

USS Yorktown About the cover

The aircraft carrier Yorktown is one of the iconic military symbols that can be found throughout the Lowcountry, representing the sacrifice and resiliency of the men and women who serve our nation past, present and future. One of the most popular tourist attractions in the Southeast, the Yorktown also connects visitors to businesses, the hospitality industry, educational institutions along with other community and civic-minded groups and organizations. (Photo/File)

Thank you!

The Charleston Regional Business Journal wishes to thank our sponsors for their support of this special front page honoring veterans.

About this special project

Veterans should be honored every day of the year for their contributions to our community and to our country. This year, the Charleston Regional Business Journal selected July 4 as a special moment to say "Thank You" to members of the armed forces and their families. Please join us in honoring all veterans as we and our sponsors collaborate to support two organizations working tirelessly for the well-being of veterans and their families: Tri-County Veterans Support Network and Fisher House Charleston. Read about these organizations below and visit their websites to get involved by donating your time, talent and money.

Tri-County Veterans Support Network partners with veterans hospital

The Tri-County Veterans Support Network connects veterans and families in crisis with local service providers within an extensive network of agencies that collaborate with direct services, referrals and continuing training and employment opportunities, said CEO and co-founder Tim Taylor.

"The whole goal is to foster greater, effective collective, collaborative community efforts to serve veterans in a more holistic way," Taylor said.

The network serves as a hub, helping local agencies become aware of each other and of veterans' needs in the primary areas of housing, health and wellness, basic needs assistance, education and vocational training, employment and business opportunities.

With the help and leadership of one of their founding board members, Chaplain Maj. Gen. Charles Baldwin, who is retired from the Air Force, the network brings agencies together so that they can talk about what they provide.

The Tri-County Veterans Support Network was recently named the local community veterans network partner for the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center.

That means the VA maintains a direct line of communication with the Tri-County

Veterans Support Network to streamline services and support for veterans in need. Taylor said that has increased referrals to and from the medical center by quickly recognizing veterans in crisis or need.

"By keeping open lines of communication between the VA, together we can provide an early warning system in serving veterans in crisis," Taylor said.

Housing and employment have become major areas of concern for many veterans returning home. The Tri-County Veterans Support Network is pursuing the establishment of a career development center with permanent, supportive housing to help veterans find employment and affordable housing options. "Veterans often come home with an array of tangible skills, discipline and leadership qualities that can provide strong value for employers if given the opportunity," Taylor said. "Our goals are to help them reframe that training and use the tools they already have to help them find stability and a job and a home in our community as they transition."



Tri-County Veterans Support Network

Contact information:
843-410-3616
tricountyveterans
supportnetwork.org

Fisher House Charleston to give veterans' families home away from home

Veterans heal faster and have greater long-term health when they can have family nearby while receiving treatment. In Charleston and across the state, that's a struggle.

More than 4,500 veterans come to the Charleston area each year to receive care at the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center. Their families find hotel rooms if they can afford it or sleep in a patient's hospital room if they can find space.

Fisher House Charleston Founder Trux Emerson said even though veterans get excellent care at the medical center, many families sleep in their cars and others choose not to accompany their loved ones.

Emerson was approached by Medal of Honor recipient Maj. Gen. James Livingston, who retired from the Marine Corps in 1995. Emerson met with Livingston to get his support for a golf tournament and was instead recruited into leading a multiyear, multimillion-dollar project to build a Fisher House.

Fisher House Charleston would eliminate room and board expenses for veteran families and keep them close to loved ones receiving care by giving them a place to stay with other families.

After that meeting, Emerson understood the need and was shocked there

wasn't a place to house veterans' families in the area. Fisher Houses are operated by Veterans Affairs after they are built on federal land, but the local medical center didn't have any land available. So a nonprofit was formed to raise money, buy the land, build a house and donate it to the VA to operate.

Property has been purchased at 150 Wentworth St., and the Fisher House Foundation has raised about \$4 million for construction. Small and large donors from across the U.S. have provided millions to get the project started, but Emerson said the organization still needs large-scale donations to finish. Fisher House Charleston is expected to cost over \$10 million for the total project, and about \$2.5 million is still needed. The organization hopes to break ground this year.

Emerson said when veterans' families live together, they discover many common circumstances and challenges.

"It's a very healing environment, a therapeutic place," Emerson said. "They think they're the only ones."



Fisher House Charleston

Contact information:
843-901-0357
www.fisherhouse
charleston.org

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LimRic Plumbing, Heating and Air is proud to hire veterans through our partnership with Troops To Trades, a national non-profit organization that helps service members transition from the battlefield to civilian life. With the help of Troops To Trades, our company has been able to train and employ many local veterans. Please turn to page 31 to learn more.