



LUKE CHAPTER MOAA

Military Officers Association of America
Post Office Box 5072
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December 4, 2017
DELIVERED VIA EMAIL TRANSMISION

Homes for Heroes Foundation
Ms. Lisa M. Welsh, Director
9201 West Broadway Avenue-Suite 615
Minneapolis, MN 55445

Military Officers Association of America
Colonel Mike Turner, USAF, Ret.
Executive Director-MOAA Military Family Initiative
Washington, DC.

Re: Report on Distribution of Grant Funds

Dear Ms. Welsh and Colonel Turner,

Luke Chapter, Military Officers Association of America (Luke Chapter) submits this joint report to **Homes for Heroes Foundation** (HFHF). This is the **final report** to HFHF, due by December 6, 2017 by the terms of the grant from HFHF, by agreement dated September 7, 2017. A grant in the amount of \$1,250 was received from HFHF. This grant program was completed as required, with all HFHF funds disbursed within 90 days for their intended purpose of housing/emergency financial support and food relief to veterans and needy junior enlisted families. No HFHF grant funds are on hand.

Luke Chapter also submits this joint and interim report to **MOAA's Military Families Initiative** as an **interim report**, as required by the terms of the grant from MOAA, by agreement dated August 1, 2017. A grant of \$5,000 was received from MOAA. A final report is due to MOAA MFI by May 31, 2018. MFI funds remaining on hand are \$4,375.

Luke Chapter has worked since notification of award of the two grants last summer to identify needy and worthy recipients of grant funding, as proposed in our applications to MFI and HFHF. We have held the two grant funds in separate identified accounts in our accounting system, because the two funds were required to be expended with different timing. However, we have administered the grant program and distributions on behalf of both accounts as a joint effort. It was impractical to do otherwise. The terms and criteria for distribution of the grants in our proposal and agreements were the same for both programs, with a total of \$6,250 in funds available for distribution. Luke Chapter considers all grants and aid to have been distributed on behalf of both grantors, HFHF and MOAA MFI.

A **Grant Committee**, headed by Lt Colonel Dennis DeFrain, Army (Ret), CWO3 Don Forney, Navy (Ret.), Linda Wolverton, SSP, and Rev (Maj) Fannalou Guggisberg, USAF (Ret.), evaluate potential recipients and make recommendations to the Luke Chapter Board of Directors. The Board reviews and approves nominations for grants to individuals.

We are working with several local agencies and programs to receive appropriate referrals for grants. Among these are: The U.S. Air Force Chaplains Office, and the Airman and Family Readiness Center, at Luke AFB, Arizona (West Phoenix Valley area); the “Veterans Court” administered by the Maricopa County District Court, Phoenix, Arizona, through Judge (Brig General) Gregg Maxon; and the Veterans Administration, through Joan MacCarthy, case worker.

Our report is submitted on the format requested by HFHF, as follows:

Hero/Family Member First Name: Brian and Alma Xxxxx

Amount of Assistance: \$500.00

Description of Assistance:

The Airman and Family Readiness Center at Luke AFB referred us to a young family which was in some financial trouble. Brian, an Air Force serviceman (E-5), is in Korea on a one-year, unaccompanied tour. They were trying to refinance their home in Goodyear to get a better rate. They ran into an unscrupulous lender who told them he would process the loan and told them not pay the existing mortgage until the new loan was completed and existing loan paid-off. Then the lender left for some unknown reason, and no new loan was made. The family fell two months behind in their mortgage payment because their mortgage money went to pay other bills.

Luke Chapter’s Grant Committee recommended a \$500 grant to the family, which was approved by the Board of Directors. We met with Brian’s wife Alma and her two young daughters. The check was made out to the mortgage company to ensure credit against the loan. Alma was extremely grateful, thanking Luke Chapter on behalf of the family. She later wrote:

“The money received will go straight to our Mortgage. I truly appreciate you for helping my family in this hardship.... This grant will help us get back on track. We’ve truly realized that we need to get back on track and humble ourselves down a lot... (and) that we need to live within our means and budget....My most sincerest gratitude for all the help you gave us and continue to give us.”

Alma felt that they might very well have lost their home, without our grant. With the grant and other funds, the family caught up on the loan payments. Brian and Alma also received debt and credit counseling. A copy of the ‘release’ signed by Alma is enclosed with this report.

Hero/Family Member First Name: Enrique Xxxxx

Amount of Assistance: \$625.00

Description of Assistance:

Enrique enlisted in the Army about 14 years ago and spent six years on active duty during the Second Iraq War, serving in combat. He separated as Staff Sergeant E-5. He was married and has three boys. Enrique suffers from PTSD. Enrique went to college on the GI Bill and received a college degree in criminal justice. Then his wife left him and took the three kids and he was

convicted of a felony related to drug abuse. He was released on probation. His social worker says there was no violence involved in the marital relationship. Enrique became severely depressed. He wanted to go to law school, but because of his felony conviction, he is unable to do that now. He has been 'clean' of drug abuse for more than one year.

Enrique has been receiving substantial counseling from the VA, and has completed work therapy. He will start a job in a company that hires felony convicted veterans as soon as he finishes his Maricopa County Veteran's Court training. As a young child, his mother abandoned him and he was raised by his father. His social worker says that he really wants to be a good father. The social worker is extremely high on him, and feels that he is now in a position to get his life back together. She has been working with him for several years.

Enrique needed \$625 to make a deposit and first month rent on an apartment in Glendale (our area). Luke Chapter Board approved the grant. We met with Enrique for breakfast, and had a good conversation with him and his VA case worker. The grant was made payable to the rental company.

Enrique presented himself as a person who has learned from his mistake. He is taking advantage of the education, counseling and training made available to him. He is now re-establishing his life as a working adult, with a stable place in which to live. He was very grateful to Luke Chapter, and to his VA counselor. Enrique declined to sign a 'release' or have a photo taken, out of concern that his privacy would be infringed, and reaction by potential employers.

Hero/Family Member First Name: Thirty enlisted families at Luke AFB

Amount of Assistance: \$750.00

Description of Assistance:

Shortly before Thanksgiving a few weeks ago, Luke Chapter took advantage of an opportunity to offer food relief, provided by the Base Chaplain's office at Luke AFB. Our Luke Chapter Chaplain, Rev Fannalou Guggisberg, works with Base Chaplain Lt Colonel Larry Fowler and Chaplain Maj David Barnes to distribute canned and packaged food and a turkey at Thanksgiving. Only junior enlisted members with families are eligible; single members eat at the mess hall.

The base identifies junior enlisted families in need of food assistance through the First Sergeants of the squadrons at the base. The First Shirt, most familiar with his/her troops, issues a voucher to the needy member. The member takes it to the Chaplain's office and exchanges the voucher for a turkey and sack of food.

This year the Chaplain had ordered 100 turkeys to distribute along with sacks of food. They had a list of 138 qualified people with vouchers from the First Sergeants. So they were 'short' by 38 turkeys. Rev Guggisberg, with approval of the Luke Chapter Board, purchased 30 gift cards from the Base Commissary a week before Thanksgiving, and provided them to the Chaplain's Office (Lt Col Fowler). Each gift card permits purchase of \$25 worth at the commissary. When the turkey supply ran out during the distribution process, a commissary card was given along with sacked food to the member or spouse so they could buy a turkey or a ham for Thanksgiving.

Unfortunately, there were 170 eligible people who actually showed up with vouchers, so not everyone was able to get a turkey or a card.

Incidentally, Luke Chapter has continued its historical practice this fall of collecting cans and packaged food from our chapter members, which Fannalou takes to the Chaplain's office for distribution at the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Two of our members, Colonel (Ret) Jerry and Pam Wojtas, were present the morning the food and commissary cards were distributed, and reported many smiling and happy faces of folks as they lined up and received the items making their Thanksgiving brighter. The families were very grateful to receive the food assistance.

This completes the final report to HFHF, and interim report to MOAA MFI. Please contact the undersigned with any questions. Luke Chapter will provide a final report to MOAA MFI no later than May 31, 2018, as agreed.

Luke Chapter is grateful for the funds provided to us for distribution in food, housing and emergency financial relief for veterans and junior enlisted families. The experience of giving and helping as a Chapter has truly enriched our members as we reach out and contact military people in need.

Very truly yours,

Michael J. Kramer, Colonel, USAFR, Ret.
President
Luke Chapter, Military Officers Association of America

Telephone: 720.563.9953
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Cc: Luke Chapter Board of Directors; AZ Council of Chapters, Lt Colonel Dick Jonas

