



For Immediate Release  
August 9, 2022

Contact: Heidi Zimmerman  
Phone: (202) 765-3773  
hzimmerman@vvmf.org

## **WALL OF FACES: MISSION ACCOMPLISHED**

***At least one photo has been found for each service member whose name is inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial***

Washington, D.C. – The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) is proud to announce that after more than two decades of effort, a at least one photo has been found for each of the 58,281 service members whose names are inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

“When VVMF began this effort, the goal was to put a face with a name for each of the 58,281 service members whose names are inscribed on The Wall. To ensure that visitors to The Wall understand that behind each name is a face – a person with a story of a family and friends who were forever changed by their loss. Today, the Wall of Faces tells these stories through photos and remembrances left by both friends and family members. We couldn’t have done this without the tenacious work of a small army of volunteers across the country. Their ingenuity, commitment and dedication are tremendous,” said Jim Knotts, president and CEO of VVMF.

“This phase is now complete, but our team and many volunteers are continuing to seek better quality photos and adding remembrances to show the full story behind each name. We ask the public to look at the photos on the Wall of Faces and add additional higher-quality images as well as leave remembrances so that with the name, the photos and the remembrances – fuller stories will begin to emerge about each of these heroes,” said Knotts.

To view and search the Wall of Faces, visit: [www.vvmf.org/wall-of-faces](http://www.vvmf.org/wall-of-faces)

In the Fall of 2001, a short-term initial effort was made to collect photos of those on The Wall, with a larger, more concerted effort launched in the Fall of 2009. Since then, hundreds of volunteers and family members have submitted photos for the effort. Volunteers tracked down photos in many different ways. These are just a few highlights of our volunteers and how they found these photos:

- Janna Hoehn began working on the project in 2011 with one photo that she had a connection to – the name rubbing she randomly made on her first visit to The Wall in Washington D.C. She then started with the 42 fallen from Maui - where she resides. With that success, she moved on to her hometown in California – and then the entire state. Hoehn contacted newspapers in each county where photos were needed. Soon after, she started working her way across the country. She grew a team of like-minded volunteers who joined her efforts, and they all had their own way of finding photos. However, Hoehn made many of the emotional phone calls to family members to not only ask for a photo but to learn more about their lost loved ones. “I am grateful for each and every volunteer, each

newspaper that agreed to do a story for a little lady from Hawaii. I am proud of my work with this project and will never forget this time in my life,” said Hoehn.

- Andrew Johnson began working on finding photos in 2014. As a newspaper publisher in Wisconsin – he knew that community newspapers all over the country could significantly contribute to the effort of finding missing photos. Johnson invited VVMF to speak at a National Newspaper Association convention. In 2016, his newspaper published a special section that displayed all of the Wisconsin Wall of Faces – the first publication of its kind – and brought awareness to other states where photos were still needed. Johnson’s connection is personal. He is the Gold Star Father of 1LT David Johnson, KIA in Afghanistan in January 2012. “It was an honor to serve our great republic by honoring our Vietnam era heroes by finding their photos. As I worked on the project, many Vietnam veterans embraced me and let me know how much they loved my son and would never forget him as they were often forgotten. In turn I would always tell them, ‘welcome home, you and your fallen military buddies will never be forgotten,’” said Johnson.
- David Hine got involved in 2009 when he read about the effort in a VVMF newsletter. He already had photos for 11 Indiana heroes he could post right away, since his hometown had hosted *The Wall That Heals* a few years prior. His hunt for photos always began in the listed home of record since each hometown newspaper would typically have the obituary that listed surviving family members along with schools attended. Finding parents or siblings was always the best solution. “My most memorable story came from contacting a daughter-in-law of a fallen service member only to find out that her husband had never seen a photo of his father. I was able to obtain a high school photo and then a military photo and provide it, not only to the Wall of Faces, but to the family as well,” said Hine.
- Herb Reckinger started looking for photos of Minnesotans in 2014. He worked with the Minnesota Historical Society as well as many loyal city and school librarians. Once Minnesota was complete, he spread out to other states. He continues to search for better photos for those with poor quality photos. “While at a *The Wall That Heals* stop, a local veteran asked me to find his friend’s name on The Wall. I asked if he wanted to see his picture. After looking at his friend on the Wall of Faces, he had one sentence for me - ‘I forgot what he looked like,’” said Reckinger. Another face remembered.
- Steve and Annie Delp began representing VVMF and the Wall of Faces project at Vietnam unit reunions in 2013. It soon became evident that the attendees – Vietnam veterans and their families – wanted to help in gathering the missing photos. The Delps took on the mission of obtaining the photos, cleaning them up and adding them to the Wall of Faces. “At one point, a small bible was left with us that had 30 names inside. Upon doing some research, it was found that 25 of the 30 names were KIA. I’m pleased to report that all 25 have at least one good picture now,” said Steve Delp.
- Norman Murray attended the Veterans Day ceremony at The Wall in 2014 and met Annie Delp. Her volunteer work was an inspiration to him. He went back home to Western New York to begin his quest to track down families, yearbooks and newspaper clippings about Western New Yorkers. In 2016 – he collaborated with a Buffalo State PR & Advertising

class and *The Buffalo News*, as well as another researcher who had been quietly collecting obituaries of the fallen. “Interestingly, my fellow researcher obtained the final picture for Western New York by buying a high school yearbook on eBay, because neither the school nor the public library had a copy in their archives,” said Murray.

- John Thomstatter got involved in 2016 after hearing about the effort. With the help of his fellow members of VVA Chapter 1036 in The Villages, Florida he led a team to find the photos for all of Florida’s service members on The Wall. Chapter 1036 enlisted other VVA chapters in Florida. They not only found all the photos for Florida, but “I was fortunate enough to find the last photo to complete Pennsylvania, my home state,” said Thomstatter.

The Wall of Faces features a page dedicated to honoring and remembering every person whose name is inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. This effort further preserves the legacy of those who sacrificed all in Vietnam and allows family and friends to share memories, post pictures and connect with each other. To learn more, visit [www.vvmf.org/wall-of-faces](http://www.vvmf.org/wall-of-faces)

### **About the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) is the nonprofit organization that founded the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall) in Washington, D.C. in 1982. VVMF continues to lead the way in paying tribute to our nation’s Vietnam veterans and their families. VVMF’s mission is to honor and preserve the legacy of service in America and educate all generations about the impact of the Vietnam War and era. To learn more about VVMF, visit [www.vvmf.org](http://www.vvmf.org) or call 202-393-0090.

# # #