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A Local Force Supporting Southeast Missouri Veterans

NOVEMBER 18TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Southeast Missouri— A dedicated group of individuals has united to form The United for Veterans (UFV) Fundraiser, a foundation committed to supporting local veterans organizations and honoring their service. Inspired by Lynn Richardet's passion for Missouri's National Veterans Memorial (MNVM) and the L. O. V. (Love Our Veterans) event in St. Louis, the UFV Fundraiser aims to create a local event that uplifts Southeast Missouri veteran organizations.

Lynn Richardet approached Joe Hobbs, now the Chairman of The UFV Fundraiser, with this vision during a lunch meeting. "I had no idea it was coming," Hobbs recalls. "Lynn felt we needed a local event to help Southeast Missouri veteran organizations, specifically the Stars and Stripes Museum." This conversation led to the formation of a diverse board of directors, including veterans, business leaders, and community advocates, all dedicated to supporting local veteran initiatives.

The inaugural UFV Fundraiser was a resounding success, raising over \$200,000, with Mercy serving as the presenting sponsor. The funds have been strategically allocated to various veteran-focused organizations:

- \$22,500 to the Avenue of Flags in Cape Girardeau for memorial flag storage*
- \$47,500 to Missouri's National Veterans Memorial in Perryville for a PTSD garden*
- \$22,500 to the Stars and Stripes National Museum and Library, enabling the curator to travel to Germany for bound volumes of Stars & Stripes newspapers*
- \$22,500 to the Missouri Veterans Home in Cape Girardeau for an outdoor pavilion*

Additionally, the UFV Fundraiser provided \$1,000 each to several local supporting groups, including the Rotary Club Southeast service, The Pike Fraternity, and PAVE, which assists local veterans.

Joe Hobbs, whose father served in the Air Force, emphasizes the importance of supporting veterans: "We owe so much to them. My father raised me to respect our country and support veterans, and that's exactly what we're doing with The UFV Fundraiser."

Looking ahead, the UFV Fundraiser has set ambitious goals for their next event, scheduled for September 13, 2025, aiming to increase table sales from 31 to 55. Mercy has already committed to being the presenting sponsor for next year's event, reflecting the community's ongoing support.

The UFV Fundraiser encourages local businesses and community members to contribute through table purchases, sponsorships, and spreading awareness about the foundation's mission. For updates and information on how to get involved, follow their Facebook page.

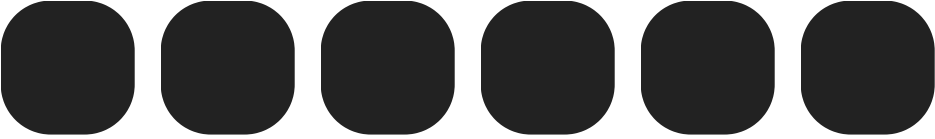
As The UFV Fundraiser continues to grow, its impact on Southeast Missouri's veteran community is set to expand, ensuring that those who served are honored, remembered, and supported in meaningful ways.

For more information about The United for Veterans Fundraiser, please visit their Facebook page or email UnitedForVeteransSemo@gmail.com.

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