



# ACV Advocate

*The quarterly newsletter of Air Compassion for Veterans*

## From the Desk of Chairman John Hoffmann

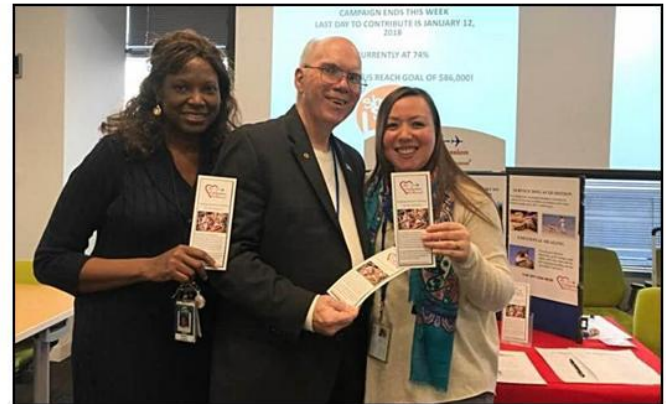


Happy New Year!

I want to send a big "Thank You" to everyone who gave in December. I especially want to thank those federal employees who gave through the Combined Federal Campaign. I had the privilege of presenting Air Compassion for Veterans at six CFC fairs. The enthusiasm was remarkable, as noted by the number of employees who signed up for our quarterly newsletter and made pledges.

ACV can survive only with the support of partners who have a heart for veterans. We are committed to providing free commercial air transportation to our wounded, ill and injured veterans and their adversely-affected family members. As long as funds permit, we're here for the heroes, whether the need is for medical treatment, counseling, rehabilitation, PTSD, TBI or service dog acquisition

Blessings,  
John



*DoD employees enthusiastically receive ACV literature.*

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Katie, 11, and Justin, 8, help our nation's wounded veterans by assisting with a mailing project. These remarkable kids are ACV Chairman and Mrs. Hoffmann's honorary grandchildren. Thank you!

## 'You'll Do This Family Proud!'

The young soldier in boot camp at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma got a call she dreaded to hear. "Your father is dying" were the words the Red Cross relayed to Pvt. Molly Skovlund on August 5, 2017. She fainted immediately. Later that night, due to extreme stress, she began bleeding from the eyes, nose and mouth and was taken to the ER. Her father, Marty Skovlund, Sr., a soldier like herself, died at 4:00 a.m. the next day.

"Make your flight plans for today," Molly's sergeant told her.

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## 'You'll Do This Family Proud' (Cont.)

The cost of a last-minute flight to her home in Huron, South Dakota was prohibitive, and besides that, Molly's mother, Marie, couldn't transfer funds in time.

"I'll see what I can do to help," she told her daughter, knowing Molly's success as a soldier depended on her being able to attend her father's funeral where she could grieve and find comfort with her family. Marie texted her friend, veteran Vince 'Rocco' Vargas. "He's a writer and actor, and an extremely busy guy. I wasn't sure he'd see my text to him at 7:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning."

Fortunately, Vargas did get the message and connected Marie with Karl Monger, the head of an organization called the Gallant Few that provides mentoring and support for veterans.

"I can't stress enough how the veteran community is there for each other," Marie said, noting that the next veteran to help was former infantryman Jim Stephens. Stephens, who is also a pilot with American Airlines, serves as a member of the Air Compassion for Veterans Board of Directors and as the Director of Transportation. In that capacity, he made sure Molly's ticket was provided and special services coordinated.

"Molly's travel involved two 501(c)(3)'s and at least 10 staff members from the world's largest airline [American Airlines]. Army ethics," Stephens said.

Molly flew home on Wednesday, attended the funeral on Friday and returned to base on Sunday. She said she was "very taken care of, and that was more than I could have asked for. The pilots and air attendants greeted me and apologized for my loss and offered me first class treatment even though I had I am economy seat. One flight attendant helped me get to my next flight in Dallas. We had a great conversation and she got me snacks for my next flight and gave me her number in case I needed help getting a place to stay if my flight got canceled.

"Air Compassion made a bad situation, which could have been worse, a lot easier to handle. I will never forget those four days and the people that helped me. It took the stress off my family who was already distraught after losing Dad. Air Compassion helped not only me but my entire family."

Military service is in the Skovlund family blood. Marty Sr. was in the Army Reserves and with Marie, raised five children. "Joshua and Marty Jr. were both Army

Rangers," Marie explained. "Marty Sr.'s dad was in World War II." She added that her son Marty is a journalist and author who worked with the History Channel on production of the TV documentary series "JFK Declassified."

Molly, who will turn 19 on February 2, is training to be a combat medic. She and her father enjoyed a close relationship. A month before his death, he wrote a touching letter to his youngest child.

"I still remember like it was yesterday the night we took you home from the hospital where you were born. I was holding you in my arms, and I said, 'She is definitely a Molly.'"

He went on to write, "I love you, Molly, and thank you for your honorable choice to join the Army, and I am sure you will do me proud! Just remember always to lean on your Lord Jesus Christ, who is with you wherever you go and whatever you do. Believe that with all your heart and soul, Molly. I am so proud of you and I love you always and forever, Molly Marie Skovlund! Have fun and never give up or give in to peer pressure. I know you will do this family proud. Skovy-Dad"



ACV Advocate is published quarterly and edited by Suzanne Rhodes. Air Compassion for Veterans is located at 6806 Landor Lane, Springfield, VA 22152. Email us: [info@aircompassionforveterans.us](mailto:info@aircompassionforveterans.us). We're a 501(c)(3) charity founded in 2006 to provide veterans and their families with free, long-distance medical transportation. We receive financial support for our operations through the generous gifts of individuals, churches, civic clubs, corporations, foundations, and the Combined Federal Campaign #99118. All Contributions are tax deductible.



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Thank You for Your Support!