



We believe that every Marine is a leader. The Marine Corps Association Foundation, founded in 2009 as the charitable arm of the Marine Corps Association, helps develop leaders by providing forums for professional education, exchanging ideas, and preserving the traditions of the Corps. We stand by Marines with valuable resources through every step of their Marine Corps journey.

Over the past decade, the Marine Corps Association Foundation has filled a void in programs that could not be supported by the Marine Corps appropriated funds. Tens of thousands of Marines across the globe each year benefit from our programs such as the Commanders' Unit Library Program, Commanders' Forum Program, Marine Writing Program and the Marine Excellence Awards Program.

Our programs are vitally important to help ensure Today's Marines develop into strong and effective leaders ready to face the challenges, both and off the battlefield, in the 21st Century.

## **MCA PROGRAMS**

### *Commanders' Forum*

Units all over the world engage in Professional Military Education experiences through this program to learn from historic battles ranging from the D-Day Landing at Normandy and Marine amphibious landings on Pacific islands, to the Battle of Marathon between Athenians and Persians in 490BC, to military engagements in the Korean and Vietnam Wars, to battles which took place in the United States during the Revolution and Civil War.

Discussing the operational, cultural, or historical significance of battlefield experiences is an invaluable learning tool for expanding a Marine's knowledge and preparedness for future missions. This program provides the most latitude and creativity to commanders and their senior enlisted leaders and provides the most impact to their Marines.

### *The Marine Writing Program*

The Marine Writing Program encourages creativity, critical reasoning skills, open discussion, and frank dialogue on topics important to Marines and ensures those serving today will excel in tomorrow's complex environment. Through a variety of essay contests for all ranks, this program continues to evolve each year.

### *The Commanders' Unit Library Program*

These libraries allow Marines of all ranks to access books that are on the Commandant's Professional Reading List, enhancing their professional military education. Without access to the libraries, Marines, and in particular our junior Marines, would be expected to find these books and pay for them on their own. Our Commanders' Unit Library Program gives Marines the tools they need to develop as leaders and critical thinkers. The study of the profession of arms is critically important to Marines of all ranks, and each year we send additional copies to unit libraries around the Corps to ensure even more books are available to Marines.

### *Marine Excellence Awards Program*

The Marine Corps Association Foundation provides awards to recognize exceptional performance across the Corps including thousands of awards at professional schools and within military occupational fields. These awards are essential tools used by Marine leaders to ensure the men and women in their units are working to be the best, and when they succeed, are appropriately recognized for their achievements. These awards, the

majority of which go to enlisted Marines, are tangible examples of just how amazing the young men and women are in our Corps.

## **OUR IMPACT ON MARINES**

One of the five priority focus areas of the Corps' 38<sup>th</sup> Commandant is Education and Training. General David H. Berger wrote in his Commandant's Planning Guidance, "The complexity of the modern battlefield and increasing rate of change requires a highly educated force. While different, education and training are inextricably linked. Education denotes study and intellectual development. Training is primarily learning-by-doing. We will not train without the presence of education; we must not educate without the complementary execution of well-conceived training."

He states that Professional Military Education (PME) is not something reserved solely for officers; rather, something expected and sought-after by our Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and Staff Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs). "PME is the responsibility of every Marine, and takes many forms from individual professional reading to formal school participation."

The Marine Corps Association Foundation supports Marines serving today with programs to enhance their military education, professional growth, and recognize their achievements. Speaking about the Marine Corps Association, General Berger said, "I think this organization provides the tools (for professional self-study) because it's one thing for a lieutenant or lance corporal to say 'Alright, I got it. I should educate myself, but I don't know where to begin.' This organization is a foundation underneath that."

Over 65,000 Marines benefited from our programs in 2020. With the focus on education and training from the Commandant, now more than ever, our programs are vital to the professional development of active-duty and reserve Marines around the world.

## **OUR PLAN FOR SUPPORT**

The Marine Corps Association Foundation builds the financial resources required to support the professional development of Marines through personal outreach, direct mail appeals and acquisitions, planned giving, special fundraising events, and social media and digital outreach. The financial goals for each program are established by historical usage statistics and forecasted growth.

The Marine Corps Association's Strategic Plan 2025 established goals and objectives related to Foundation program elements. Goals 3 (Advance professional development...), 4 (Recognize the superior performance of individual Marines...), and 5 (Grow resources to ensure organizational stability and continued support...) have supporting objectives that describe the funding of new programs Marines need, increasing the relevance of programs in existence, and the outreach to donors, sponsors, and supporters to endow programs or program elements.

Our goal is to find ways to endow enduring program elements such as the sustainment and expansion of unit libraries or excellence and writing awards. The Marine Corps has always valued personal professional development, but since the establishment of the Commandant's Professional Reading List in 1989, the emphasis has grown on reading to gain the lessons of those who went before you. Some of the Marine Corps most prolific modern leaders like General James Mattis, General Joseph Dunford, and General Jay Paxton attribute part of their development to professional reading and study.

Similarly, refining the ability of Marines to put their creativity and ideas into written products which can be persuasive and educational is something the Marine Corps values. Writing awards linked to the larger contests often provide thousands of dollars to winners and endowments to make these permanent features in the Marine Corps' professional journal, Marine Corps Gazette, is ideal.

Recognizing the excellent achievement of Marines throughout the Corps is also an emphasis of leaders. Marine leaders, whether officers or noncommissioned officers, demand a lot of their Marines and those Marines perform their duties without expectation of a reward. Even so, acknowledging those Marines who stand out from their peers is a valuable leadership tool. Many excellence awards are well established, and we seek endowments that will help us ensure their continued existence for the future.

## EXAMPLES OF HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Some examples of unique contributions to the professional development of Marines are provided below. We can work with you on other options.

- General Robert E. Hogaboom Writing Contest. Named for an influential Marine leader and veteran of operations in Nicaragua, WWII, and Korea, this annual contest inspires Marines to write about original approaches to various aspects of leadership. Three awards (cash awards and plaques) are presented totaling \$5,250 of annual expense. An endowment gift of \$105,000 would maintain this contest.
- The Leatherneck Magazine Writing Contest is an annual contest specifically for enlisted Marines and encourages them to write about leadership, current events in the Corps, or Marine history. Three awards (cash awards and plaques) are presented at an annual expense for MCA of \$2,500. An endowment gift of \$50,000 would maintain this contest.
- Annual Restricted Gift. Different from an endowment, an annual restricted gift can support a program element like the Kindles provided to deploying Marine units (unit deployments to Okinawa or other remote locations; deployments on ship, etc.). Marines have annual required professional reading and MCA provides books to libraries at home stations, but to make it easier for deploying Marines to take those books with them, we provide sets of Kindles with the required reading titles loaded so these can be shared by Marines while serving away from home. The typical annual funding for MCA is \$60,000 to purchase the Kindles and e-books, so a gift of this amount would support the Kindle/Unit Library program for one year.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

The demand for our programs grows every year. The time is now to support the Marine Corps Association Foundation in our role of enhancing professional military education and providing awards to Marine leaders.

You can donate online at [www.mca-marines.org/donate](http://www.mca-marines.org/donate) or send a check, made payable to the Marine Corps Association Foundation, 715 Broadway Street, Quantico, VA 22134. Or consider leaving a meaningful legacy by adding a gift to the Marine Corps Association Foundation in your will or estate plans. A planned gift will have a significant impact on Marines serving today and those serving in the future.

If you are interested in helping us endow one of our program elements (writing awards, other excellence awards, professional reading initiatives) please contact Timothy S. Mundy, Col USMC (Ret), Director, Foundation Operations at 703-540-0118 or [t.mundy@mca-marines.org](mailto:t.mundy@mca-marines.org).

We look forward to working with all donors, sponsors, and supporters interested in helping us achieve goals related to ensuring professional development resources for Marines are guaranteed to be available to them in the future.