



MARTHA COAKLEY
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108

(617) 727-2200
(617) 727-4765 TTY
www.mass.gov/ago

As the end of the calendar year approaches, residents of Massachusetts may be considering ways to honor and support our veterans and our troops. A donation to a veteran's charity may be a great way to achieve this, but it's important to be a thoughtful donor. Especially at this time of year, when veterans' organizations are higher-profile and pleas for donations are more plentiful, donors may be vulnerable to being pressured into donating. It can be hard to say no without feeling unpatriotic. But the best way to help veterans and troops with your donation is by taking steps to ensure that they actually benefit from your donation. Many charitable solicitations are in fact conducted by for-profit solicitors, some of which retain the majority of your donation.

During 2013, the professional solicitor campaigns listed in the table below nominally raised \$17,697,230 for veterans' organizations. But only \$7,585,512 of that total was given to the charities. This means that, on average, almost 43% total donations (or "gross revenue") was directed to the charities for which the money was raised. Over 57% went to professional, for-profit fundraisers.

The table reflects the information reported to the Non-Profit Organizations/Public Charities Division (the "Division") of the Attorney General's Office on "Form 11A." The "Form 11A" must be filed on a calendar year basis, for each solicitation campaign conducted by a professional solicitor. The table includes data for military/veterans-related charities that used professional solicitors in 2013. Please keep in mind that a charity will not appear in the table if it did not use a professional solicitor to conduct its fundraising. Also, some organizations by statute are exempt from reporting per [M.G.L. c. 12, s. 8E](#) and therefore may not appear in the list.¹

For each campaign in the table, we provide the name of the charity and its professional solicitor, the total amount raised in 2013, the amount the charity received from these funds, and the percentage of dollars raised that the charity received. While this information can be valuable in evaluating whether or not to make a donation, it is important to be aware of various factors that may affect these figures. For example, this report includes only 2013 information. If a campaign is multi-year, information from previous or subsequent years might be needed to evaluate its total results for the charity. Likewise, a charity may continue to receive donations resulting from a solicitation made during 2013, but if it was received after 12/31/13, it may not be reported on the 2013 Form 11A.

¹ Exempt veterans organizations include the Grand Army of the Republic, American Veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam, Vietnam Veterans of America, AMVETS, the United Spanish War Veterans, the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans of the World War, Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Veterans of World War I of the U.S.A., and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Please note that a report on all professional solicitations will be published by the Division later this year which will include financial information for all 2013 Forms 11A received, not just for veterans' charities.

When considering making a donation, here are some things to keep in mind:

- **Make sure you know who you are supporting with your donation.** Many charities that support military personnel have words like “troops” or “veterans” in the name. Double-check the name of the organization you are donating to, in order to be sure it is the one you mean to support. If you want to support troops locally, be sure to ask if your donation will stay local, or will be used to support veterans on a national or regional scale.
- **Don't be afraid to say no if you feel pressured.** Researching an organization before making a donation or asking a telephone solicitor who calls to provide you with more information doesn't make you unpatriotic. It makes you a savvy donor. A legitimate organization should always be happy to answer your questions.
- **Be aware that uniforms aren't just worn by vets.** There is nothing to prevent a volunteer or paid solicitor from wearing a uniform while asking for donations. Don't assume that if someone is wearing a uniform, that they are necessarily an active or retired service member.
- **Learn if the organization is utilizing a paid solicitor.** If asked, a telemarketer (or paid solicitor requesting donations on the street) is required to disclose this. You may also wish to ask for more information on how the solicitor is compensated, and how much of your donation will go to the charity itself. As you can see from the table below, many charities use paid solicitors and many paid solicitors keep for themselves a large portion of donations.

Veterans Charitable Organizations Rejecting For-Profit Professional Solicitors

Soon, veteran's charitable organizations that promise not to use for-profit solicitors will be listed on a website through the Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services.² While that promise is not a direct indicator of an organization's effectiveness, it may remove the concern that donations to these charities might be benefitting principally a for-profit fundraiser.

² The Non-Profit Organizations/Public Charities Division is working with the Department of Veterans Services to implement this new program provided for in Chapter 68, §19A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

**Professional Solicitation Campaigns for Veterans Charities
Listed by Charity**

Solicitor	Charity	Gross Revenue	Net to Charity	Percent to Charity
HERITAGE COMPANY, INC.	AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS	\$160	\$41	25.79%
MENACOLA MARKETING, INC.	AMERICAN VETERANS FOUNDATION	\$7,136	\$1,070	15.00%
COURTESY CALL, INC.	AMERICAN VETERANS FOUNDATION	\$0	\$0	0.00%
LANDMARK PRODUCTIONS CORPORATION DBA LPC CORP.	AMVETS DEPARTMENT OF MASS	\$259,536	\$64,884	25.00%
HERITAGE COMPANY, INC.	AMVETS, AMERICAN VETERANS	\$415	\$121	29.23%
XENTEL, INC.	AMVETS, AMERICAN VETERANS	\$2,445,594	\$338,114	13.83%
AFRC, INC.AKA ADVANTAGE CONSULTING	ASSOCIATION OF THE GRADUATES OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY	\$1,018,562	\$507,082	49.78%
OUTREACH CALLING	CENTER FOR AMERICAN HOMELESS VETERANS, INC.	\$7,385	\$739	10.00%
CONSULT TELE-COMMUNICATIONS	DEPT. OF MASS VFW	\$16,145	\$4,036	25.00%
COURTESY CALL, INC.	DISABLED VETERANS SERVICES, INC.	\$2,105,772	\$315,866	15.00%
ASSOCIATED COMMUNITY SERVICES DBA AC SERVICES	DISABLED VETERANS SERVICES, INC.	\$23,293	\$10,482	45.00%
HERITAGE COMPANY, INC.	ENLISTED ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF THE U.S.	\$3,365	\$1,066	31.69%
OUTREACH CALLING	HEALING HEROES NETWORK, INC.	\$16,748	\$1,675	10.00%
COURTESY CALL, INC.	HELP THE VETS, INC.	\$192,071	\$19,207	10.00%
COURTESY CALL, INC.	HELP THE VETS, INC.	\$61,667	\$6,167	10.00%
XENTEL, INC.	MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART SERVICE FOUNDATION, INC.	\$913,930	\$300,000	32.83%
XENTEL, INC.	MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART SERVICE FOUNDATION, INC.	\$1,118,425	\$300,000	26.82%
AUTOMOTIVE RECOVERY SERVICES, INC.	NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICES FUND, INC.	\$4,580,001	\$4,580,001	100.00%

BEE, L.C.	NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICES FUND, INC.	\$214,783	\$33,823	15.75%
OUTREACH CALLING	NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION, INC.	\$72,153	\$7,937	11.00%
MIDWEST PUBLISHING-DN, INC.	NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION, INC.	\$1,368,488	\$150,534	11.00%
HARRIS CONNECT, LLC	NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES	\$288,057	\$43,154	14.98%
MICHAEL REESE ENTERPRISES, INC.	OPERATION GRATITUDE INC	\$225,025	\$22,615	10.05%
ALL PRO PRODUCTIONS, INC.	PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER, INC.	\$1,074,518	\$256,130	23.84%
OUTERWALL, INC. D/B/A COINSTAR, INC.	PEARL HARBOR MEMORIAL FUND AKA ARIZONA MEMORIAL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION	\$4	\$3	92.45%
RUFFALOCODY, LLC	USAFA ENDOWMENT, INC.	\$396,595	\$266,422	67.18%
XENTEL, INC.	VETERANS ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION, INC.	\$511,229	\$100,000	19.56%
ASSOCIATED COMMUNITY SERVICES DBA AC SERVICES	VETERANS SUPPORT FOUNDATION (VSF)	\$81,289	\$36,580	45.00%
FOCAL POINT CONSULTING GROUP	VIETNAM VETERANS OF MASSACHUSETTS, INC.	\$334,600	\$102,600	30.66%
FOCAL POINT CONSULTING GROUP	VIETNAM VETERANS OF MASSACHUSETTS, INC.	\$262,800	\$78,600	29.91%
MENACOLA MARKETING, INC.	VIETNOW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS	\$4,171	\$667	16.00%
CORPORATIONS FOR CHARACTER	VIETNOW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS	\$6,696	\$937	14.00%
BRISTOL MARKETING ASSOCIATES, INC.	VIETNOW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS	\$6,400	\$1,024	16.00%
DONOR CARE CENTER, INC.	WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT, INC.	\$25	\$-1,840	-7,361.00%
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