

Keeping The Promise

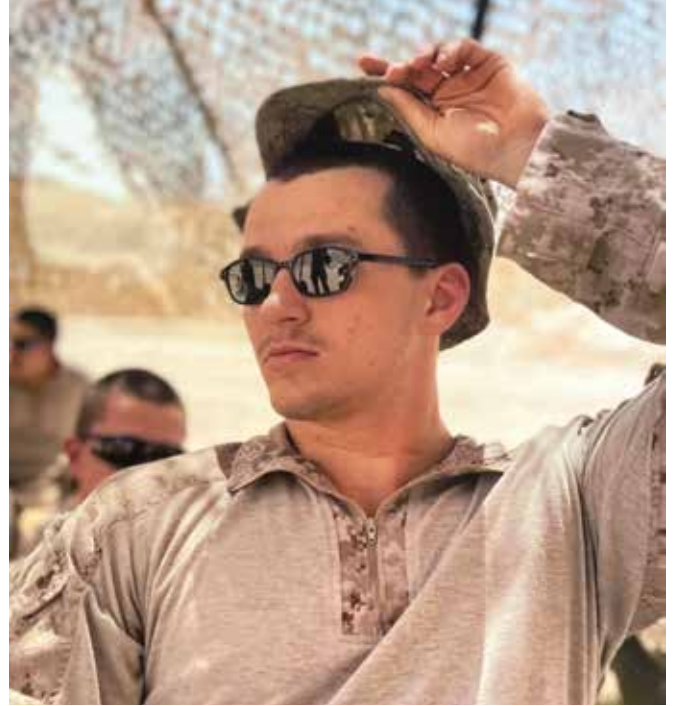
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY | 2023

“We will wait for them and pray for them until they all get home... and when they do and if they are in need, NEOPAT will help them the best we can.”

REMEMBERING OUR NATION'S HEROES

Max's Story

NEOPAT is honored to recognize U.S. Navy Corpsman Maxton W. Soviak as our 2023 Charles Kirby Wilcox Honoree. Born in Berlin Heights, Max was one of thirteen children and from the beginning it was clear Max was a curious child, full of adventure, yet with a stubborn spirit. As Max grew older, that stubbornness grew into a fierce determination to succeed in all that he did. He went full throttle at life and had a thirst for knowledge.



Max's family often compared him to the character "Max" in the popular children's book, "Where the Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak. Where you found Max, you could find chaos, wild rumpuses and adventures. He truly was king of the wild things.

Max was an act now, consequences later kind of guy with a knack for finding trouble, and the charm to always manage to get out of it. A prankster and troublemaker, he also had a fierce loyalty and a heart full of desire to make the world a better place. Max loved the great outdoors, traveling, and trying new things. After boot camp in Chicago, and A school in Texas, Max was stationed in Guam as a medic. Max dreamed of going greenside with the Marines, leading him to attend Corpsman school at Camp Pendleton in California, where he was assigned to 2/1 Ghost Company. Just like everything else in his life, Max was all in.

While on a routine deployment to Jordan, the battalion was called to assist in Kabul in the humanitarian effort to evacuate civilians and allies from Afghanistan. Maxton was one of 13 service members that gave the ultimate sacrifice on August 26, 2021 when a suicide bomber attacked Abbey Gate.



In the days leading up to the tragic event, Max earned himself the nickname "Pied Piper" as he was often seen wrangling infants and children to safety. The last time Max answered the call "Corpsman up", was to aid a mother and her young child.

The world is a better place because of Max. He loved hard, lived big, always looking to do just one more thing. He lived life to the MAX.

[Join us in honoring and remembering Max and learn more about his story through this powerful video.](#)

For more information about all Charles Kirby Wilcox honorees, visit neopat.org/about/charles-kirby-wilcox-honorees



MAKING AN IMPACT



The Northeast Ohio Foundation for Patriotism (NEOPAT) is *Keeping the Promise* to foster growth for our military community through our mission to promote patriotism, support military families, and remember those that have gone before us.

Since our inception in 2011, numerous veterans and military families have been touched by our mission resulting in over \$4 million in direct impact. In 2022 we received 135 requests which impacted a minimum of 997 veterans and military families along with 2,039 non-military family members. Additionally, NEOPAT engaged with more than 2,261 veterans and active military members and over 8,296 of their families, friends and community supporters.

One veteran and one family at a time, NEOPAT is working to make a difference in the lives of our nation's heroes and support them on their journey. [Here are a few examples of how we were able to assist local military members and their families in 2022:](#)



172 veterans and military families needed assistance for food and retail purchases to accommodate basic household needs.



35 instances where NEOPAT was able to keep veterans and military families in stable housing in some cases providing a safety net for months.



37 veterans and military families were assisted with gas, electric, phone and other utility payments to help ease monthly billing during the increase in economic hardship last year.



335 military members were helped by NEOPAT and Local Unit Commanders working towards building morale and camaraderie for their health and wellness programs.

KEEPING THE PROMISE

NEOPAT's commitment to *Keeping the Promise* to support and serve military families in our 20-county service area in their time of need remains constant. NEOPAT's core programming is focused on four key areas and we invite you to learn more about our work over the last year.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

NEOPAT provides immediate relief to those facing financial hardship including rent, utilities, food, and basic needs. For veterans and military families struggling to make ends meet, this assistance can be a lifeline to help them get back on their feet. Our partnerships with other community resources ensures our veterans are well cared for every step of the way.

Highlights from 2022 include:

- Partnering with Volunteers of America to fund the new Judge Sara J. Harper Village female veteran housing facility.
- Providing more than 100 veterans with new shoes and boots at the Veterans Day Resource Fair.
- Supporting 63 families with 158 children through the annual Adopt-A-Military Family program along with 100 veterans and their 250 family members through our toy drive and stocking programs.



Judge Sarah Harper Village



The City of Cleveland Veterans Day Resource Fair

MENTAL WELLNESS

Mental wellness, alternative arts therapy, and outdoor therapy programs provide critical support for veterans struggling with mental health challenges, helping them to cope with the unique stresses and traumas associated with military service.

NEOPAT works continuously to partner with local organizations to provide alternative therapy options including:

- Lorain Community College Hearts of Patriots Photography Therapy and Cues & Clues Suicide Prevention programs.
- Supporting Unit Commanders to fund health and wellness programs to build morale for 335 veterans.
- Co-sponsoring Modern Warrior LIVE, an immersive narrative and music experience chronicling a veteran's journey through three deployments and the transition back home.
- Providing 20+ veterans from the Stokes VA Medical Center the opportunity to spend an afternoon fishing and building comradery with the Perry Demming Foundation.



Modern Warrior LIVE

PATRIOTISM AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement programs that promote patriotism engage the broader community to connect with and show support for those who have served our country, fostering a sense of unity and appreciation for their sacrifices. We are proud to partner with other organizations in our community to offer opportunities to recognize our veteran population and thank them for their service.

- NEOPAT participates in numerous speaking opportunities around Veterans and Memorial Day and throughout the year, including the Cleveland State Veteran's Association and the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame.
- In addition, NEOPAT engages with the veteran community at numerous events including the City of Cleveland's Veteran Resource Fair, Lorain County Veteran's Symposium, the SAM Center's Veterans and Dependents Resource Fair.
- A continued partnership with the Cleveland Browns for their veteran initiatives includes hosting 50 veterans at their annual training camp in conjunction with the USO and inviting active duty military to participate in a home game.



Veteran Resource Fair



Cleveland Browns Game

"I'm so thankful to have been a part of handful of military events/halftime shows during and after my military career. I can honestly say of all the events, I have never felt more honored and blessed than I was yesterday. I know many felt the same way, so a HUGE thank you to NEOPAT and the NFL/Browns organization for instilling that feeling within myself. Please don't think twice about doing this again in the future, as your actions truly make a difference in the lives of a Soldier/Veteran."

- Veteran, Army National Guard

REMEMBRANCE

Remembering and honoring military service members promotes a sense of gratitude and appreciation for their sacrifices, and provides comfort and healing for veterans and military families who have lost loved ones. We are committed to *Keeping the Promise* to honor and remember our nation's heroes in perpetuity.

- Memorial Day speeches and events took place across our region focusing on the legacy of our fallen soldiers.
- Operations Flags of Freedom American flag displays at numerous WWII, Vietnam and Afghanistan veteran's funerals.
- Placement of wreaths on the headstones of our heroes as part of the annual Wreaths Across America event.
- Working with student veterans from Baldwin Wallace University to conduct a fall clean-up of the LCpl Brad Squires Memorial in Middleburg Heights.
- Creating Salute to Services initiatives with local high school sports teams such as the Danny Scherry Salute to Service initiative in Rocky River which included a food drive for area families in need, a special presentation to Danny's family, as well as a moment of silence to honor and remember his service to our great nation.



Brad Squires Memorial

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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\$50,001 - \$100,000



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Special thanks to all of our donors who wish to remain anonymous

**Recognition is in acknowledgment of cumulative giving between 2020-2022.*

HELP US

Keep the Promise

NEOPAT receives requests daily from veterans needing assistance making ends meet and maintaining stable access to food, basic necessities, and much-needed emotional support. These veterans and their families have sacrificed so much for our country, and we owe it to them to come together as a community to provide the help they need.

But we cannot do this work alone. It is through the generosity of supporters like you that we are able to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those who have served. Please consider joining us and donating to our mission to *Keep the Promise*.

MAKE A DONATION



Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera.



Visit neopat.org/keepthepromise to learn more.



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