

FREEDOM CENTER

Serving Those Who Serve Us.



ANNUAL REPORT 2015



FREEDOM CENTER

Serving Those Who Serve

“Guests are really appreciative for the ability to set their items down, have good snacks, etc. I have witnessed many of the guests themselves donating. One of the volunteers noticed parents having their kids put donations in the box.”

Freedom Center volunteer

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



We have been serving veterans every day since the first Freedom Center opened in November 2011. This year marks our fourth year of continuous operation. During the past year, the Michigan Armed Forces Hospitality Center, Inc. has achieved several important milestones.

For the fourth consecutive year, we have been able to meet the needs of more veterans, in more locations, than ever before. In 2015, we served more than 50,000 veterans and their families. This represents a 10 percent increase in the number of veterans who have been touched by Freedom Center activities.

In December, we completed construction of our fourth Freedom Center facility at the North Terminal at Detroit Metropolitan Airport. The ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony were held on December 17, 2015 and allowed us to meet the needs of service members who were traveling during the holiday season. The terminal serves an estimated six million passengers a year and our new center assists military personnel and their families who would otherwise not have access to our flagship facility in the McNamara Terminal.

The concept, development and construction of the North Terminal Freedom Center is a heartwarming sequence of events. It is another in a long series of “minor miracles” which have attended the unfolding of the Freedom Center project from the outset.

As you scan this report, I invite you to take time to read the “North Terminal Freedom Center” story (see p. 10). It is a stirring testament to the generosity of individuals and organizations that have contributed resources to support the veterans traveling through DTW.

This level of support would not be possible without the efforts of our staff of dedicated

volunteers and the generosity of numerous donors. I invite you to step forward and become an active member of either group.

In late 2014, we opened a Freedom Center lounge in the U.S. Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) in Lansing, Michigan. It’s an expansion of our work that started in 2013 at our lounge in the Troy, Michigan MEPS facility. The MEPS facility serves new recruits and their family members during their enlistment process.

Our annual Gala event, held in the autumn, was well-attended and raised more than \$20,000 for Freedom Center operations. Plans are already underway for the 2016 Gala.

As the scope and span of our outreach has increased, so has our staffing. Of special importance is our new Executive Director, Kate Hude, who brings a wealth of experience and fresh ideas. In addition, we have a new Operations Manager, Stephanie Appel, who supervises both facilities at Detroit Metropolitan Airport. Look for her on your next visit to the Freedom Centers at DTW.

This level of growth and success stands as a constant reminder that there is yet much more to be done. I invite you to take a moment to reflect upon the commitment, dedication and sacrifice of our service members. Then, consider how you and your organization can be part of the Freedom Center efforts to support them here in Michigan.

Thank you for making this outreach possible. Together, we will continue “...serving those who serve us.”

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth S. Pratt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kenneth S. Pratt
President



“

My daughter is getting sworn in today and the wait process for the service was made easy thanks to the Freedom Center. We laughed and talked the time away.”

Military family member

TABLE OF CONTENTS

History & Mission	7
Board of Directors & Staff	9
North Terminal story	10
Operations Update	14
Financial Report	16
Sponsors	18
How You Can Help	22



Thank you Michigan Freedom Center DTW for your hospitality. I am active duty US Army and traveled through DTW on 11 November. It was a nice experience and your staff of volunteers were superb!

 *Facebook member*



MICHIGAN ARMED FORCES HOSPITALITY CENTER, INC.

How It All Started

In December 2010, for the second year in a row, a group of Delta Air Lines employees organized a temporary holiday military lounge within the McNamara Terminal at the Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW). During a three-week period, volunteers from Delta, military veterans' organizations, the TSA and other groups assisted more than 2,400 members of our armed forces and their families. The effort was an overwhelming success and clearly demonstrated the need for a permanent hospitality station.

Michigan Armed Forces Hospitality Center, Inc., a Michigan nonprofit, was created to provide the necessary organization and fundraising for a year-round facility called "Freedom Center." The original Center is a permanent military lounge adjacent to Gate A-43 in the center of the McNamara Terminal at DTW.

On Veterans Day 2011, dedication ceremonies for the Freedom Center marked the grand opening of our permanent military lounge at DTW. Hosted by a dedicated staff of trained volunteers, the special needs of military travelers are being met seven days a week, 365 days a year. Many of our guests are transiting DTW to or from overseas duty stations.

In 2013, we expanded our operations to include a Freedom Center lounge in the U.S. Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) in Troy, Michigan. The MEPS facility serves new recruits and their family members during their enlistment process. A similar lounge was opened in 2014 at the Lansing MEPS center.

“*Waiting for our grandson to be sworn in. Wonderful warm welcome and fulfilling place. Thank you.*”

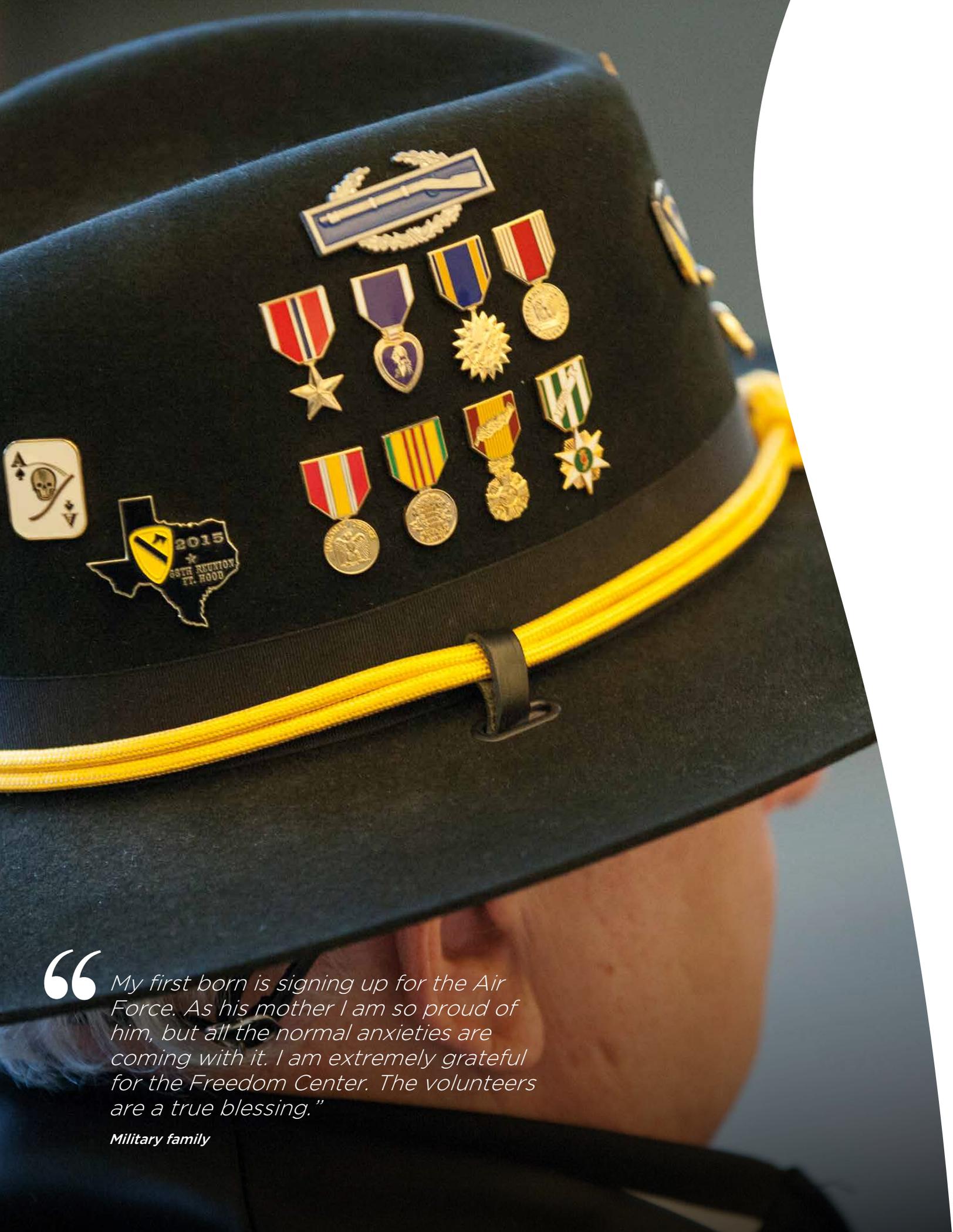
Military family member

In December 2015, construction of the fourth Freedom Center location was completed, at the North Terminal at Detroit Metropolitan Airport. The terminal serves an estimated six million passengers a year and assists military personnel and their families who would otherwise not have access to the flagship facility in the McNamara Terminal.

Our Freedom Centers retain their relaxed, home-like atmospheres that embrace and meet the needs of traveling service members and their families, through generous monetary and in-kind donations. It is only through the support of our donors, our volunteers, and organizations from the airport and through surrounding communities that we can continue to offer world-class service.

Our Mission Is Simple

Michigan Armed Forces Hospitality Center, Inc. is dedicated to providing a world-class reception and hospitality station that meets the needs of in-transit military service members and their families. Staffed by volunteers and supported by various organizations, we also welcome veterans and members of the military from allied nations. The Freedom Center is dedicated to "Serving Those Who Serve Us."



“My first born is signing up for the Air Force. As his mother I am so proud of him, but all the normal anxieties are coming with it. I am extremely grateful for the Freedom Center. The volunteers are a true blessing.”

Military family

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Kenneth S. Pratt
President
Colonel, USAF (Ret)



John G. McCandless
Vice President
Captain, USN (Ret)



Patrick Colbeck
Board Member
**State Senator, 7th
District of Michigan**



Howard F. Rundell Jr.
Board Member
Captain, USN (Ret)



Stephen Ihrig
Secretary/Treasurer
Captain, USN (Ret)



Michael B. Greiger
Board Member
Colonel, USAFR



Melonie B. Colaianne
Board Member
**MASCO Corporation
Foundation**



Timothy P. Burns
Board Member
**Vice President, Defense
& Specialty, Meritor**



Carol Ann Fausone
Board Member
**Brigadier General,
USAF (Ret)**

THE STORY BEHIND THE NORTH TERMINAL FREEDOM CENTER

In the autumn of 2014, I received a phone call from Melonie Colaianne, president of the Masco Corporation Foundation. She asked if we had plans to operate a Freedom Center military lounge in the North Terminal at Detroit Metropolitan Airport. I explained that we'd been thinking about it, but at the moment we were focused on outfitting the Freedom Center at the Lansing Enlistment Processing Station.

She pressed me for an estimate of the cost of building a North Terminal Freedom Center. Based on data I had at the time, I made some "back of the envelope" calculations and estimated it would cost about \$150,000 to complete the project.

Without much delay, Melonie informed me that she did not have \$50,000 to give us. However, she added, "...would \$100,000 be enough?"

After I had collected myself, I assured her: "Yes, ma'am! We'll get right on that!"

The next step was to work with the Wayne County Airport Authority to identify a location inside the North Terminal building. Within a few months, they identified a suitably sized retail space that was previously unused. This space was centrally located and was offered to us at the rate of \$1/year. Once again, we appreciate the partnership with WCAA in providing the space for the military lounge at relatively no cost.

During the late spring of 2015, we were introduced to Arvid Petersen, president of TPC (The Petersen Companies, Inc.), general contractors. His specialty is commercial and retail construction, especially at DTW. After outlining the basic concept of our plan, he ran his own set of

preliminary calculations. He informed us that, at roughly \$300 per square foot, the total cost of the project would be about \$380,000. I was shocked.

At this time during our discussion, we launched into a discussion about the history and background of the Freedom Center and how we've served more than 100,000 veterans over the past three and a half years. In addition, I told him that we operated with a corps of about 65 volunteers and our expenses were covered by donations and contributions.

After a short pause, Arvid nodded his head and said, "I'd like to be part of that project." He explained that he had a long list of vendors, suppliers and subcontractors and would make sure we completed the project within our budget.

By late October, construction began. One day in mid-November, I was visiting the work site and admiring the progress of the construction. Arvid happened to be there. He told me his suppliers and subcontractors had "stepped up to the plate" and together they were going to be able to complete the project under budget, with his current estimate of only \$50,000. He wanted us to be able to keep the other \$50,000 for operations.

That, in itself, would have been a remarkable ending to the story.

Fast forward another month to December 17, 2015.

We had gathered around the North Terminal Freedom Center prepared for the dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony. About 75 guests had arrived and I was circulating among the guests, greeting

“

*See you tomorrow on a trip through Detroit!
Awesome is the only word to adequately
describe Michigan Freedom Center! Thank you.*

 *Facebook member*

friends, family, dignitaries and volunteers. About 10 minutes before the event was to start, Arvid approached me and indicated that he wanted to speak with me for a few minutes. I suggested that perhaps we could wait until after the program, since it was just about to start. He was adamant. He needed to speak with me immediately.

So we stepped aside to an area where his wife and another board member were waiting. Then he explained that, since the North Terminal Freedom Center was now completed, TPC was in the process of closing the books on the project. Then he added that he'd made a decision that he wanted to share with us:

He was not going to send us a bill.

I'm not often at a loss for words. This was one of those occasions.

Here was a man who had taken this project from zero to finished in six months. In the process he'd rallied the support of dozens

of vendors, suppliers and subcontractors. He had created what can rightly be described as the "crown jewel" of the North Terminal and he asked for nothing in return.

He saw this project as his duty, honor and privilege. His way of supporting veterans and their families--his way of "serving those who serve us."

I am humbled by the incredible generosity of these two organizations - Masco Corporation Foundation and TPC and am grateful that, through their generosity, we are able to expand our outreach to even more members of our armed forces and their families.

Thank you.

Kenneth S. Pratt, Board President
Michigan Armed Forces Hospitality Center,
Inc.



Thank you
for your
generous
support

**D★M
ER**
Who Serve Us.



Freedom Center volunteers participated in welcoming dozens of “Original Rosies” who took a trip to Washington, DC. as part of a Rosie the Riveter Honor Flight.



“

In the North Terminal, we had a really appreciative guest, a younger gentleman who was traveling with his aged relative who was a veteran. This veteran had an oxygen tank, was in a wheelchair and needed assistance. The younger gentleman was so, so grateful to be able to have his relative stay in the lounge while he went to go get batteries for his oxygen.”

Freedom Center volunteer

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Freedom volunteers at four locations have hosted more than 200,000 members of the military and their families since our first lounge opened almost five years ago. Our lounges at Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW) are open 365 days a year. Many of our volunteers have been with us since the first Center opened at the McNamara terminal in November 2011 and tremendously enjoy assisting our service men and women during their travels. Some volunteers work weekly shifts on-site greeting guests and assisting with their needs as they travel; others work remotely providing various other services and support.

The **Freedom Center at DTW's McNamara Terminal** hosted 55,492 guests in 2015. This year marks our fourth year of continuous operation. In September 2015, three therapy dogs, "Sassy," "Trent" and "Shadow" joined volunteers in greeting visitors.

The **North Terminal Freedom Center** opened its doors to guests on Dec. 18, 2015. The terminal serves an estimated six million passengers a year and assists military personnel and their families who would otherwise not have access to our flagship facility in the McNamara Terminal. See story on page 10.

"I get the greatest joy volunteering at the Freedom Center ... talking to the new recruits, their parents, helping everyone who comes through our doors. Knowing what the recruits are about to do for our country makes me feel so proud."

Freedom Center volunteer

In the fourth quarter of 2014, we opened a Freedom Center lounge inside the **U.S. Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) in Lansing, Michigan**. It's an expansion of our work that started in 2013 at our lounge in the **Troy, Michigan MEPS facility**. The Lansing center hosted 9,548 visitors during its first few months in operation. The MEPS facilities serve new recruits and their family members during their enlistment process. Volunteers at the Troy facility are active in a number of programs that support our troops. In November, they shipped nearly 100 care packages to troops overseas for the holidays and raised more than \$2,600 for Toys for Tots. The site hosted 21,695 visitors in 2015.



Donna Jones
Operations Coordinator
Lansing Freedom Center



Katharine Hude
MAFHC
Executive Director



Stephanie Appel
Operations Manager
DTW Freedom Centers



“ We have such an amazing group of young men and women come through the Freedom Center at Troy on their way to Basic Training. Often on the way out the door, you hear a “Thank you.” But more often than not, I prefer to reply back: No, thank YOU!”

Freedom Center volunteer

OCTOBER 2014 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2015

ORDINARY INCOME/EXPENSE

INCOME

Direct Public Support	157,380.84
Direct Support - Masco Foundation	100,000.00
Direct Support - Delta Air Lines	25,000.00
Investments	11.41

TOTAL INCOME	\$282,392.25
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EXPENSES

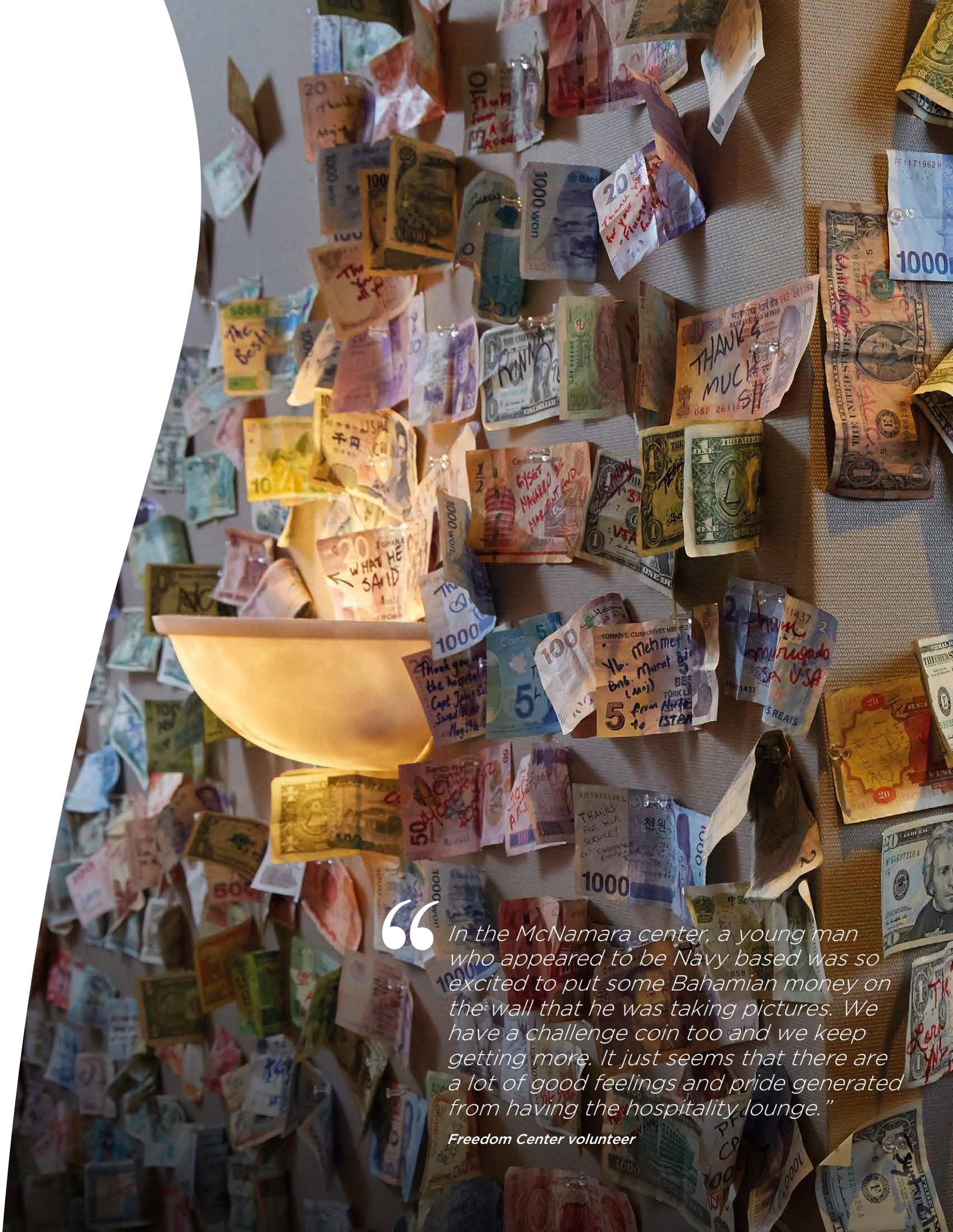
Operations - DTW_NT	13,208.32
Operations - DTW_MCN; Troy; Lansing	71,027.31
Operations - General	57,934.90
Contract Services	9,828.00
Facilities and Equipment	2,243.70
Membership Fee	352.32
Travel and Meetings	8,536.73

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$163,131.28
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NET OPERATING INCOME	\$119,260.97
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NET INCOME	\$119,260.97
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In 2015, the Freedom Center served more than 50,000 veterans and their families, a 10 percent increase.



“

In the McNamara center, a young man who appeared to be Navy based was so excited to put some Bahamian money on the wall that he was taking pictures. We have a challenge coin too and we keep getting more. It just seems that there are a lot of good feelings and pride generated from having the hospitality lounge.”

Freedom Center volunteer

LEADING SPONSORS

The Freedom Center operates entirely on monetary and in-kind donations from our sponsors and contributors. Without the following companies and individuals, Freedom Center would not exist. We appreciate the continued support and generous contributions of the following sponsors.



American Legion Auxiliary members have dedicated themselves for nearly a century to meeting the needs of our nation's veterans, military and their families both here and abroad. They volunteer millions of hours yearly, with a value of more than \$3.1 billion. As part of the world's largest women's patriotic service organization, ALA volunteers across the country also step up to honor veterans and military.



Delta Air Lines serves nearly 180 million customers each year. Delta and the Delta Connection carriers offer service to 324 destinations in 58 countries on six continents. In 2016, Delta was named to Fortune's top 50 Most Admired Companies. Additionally, Delta has ranked No.1 in the Business Travel News for an unprecedented five consecutive years.



Masco Corporation is a global leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of branded home improvement and building products. Our portfolio of industry-leading brands includes Behr® paint; Delta® and Hansgrohe® faucets, bath and shower fixtures; KraftMaid® and Merillat® cabinets; Milgard® windows and doors; and HotSpring® spas.



Meritor, Inc. is a leading global supplier of drivetrain, mobility, braking and aftermarket solutions for commercial vehicle and industrial markets. With more than a 100-year legacy of providing innovative products that offer superior performance, efficiency and reliability, the company serves commercial truck, trailer, off-highway, defense, specialty and aftermarket customers around the world.



DEFENSE

Oshkosh Defense is a leading provider of tactical wheeled vehicles and life cycle sustainment services. For decades Oshkosh has been mobilizing military and security forces around the globe by offering a full portfolio of heavy, medium, light and highly protected military vehicles to support our customers' missions. Oshkosh Defense, LLC is an Oshkosh Corporation company.



The Petersen Companies, Inc.

The Petersen Companies, Inc. was established in 1926 as "Arvid C. Petersen, builder." We are a general contracting company, with bonding capabilities, incorporated in 1986, under the current owner Arvid C. Petersen, grandson of the founding father. We proudly provide a fourth generation of excellence and maintain a reputation of stability, dependability and integrity through all phases of construction.

MAJOR SPONSORS



- **Cequent Performance Products**
- **Disabled American Veterans - Chapter 127**
- **Foundation for American Veterans**
- **GDLS Employee Association**
- **General Dynamics Land Systems**
- **Grand River Cruisers, Inc.**
- **Grand Traverse Pie Company**
- **International Express Services, LLC**
- **Knights of Columbus**
- **Kroger**
- **Northville High School**
- **Shafer Bros, Inc.**
- **Wayne County Airport Authority Employees**
- **Westland Area Jaycees**



Michigan Freedom Center is awesome! What an oasis in the desert! Thank you."

 *Facebook member*

IN-KIND SPONSORS

- **A. Boelke**
- **Air Traffic Control Personnel**
- **American Legion Auxiliary (various Michigan posts)**
- **American Legion (various Michigan posts)**
- **American Legion Riders (various Michigan posts)**
- **Araneae (North Terminal build)**
- **Aunt Millie's Bakery**
- **AWG/Boingo**
- **Blue Star, Inc. (North Terminal build)**
- **Bryan Russell**
- **Capital Flooring (North Terminal build)**
- **Center Line Electric (North Terminal build)**
- **Chili's**
- **Condor Piping (North Terminal build)**
- **Costco**
- **Dearborn Sausage**
- **Delta Air Lines**
- **Delta Air Lines employees**
- **Detroit Popcorn Company**
- **DTW Airport Concessionaires and Retail Outlet Employees**
- **Elite Fire Safety (North Terminal build)**
- **Einstein Bros. Bagels**
- **Embassy Suites DTW**
- **Fuse Technology Group**
- **Garden City High School Key Club**
- **Gear Up Foundation**
- **Glasco Corp. (North Terminal build)**
- **Grand Traverse Pie Company**
- **Graphic Images LLC**
- **GraphiColor Exhibits**
- **Great Lakes Tile (North Terminal build)**
- **Hampton Inn & Suites Detroit/Airport-Romulus**
- **HBF-APU Airport Concessions**
- **HBF, APU JV, LLC (North Terminal build)**
- **Hertz Rent-a-Car**
- **Hilton Garden Inn DTW**
- **JetBlue Airlines**
- **Joe Polimeni Photography**
- **Johnny Mac's Beer/Liquor/Wine**
- **LSG Sky Chefs**
- **Macomb Mechanical (North Terminal build)**
- **MJ-6**
- **Marine Corps League Northwest Detachment 162**
- **Marketing Associates, Inc.**
- **Moylan Energy Management (North Terminal build)**
- **National Coney Island**
- **News/Talk 760 WJR, Paul W. Smith**
- **Paradies Metro Ventures**
- **Pro Image Painting (North Terminal build)**
- **Red Holman Pontiac/Buick**
- **R.K. Hoppe Corp. (North Terminal build)**
- **Showbest Fixture Corp. (North Terminal build)**
- **St. Joseph Catholic Church - Trenton, MI**
- **Top Gun Shooting Sports**
- **Transportation Security Administration Employees**
- **Turner Brooks Carpentry (North Terminal build)**
- **U.S. Customs and Border Protection Employees**
- **Veterans of Foreign Wars District 5**
- **Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 154**
- **Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 259**
- **Wayne County Airport Authority**
- **Wendy's**
- **Wiegand Development (North Terminal build)**
- **World Duty Free Group**

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We operate Freedom Centers to meet the special needs of the military traveler. Our doors are open to Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve personnel and their dependents. In addition, we welcome military academy cadets, retirees, veterans and personnel from allied military services.

Donations

Because we are not a government agency and therefore we do not receive any governmental funding, the operation of our Freedom Centers relies solely on donations from community organizations, corporate sponsors and individuals. We are only able to provide our services due to the generous contributions of our donors and are grateful for all donations received.

If you wish to make a financial contribution you may do by using the donation boxes at any of our Freedom Center locations. You may also do so via check (mail), or via debit/credit card through our website: www.mifreedomcenter.org/donate-to-mafhc.html

“*Very nice staff. Being able to spend this time comfortably with my son before he ships out is priceless.*”

Military family

Checks should be made out to Michigan Armed Forces Hospitality Center, Inc. and sent to our mailing address:

Michigan Armed Forces
Hospitality Center, Inc.
410 S. Cedar Street, Suite A
Lansing, Michigan 48912

Volunteers

If you are interested in being part of the Freedom Center team, complete the online application on our website. For additional information, please contact us by email at info@mifreedomcenter.org or by calling **(517) 253-0896**.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Freedom Center has been able to meet the needs of more veterans, in more locations, than ever before.

FREEDOM CENTER



“

This is my second time here. The Freedom Center is a wonderful place. Coming here (to the airport) is always stressful for me and having a nice place to relax helps a lot. Thank you for everything.”

Military member

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Serving Those Who Serve Us.

COVER PHOTO BY JOE POLIMENI

