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**Giving Thanks (and Giving Back) to Our Veterans**

By David Brauner, Publisher

Veteran’s Day 2015 has come and gone for another year but one appraisal industry company is galvanizing resources to help create a lasting benefit for at-risk men and women who served our country in the armed forces.  
  
According to a memo issued by software giant a la mode, Dave Biggers, the company’s Founder and Chairman, was contacted by a la mode customer and appraiser Carol Huffman, asking if he could help a group of current and former Marines on a grassroots mission to save fellow veterans at risk of suicide. Huffman’s daughter is one of those former Marines and founders of the group, and also a staff appraiser with her mom Carol. “As an Army brat myself, the son of an appraiser and Vietnam veteran, I was committed the moment I heard it,” said Biggers. “And I knew right then that we couldn't just stop at building a website for them (Carol's original request).  We needed to get them across the goal line completely.”   
  
According the release, 22 veterans commit suicide every single day. “So, sixty minutes after you read this, another will be gone- that is, unless we all do something about it,” Biggers said.  
  
Huffman’s daughter and a small group of other Marines decided to act after a veteran friend took his life.  The group has become "official" as an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit company, "The Chesty Puller House,"  appropriately named after Marine Corps Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, legendary for opening his home to fellow marines at risk. The money raised is earmarked to purchase Puller’s home and renovate it into “an events center, headquarters, national lifeline, and ‘spiritual beacon’ for at-risk veterans of all branches,” according to the release, “and continuing in Chesty and (his wife) Virginia's tradition.”  Proceeds generated will continue funding the Chesty Puller House mission:  to never leave a brother or sister behind.

According to Biggers, the goal of the drive is to raise at least $500,000 as quickly as possible, beginning on Veterans Day.  Biggers is personally contributing $250,000 of that on a dollar-for-dollar match, doubling whatever is donated.

You can read the complete memo here:  <http://blogs.alamode.com/appraiser/article/appraisers-saving-our-veterans-in-need>

Donations can be made here: [www.alamode.com/veterans](http://click.alamode.com/default.aspx?adcode=CPVETDAY1115_E1&email=!*EMAIL*!&url=http://www.alamode.com/veterans).

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 **About the Author**  
David Brauner is the Senior Insurance Broker for [OREP.org](http://orep.org/) and Publisher of Working RE magazine. He has been involved in providing E&O coverage for appraisers for over 20 years.