




Keeping The Promise

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY | 2026



The image features three soldiers in silhouette, standing in a line and saluting. They are positioned in the foreground, with their backs to the viewer. Behind them is a large, waving American flag that fills most of the frame. The background is a warm, orange-hued sunset sky. The overall mood is solemn and patriotic.

*“We’ll wait for them and pray for them until they all get home...
and if they are in need, NEOPAT will help them the best it can.”*

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As we reflect on this past year, I am filled with deep gratitude and pride for what NEOPAT has accomplished—together with our supporters, partners, volunteers, and dedicated team. In 2025, NEOPAT continued to meet veterans and military families where they are, providing critical emergency assistance during moments of crisis and stability during times of uncertainty. Whether helping keep utilities on, ensuring families had food on the table, or supporting access to essential resources, NEOPAT remained a trusted lifeline for thousands across Northeast Ohio. Behind every number in this report is a real person—a veteran, a spouse, a child—whose life was made stronger because you chose to stand with them.

This year also reflected the strength of our partnerships. Corporate allies, individual donors, foundations, and community leaders came together with a shared belief: that those who serve our nation should never face hardship alone.

As we step into 2026, NEOPAT proudly celebrates 15 years of service. This milestone is more than a reflection on where we've been—it is a launching pad for where we are going. The challenges facing veterans and military families continue to evolve, and so must we. Our vision for the next 15 years is bold, focused, and rooted in impact.

Looking ahead, NEOPAT is committed to deepening its reach, strengthening long-term sustainability, and expanding partnerships that amplify our mission. We will continue to respond swiftly in moments of crisis while investing in solutions that promote long-term stability and dignity for the families we serve. Innovation, collaboration, and accountability will guide us as we grow—always grounded in compassion and community.

None of this would be possible without you. On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for your trust, your generosity, and your belief in NEOPAT's mission. Because of you, NEOPAT is not just responding to today's needs—we are building a stronger future for generations of veterans and military families to come.

With gratitude and optimism,

Rick DeChant
Chairman of the Board
NEOPAT

REMEMBERING OUR NATION'S HEROES

U.S. Marine Corps Lance Corporal Andy Nowacki
March 29, 1980 - February 26, 2005



THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MARINE CORPORAL ANDY NOWACKI

Andy Nowacki lived a life defined by kindness, humor, and service to others. From the time he was young, Andy had a natural ability to make people feel seen, valued, and cared for. He was known for his quick wit, playful spirit, and the way he could bring a smile to anyone around him. Whether teasing his brothers, making friends laugh, or helping someone in need, Andy found joy in lifting others up. He was the kind of person who would give the shirt off his back without hesitation—not for recognition, but because it was simply who he was.

Andy's path to service began early, driven by determination and a deep sense of purpose. At just 17 years old, when a Marine Corps recruiter visited his Lyndhurst's Brush High School, Andy knew immediately that was the life he wanted. He was resolute in his decision and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps shortly after graduating, eager to serve something greater than himself. Though military service ran in his family, Andy became the first Marine among them, forging his own path.

Andy proudly served with the 2nd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, based in Erie, Pennsylvania. After completing his initial commitment, he returned home and joined the Grand River Police Department in 2001, serving on the ready response team, honor guard, and bike patrol. When he learned his Marine unit would deploy again, he chose to return, saying simply, "They're not going without me." It was never about obligation—it was about brotherhood.

Andy believed deeply in protecting and caring for others. Whether as a Marine, a police officer, or in everyday life, he lived with courage, compassion, and an unwavering sense of duty.

After his passing, Andy's legacy did not end—it grew. His fellow Marines gather each year to honor him, a testament to their bond and the impact he had on those beside him. His family remains surrounded by friends, service members, and supporters whose lives were forever shaped by his presence.

One of the most meaningful expressions of his legacy is the Andy Nowacki Memorial Scholarship. Andy was never defined by grades or accolades, but by his character. The scholarship supports first responders and individuals pursuing careers in service who demonstrate compassion, integrity, and a desire to help others.

Andy's life reminds us that impact is not measured in years, but in the difference we make. His humor, loyalty, courage, and compassion live on—in his family, fellow Marines, community, and in every life touched by his story. His mission to care for others continues through those he inspired, and the lives changed in his name, a lasting reminder that even in loss, love and service carry forward.

"What is there to be unhappy about?" - Andy "Ace" Nowacki

Join us in honoring and remembering Andy 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



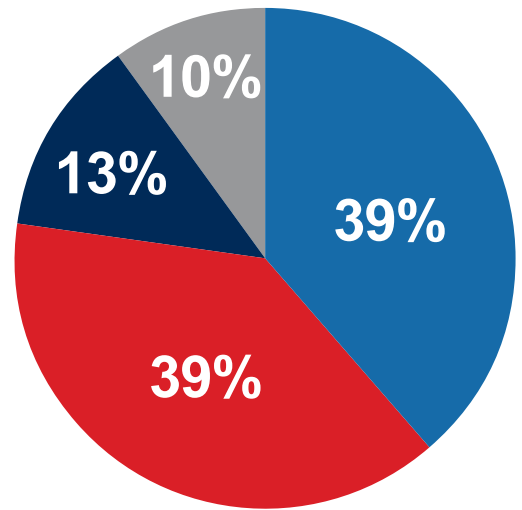
COMMUNITY IMPACT

In 2025, NEOPAT delivered \$292,289 in direct community impact, providing support to veterans, military members, and their families across Northeast Ohio, positively impacting more than 5,800 people.

Together, these outcomes demonstrate NEOPAT's continued commitment to Keeping the Promise—delivering timely, meaningful aid, and strengthening the well-being of veterans and military families throughout our community as we move into our 15th year of service.



Members of the Sgt. Clean Car Wash team collecting gifts for the Adopt-A-Military-Family program.



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MENTAL WELLNESS

REMEMBRANCE

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

NEOPAT fulfilled 105 individual assistance requests, supporting 263 people, while 34 unit and organizational requests extended assistance to 5,435 service members and their families. Through Adopt-a-Family, we assisted 36 families, positively impacting 169 family members.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Our team supported community partners like the Geauga County Veteran Food Pantry, Summit County Veterans Stand Down, and local VFW Posts by helping address food insecurity, access to services, and safe gathering spaces for veterans in need.

EXPANDING ACCESS THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Continuing to connect veterans and military families to resources through community events like the MGM Northfield Park Expo and Rid-All Armed Forces Day resource fairs, strengthened access to support across Northeast Ohio.

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 key areas and we invite you to learn more about our work over the last year.

MENTAL WELLNESS

NEOPAT provided outdoor therapeutic experiences that supported well-being and connection for those affected by the invisible wounds of service.

ADVANCING MENTAL WELLNESS & PEER SUPPORT

Supported mental wellness initiatives including the Race to End Veterans Suicide (REVS), Veterans Visiting Veterans at UH Elyria, and Freedom Rows, promoting connection, peer support, and healing through shared experiences.

BUILDING CONNECTION THROUGH OUTDOOR FELLOWSHIP

Through outdoor and fellowship experiences like fishing outings, the annual pheasant hunt, cabin fishing experiences, and outdoor rec, NEOPAT brought veterans together to promote camaraderie and peer connection in nature.



Veterans finding peace, purpose, and camaraderie on the water through NEOPAT's fishing experiences.



Team members making connections for the Veterans Visiting Veterans program at the UH Elyria Medical Center.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

NEOPAT strengthened military and veteran communities by supporting unit events, milestone celebrations, holiday meals, picnics, races, and gatherings that boost morale and expand awareness of our mission while building lasting community partnerships.

SUPPORTING SERVICE MEMBERS AT THE POINT OF ENTRY

Opened the NEOPAT Support Hub at the Cleveland MEPS Center (Military Entrance Processing Station) to provide direct, on-site resources for service members and their families at a critical transition point, strengthening early connections and reinforcing our commitment to supporting military families from the very start of their service journey.

ENGAGING PARTNERS THROUGH EDUCATION & COLLABORATION

NEOPAT's Lunch & Learn sessions brought together corporate partners, higher education leaders, and community stakeholders to share insights on veteran support, workforce engagement, and local resources.



Veterans proudly carrying the flag at the Cleveland Browns Salute to Service game, honoring service while strengthening community ties.



Military families creating lasting memories at the Cleveland Zoo during a day of connection, celebration, and support.



New recruits and families receiving resources at NEOPAT's Support Hub inside the Cleveland MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Station) - standing beside them from day one.

REMEMBRANCE

NEOPAT led remembrance initiatives and commemorative events that ensured military service is never forgotten, creating meaningful spaces for reflection, gratitude, and community unity.

SUPPORTING MEMORIALS AND GOLD STAR TRADITIONS

NEOPAT honored service and sacrifice by supporting memorials, Gold Star family events, unit memorial services, Military Salutes, Army birthday celebrations, and naturalization ceremonies.

CREATING SPACE FOR GOLD STAR FAMILY CONNECTION

Hosted a Gold Star Family Brunch to create a space of comfort, connection, and remembrance for families who have lost a service member.



Volunteers installing flags at Edgewater Park for Memorial Day, each one a visible tribute to courage, sacrifice, and lives never forgotten.



Participants in the annual All-American Ruck Challenge honoring SSG Kyle McKee, carrying the weight of remembrance with strength and unity.



Community members gathered in Seven Hills for the dedication of MSG Joseph J. Andres Jr. Memorial Park, a lasting tribute to a hometown hero.

EVENTS

NEOPAT's signature events do more than raise funds, they build community. Each gathering united supporters, corporate partners, volunteers, and veterans in meaningful experiences that generated critical resources to sustain our programs while strengthening the network that stands behind those who serve. Through fellowship, philanthropy, and shared purpose, these events ensure we can continue Keeping the Promise.

GALA

Our annual Gala served as an inspiring evening of reflection, recognition, and renewed commitment to our mission. Community leaders, corporate partners, veterans, and military families came together to celebrate impact, honor service, and invest in the future of NEOPAT. The evening reinforced the collective role our community plays in sustaining our mission and expanding our reach across Northeast Ohio.

TOPGOLF FUNDRAISER

The Topgolf Fundraiser brought supporters together for an energetic and engaging experience that combined friendly competition with purpose-driven giving. The event created a welcoming entry point for new supporters to learn about NEOPAT's mission while providing returning partners another opportunity to deepen their commitment. Together, every swing supported veterans and military families across our region.

GOLF OUTING

Our annual Golf Outing united community leaders, corporate partners, and dedicated supporters around a shared commitment to those who serve. More than a day on the course, it was a powerful demonstration of partnership, where camaraderie and philanthropy came together to generate meaningful impact for veterans and military families throughout Northeast Ohio.

CLAYS & CLAMS

As part of the Perry Demming Outdoor Freedom Project, Clays & Clams offered a unique outdoor experience that brought supporters and veterans together in fellowship and appreciation for the outdoors. The event strengthened relationships, honored service, and supported NEOPAT's mission through an atmosphere of camaraderie, gratitude, and shared purpose.

For a full list of our 2026 events, visit www.neopat.org/events.



CALL TO ACTION: JOIN THE MISSION TO SERVE THOSE WHO SERVED



At NEOPAT, our mission is clear: to support and uplift veterans and military families across Northeast Ohio. But just as no service member serves alone, this mission depends on the strength of our community.

We invite you to stand with us as a champion for those who have sacrificed so much. There are many meaningful ways to make an impact:

AMPLIFY OUR MISSION

Help spread the word. Share NEOPAT's work with friends, colleagues, and fellow community members to grow awareness and support for veterans and military families.

OPEN DOORS TO PARTNERSHIP

Connect us with your workplace or organization. Corporate partnerships and Veteran or Military Employee Resource Groups help expand our reach and deepen our impact.

CONNECT VETERANS TO HELP

Many veterans are unaware of the emergency assistance and programs available to them. If you know a veteran or military family facing hardship, help guide them to NEOPAT.

INVEST IN THE MISSION

Every contribution matters. From individual gifts to corporate sponsorships, fundraisers, or recurring donations, your support directly strengthens the safety net for those who served.

We are ready to serve those who stood for us. **Will you stand with us?**

Join the mission today. Visit [NEOPAT.org](https://www.neopat.org) or contact us to learn more.

HONORING OUR SUPPORTERS: The Heart of NEOPAT's Mission



We are profoundly grateful to every donor who stood with NEOPAT in support of veterans and military families this past year. Your generosity powers critical programs, emergency assistance, and community-based initiatives that change lives and strengthen futures.

We extend special thanks to our Patriot Circle donors, whose leadership-level generosity forms the backbone of our work. Their extraordinary commitment helps ensure that veterans and their families receive the care, stability, and respect they have earned through their service.

Thank you for believing in this mission and for making our work possible. Your support truly makes a difference—and we are honored to have you as part of the NEOPAT community.



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We strive for accuracy and want to ensure your generosity is recognized correctly. If you would like to request a change to your donor listing, please contact Greg Renkas at grenkas@neopat.org. Thank you for your support!



HELP US

Keep the Promise

NEOPAT receives requests daily from veterans needing assistance making ends meet, including 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.

To learn more, visit neopat.org/keepthepromise



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