



Forging Forward, The Bobby Henline Foundation

ATTN: Jamie Henline
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OVERVIEW

THE BOBBY HENLINE FOUNDATION

**Doing business as
FORGING FORWARD**

MISSION

Healing through finding what is strong with you. #whatsSTRONGwithYOU

VISION

To create an everyday life filled with quality, friendship, motivation, flexibility, and individual pride for active duty and veteran military and first responders and their families, and Gold Star families.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Active Duty and Veteran Military and First Responders, their families, and Gold Star Families

CHARITY STATUS

The Internal Revenue Service has determined the following for The Bobby Henline Foundation, doing business as Forging Forward:

EIN: 83-4615262

Public Charity Status: 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

Exemption: IRS Code 501(c)(3)

Classification: Public Charity

Contributions from Donors: Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522.

OVERVIEW

The Bobby Henline Foundation, Inc. doing business as [Forging Forward](#), is an IRS registered and approved public charity organization.

The Foundation consists of a group of people who believe it is in everyone's best interest to honor and empower the target populations we serve: Active Duty and Veteran Military and First Responders (Law Enforcement, Firefighters, 911 Operators, Search and Rescue), their families and Gold Star Families. By joining like-minded individuals and organizations, together, we can fulfill the vision of creating everyday lives filled with quality, friendship, motivation, flexibility, and individual pride. We do this through sharing to inspire learning, advance knowledge and strengthen our local and global communities through understanding and compassion.

Within this duty is the underlying social responsibility of assisting the target populations to re-secure their humanity through the provision of and funding for opportunities to increase social connectivity, to gain new skills, increase knowledge and treatment of physical and mental health conditions related to trauma, and provide supports that allow an individual and collective fulfilling and dignified life.

HISTORY

In April 2007, Bobby Henline came home from his 4th deployment to a war zone barely holding on to life in a medically induced coma. Doctors said there was no medical explanation why he was alive. Once Bobby regained his thought process, he strongly believed he should have died alongside the other four troops in the Humvee.

Bobby has learned over the years how to battle the demons of post-traumatic stress, anxiety, hypervigilance, survivor's guilt, emptiness, and self-isolation. He knows the darkness and deep hole of feeling lost and detached from friends and family. Many nights during his recovery he prayed to God to let him die in his sleep.

During his three-year recovery, he was worried about his family and children. He wanted to make sure they knew he was the same person after seeing him with his head burned to the skull, burns on almost 40% of his body, and the disfigurement that the burns caused. He made jokes with his family and made them laugh. He made jokes with other injured warriors and healthcare workers while in the hospital, using a dark humor only they understand. After getting through his first tumultuous year and with support from his family and healthcare providers, Bobby began to see hope. Encouraged by his occupational therapist to try out his jokes at a comedy club open mic night, he thought his set was a flop, but he began talking to the other comics and they offered some suggestions. So began Bobby's mission and purpose to share his trauma, connectivity, compassion, and kindness with the world through laughter. His trauma began to turn into light.

For almost 17 years, Bobby has traveled the world sharing his story inspiring others and being inspired by others. With supportive friends, The Bobby Henline Foundation doing business as "Forging Forward" was created to help others through their trauma and to focus on living today using the strengths they have to overcome weaknesses. Forging Forward's goal is to help each individual find an outlet, show them how to use the tools and knowledge Bobby has been using for years to battle and live with his "new" normal to help them find their "new" normal, to help them look deep inside and ask not "What's wrong with me?" but "What's Strong

with Me?” and understand what it means to build on their strengths. In building strengths, the willingness to want to help others is created and each person can use their strengths to pay it forward.

MAJOR GOALS for PERSONS SERVED

- Connectivity with each other and their communities through varied forms of art such as speaking, photography, forging, welding, comedy, acting, music, poetry, book writing, songwriting, storytelling, hiking, walking, kayaking, fishing, axe throwing, running, outdoor water activities, and more.
- Positive, collaborative social interaction through the varied forms of art and activities.
- Access to existing organizations offering activities to promote physical and mental health and socialization.
- Forging Forward encourages active duty and Veteran Military and First Responders to reach out to a buddy, administrator, professional, or family when the load feels too heavy to carry alone, with a **focus on getting professional assistance** to work through stress related to war wounds, profession, job, relationships, substance use, physical health, money, legal, or housing stress.
- Forging Forward's ultimate goal is the **elimination of suicide** among Military and First Responder populations.

SERVICES

FORGING FORWARD RETREATS

COST: *The average cost can range from \$5,000-\$10,000 depending on the number of participants, purchase of lodging, food, activities, travel or transportation, etc. The organization's goal is to keep the cost at \$5,000 or under, but with prices rising considerably this is a difficult goal to reach. Volunteers provide transportation with their own vehicles, depending on the event location, but occasionally volunteers must take a flight to an event location, in addition to renting a vehicle. The biggest expenses, minus flights and transportation are getting the participants (and volunteers as needed) to the event activity locations, food, activity expense, and lodging. The goal is to locate a company or organization willing to work with Forging Forward to provide free or greatly reduced lodging and/or meals when possible.*

LOCATION: *A Forging Forward Retreat can be scheduled anywhere in the USA. To keep cost at a minimum, the organization seeks to partner with non-profits, corporate, individual lodging owners, etc. to assist with lodging, activity, and/or food expense. Forging Forward works to partner up with like-minded organizations (not for profit, small business, or corporate) and people with resources to host the Retreat and/or skills and activities during the Retreat.*

RETREATS: *The goal is to schedule up to three (3) Retreats per year with additional retreats as funding and resources are available.*

Forging Forward brings a mixture of 4-10 active duty and/or veteran Military and/or First Responders individuals and/or Gold Star family members to a 2-4 day retreat to enjoy nature and learn or participate in at least one skill. Activities are planned in a variety of locations to rekindle camaraderie in a safe and open environment. The organization teams up with local artists, businesses, and professionals to teach participants a new outlet or tool through art or physical activity to address post-traumatic stress, anxiety, and other trauma-related issues. Activities may include whittling or wood crafts; bowling; storytelling through poetry, songwriting,

comedy; forging a knife; painting; photography; golfing; kayaking, fishing, and outdoor water activities. Additional activities include hiking, nature walk, camping, bicycling, axe throwing, community service, and more. Participants are not required to have a post-traumatic stress injury.

FORGING FORWARD REMEMBRANCE TAGS

COST: *The military veterans tags are no cost to the receiver.*

NOTE: Forging Forward is currently searching for an organization or public entity willing and able to provide verified names of First Responders who have died by suicide, which are also public knowledge. This has proved to be a difficult task due to family privacy concerns.

Forging Forward creates Remembrance Tags with the names of Military Veterans who have died by suicide due to their battle wounds of post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, or other mental health, physical, or personal issues. The Tags are presented primarily to Military and First Responder Veterans in memory of the service member, to never be forgotten.

Each person receiving a Remembrance Tag is asked to take an oath to live their life to the fullest in memory of the service member. The oath focuses on having the strength to ask for help during mental or physical health battles, as well as personal battles. Many of the military and first responders participating in the Remembrance Tags have reached out to the service member families.

[Click](#) to see the Forging Forward Remembrance Tags Spreadsheet.

FORGING FORWARD MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS

COST: *The cost ranges from \$2,000-\$20,000.*

Forging Forward helps cover part of the speaker's fee to get motivational and inspirational Military and First Responder Veterans to schools, ROTC events, faith-based organizations, and non-profit organizations that might not otherwise be able to afford a speaker to inspire their community. Forging Forward will cover part of the fee/honorarium for the Speaker, based on funds available.

FORGING FORWARD BODY SHOP for COMBAT MILITARY VETERANS ONLY

COST: *The cost could be upwards of \$1,000-\$5,000 estimated, depending on flights, lodging, travel/transportation, food and how long the military veteran must stay near their prosthetic provider to get the work completed.*

This service is designed to serve combat Military Veterans. In January 2022, through an anonymous donor, Forging Forward started The Body Shop. The Body Shop is designed to assist military veterans who have been injured in combat, who have or need an updated prosthetic, to visit their prosthetic healthcare providers, when travel, flight, lodging, or meals are needed.

A prosthetic may need to be refitted or updated, or the individual may have recently had an additional amputation due to the combat injured amputation. Forging Forward hopes to ease the burden so that the

military veteran and their family can focus on the health of the veteran AND not worry about finances as they try to figure out how to get where they need to go.

Total Veterans assisted through December 2024: 6

FORGING FORWARD REFLECTIVE ART

Forging Forward works with people attending a Forging Forward or co-hosted Retreat to create art that tells their personal story. The art is used for releasing heavy loads, starting meaningful conversations with family and loved ones, sharing personal experiences and history, sharing joys and laughter, healing - and most of all, sharing an experience with others that creates bonds of connection. We are more alike than different.

Reflective Art can also be an activity the organization can bring to a school, organization, business, or other group. If interested, email info@forgingforward.org.

FORGING FORWARD ALLIES

Forging Forward teams up with other organizations invested in giving back to the Military, First Responder or Gold Star Family communities.

FORGING FORWARD FUNDRAISERS

Forging Forward teams up with Military and First Responder Veteran and Gold Star Family individuals and organizations, organizations interested in assisting military or first responders, to advance services or programs that globally and mutually benefit the Military and First Responder Veteran and Gold Star Family communities.

FORGING FORWARD VOLUNTEERS

Forging Forward relies on its volunteers to assist at Retreats, Fundraisers, and provide additional opportunities for target populations to participate in activities. Without our volunteers, we could not properly attain our mission and vision. Forging Forward would not grow, have a positive influence on people in our communities, or even function properly. Volunteers help us build a more cohesive, safer, and stronger community across the USA; it unites people in exceptional ways, bringing positive effects on both the volunteer and the group we are assisting or being a part of. The skills volunteers bring to the table are phenomenal and they are a key part of Forging Forward's success.

OPERATIONS

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Operations are conducted by volunteer Board Members. Large projects must have a majority vote from the Board. The President of the organization runs the day-to-day operations.

Funding for the organization comes in the form of donations from men and women across the world who support the services Forging Forward provides, sales from Forging Forward products, anonymous donations, social media fundraisers, and fundraisers that various organizations and groups across the USA generously activate to support Forging Forward.

Planning and organizing events are mainly done as a day-to-day operation; however, with expansion into other states, the Board relies on assistance from an appointed volunteer in that state to assist the President in planning and execution and being reliable and accountable to the mission and vision of Forging Forward.

A 990 is filed each year that Forging Forward has been operational by an accounting firm.

HASHTAGS

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The most often used hashtags are #forgingforward, #whatsSTRONGwithYOU, (our signature hashtags), #youarebeautiful, #veteran, #military, #firstresponders, #suicideprevention, #suicideawareness.

BY SERVICES, NUMBERS, LOCATION, ACTIVITIES

The link to all services accomplished since the organization began in 2019 may be found at this link:

<https://forgingforward.org/annual-activities-list>

The list can be sorted by year, state, city, activity.

PLANNED 2026

- Walleye Fishing Retreat, Port Clinton, OH, April
- Comedy Show with Bobby Henline, Dennis Vee, and Slim: Forging Forward fundraiser, American Legion Tidewater, Norfolk, VA, May
- More on the way!

BOARD MEMBERS

- Jamie Henline, President
- Bobby Henline, Vice-President
- Shawn Ford, Treasurer
- Annie Vest, Secretary
- Kelly Black
- Kevin Ziegler

VOLUNTEERS

- Sharon Mathis
- Eddie Mathis
- Randy Barton
- Tammy Ziegler

All Forging Forward Board Members and Volunteers work and provide support on a voluntary basis.

CONTACT

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