



NAVY MARINE COAST GUARD
RESIDENCE FOUNDATION

October 2025 Foundation Update

Fall Fun with Friends

Fall is a season of celebrations, and that has certainly been true at the Foundation! On September 27, we celebrated the pioneering spirit of Vinson Hall at our annual gala, *Silver Spurs Soirée*. This year's sold-out fundraiser captured the spirit of the Old West from the moment guests walked through the swinging doors (built by CEO Rob Roe) of the Silver Bucket Saloon to try their luck at the black jack tables and roulette wheel. The night continued in the El Dorado Ballroom, with its glittering candles, velvet drapery, three-course meal and kick-up-your-heels music by the Shedkickers – all a part of the fun and funds that were raised to support our Vinson Hall family! Just weeks later, on October 29, we were pleased to host the *Evening with the Stars* event, our annual chance to thank our generous Star Members. It was a pleasure to share an enjoyable evening with so many of you, and thank you for your support! At the same time, we extended a warm welcome to our newest wounded warrior, Jacob Groves, who recently moved in as part of the Foundation's Warrior Transition program. Finally, we also had the opportunity to welcome students from The Potomac School, who came to campus to help out – and to challenge our residents in some card games! Read all about these fun events and activities that have been keeping us busy this fall!

Annual Gala Celebrates the Pioneering Spirit at Vinson Hall

The spirit of the Old West was alive and well at Vinson Hall on September 27 when the Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation held its annual gala, the *Silver Spurs Soirée*. The evening began in the Silver Bucket Saloon (Fred Johnson's Bistro), where about 175 guests received their

cowboy hats at check-in, and then stepped through the swinging saloon doors to test their luck at the blackjack tables, craps table and roulette wheel. Those who ended up winners turned in their "Funny Money" for a chance at raffle prizes later in the evening.



Peals of laughter rang out periodically as folks recognized their friends and neighbors in a variety of dress, including fake mustaches, outlaw bandanas and even one inflatable horse and rider. "How fun it was to see how everyone dressed for the occasion," said resident Alice Lancaster. "What a rousing success this year's Gala was! Martin and I thoroughly enjoyed it." Guests then made their way upstairs to the El Dorado Ballroom, where glittering candles, flowers and velvet drapery lent a little Gilded Age glamour to the scene.

Once everyone found their seat, the U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard presented the colors, and Admiral Allie Leslie, Vice Chair of the NMCGRF Board of Trustees, led the sold-out crowd in singing the Star-Spangled Banner when the recorded version failed to play on queue. After welcome remarks, a short video of the Foundation's work in 2025 was presented, and guests enjoyed a three-course meal.



After dinner, Michelle Crone, Senior Director of Philanthropy & Engagement, drew the names of 28 lucky winners of gift cards, all donated enthusiastically by local restaurants to our community.

Michelle, who wore her mother's wedding dress, shared words of thanks. "I'm wearing this dress in my mother's honor and because she reminds me so much of the remarkable people in this room," she said. "I can't thank you enough. There is no way the Foundation could do the work we do without your support!" This year's event brought in more than \$124,000 to benefit VHRC residents



and staff, a new record.

Michelle also gave shout-outs to the team that had worked hard to make the Gala special this year. The Shedkickers, a bluegrass band and Vinson Hall favorite, played and many guests took to the dance floor, enjoying the chance to kick up their heels and celebrate a night of fun in the Old West.

Planning the gala each year is a labor of love for the Philanthropy & Engagement team, and we couldn't be more pleased with the response. In the days that followed, residents generously shared their impressions of the evening.

"Wow, from those wild gambling tables to that surf and turf dinner – what an evening of joy for Vinson Hall residents," Jerry Norris wrote. "One to remember!"



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Foundation Fêtes This Year's Star Members

It was a star-studded night on October 29, when the Foundation held its annual *Evening with the Stars* in the Ballroom. About 130 of the Foundation's 2025 Star Members – those who have given a membership gift this year of \$250 or more this year – gathered together for a festive evening of appetizers, drinks, fellowship and fun.



"Each year, this event is our chance to thank our Star Members, the generous donors that make the things we do for our community possible," said Michelle Crone, Senior Director of Philanthropy & Engagement.



RDML Michael Browne, NMCGRF Trustee and Chair of the board's Philanthropy & Engagement Committee, welcomed attendees and thanked them for their support. He highlighted the Foundation's four funds, beginning with the Employee Caring Fund, which helps

employees weather financial emergencies. Last week, the Fund stepped in to provide emergency assistance to a staff member who lost his home and all his possessions in a devastating fire.

Michael highlighted several projects that the Innovation & Enhancement Fund has supported this year, including a new videoconferencing system, flat screen TV for the Sports Bar, and frames and easels for the resident Art Show. The Resident Assistance Fund continues to ensure that no resident is asked to leave when they run out of resources. And the Warrior Transition Fund welcomed a new warrior to campus last month, Jacob Groves, who is living at Vinson Hall as he recuperates from a motorcycle accident. These accomplishments are only possible thanks to all our donors and especially our generous Star Members!





the Stars is one of our favorite annual events, and judging by the smiles and good cheer during the evening it seems like we aren't the only ones who feel that way! Said resident Maureen Kammerer, "It was a lovely party – thank you so much. These

gatherings are what make Vinson Hall special." Thank you, Star Members!

NMCGRF's Wounded Warrior Program Welcomes a New Warrior to Campus

Last month, we were delighted to welcome a new warrior to Vinson Hall. Jacob Groves, a Naval Cyber Warfare Technician (E-3), is from Dalton, Georgia, a city with a population of about 35,000, located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in northwest Georgia. He said he is thrilled to be at Vinson Hall. "Everyone here is just so nice," he said. "I really appreciate the hospitality since I moved in. It's just been amazing."

Jacob enlisted in the Navy in July 2023, and after basic training at the Great Lakes Naval Base in Illinois, he was sent to A School for Cybersecurity in Pensacola, Florida. Not quite a year after he arrived, Jacob had a traffic accident. He was stopped on his motorcycle at a stoplight on a main road in Pensacola, and when the light turned green he proceeded through the intersection. But a car from the cross street turned left illegally in front of him. "I fractured my pelvis, both my wrists, a disc in my neck, which I have had replaced, and I had a TBI [traumatic brain injury]," Jacob said. "Also, an amputation of my left thumb a little bit. Not too much. A little off the top!"



He was in a Pensacola hospital after the accident for about two months, then



flown by air ambulance to the Shepherd Center in Atlanta, a hospital specializing in spinal cord and brain injury rehabilitation, where he remained for two more months. A few months of outpatient therapy followed at home, and then the Navy brought him to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, where he has been receiving outpatient therapy as part of the Navy Wounded Warrior program since November 2024.

For Jacob, the Foundation's Warrior Transition Fund came through at just the right time. He will be living at Vinson Hall for the next six months to a year while he learns if he will be cleared for continued duty or will be transitioning out of the military. "I'm OK with it either way," Jacob said. "I'm trying not to put all my eggs in one basket yet, I'm just trying to think of plans for both paths."

The Foundation raises money through our Warrior Transition Fund to subsidize participants' stay in two apartments on campus. Applicants are recommended by Navy Wounded Warrior, our partner organization based at Walter Reed that coordinates the non-medical care of wounded sailors and transitions them through recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration. One of the aspects of NMCGRF's program that makes it unique is the connections that are made between



these young warriors and our residents, many of whom were warriors themselves and as such are especially able to provide understanding and support. As one resident explained, it is not just about giving wounded sailors a place to live during their recovery, "It's about embracing them and welcoming them at a time when they might need a little extra care."

We extend a warm welcome to Jacob and hope he enjoys his stay with us!

Foundation Builds Partnership

with Local Students



The Foundation was delighted to once again host students from The Potomac School in McLean on September 12. Both of our organizations share a strong commitment to service, so we were happy to have their 10th graders join us as part of their service learning program!

The students pitched in to help the Marketing office with a mailing, as well as the Philanthropy & Engagement team prepare for the gala. But the students' time on campus wasn't all work and no play! For the final hour of their nearly 3-hour morning visit, residents joined them in the Penthouse Sylvester Lounge to play some games and have some fun.



Tables had been set with packs of cards or board games. Students and residents quickly broke up into groups to play card games like Sevens, Uno and poker, as laughter rang out through the lounge. Potomac students have been on campus many times over the years for service projects, to interview residents for a Witnessing History project, and for our annual Earth Day celebration. We can't wait to welcome them back!

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You can leave a legacy that will last for years to come by designating Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation in your will or by making a planned gift. Some types of planned gifts can support our community and provide you with a charitable income tax deduction, minimize capital gains taxes, reduce estate taxes or provide you or others with an annual income for life. To learn more about these types of gifts, please see our [website](#) or contact Michelle Crone at michellec@vinsonhall.org or 703-538-3068.

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