

RESERVE VOICE

2023

Convention Communiqué



National Convention

September 28 – October 1, 2023

Join fellow ROA members in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, for the grand finale of a year-long celebration of ROA's first Century of Service and set the agenda for the century to come.



Photos courtesy Visit Baton Rouge



For registration and more details, visit

www.roa.org/convention



Reserve Education Forum ★

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**CITIZEN-WARRIOR
COALITION**

**HIRING OUR
HEROES**

ROA® PRESIDENT'S VIEW

AS THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION CONCLUDES, WE CAN STILL CELEBRATE ROA

Fellow ROA members, welcome to the 2023 edition of our *Convention Communiqué*! As always, this is an information-packed issue, including the Annual Report from CEO/Executive Director Jeff Phillips, a Legislation Update from Director of Legislation and Military Policy Matt Schwartzman, updates from the Service Section vice presidents and committee chairs, and much more. This edition of the *Convention Communiqué* prepares us for our upcoming National Convention/Annual Meeting in Baton Rouge, LA, from September 28-October 1, 2023, which will conclude our centennial celebration. Please see the information in this communiqué or visit roa.org/events for details on registering for the convention and making hotel reservations.

I'd like to again thank the Centennial Committee and national staff for all their hard work and enthusiasm that made this year so special and successful. It's almost hard to believe that after many months of planning and preparation, our celebration of ROA's century of service to our nation is nearly complete, but as it's been said: "All good things must come to an end."

But does it have to?

Even though our formal centennial celebration draws to a close, we should continue to celebrate ROA each day; thankful for all our past successes while remaining steadfast in our original mission "to support and assist in the development and execution of a military policy for the United States which shall provide adequate National Defense." We have a superb, albeit small, full-time staff that keeps the ROA engine running daily, but, as a grassroots organization, our members turbocharge the

entire operation. Here are a few ways each member can help in continuing to "celebrate" ROA:

1. Get involved at the chapter/department level—actively participate in meetings/conventions, volunteer to assist with planning and leading events, and serve in leadership positions at the chapter/department level.
2. Get involved at the national level—volunteer to serve on one of the many National committees or run for National office.
3. Participate in the Second Century Campaign—support ROA financially so that we can expand existing programs and offer new ones to fuel future growth.

Speaking of our Second Century Campaign, for those who have participated already—thank you very much for your support! If you haven't yet contributed, there is still time to make a difference! Every donation is meaningful and much appreciated and will support ROA as we move into our second century of service.

Serving as your National President has truly been an honor and a privilege. I look forward to seeing each of you in Baton Rouge!

Robert H. Carmack

Robert H. Carmack
Capt. USCGR (Ret.)
82nd ROA National President



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ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2022

AN IMPLACABLE FIGHTING SPIRIT MOVES US INTO OUR SECOND CENTURY

I think words matter.

And so you will see in our communications the word “fight.” We don’t simply “work” for reform in law and policy that ends the inequities which hobble our reserve components . . . we *fight* for these reforms. I think warriors, young and old, appreciate that. After all we have been through for this nation, for its leaders to permit these inequities is an outrage.

It is an *outrage* that a Marine Corps reservist incurs a \$17,000 debt for a colonoscopy because he was dropped from TRICARE Reserve Select when he moved from individual mobilization augmentee to IRR *for two weeks* while he reestablished in another IMA unit.

It is an *outrage* that members of the RC must endure discontinuity of health care and occasionally incur massive dental and medical expenses to stay ready for service to our country.

It is an *outrage* that RC spouses still encounter employment “transportability” barriers when they move from state to state and find their medical certifications don’t travel with them.

It is an *outrage* that a member of the reserve components can serve twenty or more good years and still not qualify for veteran status for federal hiring preferences.

It is an *outrage* that reservists are paying their own way to drills!

It is an *outrage* that an active component retiree gets their check immediately, while Reserve or National Guard members must wait until the age of 60.

Many years ago, on a pleasant day in a muddy tank assembly area at the Grafenwoehr range, as our battalion was preparing to head home after tank gunnery to our kaserne in Bamberg, Federal Republic of Germany, one of the fightingest, most honest, and most respected officers with whom I ever served uttered words I shall never forget. Between pulls on his omnipresent cigarette, Maj. Ed Bryla, a Vietnam veteran and our battalion executive officer, fumed to me and another green lieutenant over the many supply deficits that bedeviled the post-Vietnam Army and, in particular, kept our aging M60A1 RISE Passive tanks from adequate readiness.

“If you care, you have to be angry,” he said, glaring at me—or rather verbally firing right through my skull, the tanks behind me, and into the defense bureaucracy thousands of miles to the west. “*You should stay angry.*”

Anger is a dangerous companion. Controlled and directed into constructive action, it can virtuously animate one’s efforts. From researching our association’s history, I have seen time and again how

such outrage was so directed and military readiness consequently enhanced. The needs of the Reserve service too often get mired in mere trifling matters. They impede readiness itself and simply serve no purpose.

ROA is the leader in taking on these challenges, as it has for the century of our existence. It can be slow going, and victories are often elusive and usually hard-won. Yet the fight is worth it. We are gratified that our determination and leadership are increasingly regarded as worthy of association among others who understand the stakes.

Meeting at ROA's Minute Man Memorial* Building on March 28, the chiefs of the reserve components—Reserve and National Guard—led a [panel discussion](#) on employer support of the RC. The chiefs thoughtfully and constructively engaged with industry representatives about how the military could facilitate their support with more predictability. In other words, win-win.

*Researching for the ROA histories in the past two issues of *Reserve Voice Magazine*, I noticed in period issues of *The Officer* that in our headquarters name, the “minute” and the “man” were separate words. I will return to that historically correct usage.

This framework of collaboration creates an upward spiral in readiness. Good military policy enables Citizen Warriors to follow a dual-career path, serving on a basis that preserves the goodwill of employers. Employers, in turn, support military service, enhancing its feasibility for young men and women contending with all the pressures of “life-at-thirty.” And up it goes.

You will read in these pages the reports of our directors of operations, legislation, and military policy. You will see that we are actively engaging along both these “internal” and “external” fronts! ROA “owns” the reserve component law and policy space; *only* ROA fights for law and policy that enhance the readiness of all reserve components across the entire spectrum, from equipping and training to family and veteran care—it all counts toward readiness!

In Director of Legislation and Military Policy Matthew Schwartzman's column, you will read about our campaign in Congress and the administration. I think you will agree that we are making a difference as significant as we have throughout our history, doing so with a fraction of yesteryear's national staff—and a federal government more fractious than in living memory.

ROA's focus on readiness and our intent to help solve the tough problems reserve component leaders face in achieving readiness is being recognized. The Army Reserve's NCO leadership has chosen ROA to be the site of a meeting and banquet later this year and asked the ROA executive director to provide some remarks. That executive director is *thrilled* at the honor and privilege of being among a roomful of sergeants (major)!

In August, the prestigious [American College of National Security Leaders](#) endorsed ROA's Citizen-Warrior Coalition initiative to establish a presidential commission and conference on ensuring America has sustainable military readiness. The topics would include eliminating the persistent inequity between the components that weakens that readiness. The college is “dedicated to promoting national security by providing a source of commentary and advice to national security practitioners” (from its website). Its membership of retired generals, admirals, and ambassadors is—like ROA—on *solutions*.

Inherent in this initiative is mounting evidence that the all-volunteer force may be inadequate for the increased operations tempo of a nation engaged in nearly 150 countries and facing adversarial behavior in Europe and Asia. We read of persistent recruiting failures among most of the services. Readiness-sapping gaps exist within commissioned and noncommissioned end strengths.

In the 2023 Kansas University Press book [The All-Volunteer Force: Fifty Years of Service](#), ROA's role was highlighted in the chapter I contributed on the reserve components. (The editor-in-chief's choice of an ROA voice to write the sole chapter on the reserve components is a statement in and of itself.) Among the book's 13 chapters, warnings of AVF inadequacy are pervasive and compelling.

It's one thing to warn of danger; it's another and more difficult thing to offer solutions. One potential solution is a program that Gen. George C. Marshall championed after WWI and during the Cold War: universal military training. Essentially, all eligible citizens of military age get a year or so of training “in the basics.” Upon completion, further service is an option but not compulsory. Explaining the value of UMT, Marshall wrote in his September 1945 biennial report to the secretary of war:

“In another national emergency, the existence of a substantial portion of the Nation's young manpower already trained or in

process of training, would make it possible to fill out immediately the peacetime ranks of the Navy, the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserve. As a result our Armed Forces would be ready for almost immediate deployment to counter initial hostile moves, ready to prevent an enemy from gaining footholds from which he could launch destructive attacks against our industries and our homes. By this method we would establish, for the generations to come, a national military policy: (1) which is entirely within the financial capabilities of our peacetime economy and is absolutely democratic in its nature, and (2) which places the military world and therefore the political world on notice that this vast power, linked to our tremendous resources, wealth, and production, is immediately available.”

Such an exposure (without the waivers that so corrupted the Vietnam-era draft) would help close the “civil-military gap” and also likely generate recruits among young people who discover an affinity for military service (*surprise, surprise!*).

I suggest that the strategic value of such an initiative befits ROA’s advocacy.

Underappreciated within the defense world is civilian employers’ role in the reserve components’ readiness. Without their support, would there be an Army Reserve, an Air Force Reserve, and on down the line? ROA’s recognition and facilitation of employer support is taking shape in the Citizen-Warrior Coalition. As the nation’s reliance on the RC grows, ROA must help enhance employer readiness to support RC service!

All we do must be paid for. In the annual report financials, you will see the story of an organization grappling with the challenges associated with passage through turnaround. And we are getting through it.

Our bills are paid on time, our audits are clean, and we are not raiding our cash reserves. Your national staff, supported by our elected officials in the Executive Committee and its associated committees, determined a year ago that we would not engage in “deficit budgeting,” to use layman’s terminology. Our expenses are not exceeding our *cash* revenues; we are tracking with our financial plan—and by that, I mean not the “theory” of the balance sheet and income statement but the “fact” of the cash flow statement.

That took some to-the-bone cutting in expenditures, especially those associated with our invaluable contracting partners, such as Military Non-profit Consulting and KMC communications. Yet

these partners are invested in ROA’s success, and we together figured out how to stretch the dollar and get target effect: our development and programmatic ascension continue, and our communications haven’t been this good in over a decade!

We have transitioned from our former financial management firm (SmithBucklin) to CBM, whose team is doing a great job. For the first time in perhaps two years, our financial documents caught up, and we have visibility of our finances. (We owe much to the great teamwork of Diane Markham and our national treasurer, retired Air Force Col. Tom Hueg, who is also president of the Department of Virginia. Incoming President Wroblewski, with President Carmack’s approval, brought Tom onto staff as a temporary “executive treasurer” to help us through the transition—Tom’s report expands on this progress. I cannot thank Tom enough, and it has been great to have a fellow aviation buff to chat with!)

We are preserving our fiscal reserves but not yet rebuilding them beyond the bounties of a Wall Street bull market’s inflows. Revenues are key, and I will address what we are doing in that regard. Shortly after the convention’s October 1 conclusion, staff and the Budget and Finance Committee will launch into the budget development for the new fiscal year beginning January 1, 2024.

Our primary revenue drivers are profits from our tenant leases, Top of the Hill Banquet and Conference Center, and philanthropy.

Our tenants, USAA and Norfolk Southern, continue their valued occupancy. The latter is on a one-year extension of its expired lease while it moves through the situation of the Ohio derailment. A new lease will likely bring new terms, which may or may not produce revenues as we have experienced. Both the commercial brokers advising us and our expert Building Committee have considered alternative uses for the floor, but we think retaining our excellent tenants is the best course of action.

Top of the Hill is within about \$500,000 in annual gross revenues of what we think is its maximum. Business is back and our bookings are up. We have raised prices successfully and are exploring ways to attract business into the gaps, such as the monthlong absence of business in August, when Congress adjourns. I think we will get another \$100,000 of revenue in the next fiscal year and be back at the pre-COVID \$1M mark soon thereafter, yet there is still headroom.

Unlike leases and Top of the Hill, philanthropy essentially has no ceiling. *Here is where we must go flat out.* The development

I refer to is less that of donations within ROA than corporate support. We will attract that support when we prove to the private sector that we can help *them* succeed. Corporate America needs good men and women in the workforce. We talk convincingly about the value these people bring: the private sector agrees and is hiring. What does not yet exist is the ability to make the direct linkage between employer and candidate. Employers tell us they cannot identify these candidates. The federal government is tied up in knots with privacy concerns, etc. Yet there is a way to make this linkage, and ROA must find it.

Working in support of all this and you, our members, is the national staff; the smallest staff since our founding and the weeks after our 1945 reactivation. The national staff's recent development is especially exciting. As former chief of staff Lani Burnett was retiring, I was understandably being urged to replicate her role with another hire. My gut told me to take time for deliberation; was another chief of staff what we needed? As famed management "guru" Peter Drucker said, "Fast people decisions are invariably wrong people decisions."

After some reflection and with the advice of search firms, we changed the role to a director of operations. Diane Markham proposed creating a director of administration; with such a small staff and with our contracting partners performing superbly, we don't really need a chief of staff. The operations director had been more "outward facing," focusing on membership development and our contracting partners. The administration director would be inward-facing—management of the building's physical plant, interface with our financial management firm, and management of staff functions. That's what we did, and having worked with Diane for years and knowing her potential, I hired her for the director of administration role.

After I interviewed about a dozen operations director candidates furnished by two leading search firms and ROA Excom member Scott Willis, a search professional himself, *staff* interviewed the final three candidates, themselves choosing who would be their new team member. They selected newly retired Navy Cmdr. Tremayne "Trey" Criner. With several months behind us, I can say this new arrangement is working splendidly!

Trey's chief priority is membership development. The engine of membership recruitment and retention is our departments and chapters, armed with a compelling story, resources, value to the individual member, and sheer zest for ROA! Trey's job is to lead the way in developing those resources and helping departments and chapters revitalize and strengthen. He is new to ROA but is a military man through and through; as the former executive officer of an American warship, he knows how to make things happen "on the deck plates." As important, he brings an invaluable "outside perspective." He works hand-in-glove with the Membership, and Department and Chapter Development Committee chairs. Some of you have already begun working with Trey!

Going into my ninth year as your executive director, I think a lot about ROA's value proposition. As ROA enters its Second Century of Service to America, no shortage of fights calls to us. Our reserve components contend with inequities in law, policy, and the military's tribal culture that treats them too often as second-class competitors for resources and respect.

Yet in foreign wars and domestic crises, America's "citizen-sentinels" perform as well as the active force on a fraction of the time and funding, while the Pentagon treats them like a fraction of the service member.

ROA's advocacy is a matter of national security; it must be imbued with an implacable fighting spirit and a pervasive optimism: we will win for our reserve forces and for readiness. We must call out and fight the outrages and the policies behind them. If we don't, we simply will not matter.

We say, "*Join ROA and help us fight!*"




WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

*Thomas Hueg, Colonel, US Air Force (Retired),
National Treasurer, Reserve Organization of America*

Since last year's centennial national convention, ROA has:

- Hired a new financial advisory team with CBM (Councilor, Buchanan, and Mitchell),
- Switched our banking to Capital Bank, who is a sponsor of ROA's Citizen Warrior Coalition, and
- Shifted its fiscal year to a January 1 – December 31 structure.

Adjusting fiscal years is never easy and can often cause confusion since it creates a "short year" that compresses timelines to complete financial reports, tax reporting, and an annual audit. By moving to a calendar-based year, however, ROA will base its annual budget on revenues earned the previous year rather than projected future earnings.

Amid all this change, ROA's Chief of Staff, Lani Burnett, was scheduled to retire in October. She agreed to remain through December until a successor could be identified. Diane Markham was promoted to Director, Administration and assumed many of Lani's responsibilities including the day-to-day management of ROA's finances. The ExCom appointed retired Col. Thomas Hueg as the National Treasurer in late November and authorized hiring him into a temporary position to oversee the many moving parts. Diane and Tom started in their new positions on January 2 and, with tutelage from Lani and a lot of learning by doing, have worked hard to understand ROA's business operations, deal with short year transactions, and collaborate with ROA's financial advisors, auditors, and tax preparers.

Thus, 2023 has been a transitional year while the books and records were realigned from the previous FY23—originally established as April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023—and readjusted to "FY23-1" where the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023. A new "FY23-2" was begun for January 1 through December 31, 2023, but remember that part of the budget (the portion from January 1 through March 31, 2023) had already been approved a year before under the original plan. Beyond that date, the President and Executive Committee had no budget authority. Realizing there wasn't time for a complete budget preparation process before April 1, Diane, Tom and members of the Budget

and Finance Committee built a "cash flow projection" to sustain ROA through December 31. The cash flow projection focuses solely on the revenues coming in each month and ensures there are enough funds to pay ROA's bills on time.

Developing the projection, which included the anticipated hiring of a new director of operations and forecasting normal expenses while building a reserve to accommodate unanticipated bills, was a challenge. To fit everything together required a request to our fundraising and communications vendors to cut back their invoices by half (with a commensurate reduction in services to ROA) and a one-time \$345,000 withdrawal from the investments. The ExCom approved the plan during the March leadership meetings.

Know that the staff is working to keep expenses to a minimum, which has been the focus for many years, particularly as ROA fought through the trials presented by the Covid-19 response. Revenues from robust Top of The Hill business this spring and early summer and rental income from our tenants have yielded strong cash inputs and we remain "on glide path" as planned in the cash flow projection.

The staff and Budget and Finance Committee, with assistance from our financial advisors, is building the budget for FY24 which will be executed beginning January 1, 2024. We are recommending a few "must do" items to help ROA maintain budget discipline. Things like setting aside a portion of the monthly rental income into a fund from which we will pay building-related expenses – insurance, property taxes and maintenance and upkeep – to alleviate withdrawals from our investments, particularly the Reserve Contingency Fund. We want to reintroduce the monthly payment back to the Memorial Endowment Fund (those funds were used years ago to remove ROA from onerous bank charges on a loan. In exchange, ROA made an "I.O.U." to itself to repay the Endowment Fund over the course of 30 years with the money saved from not paying the bank). We were making regular payments each month until the pandemic struck in 2020 and our Top of the Hill business and the revenues it provided, was interrupted. At that time, the ExCom decided to suspend the payment plan to preserve cash for more pressing bills. It is time to restore the payments and "get right" with ourselves.

In kicking off our second century of service to America, ROA must establish and execute a value proposition that forges

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new relationships in “iron and steel.” We have been extremely fortunate to have generous members making pledges and donations to our Second Century Campaign and have benefitted from substantial estate gifts recently. However, there remains the need for a reliable and predictable source of revenue. ROA’s success in influencing legislation and policy is allowing new

partnerships to grow. ROA’s Citizen Warrior Coalition is bringing us into a revenue rendezvous unlike anything in ROA’s history. But rest assured, our mission, our operations, and our Association will always be charged by our founding purpose: to sustain the readiness of the Reserve and National Guard.

RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - CONSOLIDATED

	3/31/22	3/31/21	3/31/20
ASSETS			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	234,665	198,685	469,120
Investments	10,573,888	10,399,585	8,854,493
Deferred Compensation Assets	-	-	-
Accounts Receivable, Net	1,142,844	975,171	583,065
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	258,641	393,908	424,841
Insurance Stabilization Reserves	554,811	429,635	554,811
Fixed Assets, Net	6,678,571	6,874,339	7,141,942
TOTAL ASSETS	19,443,419	19,271,323	18,028,272
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS			
LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	324,100	234,908	172,185
Accrued Payroll and Related Liabilities	98,969	88,677	72,287
Departments’ Share of Membership Dues	28,283	23,298	14,180
Deferred Revenue	82,576	143,803	224,588
Note Payable	-	-	-
Deferred Term Membership Dues	10,271	7,195	10,323
Deferred Life Membership Dues	5,114,965	5,452,228	5,791,932
Deferred Compensation Liability	-	-	-
Security Deposit Liability	-	800	800
TOTAL LIABILITIES	5,659,163	5,950,909	6,286,295
NET ASSETS			
Unrestricted Net Assets	9,015,895	8,551,869	7,154,911
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	1,913,439		1,748,841
Permanently Restricted Net Assets	2,854,922	4,768,545	2,838,225
TOTAL NET ASSETS	13,784,256	13,320,414	11,741,977
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	19,443,419	19,271,323	18,028,272

Final numbers for FY20 and FY21 are audited.
Final numbers for FY22 are undergoing audit.

RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES - CONSOLIDATED

	3/31/22	3/31/21	3/31/20
Revenue:			
General and Administrative	581,550	683,675	1,020,333
Building	807,278	852,912	739,077
Membership	377,855	367,088	402,373
Reserve Readiness Center	-	N/A	N/A
Governance/Committees	6,040	-	-
National Council Meeting/Leader's Conf	-	-	2,500
Legislative and Military Policy	25,000	-	-
Resource Development	84,481	156,990	34,492
Family Support	-	10,000	N/A
ROA National Convention	47,725	17,725	57,466
International Programs - CIOR	-	-	31,045
International Programs - UPORFA	-	-	6,500
International Programs - CIOMR	-	-	N/A
Publications/Communications	40,412	72,196	12,667
H.J. Reilly Scholarship Program	5,600	-	-
Other Scholarship Programs	3,000	1,000	N/A
Industry Partners	15,000	205,000	-
ROA Investments	220,658	1,342,557	(179,169)
STARs Foundation General	-	-	-
Reserve Kids School Kit	1,350	15,000	700
STARs Foundation Reception	90,000	-	-
Reserve Education Forum (REF) Events	-	-	16,511
STARs Comprehensive Campaign	603,332	276,120	450,821
STARs Foundation Investments	54,789	338,222	(41,934)
Top of the Hill	379,533	61,061	778,386
Memorial Endowment	13,320	3,377	14,848
Memorial Endowment Investments	43,630	309,629	11,141
Total Revenue	3,400,552	4,712,552	3,357,757
Expenses:			
General and Administrative	571,185	589,921	543,683
Building	895,225	887,332	996,659
Membership	131,102	143,241	232,524
Reserve Readiness Center	29,950	N/A	N/A
Governance/Committees	91,831	79,259	77,838
National Council Meeting/Leader's Conf	38,332	3,724	18,367
Legislative and Military Policy	127,904	156,971	154,905
Resource Development	35,293	33,758	39,174
Family Support	114	603	N/A
ROA National Convention	126,040	61,566	100,228
International Programs - CIOR	4,398	2,241	47,386
International Programs - UPORFA	-	-	6,526
International Programs - CIOMR	974	680	N/A
Publications/Communications	184,525	262,540	190,109
H.J. Reilly Scholarship Program	65,170	54,235	66,652
Other Scholarship Programs	1,114	1,000	N/A
Industry Partners	236,756	52,976	27,805
ROA Investments	26,129	22,537	21,453
STARs Foundation General	16,682	29,902	23,979
Reserve Kids School Kit	20,992	12,134	18,079
STARs Foundation Reception	2,443	10,022	24,853
Reserve Education Forum (REF) Events	2,449	-	83
STARs Comprehensive Campaign	287,543	463,869	493,458
STARs Foundation Investments	5,986	5,235	5,167
Top of the Hill	142,198	123,217	345,810
Memorial Endowment	8,207	9,237	10,067
Memorial Endowment Investments	6,577	5,508	4,841
Total Expenses	3,059,117	3,011,708	3,449,646
Net Change in Net Assets	341,435	1,700,844	-91,889

Final numbers for FY20 and FY21 are audited.

Final numbers for FY22 are undergoing audit.

THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Cmdr. Trey Criner, USN (Ret.), ROA director of operations

“I have argued that our world is at an inflection point. How we respond to the tremendous challenges and the unprecedented opportunities we face today will determine the direction of our world and impact the security and prosperity of the American people for generations to come.” October 22, 2022 – National Security Strategy, President Biden.

In my first 100 days as director of operations, I have heard directly and indirectly from members that ROA’s existence is in peril. Declining membership and low participation, it has been reported, are resulting in diminishing chapter and department engagements.

We have aging members with health conditions that limit their mobility, precluding them from participating in chapter engagements. Acquiring new members has been challenging for some chapters. A myth has emerged that ROA could not get on military installations to speak with reservists; therefore, “we” cannot recruit and get new members. To be clear, DoD instructions do not state that ROA cannot get on military installations to talk and give information about ROA and what we do.

Others see recruiting today’s youth as challenging, and some older members cannot relate to today’s generation. They may assert that “our enemy is the passive interest, apathy, and indifference existing” in our reservists today, as Lt. Col. Stephen A. Park, the executive secretary of the Department of Wisconsin, contended in his recruiting efforts back in 1931 (Carlton and Slinkman, p. 24¹). The challenge, as real today as it was then, is surmountable.

As a result, some chapters with low membership have either reduced the number of chapter engagements, merged with other chapters, or folded altogether. The challenge of creating new memberships and renewing old memberships to keep pace with attrition has been an uphill battle for years, if not decades before. So, I posed a couple of questions to our members, “Why do we have chapter and department engagements?” and “What purpose do engagements serve?” If your response revolves around recruiting new members, then we have missed the boat.

Despite our number of members having shown a downward trend, I conclude that ROA remains the premier military service organization. Our mission, though simple, is straightforward – “support a military policy for the United States that will provide adequate national security . . .” This is our core mission.

ROA must help prepare our reserve component to be ready to “fight tonight” and ensure they are armed with all pertinent information that will impact their readiness. We must establish enduring relationships with our future RC NCOs and command leaders within our community and preserve open lines of communication for information sharing. We should make every effort to ensure future leaders are plugged into the various media platforms to have the latest information on legislative, DoD, VA (and Dept. of Labor) matters that may impact their units’ readiness. As we move into the new year, my goal is to continuously improve our various social media platforms to ensure easier access to information. That information must go beyond the walls of ROA to all ranks.

As we recommit to building relationships with our local future RC leaders, I welcome opening dialogue, reestablishing our partnership within our local community, and educating them on the truths of our military. We are at a dynamic point in our country’s history where we may have to “fight tonight.” We can all learn from Generals Reilly, Delafield, and Hoffman, who each faced similar challenges after the Great War.

As an organization, we must “work to change the very habits of the minds and lives of the American people to meet the realities of a changing world” (Carlton and Slinkman, p. 50). We must carry that passion of “creating a spirit of patriotism throughout the national community, and finally achieving an appreciation for National Defense that never since has appreciably lapsed” (Carlton and Slinkman p. 50).

Many people in our communities do not know who we are; we do. We must reignite passion and garner support for our military in our communities.

I look forward to serving you and our organization—tackling the challenges before us and moving ROA forward in the “Decisive Decade.”

¹ *The ROA Story*. John T. Carlton and John Slinkman, 1982

THE INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Lt. Col. Darren L. Venters, USAF (Ret.)

The Insurance and Financial Services Committee strives to provide membership benefits that fit your lifestyle. There is a product for you, whether you are 22 or 102. Check them out!

Insurance – AMBA partners with ROA to offer a wide variety of insurance coverages from top companies for your personal and professional needs – including life insurance, TRICARE supplements, the Hospital Indemnity, and Short-Term Recovery Insurance plan, accident protection, long-term care insurance, vision insurance, and more. [ROA - Home \(roainsure.com\)](http://ROA - Home (roainsure.com))



American Hearing Benefits – The quality of your hearing may just affect the quality of your life. That's why we have partnered with American Hearing Benefits (AHB) to provide ROA members access to FREE hearing consultations and significant discounts on hearing aids through AHB's nationwide network of hearing professionals. [American Hearing Benefits \(roainsure.com\)](http://American Hearing Benefits (roainsure.com)) or call (866) 651-6316

Prescription Discount Card – Save an average of 20 percent on prescription drugs not covered by insurance and as much as 50 percent on select generic medication when ordering by mail. Present your card at a participating pharmacy and pay either the discounted rate or the pharmacy's regular retail price, whichever is lower. [Prescription Discount Card \(roainsure.com\)](http://Prescription Discount Card (roainsure.com)) or call (877) 321-2652.



Vision Insurance – Individual vision plans from VSP® give you convenient access to thousands of quality providers while saving money on your vision care needs, including eye exams and glasses, or contact lenses. [Vision Insurance \(roainsure.com\)](http://Vision Insurance (roainsure.com)) or call (844) 641-6718 for information.

Identity Theft Protection Plan – Protection for you and your family to fight today's identity fraud issues includes proactive identity monitoring, credit monitoring, social media monitoring, and more. [ID Theft - Pro Plus \(roainsure.com\)](http://ID Theft - Pro Plus (roainsure.com)) or call 1-800-789-2720 for information.



CommonBond – Student Loan Refinancing – Refinancing your federal or private student loans with a new one at a lower interest rate can save you thousands. ROA members get \$100 cash back from CommonBond when they refinance. [Student Loan Refinancing \(roainsure.com\)](http://Student Loan Refinancing (roainsure.com)) or call (800) 975-7812.



Estate of Mine Organizers (EOMO) – Don't get caught scrambling to get your affairs in order. There is no better time to do this than now! EOMO™ organizational system is an exceptional tool to help you get your estate in order. EOMO™ is designed to meet the unique lifestyle and demands of the Reserve and National Guard.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the EOMO™ system! Use code **40PERCENT** to receive your EOMO™ Organizational System discount.



ROA Emergency Assistance Plus (EA+) is a crucial safety net that provides 24-hour emergency assistance services when you travel, whether alone or with your family. From medical evacuation to travel assistance, EA+ automatically steps in to help you focus on your recovery. [Click here](#) to learn more.



Guided Travel – Travel far, often, and for less – make your next getaway extraordinary! More than 160 guided tours spanning all seven continents. From selecting a destination to 24/7 support—Collette’s experts are with you every step of the way. Experience the difference of guided travel with Collette. Your adventure awaits. [Click here](#) or call (855-212-1097).

Hertz #1 Gold Club – Free Hertz #1 Club Gold Membership provides faster reservations and rentals, discounted rates, and special offers. Earn free rental days! [Click here](#). Use company name: Reserve Officers Association; CDP# 71822; promo code: 1315.



Total Brain Training – Did you know a resilient brain can help you manage stress better, stay positive, and think clearly? Your Total Brain – Emotion, Feeling, Cognition, and Self-Control – defines who you are at all times. Leveraging Western neuroscience and ancient Eastern wisdom, Total Brain helps you understand and improve your brain performance to overcome daily challenges and realize your inner power. [Total Brain \(roainsure.com\)](#) or call (800) 247-7988.



Get Your Discount on AT&T Wireless Service – ROA members can save 15% on qualified monthly wireless service plans from AT&T online if you have a .mil or .gov email address. [Click here](#) or email Mark Menikheim at mm3309@att.com.



Apple Computers & Accessories – Apple and ROA bring you a special program. ROA members qualify for preferred pricing on select Apple products. [Click here](#) for more information.



ROA/Corporate Gray Career Center – Job Seekers: Post your resume, search for job opportunities, gain career advice, learn about upcoming military job fairs, and more! [Click here](#) to get started.

[VetJobs.org](#) and [MilitarySpouseJobs.org](#) are a natural fit for the ROA membership. A leader in employment for the military & veteran communities, we offer job seekers exclusive access to more than 3.5 million employment opportunities and our PREMIERE job placement program. We have been doing Reserve, National Guard, veteran, and military spouse job placement since 2010. If you need a good job, we can help you get it. We are well-funded by foundations that care about you. As a result, we don’t charge you or the company that hires you. One-on-one personal help at no cost. It’s a great deal that’s hard to beat.

ROA COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE, AT YOUR SERVICE!

The National Marketing and Communications Committee serves as the *eyes and ears* of ROA. In addition, the committee is now tasked with finding additional marketing opportunities for our Association. This will be significant as we embark on our second century of service, leading the nation's efforts to ensure the Reserve Components are strong and ready and Reservists' family members are well-cared for.

Our committee monitors social media instruments and searches for appropriate content. We keep the membership informed and enhance the leadership's ability to make informed decisions. During the Centennial, we also judged the Alex A.C. Gerry Writing Contest and encouraged submissions for "Member of the Week," now known as the "Faces of ROA," featured on our website:

We also seek content to support our Facebook page:

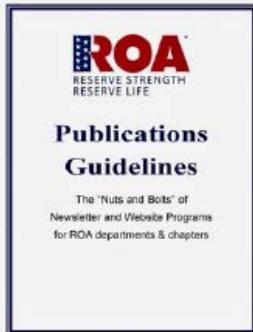
As a grassroots organization, we support the efforts of ROA's departments and chapters to keep their members informed. We also review and recognize department and chapter newsletters and their websites to keep their members up-to-date. Newsletters are evaluated for possible *Sword and Pen* and *Ben Franklin* awards. Here are a few examples of their outreach:

Websites are judged for the *Sword and Screen Award* and the *Brigadier General Sarnoff Award*. An excellent example is from the Department of Missouri:



Department of Missouri website

To provide guidance, our committee developed and updates the ROA Publications Guidelines to establish the appropriate recognition for newsletters and websites. It also provides information on best practices for departments and chapters publications and online products.



Our responsibility is also to raise awareness of ROA's achievements, as in the recent case where ROA provided an amicus ("friend of the court") brief that supported a *writ of certiorari* to the U.S. Supreme Court for Army Reserve Capt. LeRoy Torres' claim against the State of Texas regarding his burn pit illness while serving our nation during his Iraq deployment. ROA then submitted a second amicus brief supporting the Torres case to the court. No other national military organization offered such support. We also publicized the subsequent PACT Act legislation. This was featured in ROA's *ReserveVoice Magazine*

and on our Association's website and Facebook page—which our committee provides periodic content:



ROA has been in the lead on the following:

- Preservation of the Reservist's rights under the United Services Employment Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).
- Reserve component members equal military benefits and rights.
- Use of the commissary system.
- Extending TRICARE to all serving members of the Reserve Components.
- Full-Service Members Group Life Insurance (SGLI) coverage.
- Ensuring that Reserves get the same equipment as their active-duty counterparts.

With our legislative agenda, we are also publicizing our "Call to Action" efforts, especially as we face the possibility of Coast Guardsmen (reserve, active and retired), U.S. Public Health Service, and NOAA Corps members losing pay if Congress fails to pass a budget. We remain the only organization solely dedicated to supporting the reserve components and their critical role in national defense – all ranks and all services.

If you are a photographer, writer, journalist, videographer, or media guru, we stand ready to welcome you to our Communications and Marketing Team!

Submitted by:

Chairman:

Henry E. Plimack, USCGR (Ret.)

Captain, USCGR (Ret)

hplimack@roa.org



CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

AS ROA'S CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION DRAWS TO A CLOSE, WE COMMENCE OUR SECOND CENTURY OF SERVICE

With a very successful national convention in Washington, DC, in October 2022, ROA commenced our Centennial Celebration. Next month in Baton Rouge, we will kick off our second century of service supporting the reserve components and their strategic role in America's national security.

As you may remember, ROA's Centennial Committee started this journey when President Don Stockton conceived of our Centennial Celebration in 2019. That objective was then revitalized by President Judi Davenport and continued under the leadership of President Bob Carmack. Each wished to see ROA gain visibility and recognition for our service to the nation and legislative accomplishments. With 23 volunteers, we sought to gain greater visibility for our association and encourage others to join and support our efforts.

Each leader spoke about those efforts:

From former President Stockton:

"My charge for the committee was to plan a series of events for the year leading up to and the year following a centennial celebration in October 2022. The committee achieved my vision, even above and beyond my expectations, and I want to congratulate them and thank them for a job well done."

From former President Davenport:

"A special thanks to the wonderful support for the STARS Foundation this year, which enabled holding key events during the Centennial celebration. A special thanks for the hard work of the Centennial Committee. Their lines of effort were established and well-executed. ROA is one team—one family. The Reserves—all ranks, all services—will always be the line of defense that keeps our country safe!"

And President Carmack:

"The committee's dedication, hard work, and commitment to plan, schedule, and execute its many lines of effort was

critical to ROA's successful Centennial Celebration. Many thanks to all members of the committee."

At the onset, we developed 21 lines of effort. Five proved unattainable, and one is still being planned. Who knew how complicated and labor-intensive creating a commemorative stamp with a postmark canceling on October 2 might be?

The highlights of our efforts were:

- Featuring ROA's legislative achievements on Capitol Hill for a century, demonstrating our extraordinary value to the reserve component community.
- Securing the unanimous passage of Senate Resolution 820, honoring ROA's 100th anniversary.

Developing a highly regarded challenge coin to preserve this special occasion, now treasured (like this mounted version) in many personal collections:



Adorning the Minute Man Memorial Building with centennial flags and decals:



Placing a wreath at our founder's Arlington National Cemetery gravesite:



Creating a marketing video to be used for targeted recruiting and organizational awareness:



One of unique line of effort was our Alex A.C. Gerry Writing Contest, awarded posthumously to Col. Richard E. Nelson, III, USAF (Ret.). The award was accepted by his son, also an ROA member, Lt. Richard E. Nelson, IV, USN, in the presence of Colonel Gerry's daughters, Priscilla and Marisol.



Those attending the international meetings of the Pan American Union of Armed Forces Reserve Officers (UPORFA), the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR), and the Interallied Confederation of Medical Reserve Officers (CIOMR), learned of ROA's Centennial with an announcement at their general sessions, and a toast during their banquets by our dedicated representatives. In a special gesture of recognition, our Reserve Voice Magazine was placed in two different NATO libraries:



In CIOR's recently published 75th Anniversary Book, ROA's former President, Executive Director, and CIOR's President for Life, Maj. Gen. Evan "Curly" Hultman, USA (Ret.), was featured:



Also, a very comprehensive and informative centennial Reserve Voice Magazine and Reserve Voice Convention Communiqué were published:





We will continue posting the “Faces of ROA” each week throughout our centennial year, thanks to Kalen Arreola and her KMC Digital Team and our legislative achievements secured by ROA’s government relations program.

Thanks to the extraordinary patience and persistence of our Washington, D.C. insider, Col. John O’Shea, USA (Ret.), we were able to replace the missing ROA Plaque at the Lee House, located opposite the White House and Eisenhower Executive Office Building. It stands out quite well in this historic area and is a testimony to John’s extensive efforts.



The bugler was Jari Villanueva, now executive director of the Doughboy Foundation.

This was coupled with a centennial reception at the Willard Hotel, where ROA’s first convention was held in October 1922. The reception proved to be a true celebration of our Century of Service, thanks to the support of the ROA STARS Foundation, Capital Bank, Humana Military, and participation by our membership.



Precisely a century after establishing ROA, General of the Armies John J. Pershing was awarded ROA’s Minute Man Award.

But the crown jewel of our centennial celebration, thanks to the support of the Doughboy Foundation and National Press Club, was the wreath-laying ceremony at the statue for our founder, General Pershing, highlighted by the presence of:

(L-R): Clifton Truman Daniel, President Harry S. Truman’s grandson (Truman signed ROA’s congressional charter on June 30, 1950); Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly USN (Ret), grandnephew of ROA’s first president, Brig. Gen. Henry J. Reilly, Jr.; and Maj. Gen. Evan “Curly” Hultman, USA (Ret.), former ROA president and executive director, accompanied by his daughter, Col. Heidi Warrington, USA (Ret.).



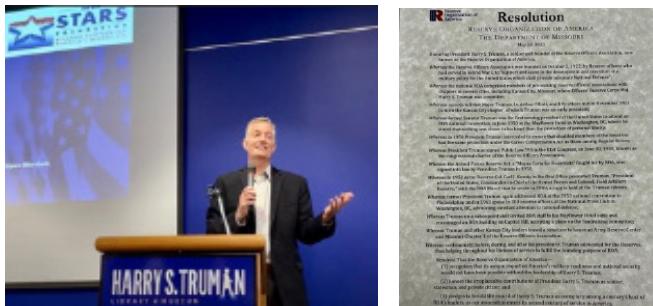


There's still time for departments, chapters, and committees to engage.

We have a lot of Centennial material on our website's Centennial Toolkit Page for your use: <https://www.roa.org/page/roa-centennial>

Be sure to use the videos and stills from our centennial national convention and recruit new members with the ["Century of Service to America"](#) video. After all, we are a grassroots organization. The more congressional district constituents, the more ROA has influence.

One exciting example of engagement was the Department of Missouri, holding its department's convention at the Truman Library, featuring its director, Dr. Kurt Graham. The department presented a resolution citing Truman's role in the military and ROA. It is now part of the library's permanent collection:



Be sure to work on your state and local proclamations – such as this one from the Department of New York (DONY):



Pictured above (L-R): DONY Secretary Capt. Lawrence (Laurie) Clarke, USAR (Ret.); DONY President Col. Ed Downey, USA (Ret.); and NY State Assemblyman Joe Angelino, NY Assembly District 121.

Our director of development, Bradley Carlson, and his MNPC team will be kicking off our Second Century Campaign in Baton Rouge. You, too, can be part of ROA's growth, visit: <https://www.roa.org/donations/donate.asp?id=21933>

In the words of our committee member, Cmdr. Jen Franco, USN:

"It's exciting to be part of ROA's history and its future. As a Reservist, I take for granted the pay and benefits I receive are a normal part of my service. Through the planning efforts for ROA's Centennial, I have a renewed appreciation for this organization to specifically bring attention to the needs of the Reserve, the National Guard, Coasties, and U.S. Public Health Service Professionals. We have unique contributions to the National Defense effort, and the history of ROA is also unique. This Centennial is hopefully a time to raise awareness about ROA and their relevance in today's environment."

Let's make our Second Century of Service even stronger with your engagement in our events by bringing in new members and retaining current ones. Nourish them with personal communication and invite them to participate actively – even if virtually.

Submitted by Centennial Committee Co-Chairs:

Henry E. Plimack
Captain, USCGR (Ret)
hplimack@roa.org

Jan L. Rhoads
Colonel, USAFR



Adm. Lisa Franchetti



Adm. Linda L. Fagan, USCG



Richard Spinrad

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS IN THE NAVAL SERVICES

As of this writing, the leadership of two services in our section are in limbo. Congress has yet to approve the nominations of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Until the Senate approves these selections and we see these leaders “underway,” it remains to be seen if there will be a change in direction for these services going forward.

In the Navy, when the CNO cannot serve, as is the case with the retirement of Adm. Michael Gilday, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations assumes the role of “acting” CNO. In this instance, the VCNO is Adm. Lisa Franchetti. She will be the first acting CNO since 1996; she is also the president’s nominee for CNO.

As for the Marine Corps, there is speculation as to whether the policies of former Commandant Gen. David Berger, now retired, will be maintained by the acting commandant, a first since 1910, Gen. Eric Smith. Lt. Gen. Christopher Mahoney has been nominated as the Assistant Commandant. It is unclear if General Smith will continue the “transforming the force” in Force Design 2030 to prepare the service to deter China and prepare for potential conflict in the Indo-Pacific region.

Fortunately, there is no such uncertainty in the leadership of other services in our section.

Commandant Adm. Linda Fagan heads the Coast Guard.

The U.S. Adm. Rachel L. Levine, M.D. lead the U.S. Public Health Service. Rachel Levine, M.D.

Administrator Richard W. Spinrad, Ph.D., leads the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

One of the biggest challenges for these three services is funding: if Congress does not fund the government on time, servicemembers will not receive on-time pay. Specific to the Coast Guard, ROA is fighting to fix this important issue by

advancing H.R.2693, the Pay Our Coast Guard Act. During the last government shutdown, members of these services worked without pay for more than a month. This legislation would ensure no lapses in pay when Congress fails to pass an on-time budget.

Speaking of budgets, ROA is working to restore \$84 million in funding that was taken away from the USPHS Ready Reserve Program with the signing of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (the debt ceiling compromise) on June 3. Following the act’s signing, ROA’s legislation and military policy director, Matthew Schwartzman, spearheaded a coalition effort to spotlight the issues to key appropriators on the Hill, including Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR).

This effort prompted the introduction of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Act by Senators Wyden and Duckworth on Aug. 3. Simply put, this bill authorizes dedicated annual funding to the USPHS Commissioned Corps, the only Uniformed Service without a budget line item dedicated to service operations and maintenance.

ROA’s executive director retired Army Maj. Gen. Jeffrey E. Phillips was quoted in a congressional news release to announce the bill’s introduction:

“The Reserve Organization of America thanks Senator Wyden for acting decisively to fund the United States Public Health Service and its Ready Reserve program,” said Phillips. “Providing USPHS with the resources to defend and protect the nation’s health has never been more important. ROA is proud to support this legislation and will fight to get it into law.”

To support ROA’s advocacy efforts on this important issue and join our Minuteman Movement, please visit:

www.roa.org/general/custom.asp?page=CallToAction

Continued on next page

On the Call-to-Action page, you can also persuade Congress to pass the Pay our Coast Guard Parity Act and support other legislation spearheaded by ROA. If you have any questions, please contact ROA's legislative director at:

mschwartzman@roa.org

On a lighter note:

On July 21, the USPHS announced their first ever official mascot:

“Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released the following statement announcing the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps’ first official mascot – Lt. Cmdr. Abigail, a trained facility dog who will provide therapeutic care to patients and Public Health Service officers.”



Lt. Cmdr. Abigail

Lt. Cmdr. Abigail was named after the former First Lady of the United States, Abigail Adams, who has a historical

connection to the service. The origin and history of the USPHS Commissioned Corps trace back to July 16, 1798, when Congress passed an Act, signed by President John Adams, creating the US Marine Hospital Service to protect against the spread of disease from sailors returning from overseas ports and thus began the story of the Public Health Service.

The concept of the service mascot originated during the COVID-19 pandemic when Public Health Service officers deployed to respond to the largest public health emergency in modern times. The mascot is intended to improve mental well-being, enhance camaraderie, and assist with public health messaging. When first appointed, the mascot receives an honorary rank in the USPHS Commissioned Corps equal to that of the primary handler. This honorary rank will not include any salary or retirement benefits.

Lt. Cmdr. Abigail, a Labrador Retriever, is a Warrior Canine Connection dog, who received special training to serve as a facility dog. Lt. Cmdr. Abigail will serve as a living symbol of the USPHS Commissioned Corps’ commitment to the greater public and protecting the nation’s health.”

Since the Army has a mule for a mascot and the Air Force has a falcon, our Naval Services Section will create its rotating mascot from its five services – possibly starting with Lieutenant Commander Abigail!

Submitted by:

*Henry E. Plimack
Captain, USCGR (Ret)
hplimack@roa.org*



AIR SECTION VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Team Air & Space Force,

As I close out my two-year stint as VP-Air Force, I am reminded of this position's enormous responsibility. We advocate for more than 68,000 selected reserve serving within the Air Force Reserve Command across 64 wings, groups, squadrons, detachments and direct reporting units. The command flies 300 fixed-wing aircraft and 16 rotary-wing aircraft in 32 states.

Our command's primary mission is to "Provide strike, air mobility, special operations forces, rescue, aeromedical evacuation, aerial firefighting and spraying, weather reconnaissance, cyberspace operations, ISR, space, flying training, and other capabilities to support the Active-duty force and assist with domestic and foreign disaster relief."

Let us look at the numbers for other Air Force major commands:

- Air Force Global Strike Command has 132 fixed-wing aircraft, 25 rotary-wing aircraft and 27,805 active-duty air and space personnel.
- Air Force Material Command has 117 aircraft and 17,794 active-duty air and space personnel.
- Air Mobility Command has 403 fixed-wing aircraft and 41,262 active-duty air and space personnel.
- Pacific Air Forces Command has 369 fixed-wing aircraft, 13 rotary-wing aircraft and 30,926 active-duty air and space personnel.
- US Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa have 162 fixed-wing aircraft, 5 rotary-wing aircraft and 23,686 active-duty air and space personnel.

Every one of these commands has similar fixed-wing aircraft but fewer personnel than AFRC. The main difference? These five commands are led by a four-star general.

For the sake of argument, let us assume that a three-star flag officer should lead a part-time force. After all, the Air National Guard, a part-time force with 1,021 fixed-wing aircraft and 18 rotary-wing aircraft (nearly 3x the federal reserve inventory) and 104,984 members, is also led by a three-star. Yes, the part-time selected reserve is led by three-stars with one caveat: the selected reserve, which can switch between titles 10 and 32, is represented at the JCS level with a four-star, emphasizing the importance of states over the strategic and operational readiness of the reserve component.

I'm not advocating for a position one way or the other. Instead, I impress upon you why ROA is needed and what we represent. The active component will continue to lean and rely on the Reserve Forces to meet the demands and needs of a nation spread across the world and the space above us. The National Guard has proven time and again their willingness to fill a void and meet the needs of a nation whose diplomacy stretches beyond the borders of its sovereignty. But who will advocate for the Federal reservist who wears civilian clothes 28 days most months but places a uniform on two of them and at least 14 days a year? Who will ensure that the Citizen Airman is afforded similar opportunities and trains with equivalent quality equipment that the active-duty force utilizes? Only one group stands to represent those interests to ensure military policy supports the national defense strategy...the group that stands in that gap is ROA.

Thank you for allowing me to represent you over the past two years. I promise over the next four years ahead of me that I will never veer from where I came from. You made me who I am, and I am proud to serve with you.



*Lt. Col. Layne R. Wroblewski
USAFR*



STARS FOUNDATION BOOSTS ROA'S SECOND CENTURY OF SERVICE

The *Reserve Voice Magazine* and *Communiqué* are critical components for the Standing Together for America's Reservists Foundation communication. As I wind down my two years serving as the STARS Foundation chair and your immediate past national president, I want to say a simple *Thank You* to all of you who believe in the mission of ROA and supported that mission with your financial support and volunteer time, especially for the STARS programs.

I also need to publicly and with heartfelt sincerity thank those who have supported me on the STARS Foundation Board these past two years: National President Bob Carmack, President-elect and Air Force VP Layne Wroblewski, Army VP Vince Cummings, Naval Services VP Henry Plimack, STARS VP Susan Lukas, Secretary Cathy Luke, Treasurer Tom Hueg, Family Support Chair Anne Groskreutz, Special Programs Chair Margaret Cope, Resource Development Chair Don Brown, STARS JAG Bill Pentecost, board members Jeffery Weekly, Jack Stultz, Josh Echols (first year), Rick Nelson (first year, now deceased), ROA staff members Jeff Phillips, Diane Markham, Lani Burnett (retired), and Military Non-Profit Consulting (MNPC) advisors Brad Carlson, Julia Carlson, and Jennifer Kelly. These past two years have been successful because of all your efforts in going the extra mile.

So, what has STARS accomplished over these two years? From the *external* initiatives perspective, the Second Century Campaign has been a success (there is more fundraising to do to reach our \$10 million goal), so thanks to all of you! We don't want to stop now, so one last time, I have to pitch to each of you, the ROA members, and our wonderful corporate sponsors to consider pledging support, however you can, to the campaign to help us meet our goal.

Additional external initiatives are collaborations with ROA on the Citizen Warrior Coalition (our industry partners), 30 scholarships awarded through the Henry J. Riley fund, partnering with the Family Support Committee initiatives (Yellow Ribbon programs, children's writing contest, and school kits), collaborating with the Military Child Education Coalition (it should be noted that two of our ROA leaders were asked to participate on a panel for MCEC forum), and a partnered sponsorship of several Reserve Education Forums (REF), including the Reserve Chiefs panel in March and before that an REF on Reserve Component Dental Readiness.

Internal initiatives include updating the STARS Foundation bylaws, working with the STARS/ROA financial personnel to audit the STARS financial trail in accordance with the IRS and the revised STARS governing documents, updating the memorandum of service agreement with ROA, and STARS Foundation recognition to those giving to the Second Century Campaign both at the March Leaders conferences and an exclusive event at the 100th-anniversary celebration.

The STARS Foundation was a key sponsor of the 100th-anniversary reception at the famous Willard Hotel along with the banquet keynote speaker, Clifton Truman Daniel, the oldest grandson of ROA life member Harry S. Truman, who, as president, signed ROA's congressional charter in 1950. It has been my honor to serve this organization. I encourage everyone to take the opportunity to support ROA through the STARS Foundation with your time and funding at any level you can, be it at the department or national level.

A more detailed report on the campaign and support to STARS from MNPC follows. See you in Baton Rouge late this September at the national convention!

Be well, and stay safe in this crazy world.

Judi

Col (Ret.) Judi Davenport
STARS Foundation Chair
Immediate Past National President

DCDC COMMITTEE REPORT 2023

Col. Scott S. Russell, USAFR (Ret.)

The Department and Chapter Development Committee has been active since President Carmack made it an ad hoc committee over a year ago. The committee has been meeting monthly. Our first order of business was to find out from the departments and chapters what their problems were and what successes they were having. To do this, the committee created a survey that delved into the good and the bad, how our members communicate, and how effective the ROA website was.

The survey went out to the department and chapter presidents in December 2022 and was closed out in January 2023. We compiled the survey results and were able to brief these results during the senior leader meeting at the ROA building in March. At that meeting, the committee was able to get together in person and analyze the results and comments of the survey to come up with the biggest issues that we needed to focus on to make things better.

Our top three priorities that we came up with are:

1. Reserve commanders' support of ROA
2. Reestablish ROA Academy
3. Improve communications with ROA members

I will go into detail about what we have accomplished so far.

The committee has focused on what the departments and chapters can do locally to influence reserve commanders, while Jeff Phillips is concentrating on the senior leadership of the reserve services. The DCDC is concentrating on how to get access to unit commanders, their drilling reservists, and their reserve locations.

One aspect of this is getting access to the Yellow Ribbon events. The Army Reserve tends to have many smaller events at local units, while the Air Force Reserve tends to have fewer but larger events. At the senior leaders meeting, we gave out a flyer that explained how people could access the Yellow Ribbon website (yellowribbon.mil) and sign up for local U.S. Army Reserve unit events.

For the Air Force side, I have contacted the Air Force Reserve Program Manager for Yellow Ribbon, and I am being notified of all upcoming AF Yellow Ribbon events and are considered to be an approved vendor with a table at these events. We have already done two events in Orlando, FL, and have two events in August and September and another in August in Anaheim, CA. These



events allow us to find out from the deployers what their issues are so that ROA can advocate and spread the word about ROA. We are also working with two departments to have local events to revitalize chapters associated with reserve units. Additionally, we are working on a bullet paper with ideas on what departments and chapters can do to get access at the local level.

The second area is the ROA Academy. We will have a start-up ROA Academy session at the upcoming national convention in Baton Rouge. This session will be the first event we have had in a few years, and we will get the word out on what we have done so far to address department and chapter issues and then look at getting member feedback on what members want to see in the academy. We will also discuss the best format to present this information and the best social media platform for our members. If you will be at the convention, please take the time to give us your input.

The third area is improving communications with our members. We have been working with ROA's new director of operations, Trey Criner, on improving the website and member suggestions on how to make it more user-friendly and useful. Trey's chief priority at ROA is membership development, and he is our point person on the staff for creating conditions at the national level for membership growth.

At the ROA Academy, Trey will brief on the use of the current website, the progress made on the website, and plans for the future of the site. He plans to have an updated website next March. We are also looking at how we get the word out to our members via the Reserve Voice Magazine, Reserve Voice Online, video, and social. We are also developing a program to reach out to the departments and chapters to keep two-way communications going and enable them to ask for help.



Visit Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and join your fellow members as we gather to hear interesting and informative speakers, collaborate, mentor, conduct association business, see old friends, and make new ones.



Photo courtesy Visit Baton Rouge

“As the Capital City of Louisiana, Baton Rouge is the heart and soul of the state’s eclectic culture. With over 300 years of history, Baton Rouge has a colorful story to tell, which can be tasted through our culinary offerings, seen through the picturesque views of the Mississippi River and historical landmarks, and experienced through the vibrant arts and culture scene. Every day in the “Red Stick” is worth celebrating, even more so through our festivals and events held throughout the year. So, sit back, relax, and let us make the planning easy – we’ll be waiting to welcome you with Southern hospitality and an authentic Louisiana experience!” – Visit Baton Rouge

Order your free welcome guide, sign up for the newsletter, or just learn more about the city at www.visitbatonrouge.com.

Registration Information

Standard registration is \$300 and includes the welcome reception (Thursday), all meetings (Thursday-Sunday), lunch (Friday), and coffee breaks (Saturday), and the option to purchase tickets for the Memorial Breakfast, Banquet, and tour of the Veterans Museum and USS Kidd.

Registration will be open through September 15, 2023. Visit www.roa.org/convention for registration and event information.

Hotel Information

The meeting will be held at the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center, 201 Lafayette St, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. ROA's room block offers a rate of \$134 (plus tax). Reservations must be made by Monday, September 11, 2023, to enjoy the group rate. Visit www.roa.org/convention for the booking link or call (225) 344-5866.

Schedule

Event highlights include:

- Opening session keynote address by Lt. Gen. David G. Bellon, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve, and U.S. Marine Corps Forces South.
- Banquet keynote address by Sandra J. Franks, Commissioner, Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs.
- State of the Association address by ROA Executive Director, Maj. Gen. Jeffrey E. Phillips, USA (Ret.). His briefing will provide updates on the ROA's status and activities, following the ROA strategic plan's five areas of focus: increase revenue and reduce expenses, influence legislation and military policy, grow membership, improve strategic communications, and provide quality products and services.
- "Successes and Opportunities in Prevention of Suicide in the Reserve Components," a panel discussion hosted by ROA's Health Services Committee. This panel presentation, moderated by Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Peggy Wilmoth, Ph. D., will cover policy and programs across the force addressing suicide in the reserve components. Areas for potential policy improvements or legislative efforts will be one possible outcome of this panel.
- Legislation Update by ROA Director of Legislation & Military Policy Matthew L. Schwartzman.
- Tour of the Veterans Museum and USS *Kidd*. Tour the *Fletcher*-class destroyer USS *Kidd* (DD-661) and its veteran's museum. The USS Kidd was named for Medal of Honor recipient Rear Adm. Isaac C. Kidd, Sr., who was killed aboard his flagship USS *Arizona* during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.
- And much more!

THE MEDAL OF HONOR CITATION OF REAR ADM. ISAAC C. KIDD:

"For conspicuous devotion to duty, extraordinary courage, and complete disregard of his own life, during the attack on the Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, by Japanese Forces on December 7, 1941. He immediately went to the bridge and, as Commander Battleship Division ONE, courageously discharged his duties as Senior Officer Present Afloat until the USS ARIZONA, his flagship, blew up from magazine explosions and a direct bomb hit on the bridge, which resulted in the loss of his life."

- The USS Kidd is one of only four of the 175 Fletcher-class destroyers built from 1942 to 1944 still preserved as museums and the only known destroyer preserved in her World War II configuration. USS Kidd is recognized as one of the most authentically restored vessels in the world by the Historic Naval Ships Association, an organization whose fleet spans several nations scattered across five continents. The co-located veterans museum displays various artifacts celebrating veteran and naval military history, with displays and interesting artifacts for all generations.

For registration and more details, visit

www.roa.org/convention

Association Business

Resolutions

The convention body will consider resolutions recommended by departments, service sections, and standing committees. To be properly filed, a resolution must be received in the prescribed format in the Resolutions Handbook at National Headquarters no later than Monday, August 28, 2023. Resolutions recommended by the National Resolutions Committee for presentation to the national convention will be provided to delegates. To download the resolutions handbook and to see current resolutions, visit www.roa.org/resolutions. For more information, contact Matt Schwartzman, ROA's Director for Legislative and Military Policy (mschwartzman@roa.org or 202-646-7713).

Elections

Convention delegates will elect 12 new members to the National Executive Committee. Each service section will elect a vice president (two-year term), two executive committeemen (two-year term), and a junior vice president (two-year term). For the Naval Services, one executive committeeman will be from the Navy, PHS, or NOAA; the other will be from the Marine Corps, PHS, or NOAA. Be sure to check the Candidates' Corner regularly at www.roa.org/candidates to see who has been added to the list of endorsed members running for office.

To be considered for an elected office, your department must endorse you. Endorsement letters must be signed by your department president or secretary and sent to Diane Markham (dmarkham@roa.org or 1 Constitution Ave NE, Washington DC 20002).

Constitution and Bylaws Amendments

There are no amendments scheduled for consideration during this year's meeting. The deadline has now passed for submitting proposed amendments for consideration during this convention. Proposed amendments for consideration during the 2024 convention must be submitted to Diane Markham (dmarkham@roa.org or 1 Constitution Ave NE, Washington DC 20002) no later than March 7, 2024.

Delegates

Every member is encouraged to apply to their department leadership to become a delegate. Delegates cast votes on behalf of their department on issues such as resolutions, proposed changes to the constitution and bylaws, and the election of national officers. To find out who your department leader is, visit your

department's group webpage or contact Tracey Ware at tware@roa.org or 202-646-7733.

Departments should submit their completed forms to national headquarters no later than September 15, 2023. Visit www.roa.org/convention to download the reporting form and see the number of delegates and votes each department is allowed. Forms and questions should be sent to Diane Markham at dmarkham@roa.org or (202) 646-7728.

Dress/Attire

Recommended dress for all meetings and the welcome reception is business casual. Members in uniform are expected to adhere to their respective services' grooming, physical, and uniform standards. The banquet is formal/black tie or military equivalent.

Parking at the Hotel

While the hotel has no parking garage, they offer valet parking at \$33 per day. There are also several public parking lots and garages in the nearby vicinity.

Getting There

If traveling by air, the most convenient airport is the Baton Rouge Metropolitan/Ryan Field Airport (BTR), which is only eight miles from the hotel. An alternative is the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY), 70 miles away in New Orleans.

The hotel offers a complimentary shuttle service to/from BTR. The shuttle picks up outside of the baggage claim area. Upon arrival, call the hotel front desk at (225) 344-5866. At your request, they will deploy the shuttle.

What to Do

Immerse yourself in Louisiana culture by exploring historic landmarks and attractions to learn about Louisiana's colorful and storied history. Embark on an outdoor adventure at one of Baton Rouge's sprawling parks, where you can rent kayaks, picnic, hike, and much more. Find your new favorite artist by exploring the arts and culture scene, where local and nationally renowned artists are displayed at every corner of the city. Dance the night away at free live local concerts or large-scale festivals, where you're sure to jam to every genre, from swamp blues to alternative rock. Whatever you're looking for, you'll find it in Baton Rouge! Plan your stay at www.visitbatonrouge.com.

For registration and more details, visit

www.roa.org/convention

BATON ROUGE SIGHTS

By Lt. Col. Richard Stephens

It's scenic. It's lively. It's Baton Rouge, our host town for 2023's ROA convention. You'll want to visit its sights, arts, and waterfront, eat Creole food, and listen to jazz during your convention stay. Let's explore the town.

Baton Rouge: Louisiana's second-largest city, with a population of 221,600. The port on the Mississippi River is the 10th largest in the USA. Louisiana State University is huge: it offers 330 academic fields of study to 35,900 students on 1,000 acres and, of course, fields the LSU Tigers football team.

Capt. Danny Allen, USNR, Ret., a member of the ROA Department of Southeast (DOTS) and lifelong resident of Louisiana, and www.louisianatravel.com, teamed to list their Top 5 sights in "The Red Stick."



Louisiana State Capitol and Old State Capitol. The current capital is 34 stories, the tallest capital building in the USA. The Old State Capitol in downtown Baton



Rouge offers artwork, historical exhibits, and a beautiful stained-glass dome.

Capitol Park Museum. According to louisianatravel.com, it has exhibits "From Louis Armstrong to Huey P. Long, from Mardi Gras to fais-do-do, and from the nation-building commerce of the Mississippi River to the life-sustaining bounty of the Gulf of Mexico."

Plan an outdoor trip to LSU Rural Life Museum or the Magnolia Mound Plantation House. The Rural Life Museum (close to LSU) "takes visitors on a time-traveling journey through the state's history, with hundreds of artifacts, plantation quarters, and various architectural styles unique to the region," explains louisianatravel.com.

Magnolia Mound Plantation House. You'll find one of Louisiana's oldest intact plantation homes from 1791. "See locally made, Colonial-era furniture, decorative arts that came by ship...local textiles and some of the most authentic French Creole architecture in the region," louisianatravel.com wrote.

USS Kidd

Veterans Museum.

The USS *Kidd*, a Fletcher-class destroyer, sailed in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters from 1943 to 1964, participating in

World War II and the Korean and Cold Wars. Visitors walk the decks from bow to stern, visiting galleys, bunks, bridge, engine room, and 5"/38-caliber, 20mm, and 40 mm gun mounts. A separate museum displays a variety of artifacts.



More information about these sights is found at
[https://www.louisianatravel.com/articles/
top-ten-things-do-baton-rouge.](https://www.louisianatravel.com/articles/top-ten-things-do-baton-rouge)

Photo courtesy Visit Baton Rouge

For registration and more details, visit
www.roa.org/convention

A JAM “PACT” FIRST YEAR

By Matthew Schwartzman, legislation and military policy director

July 1 was my one-year anniversary as your legislation and military policy director. If I had to describe the experience in a couple of words, it would be jam “PACT.”

Within the first few weeks, I found myself sleeping on the Capitol steps alongside ROA’s executive director, Jeffrey Phillips, and valued mission partners to secure the signing of the *Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act*, commonly referred to as the “PACT Act.”



Phillips and Schwartzman help sustain Senate “fire watch” to secure passage of the PACT Act, July 2022.

advancing the legislation to the president’s desk for signature.

There was your ROA: in action, *fighting* to ensure the government honors its pact to the millions of toxic-exposed veterans.

Close to 350,000 PACT Act claims have been approved, and more than 4 million toxic exposure screenings have been administered.

If there was one lesson I learned (and there were many) from Jeff Phillips sleeping on those steps, it is that ROA is not your typical “grip and grin” military service organization.

We *fight*. And we *fight to win*.

That night, I earned the nickname “bathroom guy” for leading veterans nationwide to and from the Minuteman Memorial Building at all hours to use our facilities. I wear this nickname as a badge of honor to this day and will carry it with me for the foreseeable future.

While this action may seem minimal, it was integral to sustaining the “fire watch” that swayed the Senate into

In the May edition of ROA’s *Reserve Voice Magazine*, Phillips wrote that “Just as far as ROA takes the fight to those who make policy, to those that pass bills, and to those who sign bills into law. . . just that far will our Reserve Components be made ready.”

Here is how far we have gone in the 118th Congress:

- We testified twice and submitted three statements for the record.

On March 9, ROA’s very own retired Air Force Col. Gilbert Patton testified before the House Committee on Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.

As described in the March *Reserve Voice Newsletter*, ROA’s testimony was “frank and unflattering of the Department of Labor’s Veterans Employment and Training Service.”

At the hearing, Patton offered insight into how to better gauge the effectiveness of existing USERRA protections, modernize regulations governing USERRA enforcement, and ensure DOL VETS personnel are properly resourced and trained to manage USERRA claims.

This testimony, coupled with ROA’s Law Review 15089 (by retired Navy Capt. Samuel Wright), formed the basis of H.R.3943, the Servicemember Employment Protection Act.

On June 14, I testified before the same subcommittee supporting the legislation with a few minor amendments.

On July 26, the Servicemember Employment Protection Act received a markup from the full U.S. House Veterans Affairs Committee and was well received. With the committee’s passage of the bill, we are one step closer to adding another victory to ROA’s “legislative belt.”

The third statement for the record, coming directly from executive director Phillips, is ROA’s “master testimony” for the first session of the 118th Congress. This comprehensive 37-page document was sent to all members of the House and Senate’s Defense and Veterans Affairs committees.

- We released a brand-new resource, the Interactive Position Paper.

By visiting roa.org/page/legislativeletters, you can read letters to leaders that ROA has sent and access our brand-new Interactive Position Paper.

The IPP, first [announced](#) with the introduction of H.R.3668/S.1670, the *TRICARE Fairness for National Guard and Reserve Retirees Act*, contains a QR code that “pulls back the curtain” on ROA’s advocacy in Washington D.C.

To date, we have released three IPP’s, each equipped with an ROA exclusive *Up to the Minute Man* legislative update.

This premium government affairs resource informs and educates members and stakeholders on the issues ROA is advocating and is available to those meeting with their elected officials in their district and state.

➤ We hosted a reception with more than 75 attendees.

On May 9, ROA hosted a reception in the Senate Visitors Center honoring the 70th anniversary of the Reserve Forces Policy Board and welcoming the 118th Congress.

In attendance were several key figures from the national security space, including (but not limited to) Chief of the Air Force Reserve Lt. Gen. John Healy; Director of the Air National Guard Lt. Gen. Michael Loh; Chief of Navy Reserve Vice Adm. John Mustin; Assistant Commandant for the Coast Guard Reserve Rear Adm. Miriam Lafferty; Special Assistant to the Chief, Air Force Reserve for Reserve Space Personnel Policy and Integration Maj. Gen. Anne Gunter; Army Reserve Chief Financial Officer and Director for Resources, Installations, and Materiel Stephen “Sully” Sullivan; and the RFPB chairman, retired Maj. Gen. Arnold Punaro, USMC.

Preceding the reception was an RFPB working group focused on personnel issues, which included colorful exchanges on the need to deliver sustained medical readiness for the Total Force and a “new” space component personnel management proposal.

ROA remains, as we have for 100 years, at the forefront of these colorful exchanges and is unafraid to “poke the bear” when necessary.

➤ We set and took over 200 office visits on the Hill.

With COVID-19 restrictions lifted at the various House and Senate office buildings, the 118th Congress presents renewed opportunities for ROA to expand its advocacy network and influence legislation at the national level.

To date, your ROA has met with every Senate office on at least one occasion and the offices of all members of the House Defense and Veterans’ Affairs committees (we have also taken advantage of the sandwich station at the Dirksen Senate office building café).

We have done this alone and alongside members of The Military Coalition, a consortium of 35 military and veterans service organizations representing more than 5 million service members past and present and their families.

ROA has also participated in multiple congressional roundtables. The most recent roundtable, hosted by Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, focused on implementing the PACT Act.

ROA’s most recent fellow, Zoe Wertlieb, accompanied me to the roundtable. In her reflection piece [*Thrown into the fire and ready for more*](#), Wertlieb expanded on how being at the Capitol building for the roundtable altered her perception of the legislative process.

“It was clear that everyone was eager to be there, advocating to improve the lives of those that served the nation honorably,” wrote Wertlieb. “. . . the Capitol building felt less like a historic landmark and more a place of business for ROA and our nation’s elected officials. . . This is the place where ideas become realities.”

➤ We strategically maneuvered the defense and veterans’ policy space to secure positive outcomes.

ROA is unafraid to unilaterally address issues of importance to our members and the cause of readiness. Historically, we have attacked the “big” issues head-on; the issues that others may not be willing or daring enough to speak out on.

Perhaps there is no greater example of this in recent times than our [call to action](#) for President Biden to immediately reinstate all service members who were discharged solely for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine with 100% back pay.

Another example is ROA’s commitment to supporting retired Army Reserve Capt. Le Roy Torres in his successful fight to assert the supremacy of USERRA federal reemployment rights for members of the reserve components whose civilian employment is endangered by military deployments.

Our executive director twice wrote to Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, urging him to comply with USERRA. ROA then drafted and filed an *amicus curiae* (“friend of the court”) brief urging the Supreme Court to grant *certiorari* (discretionary review) in this case. After the Supreme Court agreed to hear this case, ROA filed a new supportive *amicus* brief on the merits.

In its *Torres v. Texas Department of Public Safety* decision, the Court reversed the Texas intermediate appellate court and, in effect, defeated the Texas Supreme Court, which had refused to even hear the case, citing “sovereign immunity” from such actions.



The story of Capt. Torres not only captures ROA's commitment to leading from in front (and alone, if necessary) but also the relentlessness of our advocacy program.

Your ROA *relentlessly represents readiness.*

ROA's relentless nature has influenced the introduction of 13 bills in the last seven months. Make no mistake, we are pleased with the progress we have made, but the job *is not* finished.

Sometimes, to finish the job, partnerships are necessary. In most briefings, we emphasize the importance of building diverse coalitions of support to yield "timely and desired" legislative results, such as with ROA's [Citizen Warrior Coalition](#).

A perfect example of partnership leading to policy is our March 9 uniformed services education forum, co-hosted in the MMB with the Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service.

The forum focused on the nature of service in the USPHS Ready Reserve Corps and several legislative initiatives ROA and COA are working on together. Attendees included congressional staff and representatives from the PHS Ready Reserve Corps, including Rear Admiral Susan Orsega, the Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Health, and the U.S. Surgeon General.

In July, just four months later, Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) introduced the *Public Health Service Ready Reserve Act*, which includes seven of the proposals spotlighted at the forum.

Specifically, this legislation codifies the PHS Ready Reserve's structure. It enables access to benefits and entitlements for its members, including Post-9/11 GI Bill assistance, dual compensation, leave, and medical and dental care.

It is the most significant benefits parity package for the PHS Ready Reserve in history and was directly influenced by ROA and COA.

ROA and COA's fight to promote and enhance the PHS Ready Reserve also includes working to restore over \$80 million in funding cut from the Ready Reserve program by the *Fiscal Responsibility Act*, signed into law on June 3.

Immediately after the act's signing, ROA visited more than 20 congressional offices, calling attention to the harmful effects of this deficit-driven decision.

Sens. Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Tammy Duckworth responded promptly to the situation with a [letter](#) to Dept. of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra and the introduction of the [U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Operations and Readiness Act](#), which establishes a budgetary line item to provide the USPHS with \$150M for the upcoming fiscal year.

One last example of partnership leading to progress is the relationship between ROA and the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America. From May 11 to 13, ROA and JWV shared a booth at The United States of America [Vietnam War Commemoration](#).

The commemoration focused on honoring Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice.

ROA and JWV joined forces shortly after to support the [Giving Reservists a Valiant Eternity \(GRAVE\) Act](#). This legislation simply amends existing law to allow all Reserve and National Guard members to receive a VA-furnished headstone or grave marker for their burial site at no cost.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Mike Lawler, extended gratitude to ROA for helping to turn this proof of concept into a reality.

"While all reservists are trained and equipped to mobilize alongside active duty military, only certain reservists are eligible to receive a headstone or grave marker once they pass on," said Rep. Lawler. "That is why I introduced the Giving Reservists a Valiant Eternity (GRAVE) Act, which will greatly expand reservists' eligibility to receive these honors. I am grateful to the Reserve Organization of America for working with me on this bill and for their continued advocacy for all of our brave reservists."

As an extension of this line of effort, defense fellow Wertlieb toured the Jewish War Veteran's Museum on Aug. 21. This tour served as the first step toward an ROA-led effort to develop a spiritual readiness legislative agenda.

Read more about ROA's quest to achieve spiritual readiness on page 33.

The power of partnership is driven by the "three P's": people, process, and policy. I look forward to seeing how ROA's relationships with mission partners and industry grow and the successes we achieve together.

➤ We are just getting started.

Having fought one by that name, ROA's founders understood there is no such thing as a war to end all wars.

Given history, this is a self-evident truth. So long as there is competition in the international system and the dark side of human nature occasionally rises to places of power, there will be a need for a strong and ready military. So long as there is a need for a strong and ready military, there will be a need for ROA.

To paraphrase Rep. Lawler, ROA's advocacy will continue.

ACHIEVING READINESS IN ALL DIMENSIONS

By: Zoe Wertlieb, defense fellow

Readiness is the key to military success. The nation must ensure our service members are properly trained and equipped to “fight tonight.” This is why ROA was founded 100 years ago and it remains the heart of the mission today. These means providing Reserve and National Guard members with all that is needed to achieve and maintain readiness in all dimensions: physical, mental, medical, material, financial, and even spiritual.

People join the U.S. military because they want to serve. There is a calling to give back to their country and community. During their service, members and their families can confront a range of difficulties they could not foresee; obstacles they must be personally prepared to overcome. For many, spirituality is vital part of that personal resiliency required to overcome these challenges. According to the *Army Resilience Directorate*, spiritual readiness is “the ability to endure and overcome difficulties through finding meaning in our life experiences.” Spirituality is not universal. It is not a prerequisite or a requirement, but for many, it is a source of strength.

As ROA continues to support all facets of resiliency, it is worth recognizing that spiritual readiness is not some recent theory. I was recently reminded that it dates back to the earliest citizen soldiers on the shores of this new world.

Mike Rugel, director of programs and content for the National Museum of American Jewish Military History recently gave me a tour of the museum. Of all the stories in the collection, that of Asser Levy, a pioneer of Jewish rights in the colonies stood out for me in context of ROA’s focus on readiness.

An immigrant to New Amsterdam, Levy faced pervasive antisemitism, particularly from the colony’s governor, Peter Stuyvesant. In 1655, Stuyvesant ordered the recruitment of all adult men to fight against the Swedish along the Delaware River. Several Jews, including Asser Levy, asked to serve but were turned away because of a decree enacted by the governor that forbade Jews from service. To compound the insult, Jews were required to pay a monthly military exemption fee.

Driven by the desire to serve and defend his new home, Levy and his Jewish colleagues refused. On Nov. 5, 1655, Levy and others petitioned for leave to stand guard or be exempted from the fee. The petition was denied, and all were told they were free to leave the country if they did not like the ruling. Levy appealed to the authorities in Holland and eventually won, allowing him to become the first Jewish member of a volunteer home guard in America, serving like all other citizens.

Levy’s story led me to a more holistic approach to spiritual readiness. One driven by policies and practices that provide an increased degree of inclusivity for service members and their families—of all faiths and all backgrounds. This includes a proper accounting for cultural sensitivities when honoring the deceased and ensuring the spiritual readiness of survivors as well.

Spiritual readiness complements all military training and service aspects, completing a holistic approach to readiness. Service members can tackle the diverse challenges that stand in their way by nurturing inner strength, ethical foundations, and a sense of interconnectedness.

Spiritual readiness, as the *Army Resilience Directorate* states, helps us “to endure and overcome difficulties through finding meaning in our life experiences.” That spiritual readiness relies on an infrastructure that ensures all service members and their families can, without preference or prejudice, exercise their religious freedom. It is that infrastructure that contributes to readiness, as readiness ensures national defense.

Like Asser Levy, ROA is on a quest to open opportunities to enhance readiness for all service members and their families. Rooted in the earliest history of our country, the quest continues.

FAMILY READINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE REPORT

By Culas "Mike" Hutchinson and Anne Groskreutz

The Family Readiness Support Committee acts in an advisory capacity on all matters of policy and procedure relating to family matters. Jim Semered wrote an article in the last Reserve Voice that outlined some of the goals and missions of the FRSC. The committee also conducts programs to support reservists' families and manages the Family Support special interest groups.

Anne Groskreutz, committee chair, conducts monthly committee meetings via Zoom to discuss FRSC outreach, participation, and support for Yellow Ribbon events and to facilitate communication with other military family support organizations. We also meet at the national convention.

The FRSC has assembled two event organizer kits available to represent and support ROA and STARS at military family activities. Each kit contains two reversible ROA and STARS table coverings, two acrylic stands, two clipboards, and a brochure with suggestions to be used. Please contact us, and we will arrange to lend you a kit. The only cost for using the kit is postage to return the organizer kit to us.

The FRSC encourages all ROA members to participate with us in outreach programs to engage families of our Reserve and National Guard Citizen Warriors. Please contact us through the ROA website or by contacting our national office.

FRSC sponsors a Children's Writing Contest for ages 10-14. Although the deadline may have passed for this year, the committee hopes to continue the program and give out monetary prizes to the winners. Look for more information on the ROA website next summer.



THE ROA LAW REVIEW LIBRARY AT 26

By Capt. Samuel F. Wright, JAGC, USN (Ret.)

Please go to www.roa.org/lawcenter. You will find 2,037 “Law Review” articles about the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), the Uniformed Services Former Spouses’ Protection Act (USFSPA), and other laws that are especially pertinent to those who serve our country in uniform. You will also find a detailed Subject Index to facilitate finding articles about specific topics.

The Reserve Officers Association, now doing business as the Reserve Organization of America (ROA), initiated this column in 1997, and we add new articles each month. These articles are available for free to everyone, not just ROA members.

Through these articles, and by other means, including amicus curiae (“friend of the court”) briefs that we file in the Supreme Court and other courts, ROA advocates for the rights and interests of those who serve our country in uniform, especially those who serve in the Reserve and National Guard. Our articles provide vital information not readily available elsewhere about the legal rights of service members and how to exercise and enforce those rights.

Our articles are read by service members, military spouses, attorneys, judges, employers, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) volunteers, Department of Labor (DOL) investigators, federal and state legislators and staffers, and others. People find our articles by doing internet searches. They find and read the articles when they need the information.

ROA’s mission, as set forth in our congressional charter, is to advocate for policies that will provide for adequate national defense. The Law Review Library and the Service Members Law Center promote that mission in three ways. First, we provide detailed information to federal and state legislators as to how new laws should be enacted and how existing laws should be amended to provide more effective protections to service members. Second, we advocate in court for broad interpretations of the laws that have been enacted, to better serve the rights of those who serve our country in uniform. Third, we provide detailed information to service members about what they need to do to exercise their rights and what they should do when their rights are violated.

I am the author of more than 90% of the “Law Review” articles that ROA has added to its website in the last 26 years, but I am 72 and will not be around forever to author and update these articles. In the last two years, I have recruited three understudies who are young enough to be my granddaughters. They are First Lieutenant Lauren Walker, 1st Lt. Tara Buckles, and 2nd Lt. Allison Sturgeon, both Marines.

ROA has had a great first century, which we celebrated last year. If our organization is to continue to survive and thrive for a second century of service to our country, we must recruit new members who are much younger than us, the quite elderly current members. The Service Members Law Center and the Law Review Library are an essential part of that effort.

PRESERVING THE
ALL-VOLUNTEER
FORCE AND THE
ROLE OF THE
PRIVATE SECTOR:



CITIZEN-WARRIOR COALITION

CITIZEN WARRIOR COALITION EVENT SPARKS CONVERSATION ABOUT RESERVE, GUARD EMPLOYMENT AND CORPORATE AMERICA'S KEY ROLE

WASHINGTON D.C. — Senior Reserve and Guard leaders met at the Minute Man Building for a round robin discussion focused on recruiting, retention and industry partnerships at a panel hosted by the Reserve Organization of America's Citizen Warrior Coalition March 28.

The Citizen Warrior Coalition was established to assist the Reserve and National Guard with their recruitment and retention efforts and to build partnerships with corporate America. The end goal is to educate employers on the value of hiring Reserve and National Guard service members and provide support to those corporate partners who commit to hiring dual-career servicemembers.

“ROA’s sole purpose has always been national security through a focus on readiness of the Reserve Components,” said Jeffrey Phillips, ROA executive director, during his opening remarks. “This discussion is an extension of our efforts to promote a force that is ready, that is supported in a robust and continuing fashion by America’s employers.”

Panelists included Lt. Gen. John P. Healy, chief of the Air Force Reserve, Lt. Gen. Jody Daniels, chief of the Army Reserve, Lt. Gen. Jon Jensen, director of the Army National Guard, Gregg Habel, executive director of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve and U.S. Marine Corps Forces North, Rear Adm. Miriam Lafferty,



assistant commandant for the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, and Navy Reserve Force Master Chief Petty Officer Tracy Hunt.

The panel discussion focused primarily on recruiting and retention's role in maintaining readiness and how partnerships with private sector employers can benefit Reserve Component members with dual careers.

Mark Elliott, managing director and global head of military and veterans' affairs at JPMorgan Chase & Co., served as the moderator and kicked off the panel by asking about recruiting and retention. His questions focused on how corporations and industry partners can help address challenges faced by Reservists while also providing insight into how the Reserve Components can work effectively with companies to develop policies that support Reservists.

"I take myself as an example," Healy said. "I've had a successful career in the airline industry as well as in the military. I think there is good collaboration, but I think there is a lot more to be done. ESGR (Employee Support of the Guard and Reserve) is a wonderful program with regards to protections for individual service men and women, but I think the industry deserves that same protection with regards to hiring Reservists and Guardsmen.

"The culture that I perpetuate in the Air Force Reserve is all about providing the member and the family with stability and predictability so they can pursue both a military career and a civilian career. I think the companies that hire them on the outside deserve that same level of stability and predictability so they will know when they are going to need more help and when they won't."

The panel went on to discuss the benefits of sharing talent and practices for collaboration, especially since the Reserve and Guard bring a unique set of skills and talents to the workplace.

"We're looking at a concept called 'multi-capable Airmen,' where we are trying to define how we can leverage a Reservist's civilian experience into their Reserve duty," Healy said. "We're also looking at if there is a means by which industry can take advantage of the skillsets Reservists obtain by being members of the military."

In addition to recruiting, retention and partnering, the panel discussed a host of other topics, including industry labor gap analysis, certifications, pay, compensation and benefits, health care, professional growth and development, and spouse and family support.



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Charter from the Congress

TO THE RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

(EXCERPTS OF PUBLIC LAW 595, 81ST CONGRESS)

An Act

TO INCORPORATE THE RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that (there is) hereby created a body corporate by the name of Reserve Officers Association of the United States, and by such name shall be known, and have perpetual succession and the powers, limitations, and restrictions contained in this Act.

* * * *

SEC. 3. The object and purpose of the corporation shall be to support a military policy for the United States that will provide adequate national security and to promote the development and execution thereof.

SEC. 4. The corporation shall have perpetual succession and power

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* * * *

SEC. 7. (a) The governing body of the corporation shall be a national executive committee consisting of the president, the last past president, three vice presidents, three junior vice presidents, three national executive committeemen, and the executive director.

(b) The national officers of the corporation shall be elected at an annual national convention and shall hold office for one year or until their successors have been duly elected and qualified, except the executive director, the national treasurer, and the national public relations officer, who shall be appointed by the national executive committee.

* * * *

(e) In conducting the official business of any department or chap-

ter each active member of such department or chapter shall have one vote.

* * * *

SEC. 10. The corporation, and its members and officers as such, shall not contribute to or otherwise support or assist any political party or candidate for elective public office.

* * * *

SEC. 15. (a) The financial transactions shall be audited annually by an independent certified public accountant in accordance with the principles and procedures applicable to commercial corporate transactions.

(b) A report of such audit shall be made by the corporation to the Congress not later than January 15 of each year.

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SEC. 16. The national headquarters of the corporation shall be located in the District of Columbia.

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SEC. 18. The corporation and its subordinate departmental subdivisions and local chapters shall have the sole and exclusive right to have, and to use in carrying out its object and purpose, the name of "Reserve Officers Association of the United States" and such seals, emblems, and badges as to the corporation may lawfully adopt.

SEC. 19. The right to alter, amend or repeal this Act is hereby expressly reserved.

PUBLIC LAW 595 – 81ST CONGRESS
CHAPTER 431 – 2ND SESSION
(HR-5002)

APPROVED JUNE 30, 1950

Alben W. Barkley
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

Sam Rayburn
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Harry Truman
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES