REPORT FOR DUTY
VETERANS DAY WEEKEND 2016
The Mission Continues empowers veterans who are adjusting to life at home to find purpose through community impact.

About The Mission Continues

**Mission**
The Mission Continues empowers veterans who are adjusting to life at home to find purpose through community impact.

**Programs & Impact**
The Mission Continues has operations across the country engaging veteran volunteers to address critical challenges facing underserved communities. It’s a unique model that creates a positive impact for veterans and the communities they serve.

**Vision**
We deploy veterans on new missions in their communities, so that their actions will inspire future generations to serve.
After the attacks of 9/11, thousands of men and women stepped up to serve in our country’s military. For those fortunate enough to return home, the desire to honor our oath of service extended beyond our roles in the military. So we sought ways to continue serving in our communities, putting our skills to use here at home. The Mission Continues was forged in this spirit of leadership and dedication to continued service, and every year The Mission Continues gives a heartfelt salute to Veterans Day by mobilizing veterans and their communities to #ReportForDuty.

This year, we invited everyone to #ReportForDuty with us, knowing that our communities are better and stronger when veterans and civilians work side by side. We also know that it is up to us to inspire our youth, who are the next generation of doctors, teachers, and entrepreneurs, to feel empowered to make a positive difference.
Located in Brownsville, Brooklyn, Osborn Playground has been an instrumental community hub since 1988. Due to decreasing investments in city parks, Osborn Playground will not be receiving funding from NYC Parks to help the playground remain a safe place for local children and residents to play and remain active.

The Mission Continues veterans and supporters refurbished the park’s iron fencing and two playground sets, refreshed the paint on the basketball courts and shower basin, painted a new softball field, blacktop games and mural on the playground’s comfort station, and removed invasive plant species to plant 350 daffodils.

“Veterans Day means to me that even after leaving the military, I can continue to serve and serve in new ways by involving myself in service projects to help make the local communities better.”

— WESLEY HUANG, BROOKLYN PLATOON LEADER
The Mission Continues Washington DC 1st Platoon is focused on neighborhood revitalization in the Congress Park apartment complex, part of the larger Congress Heights neighborhood in Southeast DC. By bringing veterans and community partners together, the platoon works with the residents of Congress Park to improve the community through positive involvement and service.

On Veterans Day, all five Washington DC platoons came together to plant new flowers in the butterfly garden that sits in the middle of the courtyard. Additionally, the platoons worked to beautify and refurbish planters and foliage surrounding the community’s new playground.

“Veterans are proudly highlighted once a year, and also celebrated daily by those who walk in our shoes. The Mission Continues’ unique approach combats multiple stress points experienced by veterans. My heart is moved to know our presence has magnified hope in both veteran and civilian communities.”

— Jackie Clayton,
Washington DC 1st Platoon Leader
The Ideal Independent School, formerly Higgs Charter Academy, accommodates children from pre-K through 12th grade residing in Bexar County, San Antonio. The school provides a secure, nontraditional environment that allows students to excel in their education.

This Veterans Day, San Antonio Service Platoons returned to The Ideal Independent School to continue the work they began last year. The platoons replaced railings, installed new fencing, and painted both the interior and exterior of the school’s nine portable buildings.

“When I first saw Ideal Independent in 2015 my heart sank. I could not believe there were still schools that did not have some type of playground for elementary children, but that was just the beginning. We built them a playground in 2015 and for Veterans Day we were able to install a privacy fence, paint the outside of the portable buildings and ramps, and repurpose abandoned planters to beautify the school. It may not seem like much to some, but to the volunteers that attend, and to the children and staff of the school, it means everything. Being able to be a part of The Mission Continues and to complete projects like these is what keeps veterans like me going. It is reenergizing and reminds me that I can make a difference.”

— CRYSTAL LAFLEUR, SAN ANTONIO 2ND PLATOON LEADER
The St. Paul and Minneapolis platoons teamed up to serve at the Phyllis Wheatley Community Center. The center’s mission is to provide comprehensive, quality programs in lifelong learning, child development and family support for the diverse Greater Minneapolis community.

The platoons will be working the center’s staff room and library. They built new bookshelves for the developing library to help alleviate space limitations. Additionally, the team completed painting projects and landscaped the exterior of the building.

“Every Veterans Day I get thanked for my service, and while I appreciate the sentiment I very rarely feel as if I have earned it from those who don’t know me. This year, when Barbara thanked me and our platoon for the worked we did at Phyllis Wheatley, and for my continued service, I felt a special kind of pride. I was doing something that would be impactful for years to come, and in my own community.”

— SHANNON DOTY, MINNEAPOLIS PLATOON LEADER
Quil Ceda Tulalip Elementary is located in the Marysville School District in the state of Washington with an enrollment of 540 students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade. The school provides a rich learning environment, blending Tulalip culture with Common Core standards to improve student learning.

In partnership with the school, as well as with the Veterans Department of the Tulalip tribe, the Seattle 2nd Platoon built new outdoor benches for each grade, and painted a Tribal Nations map for students to learn about their heritage.

“Veterans Day meant more to me this year than any other year. I spent the day doing what veterans do best: serve the greater good; and I did just that by helping my community reach its hidden potential.”

— MATT MOROGUE, SEATTLE 2ND PLATOON LEADER
OUR IMPACT

6,173
HOURS SERVED COLLECTIVELY

462 VETERANS
48 % ARMY
18 % MARINE CORPS
19 % NAVY
14 % AIR FORCE
< 1 % COAST GUARD

29
COMMUNITY PROJECTS COMPLETED

ACROSS 19 STATES

SERVING ALONGSIDE 225 YOUTH

OUR IMPACT THIS VETERANS DAY IS EQUAL TO

$145,459.44

WORTH OF SERVICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES*

* Based on the Independent Sector’s estimate of the average value of a volunteer hour ($23.56 in 2015)
MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

The 2016 Veterans Day Campaign was designed to generate engagement at the local and community levels nationwide. These efforts were supported and mirrored within our various media results. We garnered strong media coverage throughout the country, appearing in print, digital and television outlets in a diverse range of regional markets. Overall media impressions totaled more than 1.5 million in over 15 markets.

THE FOLLOWING IS A SELECTION OF MEDIA OUTLETS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE EVENTS COVERAGE:

- abc13 Houston
- WGN9 Chicago's Very Own
- FOX26 Houston
- Richmond Times-Dispatch
- HeraldNet Everett, Washington
- NEWS 12 Brooklyn
- Local 4 News Columbus

OUR SOCIAL MEDIA EFFORTS ALSO YIELDED POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT FROM OUR AUDIENCE:

Our social campaigns, revolving around the hashtag #ReportForDuty, shared personal stories of our veteran volunteers in the weeks leading up to Veterans Day about how they Report For Duty every day. This led to 109,439 impressions across our three social channels, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and a 45% increase in engagement from Veterans Day 2015.

We also participated in the Mannequin Challenge at our DC project, and the video led to 10,496 views across social media, and was shared broadly on both Facebook and Twitter, with 1728 of those people engaging with the post with likes, shares, or comments.
Veterans Day is widely regarded as a time to honor and remember our nation’s military veterans. At The Mission Continues, it’s also a chance for veterans and communities to join in action, creating veteran led impact at home. The day carries great impact and significance within our organization, but neither marks the start or stop in our ongoing commitment to service.

The annual Veterans Day campaign is one of many year-round service initiatives led by The Mission Continues. In partnership with local organizations, projects are rolled out nationwide on a weekly basis throughout the course of the year. They vary in size, scope and cause based on the needs of a given project site. This regionally and topically diverse service schedule provides scores of opportunities for individuals, veterans and non-veterans alike, to report for duty in their community.

As we move into 2017, we invite you to join us in our upcoming efforts. Check out our missioncontinues.org for updates on events and awesome service projects going on now in your area. Even better, sign up with a local platoon and make service projects with The Mission Continues part of your year-round commitment to service!
2016 PROJECT CITIES

ATLANTA
BALTIMORE
CHICAGO
COLORADO SPRINGS
DALLAS
DETROIT
HAMPTON ROADS
HOUSTON
INDIANAPOLIS
KANSAS CITY
LOS ANGELES
LOWELL
MIAMI
MINNEAPOLIS

NASHVILLE
NEW YORK CITY
ORANGE COUNTY
ORLANDO
PHILADELPHIA
PHOENIX
PORTLAND
SAN ANTONIO
SAN DIEGO
SAN FRANCISCO
SEATTLE
ST LOUIS
TAMPA
WASHINGTON DC
Thank you to our sponsors, partners and supporters for providing the financial support needed to equip veterans with the tools and resources needed in making a visible impact in communities across the country. We couldn’t have done it without you!