



2017 SERVICE PLATOON SNAPSHOT

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WHAT IS THE SERVICE PLATOON PROGRAM?

Launched in 2013, the Service Platoon Program connects teams of veterans with community organizations and local volunteers to tackle tough challenges facing their communities. Service platoons seek to contribute to meaningful community objectives by consistently executing service projects, serving as mentors, or helping plan and lead community engagement activities. As a result of their volunteer service, veteran platoon members are empowered through personal growth, connectedness and community impact.

Since the founding of the program, platoons have grown in number and membership across the country. Operating under the guidance of a regional City Impact Manager, these teams reach desired objectives within a given community. At the helm of each service platoon is a platoon leader who guides the group's initiatives and aligns efforts with their community partners. Platoon leaders are veterans who commit 12-plus months of leadership to their platoon. To further ensure a platoon's impact, platoon leaders receive mentoring and training from Mission Continues' staff to develop their leadership skills.

Platoons are at the center of our local and national efforts. In addition to their individual schedule of ongoing service projects, platoons play a pivotal role in supporting service projects during national campaigns and events including Veterans Day, MLK Day, 9/11, Mass Deployment, Fellowship Orientation, and Women Veterans Leadership Summit.

The specific objectives guiding service platoons may vary from city to city, but all platoons remain unified by a common goal: to tackle pressing local issues and create sustainable impact. Service platoons continue to expand in new cities to face new challenges. This is an exciting opportunity for veterans to lead community change, serving side by side with non-veterans and partners in communities nationwide.

OUR 2017 PLATOON IMPACT:

**75 PLATOONS
IN 45 CITIES**

893

SERVICE EVENTS

**SINCE JOINING A SERVICE PLATOON,
LEADERSHIP MEMBERS SHARED THE
EFFECTS OF THEIR EXPERIENCE.**

85% REPORT LEARNING NEW SKILLS

**96% BELIEVE THEY ARE PURSUING A
MEANINGFUL MISSION**

**91% ARE CONNECTING
WITH NON-VETERANS THROUGH
COMMUNITY SERVICE**

NEW PLATOONS LAUNCHED:

**SACRAMENTO
COLUMBUS, GA
NEW ORLEANS
AUSTIN**

**DENVER 2ND
BROWARD COUNTY
PITTSBURGH 3RD
NEW YORK 4TH**

VOLUNTEERS MOBILIZED:

**3,792
VETERANS**

.....

**5,143
COMMUNITY
MEMBERS**



17% INCREASE IN VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT FROM 2016-2017

\$1,953,275

WORTH OF COMMUNITY IMPACT

* Based on the Independent Sector's estimate of the average value of a volunteer hour (\$24.69 in 2017)

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PLATOONS ARE MAKING AN IMPACT IN A BIG WAY. CHECK OUT A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE 2017 SERVICE PROJECTS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY:



"Parks need maintenance and protection, and our work with The Mission Continues has helped address the nearly 12 billion dollars of deferred maintenance backlog within the National Park Service. When veterans are enjoying their parks in service they form their own individual connection to that public space. Preserving our nation's parks for tomorrow ties us all together. Together, we make sure parks are in pristine condition for the next generation."

**— Jacqueline Crucet,
Senior Program Manager at National Parks Conservation Association**



NORTHEAST REGION: MIAMI 1ST PLATOON PLATOON EST. JUNE 2014

In honor of Veterans Day, Miami's 1st Service Platoon returned to Everglades National Park, which sustained damage during Hurricane Irma. While there was much to be done, they focused their efforts where it was needed most. Mission Continues volunteers spent the afternoon clearing the trail of branches and brush — completing in under one day what it would have taken the park much longer to do with fewer people. The project was fitting because of Miami 1st Service Platoon's operational focus on environmental stewardship. To that end, the platoon has partnered with the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) to help alleviate some of the needs in Everglades National Park and Dry Tortugas National Park.

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MIDWEST REGION: ST. LOUIS 2ND PLATOON PLATOON EST. OCTOBER 2015

The St. Louis Summer Service Slam is an annual event that brings the community together as part of an ongoing partnership between The Mission Continues and FOX Sports Midwest. In 2017 the St. Louis 2nd Platoon hosted the event at the Division of Youth Services, Missouri Hills Campus, a residential youth facility. Missouri Hills Campus' goal is to become a regional resource for youth to have personal and group experiences that allow them to grow and develop into fulfilled young adults. For the event, nearly 100 volunteers, among them residents and staff, gathered at the youth center to create indoor and outdoor spaces within their residential cottages such as reading nooks, outdoor patio seating, a 5k trail, and outdoor recreation areas.

CENTRAL REGION: HOUSTON 2ND PLATOON PLATOON EST. SEPTEMBER 2014

In the immediate wake of Hurricane Harvey all five of the Houston area platoons reported for duty in areas hardest hit by the storm. Platoons served selflessly by clearing debris, leading neighborhood water rescues, organizing donation drives, and clearing damaged homes. Their efforts were further supported by the Delta Class 2017 Fellowship Orientation, when Houston platoons teamed up with an incoming fellowship class of nearly 100 veterans to make an impact addressing ongoing Hurricane Harvey related issues at not one - but two - operation sites in Houston. At Hope Farms, an urban farm in the Sunnyside neighborhood of Houston, veterans built much needed shade structures, repaired a chicken coop, and planted fig and persimmon trees for the community. Just across town volunteers teamed up with the Independence Heights Redevelopment Council to refurbish a community center and park in the Independence Heights neighborhood, where the scope of work included a new walking path, outdoor seating, murals, and free community library.



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WEST REGION: LOS ANGELES 1ST PLATOON PLATOON EST. JULY 2013

The Los Angeles 1st Platoon serves in the heart of the LA Promise Zone taking action to improve neighborhoods by improving school grounds and fostering educational opportunities for the youth in underserved neighborhoods. The platoon set out in December to seed change at Santa Monica Boulevard Community Charter School, which promotes academic achievement in a collaborative environment and fosters student civic engagement. With the help of partners including Walt Disney Corporation, NBC, Wounded Warrior Project, and the Youth Policy Institute, the platoon completely demolished and rebuilt six new garden beds, landscaped school grounds, and helped to promote a new school curriculum focused on healthy eating.

SOUTHEAST REGION: BALTIMORE 1ST PLATOON PLATOON EST. APRIL 2015

As part of the 9/11 National Day of Service, the Baltimore 1st Service Platoon served at Roots & Branches School located in the Harlem Park West community of West Baltimore. In the last half century the community has suffered from issues such as blight, abandoned properties, high rates of truancy, violence, and drug-related crimes. On Sept 11th, the 1st Platoon partnered with CK Commercial - a local contracting company who secured over \$45,000 worth of donated materials - and engaged over 100 volunteers to report for duty at the school. Volunteers painted a mural on the library wall, gave the cafeteria a face lift, installed classroom flags, repurposed underutilized spaces, and remulched the school playground. In partnering with Roots & Branches School, Baltimore 1st Platoon is supporting children and families in Harlem Park West while also helping to promote the school building as a central gathering point for groups, neighborhood initiatives and available resources.



SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: CARMAX

Since 2016, CarMax has been empowering veterans through The Mission Continues as they address pressing local issues and make meaningful social change. As a Platoon Sponsor for the Houston 3rd Platoon, Denver 1st Platoon and Richmond 1st Platoon, CarMax provided vital financial investment in our veterans, empowering them to serve again in their communities. CarMax's support for this work empowered hundreds of veterans and inspired them to pursue other opportunities within their platoons and communities. We thank CarMax for bringing a deep and sustaining commitment to our veterans, their families and the communities in which they work and live.



SERVICE PLATOON SPONSORSHIP

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

In partnering with local community organizations, platoons are effectively addressing identified community issues through service projects. Service platoons provide valuable support through their time and resources to offset the needs of their partner nonprofits.

Corporate partners play a critical role in the success of a platoon's mission through financial contributions, outreach and employee participation. Corporate and foundation sponsors are invited to support specific platoons as lead or contributing sponsors.

Together with our partners, platoons are able to reach greater audiences to achieve increased community impact and empower more veterans as they experience personal growth and connection through their continued service.

To champion our efforts and support a service platoon, please contact Kat Cheshire at (703)577-2659 or kcheshire@missioncontinues.org.



"If it takes a village to raise a child, then the Mission Continues family has picked me up through my platoon leader infancy and nurtured me through the growing pains as I've gotten my service legs under me."

— Brayden Yoder, Los Angeles 2nd Platoon Leader

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Wasserman Foundation



Bank of America volunteers and Jon Stewart serve with The Mission Continues volunteers and president, Spencer Kympton, at New York City 9/11 service project on Ellis Island.



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