

BUILDING CHARACTER



HONORING SERVICE



VETERANS HERITAGE PROJECT™

Connecting Students with Veterans™ in order to Honor Veterans, Preserve America's Heritage, and Develop Future Leaders

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2020-2021





PERSEVERING THROUGH A PANDEMIC

RESILIENCE

The positive attitudes of **teachers** who went above and beyond to keep their Chapters going this year were an inspiration! Many teachers shared that VHP was the “*only thing going*” at their school as an educational enrichment alternative.

While some districts canceled all after-school activities, the addition of Zoom accounts and instructions on how to conduct virtual interviews allowed for **18 of our 30 schools to participate**. Monthly Zoom meetings with teachers and student leaders provided a positive atmosphere that allowed for an exchange of concerns, ideas, encouragement, and solutions.

Veterans sharing stories of perseverance when facing adversity resonated even more than normal, helping students cope with a year of challenges. Special tributes and interviews which demonstrated the extraordinary service of the Arizona National Guard during COVID, civil unrest, and wildfires further **enhanced students’ sense of service** and accomplishment this year, when little else did.

★ VHP was featured by the Alliance of Arizona NonProfits as one of eight inspirational nonprofits who demonstrated innovation and resilience during COVID.

★ 85% of surveyed veterans shared that they found the ability to participate in VHP during COVID particularly meaningful.

When students could not gather at their schools to lay out the stories for publication, VHP’s Publishing Coordinator hosted socially distant workdays for small groups at the VHP office, which resulted in the publication of **104 veteran legacies** between two editions of *Since You Asked XVII:™ A Salute to the National Guard*.

THANK YOU to our volunteers and supporters for keeping the **power of connection** strong for our students and veterans, and for providing funding which enhanced our ability to encourage and support collaboration and innovation within our Chapter schools.

INNOVATION

Our Saluting Stories of Service gala and the annual Community Reception and Book Signing, typically attended by 1,000 people, was replaced by **HONOR ROLL** – a hybrid event that offered an in-person socially distant parade experience for veterans and students, livestreamed for the public. Teachers, students, and volunteers from **12 VHP Chapter schools** cheered **veteran participants from 2020 and 2021** as they drove through the parking lot parade route donated by Paradise Valley Community College.

Within the route, students presented each veteran with a book, a handwritten thank you note, a commemorative Honor Roll challenge coin, and a beautiful poem written by a student. The route featured cheering students and teachers, veteran service photo displays, American and service branch flag lines, the Patriot Guard Riders, and community partners who brought vehicles from every military engagement from World War II to the War on Terror – even a flyover from the Arizona Stearman Squad.

Covered by every local TV station and livestreamed to VHP’s website, the 50-minute virtual event opened with remarks from Former Secretary of the Air Force, Barbara Barrett. Alumni students emceed the event, taking viewers through the route while incorporating special video features on VHP’s teacher of the year, student scholarships, veteran spotlights, and the **1st Annual Alumni Service Award**.

The teamwork and community participation which made Honor Roll possible was phenomenal!

THANK YOU to our sponsors for covering 100% of expenses, to our students and community partners for developing parade elements, to our Chapters in Yuma, Tucson, and Florida for holding similar events for their communities, to our gala committee for planning and executing the livestream and fundraising elements, and to our benefactors for generous financial support, raising \$78,000 to further our mission.

“This is important. The VHP program provided a lifeline—an opportunity for connection during a time of isolation, social distancing, and fear.”

—KEVIN STOREY, SHADOW MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER



"I am humbled and honored to be recognized by VHP, an organization and experience that has been such an integral foundation of my young adult life. I owe so much of the professional, citizen, and person I am today to Mrs. Hatch and the countless veterans whom it was my privilege to know and serve . . . what role models, mentors, and friends at such a formative time in my life."

—DR. JEFF TULLY, ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT





POSITIONED FOR GROWTH

Over the past few years, VHP has held itself to working with only 30 schools in order to maintain program quality while strengthening our infrastructure. We have accomplished much—establishing operational systems, enhancing Chapter resources and trainings, and expanding awareness and support.

This year, we **reached major goals in technology and staffing**, which have positioned us for future growth!

The implementation of VHP's curriculum in a **learning management platform** reduces teacher workload, ensures consistent and quality program implementation, and supports our ability to scale. The online courses guide teachers in managing a Chapter; instruct students through the interview, writing, and archiving process; train Chapters in the design of *Since You Asked*; and offer guidelines on how to organize a book reception.

★ Students with 21st Century Skills

- Are adaptable, resourceful, creative
- Are able to find and navigate information
- Have real-world problem-solving skills
- Demonstrate empathy, reliability, integrity
- Foster innovation

The addition of a Publishing Coordinator brings **expertise in the use of design software** and preparing book files for publication. This expertise is necessary for increased capacity and has already resulted in production and cost-saving efficiencies, enhanced skills in students, and the ability to continue our mission through the pandemic.

★ VHP received national attention in April when featured by the Heritage Foundation's *The Daily Signal*. This November they will host a podcast featuring a VHP student and his/her interviewed veteran.



★ Civic learning experts agree that civic education must include service learning or project-based activities. These experiences, such as interviewing veterans and writing their stories, assembling *Since You Asked*, and planning book receptions, are necessary for students to build communication and collaboration skills, to be exposed to people with different perspectives, and to learn how to engage with the greater community (*Brookings Institute, 2020*).

Full-time dedicated fundraising staff is vital to achieve our strategic goals; therefore, a seasoned Director of Development will be added in the fall. This person will manage all fundraising initiatives and work with the Board and Executive Director to **steward transformational gifts** to propel our mission forward.

Veterans Heritage Project received such a gift this year from a WWII and Korean War veteran who cared deeply about veterans, education, and an organization “**that embodies the ideals held to be important to me.**” Sadly, he never chose to share his story with VHP, instead leaving a legacy gift in his will, thus enhancing the future for our mission.



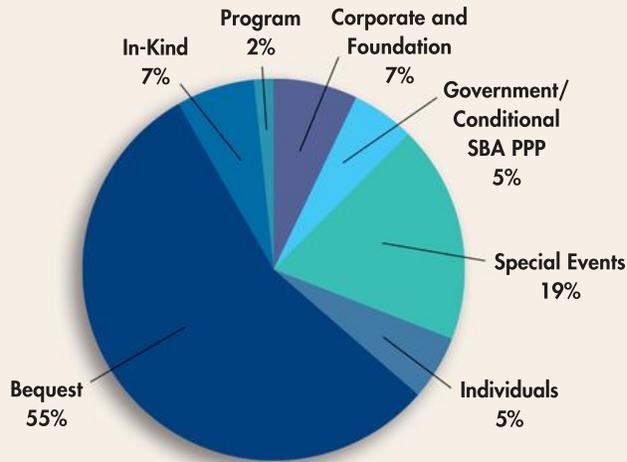
The strength of our programs and our demonstrated growth attracted **new board members** who come to us with national and global expansion experience, national board service experience, as well as finance, marketing, and operations backgrounds.

Together with our community of volunteers and supporters, we are excited for our unlimited possibilities. **THANK YOU** for helping students reach their greatest potential, while honoring and preserving the service of our veterans.

FY 21 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

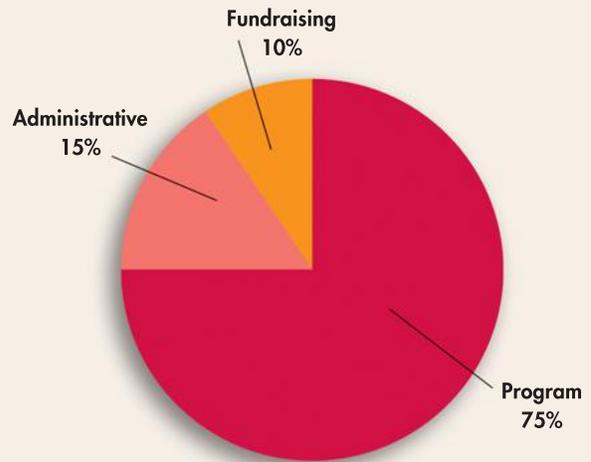
FY 21 Revenue \$905,165

(Ending June 30, 2021)

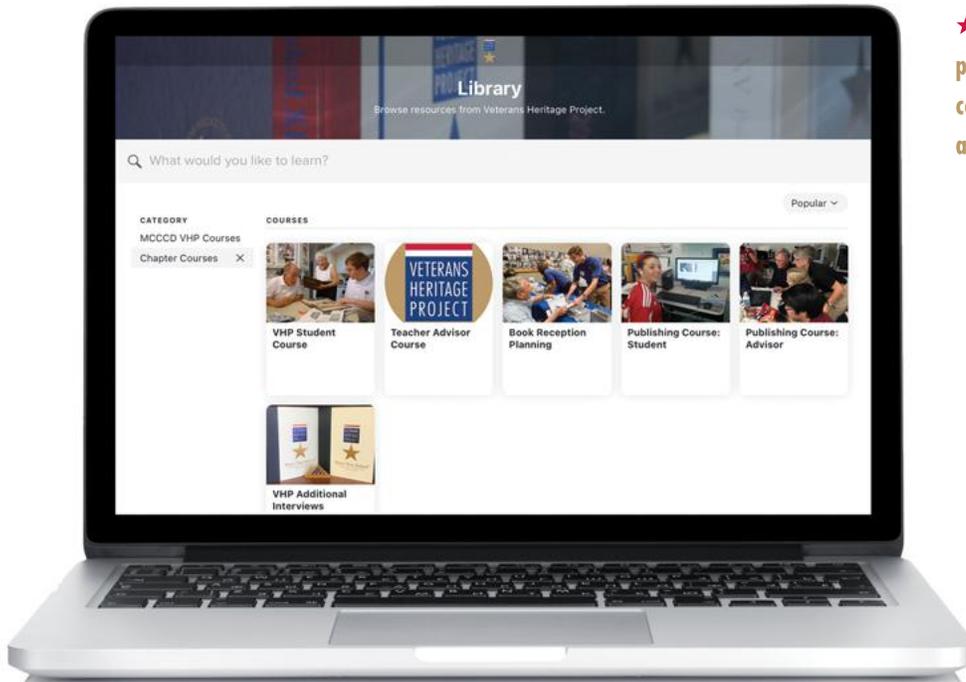
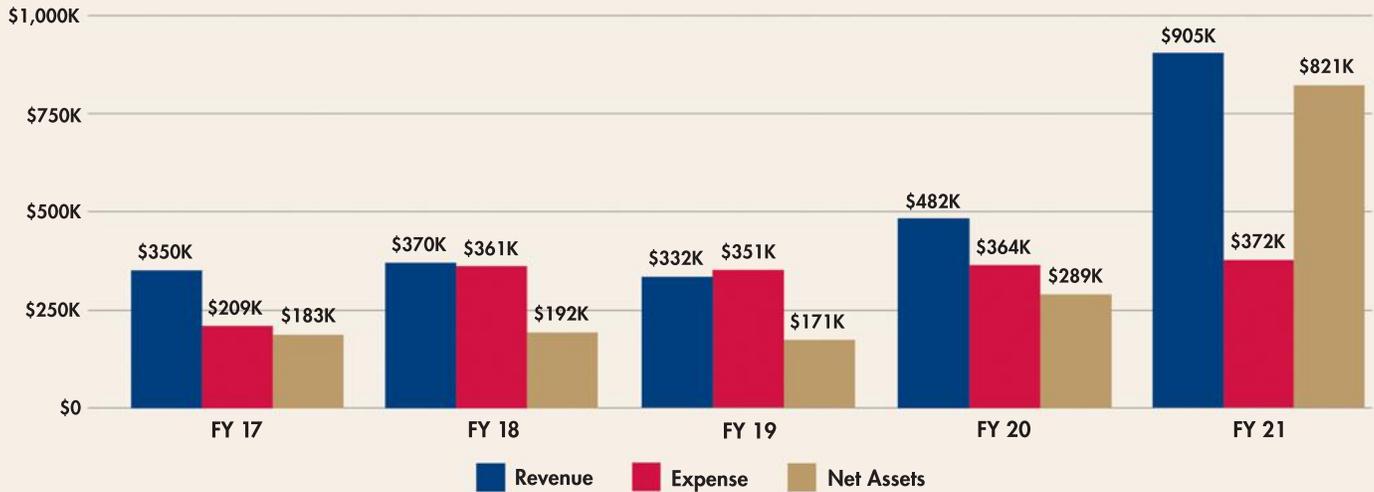


FY 20 Expense \$372,285

(Ending June 30, 2021)



5-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY



★ VHP's curriculum in a learning management platform reduces teacher workload, ensures consistent and quality program implementation, and supports our ability to scale.





RING OF HONOR CONTRIBUTORS



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SILVER STAR – \$25,000+



BRONZE STAR – \$5,000+



COMMENDATION – \$2,500+

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A full listing of generous donors is available at VeteransHeritage.org/mission

MAKING A DIFFERENCE BY *CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH VETERANS*™

PROGRAM

Your patronage provides students the opportunity to connect with veterans who share their stories of service, life experiences, and the resulting lessons they wish to impart to the next generation.

- Oral history interviews preserved in the Library of Congress
- Student-published hardbound book, *Since You Asked*™
- Regional community book receptions to honor veterans
- Veteran presentations
- Civic engagement activities
- College scholarships



REACH

Your generosity allows additional students and veterans to benefit from our award-winning after-school program. VHP's vision is to become a national model for civic and character education, doubling program locations in Arizona and expanding to additional states by 2025.

Annually Serving

- 26 Arizona and 4 Florida schools
- 7th grade through college
- 3,000 students
- 300 veterans

Since 2004 Founding

- 2,426 veteran interviews
- 2,565 chapter students
- 52,907 lecture students



IMPACT

Your support helps students reach their potential through character development, leadership skill building, academic skill strengthening, and bonds our community through increased patriotism and civic engagement. On average,

- 100% of students graduate
- 90% increase leadership, academic, and 21st century skills
- 85% develop a mentoring relationship with a veteran
- 25% of veterans tell their stories for the first time
- 62% find the experience cathartic



RECOGNITION

Your belief bolsters VHP's reputation. Our curriculum, designated a Character Education Program and aligned with Arizona's College and Career Readiness Standards, has been recognized by

- Congressional Medal of Honor Society
- Veterans History Project: Library of Congress
- National Society Daughters of the American Revolution
- Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society
- Arizona Department of Veterans' Services
- Arizona Department of Education
- Arizona Council for the Social Studies
- Arizona Humanities



LEADERSHIP

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STAFF

Michelle DiMuro, CFRE	Executive Director
Barbara Hatch	VHP Founder and Program Director (volunteer)
Pamela Gray	Director of Development
Hannah Nichols	Program Coordinator
Blanka Thomas	Publishing Coordinator

* FY 21 only ** FY 22 only



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