

# ***Polaris Financial Gives Back to our Veterans on Armed Forces Day***

*By Bob Deitrick, CEO*

*May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

*The COVID-19 crisis has been problematic for everyone. This pandemic has been unlike anything we have experienced before. It has been tough, but it's been especially challenging for those who are struggling financially. Steven and I decided in March, when the shut down began, we wanted to give back to our community. The first week of the shutdown we passed out over 120 Honey Baked® hams to the entire staff at Eddie Merlot's and Polaris Grill, two restaurants we enjoy and frequent. All of these folks had lost their jobs, unknowingly, to no fault of their own. Several weeks later, on Good Friday, we passed out ham dinners and sides to our friends at Eddie's once again and we went with our board members to pass out 60 ham dinners to the disabled vets at Freedom's Path in Chillicothe.*

*Several weeks later, we decided to go all in to celebrate our veterans, Gold Star and Blue Star Families on Armed Forces Day in Columbus. In two weeks, we created a team consisting of eight companies and 60 volunteers. We handed out 700 Honey Baked® ham dinners, sides, cookies and desserts to veterans, active duty and military families. The coalition we put together included:*

- Polaris Financial Partners – Thanks to our board members and clients: Sally Volpe, Mick and Joyce Rings, Dave and Joanie Reisdorf, Maurice Robins, Paresh and Maya Patel, Tom and Vicki Harper, Dave Smith, Cheryl Hittinger, Paulette Tiell, Smily and Diane Gillig, Steven Morgan and Justin Braun*
- The VA Ambulatory Care Center of Ohio - led by Staff Sergeant Traci Washington*
- Eddie Merlot's – Thanks to Scott Ciocca, Jesica Kantner and the Eddie's staff*
- Honey Baked® Ham of Polaris – Thanks to Tesh and Shyamal Patel for their prodigious effort*
- Costco of Polaris – Thanks to Sandy in Membership*
- TV Asia - Thanks to Shital Parikh*
- St. Francis DeSales High School – Thanks to Principal Dan Garrick*
- Holy Family Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry – Thanks to Father Stash Dailey*
- HMB, Inc. of Westerville – Thanks to my neighbors Tom and Jodi Harris and 12 of their staff*
- Thanks to Santa and Mrs. Claus who joined us from the South Pole*



*It was an exceptionally rewarding experience to see how happy folks were as they drove through and picked up their feast. Most came in cars, some even took the bus while others walked in, so we knew they were homeless. It is hard to believe, yet 20% of our adult homeless in Columbus are veterans.*

*Steven and I did this, with our board, because it was the right thing to do during this pandemic and because we wanted to bring attention to the fact that many vets, who have sacrificed for our great country, are suffering. For our first effort in attempting this - it was a success. We made an profound impact on many lives. As I said on the news that day:*

***“Our veterans are to be held in exceptional esteem. They are a national treasure to all of us”***

*During this event we met a Gold Star Family - Ed and Mary Miller. They lost their son on his second deployment to Iraq. Ryan was killed in action protecting us on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006. I had a poster made for the Miller's of their son which we displayed at St. Francis DeSales and at Eddie Merlot's:*



*We gave this banner to the Miller's on Saturday. Despite what any of us feel we have been through over the past two months, I assure you, what we have experienced is nothing compared to what the Miller's have had to endure having lost their son, Ryan, who died protecting all of us...*

***We owe The Miller's and all of our Gold Star Families our eternal thanks and gratitude.***

*As we commence the process of re-opening our economy, we need to understand that things will not be normal for a while, but we will re-open. Anecdotally, Eddie Merlot's opened last Thursday with 200+ guests each night. Scott Ciocca, their GM told me he could have booked 400 each night, so that's a good sign demand is returning. We also wanted to thank the media for their effort last weekend. Both WBNS-10 and WSYX-6 covered our event at Eddie's last weekend. If you would like us to email you access to the videos (mp4 files) of the local news coverage please let us know.*

*Thanks to our clients and friends for supporting us. We can all be proud of the effort made to assist our community. We will be in touch soon with recommendations as we move to this “new normal” phase. We hope you had an enjoyable Memorial Day kickoff to the summer and look forward to seeing you, virtually, very soon. Feel free to call us for a virtual or phone review. Have a terrific week!*

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