewers and Summerfest also honored local veterans and their families.

“What a wonderful community project! Congrats to all that made this possible and to those who participated in creating such a meaningful piece of art for the War Memorial and those that it represents.” —Elissa Wold, via Facebook, about new community art project mosaic



COMMUNITY IMPACT

145,000 PEOPLE
ENGAGED IN WMC ACTIVITIES

- DOORS OPEN MKE
- 9/11 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY
- SCHOOL GROUP VISITS HITS ANOTHER RECORD HIGH
- NEW "SERVICE EXPERIENCE DAY" PROGRAM CONNECTS 400 VETERANS & STUDENTS
- HISTORIC MILWAUKEE PARTNERSHIP FOR WALKING TOUR AND PROGRAMS
- FIRST FRIDAY TOURS
- FLAG OF HONOR PROGRAM WITH MILWAUKEE BREWERS
- SUMMERFEST PARTNERSHIP FOR MILITARY APPRECIATION PROGRAM
- SCOUTING MERIT BADGE CLINICS
- WMC HONOR CARDS AND VETERAN AUTOGRAPH CARDS

"I so wish I could have met Lance. But through your dedicated and loving efforts, I feel I have. Immortality is left in the stories we tell of them over and over. Never ever forgotten!" —Troy Curnutte, via Facebook

VETERAN IMPACT

\$147,000

In services provided by the War Memorial Center
to veterans and military service organizations

73 VETERAN SERVICE & MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS SERVED

- VETFEST
- MEMORIAL DAY
- PURPLE HEART DAY
- GOLD STAR FAMILY DAY
- VETERANS DAY
- PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY
- LATINO VETERANS LEGACY OF VALOR

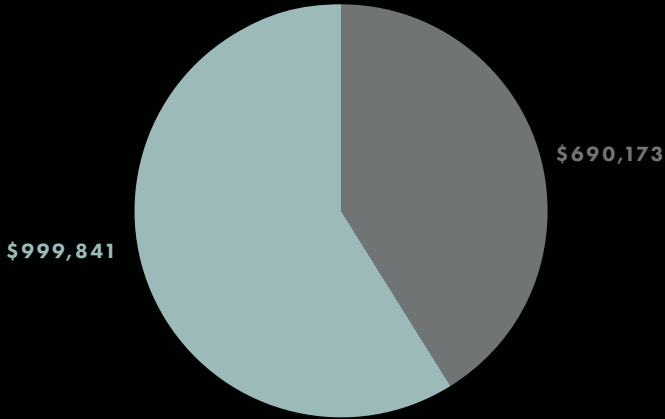


“ Really moving. Thank you, War Memorial Center
for bringing us together and honoring all of our
brothers and sisters. ” —Tiffany Koehler, via Facebook

OPERATING FUND

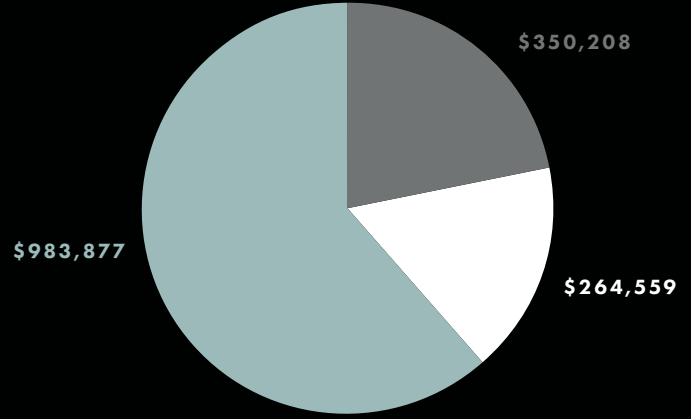
REVENUE:

\$1,690,014



EXPENSES:

\$1,598,644



CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

TOTAL ASSETS
\$536,563

TOTAL LIABILITIES
\$210,744

TOTAL NET ASSETS
\$325,819

The condensed statement of financial position and condensed revenue and expense data are derived from the War Memorial Center's financial statement as of December 31, 2019. A complete copy is available upon request.

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WAR MEMORIAL CENTER

LEGACY OF HONOR SOCIETY



The War Memorial Center established a Legacy of Honor Society to properly thank those friends who have included WMC in their estate plans. Legacy gifts provide the foundation for our work to continue now and in the future.

WMC CONNECTIONS

The War Memorial Center provides numerous opportunities for veterans and civilians to connect so their stories of service and sacrifice are not forgotten. Here's a few of those memorable connections.



KATHY STRONG

Kathy Strong travelled from California to dedicate a memorial brick for a Vietnam veteran she never met. Kathy was given the POW/MIA bracelet for James Moreland as a Christmas gift when she was 12 years old. She wore that bracelet every day for four decades until the remains of Moreland were finally discovered and returned home. Kathy is on a mission to honor him with a memorial brick in all 50 states. Wisconsin was state number 17.



ANNA MAE ROBERTSON

VetFest featured Anna Mae Robertson, a member of the Women's Army Corps all-African American battalion that served overseas in World War II. The 6888th Central Directory Postal Battalion (Six Triple Eight) was sent to Europe in 1945 to sort a backlog of mail. The assignment was supposed to take six months, but Robertson and her battalion finished in half the time. Their motto was "no mail, low morale."



ADAM MAKOS

Bestselling author Adam Makos skyped into the WMC to discuss his latest book *Spearhead* about tank gunners in World War II. While reading the book, local Korean War veteran Stan Larsen came across the name of a veteran from Sheboygan, Karl Kellner, who was killed in action. Stan tracked down that veteran's nephew who came to the book event with his uncle's military memorabilia including Kellner's Silver Star and Purple Heart.



DAN KAUFMAN

Dan Kaufman from Verona, Wisconsin, came to the War Memorial Center on Memorial Day to see the Operation Iraqi Freedom memorial dedicated to his friends in Fox Company. Dan served with all the Marines listed on the memorial and wanted his kids to understand the true meaning behind Memorial Day and the ultimate sacrifice it represents.

2019 PATRIOT AWARD



Group shot of all WMC Patriot Award recipients (left to right): Dave Drent, George Gaspar, Andrew Schlidt, Mike Grebe, Medal of Honor Recipient Gary Wetzel, and Joe Campbell (seated).

The War Memorial Center Patriot Award was established to give special recognition to select individuals for extraordinary contributions to the legacy of the War Memorial Center.

There is no regular schedule for induction as a Patriot Award recipient. Last year, the WMC Board of Trustees recognized two people. This year it was only one.

Dave Drent was surprised with his Patriot Award during his retirement celebration. Dave spent 48 years in service to the War Memorial Center and the veterans we serve.



War Memorial Center
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