

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 2021-2022







# OUR MISSION MARCHES ON!

**Thank you** so much for partnering with VHP during the 2021-2022 school year. Your support enriched education for students through veteran presentations, built character and leadership skills in chapter students, and engaged our community in opportunities to show appreciation for veterans and their selfless service.

Although pandemic ripple effects continued and circumstances resulted in lower participation numbers than normal, we are proud our mission was still able to make a meaningful impact. Our program even grew in other areas such as technology supports, scholarship opportunities, and summer internships.

The energy and enthusiasm experienced by our students, teachers, and veterans as we returned to in-person activities has renewed an ambitious goal to bring Veterans Heritage Project to 50 schools by 2025! This will require financial resources, marketing approaches and materials, and additional staffing. School boards, district superintendents, principals, teacher conferences, parent-teacher organizations, and educational institutions where teachers earn their degree are all avenues where we can share how our program supports educational standards, graduation statistics, and a strong school culture.

We are excited about these challenges. We know there is so much opportunity to make a difference. *Our mission is important and needed!*

We have amazing people who believe in our program, and its ability to build a stronger future. Your support has already helped accomplish so much in recent years. Thank you! We look forward to continued growth and impact with your partnership.

**Michelle DiMuro, CFRE**  
Executive Director

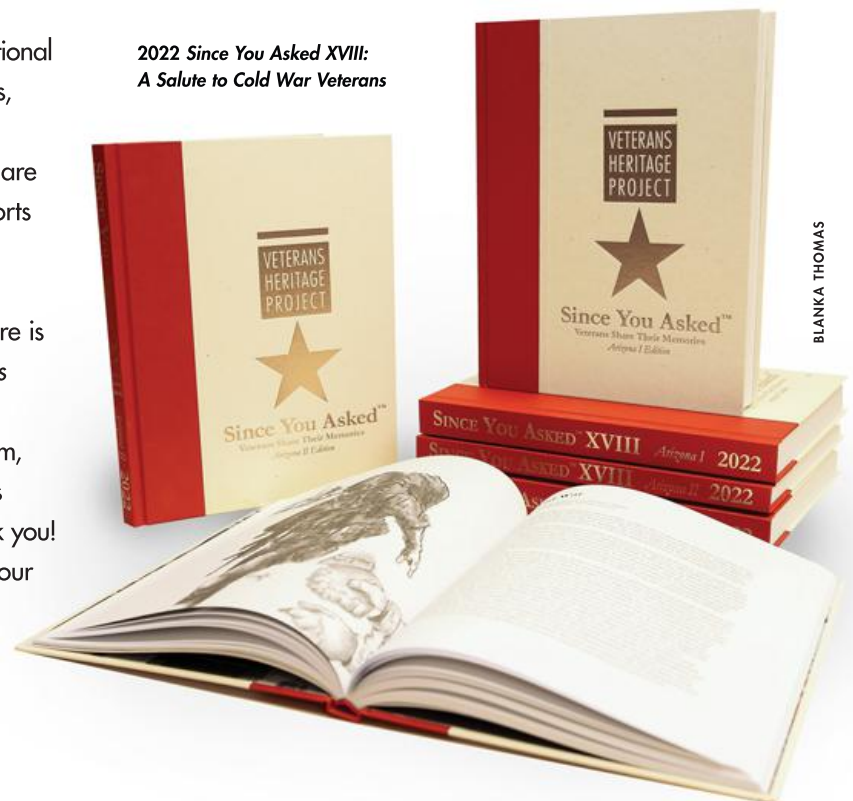


Don Kneeder enjoyed representing Vietnam veterans as part of our Phoenix Veterans Day Parade partnership with Sanderson Lincoln.

*"Extremely personal and professional and respectful experience. This program should be spread across the nation."*

—CLYDE BROWN, COMMANDER, US NAVY, RETIRED

2022 *Since You Asked XVIII:*  
*A Salute to Cold War Veterans*



*"To be honest, nobody in my family supported my choice to enter the US Air Force and never asked about my service. (My student interviewer) impressed me with her attention to detail, thoroughness in writing, and tenacity in telling the story accurately."*

—DEBORAH CARR, USAF VETERAN





# CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH VETERANS

After a two-year hiatus, we were able to once again hold our culminating program activity, the **Annual Community Reception and Book Signing**. It was exceptional in be together in-person again and have students honor their veterans by presenting *Since You Asked™ XVIII: A Salute to Cold War Veterans!* Many of our veterans shared the significance of their experience.



*"Was beyond anything I could have expected."*

—GLENN POSNIACK, US NAVY VETERAN

*"I am not a combat veteran. I did not think I had a story to tell. These students did not necessarily need to hear stories of battle, but ones of Teamwork, Mentoring, Survival, and Loyalty. One Team, One Mission. The reception proved our messages got through."*

—ANONYMOUS

*"A terrific experience. So impressed with the youth who take the time to be a part of this project."*

—ADMIRAL STANLEY ARTHUR, US NAVY, RETIRED

*"Such an emotional and special event."*

—LAWRENCE ALONZO, US ARMY VETERAN

*"My experience was unbelievable and more than I ever expected. The turnout was more than I expected in so far as honoring the veterans."*

—ANONYMOUS



From the top, Vietnam Veteran Willard Gilbert and his granddaughter Hannah Gilbert, proudly display the story she wrote about his service.

Cactus Shadows High School students appreciated speaking with Vietnam Veteran Harold Ferguson, who traveled from Flagstaff to participate in the book signing.

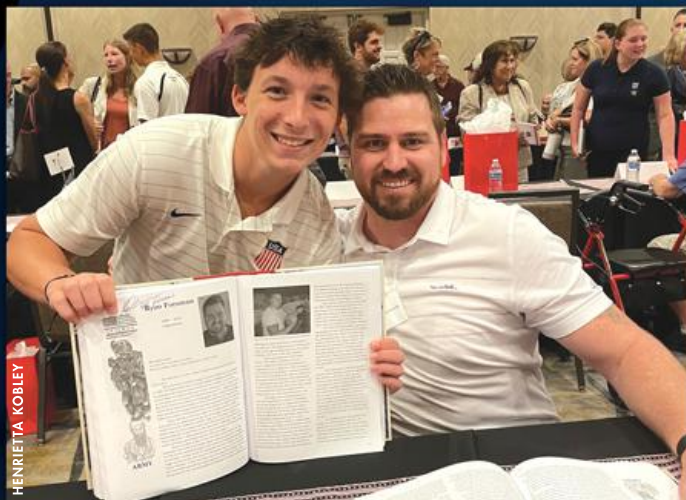
Afghanistan Veteran, Ryan Forsman and his student interviewer, Evan Kobley from Notre Dame Preparatory, enjoyed reconnecting at the event.



MANISH SHARMA



MICHELLE DIMURO



HENRIETTA KOBLEY



# OUR MISSION'S 18TH EXCITING YEAR



## CHAPTER PROGRAMS



**19** School Partners  
**154** Student Participants  
**118** Veteran Legacies Preserved



## VETERAN PRESENTATIONS



**19** Presenters  
**6** School Partners  
**3,159** Students Impacted



## STUDENT FEEDBACK



**100%** of high school seniors graduated and pursued college  
**100%** increased academic and 21st century skills  
**88%** increased civic engagement  
**86%** developed a mentoring relationship with a veteran



## VETERAN FEEDBACK



**20%** shared their story for the first time  
**76%** found the experience cathartic or healing in some way  
**80%** felt the experience EXCEEDED their expectations  
**100%** would recommend participation to another veteran

*"I have certainly shared some things with my family but not with the detail or organization that was achieved during this project. The intelligence and insightfulness of the interviewer far exceeded my expectations. This student was so impressive that I would like to know as she reaches milestones in both education and life endeavors. This is a terrific and important Project. Connections between and across generations is very important and this facilitates exactly that."*

—CAPTAIN CHARLES MACVEAN, US NAVY, RETIRED

# LEAVING TOMORROW'S LEGACY TODAY

Frank and Judy Lambert with Lambert Scholars, Lauren Anderson and Kayleigh Rice.



Our Legacy Society members utilize planned gifts either now or as part of an estate gift, as a way to leave a meaningful legacy in support of a mission they believe in. Learn more at [veteransheritage.org/legacy-giving](https://veteransheritage.org/legacy-giving).

Veterans share their stories of service, life experiences, and the resulting lessons they wish to impart to the next generation. Appreciation from students can be significantly healing, the recognition is rewarding, and the preservation of history is important. However, our veterans often share that what makes the most impact are the interactions with their students, as was the case for Vietnam Veteran Frank Lambert.

When Frank returned from Vietnam, strangers threw rocks at his medical transport. In his civilian life, work colleagues ridiculed his service. Due to this treatment, Frank never shared his remarkable stories of leadership, bravery, and duty until he was interviewed for the 2011 Purple Heart edition of *Since You Asked*. Frank was impressed with his student interviewer, Ashley (Durham) Dietrich's gratitude toward veterans and her aspirations to serve her community. A connection was formed, and the on-going experience with both Ashley, and the appreciation he received from students as a classroom speaker, ultimately "rekindled my sense of duty and patriotism. For that, I am very grateful and mindful of this personal responsibility to pay back to those who are a part of VHP."

To help more VHP students who have demonstrated a passion for learning, hard work, and giving back to the community, Frank and his wife Judy established the **Lambert Family Scholarship Fund**. The fund, open to high school

seniors and college freshman, awards up to \$17,500 to support trade school, community college, or a university education, and is renewable for up to four years.

In this inaugural year of the scholarship, Frank and Judy chose to award scholarships to two impressive students.

**Lauren Anderson**, a 2021 graduate of Cactus Shadow High School, attends Northern Arizona University in the Honors Program, majoring in psychological sciences with a Chinese language minor. Lauren's teachers mention her perseverance, resilience, and quiet leadership. "Lauren is thoughtful and inquisitive in class discussion, capable of original thought, attentive, and ready to learn. She is a caring person who enjoys giving back to the community."

**Kayleigh Rice**, a 2022 graduate of Ironwood Ridge High School, also attends Northern Arizona University, majoring in civil engineering. Kayleigh's teacher remarked that in addition to her work ethic and contributions to VHP, "Kayleigh's distinct sense of personal dignity and integrity have no doubt contributed to making her the well-rounded citizen that she is today."

Frank and Judy are so impressed by these student scholars, that they recently shared their plans to fund the scholarship in perpetuity. Our deepest gratitude to the Lamberts for inspiring our next generation and leaving a legacy of character and service.





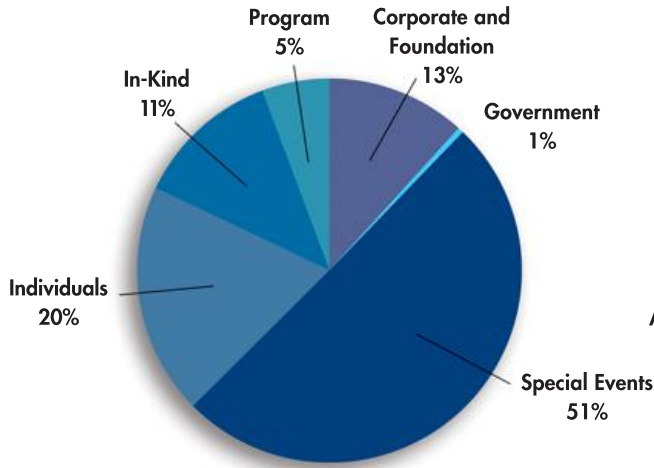
# VETERANS HERITAGE PROJECT



## FY 22 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

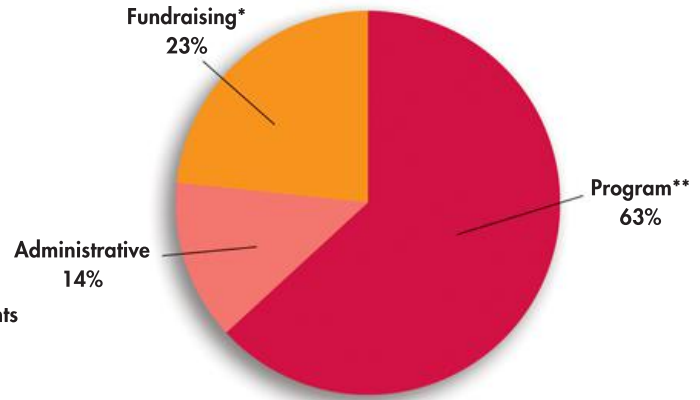
### FY 22 REVENUE \$512,316

(Ending June 30, 2022)



### FY 22 EXPENSE \$437,733

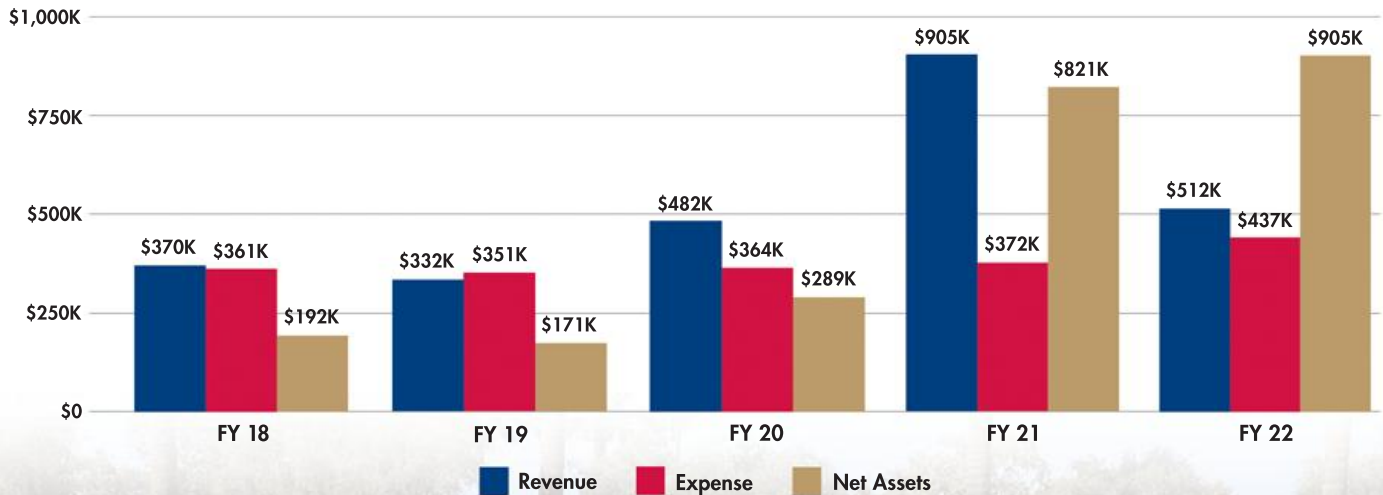
(Ending June 30, 2022)



\* VHP is investing in our capacity to fundraise so that our program can grow and serve additional students, veterans, and communities.

\*\* Paper shortages, labor shortages, and supply chain difficulties resulted in a delay of book publishing, shifting costs for our book reception and scholarships to the next fiscal year.

## 5-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY



MICHELLE DIMURO

Shadow Mountain High School VHP Chapter at the 2021 Phoenix Veterans Day Parade.





# RING OF HONOR CONTRIBUTORS



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<sup>LS</sup> Legacy Society Member | \* Sustaining Supporter via monthly giving or multi-year pledge

A full listing of generous donors is available at [VeteransHeritage.org/mission](http://VeteransHeritage.org/mission)



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\* FY 23 only

## STAFF

<b>Michelle DiMuro, CFRE</b>	Executive Director
<b>Barbara Hatch</b>	VHP Founder and Program Director (volunteer)
<b>Hannah Nichols</b>	Program Coordinator
<b>Blanka Thomas</b>	Publishing Coordinator
<b>Tami Welch</b>	Administrative Coordinator



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