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Eight charities join CFC, looking to boost profile

By [Karen Jowers](#)

Staff writer

Being involved in the Combined Federal Campaign is giving some military-related charities the boost they need to expand their help to troops and their families, especially those suffering because of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund, founded several years ago to help defray the costs of injured Marines and sailors during their hospitalization and recovery, is one of eight new kids on the block in the Military, Veterans & Patriotic Services Organizations of America, a military-related charities federation.

CFC allows such charities to “reach a donor base you can’t reach any other way ... it gives long-term stability,” said Nancy Walker, spokeswoman for the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund, www.semperfifund.org.

The fund has already passed the \$5.6 million mark in assistance to Marines and sailors in the past 2½ years, she said.

Now the group has broadened the scope of its assistance to include big-ticket, long-term needs such as modified homes and vans for the injured. It’s formed partnerships, giving \$20,000 for every home that the nonprofit Homes For Our Troops builds for a Marine or sailor; and helped fund modified vans for Marines and sailors, which cost about \$10,000 to \$15,000 above the allowance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs for that purpose.

‘A tremendous difference’

Last year was the first year of CFC participation for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, and that has made “a tremendous difference in TAPS’ ability to help those who have suffered the loss of a loved one in the armed services,” said founder and chairman Bonnie Carroll.

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TAPS received \$74,182 in pledges in 2005, well above the median level of donations — \$30,000 to \$50,000 — that most new CFC charities receive.

Being in CFC and participating in CFC fairs has helped TAPS get the word out about what it does, Carroll said, adding that donations have increased by about 50 percent this year.

As a result, TAPS in turn is looking to expand its help to grieving families, such as increasing its “Good Grief” camps for children from once a year to three times a year.

The Ranger Memorial Foundation hopes that by being in the national and international CFC campaign, it will boost its efforts to create a fund to care for the Ranger Memorial at Fort Benning, Ga., in perpetuity. The foundation also hopes to increase the amount of money it gives to Ranger family readiness groups that request it for family events, or to help families in distress, said Joseph Leuer, executive secretary of the foundation.

The foundation also wants to increase the number of scholarships and amount of money the scholarships award within the Ranger community, Leuer said. It now provides 20 scholarships a year worth \$750 each, he said.

Marty Horn, president of Any Soldier Inc., said his group is expanding its operations to help injured troops and surviving family members and he hopes CFC participation will help the group get the funding to do this.

The group’s Web site, www.anysoldier.com, has helped Americans connect with deployed troops, sending care packages and letters. But with the help of donations, Any Soldier has also given computers, American flags, 2,000 care packages and more in response to specific needs.

Five other new military-related charities have passed rigorous financial and organizational review to become part of CFC:

- Give 2 The Troops Inc. (www.give2thetroops.org), which sends letters and care packages to deployed troops.
- The United States Army Warrant Officers Association Scholarship Fund ([www.usawoa.org /woasf](http://www.usawoa.org/woasf)).
- The Coast Guard Auxiliary Association (www.cgaux.org).
- The Council on America’s Military Past (www.campjamp.org), which focuses on military history and historic preservation.
- The Daedalian Foundation (www.daedalians.org), which gives scholarships and training to encourage young people to pursue a military career.

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