



**Who We Are:** In 2008, Florida Legislature established the Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF) as a Direct Support Organization to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA). The Foundation operates for the direct and indirect benefit of the veterans of FL, the FDVA, and FL Veteran Service Organizations. The FVF is also a nonprofit organization operating for charitable and educational purposes under Section 501(c)(3).

While many of Florida's almost 1.7M Veterans, successfully transitioned to a post-military career, many encounter challenges that impede their progress. Veterans, reported priority services needed during this transition were employment assistance, transportation, housing, mental health, and utility assistance in emergencies.

**Serving All Florida Veterans:** FVF has taken charge of representing over 4.5 million FL Veterans and their families through Congressionally Mandated Florida Veterans Service Organizations (VSO's). We created a unified team to carry a top-three, prioritized list of initiatives to the legislative menu for the 2018 session. This dynamic with support of County Veteran Service Officers will bring education resources, and relief to meet the needs for Veteran's success.

**Making A Difference In The Lives of Veterans:** FVF's direct support of FDVA is "proactive" to ensure success by engaging military personnel prior to discharge from active duty. The Veterans of Florida will produce a roadmap for a new veteran that will educate him/her on their journey from cradle to grave.

- FVF matched a mental health /wellness grant, transitioning homeless Veterans for reintegration to productive life.
- FVF funded a portion of new vans for Disabled American Veterans in Florida, to provide Veterans transportation to appointments to medical clinics and hospitals, and engaged Transportation Disadvantaged for transportation.
- FVF recently entered into an agreement to educate the over 3,100 Florida Assisted Living Facility Administrators to provide education to elderly, resident Veterans regarding their earned benefits, pensions, and Aid and Attendance opportunities. This initiative alone can provide over \$300 million in benefits.
- FVF is working with the Elks Club and the Broward County models to serve Homeless and At-Risk Veterans to develop a model program of a day of service for effective, meaningful support.
- FVF is chartered by FDVA to provide information about Veteran's earned benefits through the funding of VA Benefits Guides. FVF has furthered education of Veterans through the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) on demand when Veterans opt to request additional direction on earned entitlements.
- FVF is advocating statewide initiative Veteran's Court that supports rehabilitation rather than incarceration.
- FVF demonstrated its ability to make a serious positive impact on Florida Veteran's lives through the execution a \$1.25 million grant, which has become evident by any metric that this organization is necessary. To eliminate homelessness, FVF has, in one year distributed over \$363,000 to over 500 veterans and their families for housing and utilities. Additional resources were awarded during natural disasters such as hurricanes Hermine and Irma.

**Meeting Future Needs:** In 2018, FVF will provide initial engineering drawings for the Florida Veterans Memorial Garden, to begin at the completion of the Capitol renovation. Additionally, each year many extraordinary Veterans who have given continued public service are honored through the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame, which is partially funded through FVF support.

- With legislative funding, the FVF will provide greater assistance to rural areas of the state to aid Veterans in attending medical appointments and also to meet employment needs.
- FVF will collaborate with 211, Mental Health Crisis Centers, and United Way to compose a repository of services by county to connect nonprofits and county services to answer Veterans' needs.
- FVF will team to provide all avenues of connecting a Veteran with resources for employment, to include current web-posted listing of opportunities. Additionally, site will include prerequisite training required and what assistance "veteran-friendly" vocational/technical and academic schools can provide through earned benefits.

**Summary of FVF Services:** Veterans bring in over \$17 billion annually to Florida. On a shoestring budget, FVF had outcomes with only 5% administrative overhead. FVF connects missions of Florida nonprofit organizations to serve the Veteran population in transportation, mental health, PTSD therapy, education, employment, health, benefits guides, and Veterans Outreach for ease of resources during crisis. Our Motto is - *"Transition for Success"*