

UNITED VETERANS



BEACON HOUSE

1994-2024

THE BEACON

The Newsletter of United Veterans Beacon House

Winter 2024

INSIDE

- 2 Notes From Frank /
From the President & CEO
- 2 Beacon House Timeline
- 3 Third Annual Golf Tournament
- 4 Recap of Our 30th
Anniversary Gala
- 6 Bank of America Provides
Substantial Funding to UVBH
– \$300,000!
- 6 Through the Lens –
Highlights with Our Veterans



- 7 Restoring Homes, Restoring
Hope – *The Elsie Project*
- 8 Board Member Spotlight:
Claudia Troiano



Carew Davis

Meet a Veteran, Be Inspired!

Carew D. spent 10 years in the Army. His story is both common and unique; it is a cautionary tale and a roadmap to success. Carew D. understands that sharing his experience can inspire and lift his fellow veterans – many of whom struggle with the stark realities of life after military service.

Born in Madrid, Spain, Carew grew up on Long Island. He joined the Army in 1999. Following a decade of service, he returned home in 2009. Life on Long Island – with its high cost of living – was an eye-opening experience. And full of challenges.

“All my money went to my household,” says Carew.

Returning veterans often face similar challenges after many years of military service, where everything from housing to medical care is arranged and provided for by the US government. (continued on page 5)

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President & CEO
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Notes From Frank

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the third edition of The Beacon! This is a particularly special time for United Veterans Beacon House: 2024 marks our thirtieth anniversary, and we have exciting news about our future.

This issue of The Beacon recounts our recent activities and milestones, including a profile on Claudia Troiano, one of our most dedicated board members. You will also meet veteran Carew D. and learn of his inspiring story.

Our 30th Anniversary Gala was held on Thursday, October 29, 2024 at the Heritage Club in Bethpage State Park, where we celebrated the past, present, and future of Beacon House. This lively event was a wonderful opportunity to highlight our achievements, and to meet veterans whose stories are inspiring.

Perhaps most exciting is the sharing of our plans for the future—including a first-of-its-kind offering for aging veterans on Long Island—during the gala.

Thank you for your support and encouragement!

Warm regards,

Frank Amalfitano, President & CEO

Beacon House Timeline

1994

The mission to serve veterans is born & UVBH incorporated

1999

Frank Amalfitano becomes CEO
First 5 homes are purchased through a bricks & mortar grant awarded by the VA

2002

Awarded the Homeless Veterans Reintegration from the Department of Labor, creating our job readiness and job placement program for homeless veterans

2006

Developed our first permanent housing program for veterans and their families

2013

Received grant award from the Veterans Administration for our first emergency housing program for veterans

2014

The Veterans Salute Gala is born and UVBH receives its first community partnership donation from Northwell Health

2016

Our first net zero home for Veterans living with HIV/AIDS opens

2017

Our first large non-government grant—\$100,000 from the Unitarian Universalist Church—is received

2023

Pro bono legal clinic is launched

2024

Our 55th housing location is developed

Our 30,852nd Veteran is served

Our 15,022nd veteran is housed



55
Homes



203
Employees



89
Cents per Dollar
Directly to Programs



15,022
Veterans
Housed



30,852
Homeless Veterans
Served



Honoree, Adam P. Silvers, Esq. pictured with his golf team



The Axis Construction Team – Chris Lambert, Ralph Lambert, Robert Garone and Dan Lambert

Third Annual Golf Tournament

On a lovely, sunny, Spring day, our third annual United Veterans Beacon House Golf Tournament kicked off at the Mill River Club in Oyster Bay. One hundred and twelve men and women turned out for an 18-hole round of golf, while over 130 participated in the day's festivities. This was the biggest turnout yet for what has become a must-attend event for networking, camaraderie, and support for our veterans.

This year's honoree, Managing Partner at Ruskin Moscou



Golfers Michael Jaffee, Adam Wood, Kevin O'Connor, Neil Katz, and volunteer Lucy Wood team up for some fun on the course during our golf outing, ready to roll the dice for the on-course game!

Faltischek Adam P. Silvers, was recognized for his support of Beacon House's mission, and his efforts in advancing the cause of veteran support. It was an honor to celebrate his commitment.

The perfect weather conditions added to the memorable day, while various on-course games added a layer of fun and competition! Later, an al-fresco dinner on the club's terrace brought everyone together to mingle over food and drink. Overheard were murmurings over which foursome won the day, and who would prevail in the silent auction and raffle. The competition was intense, but everyone walked away happy that they had shared in a rewarding day.

We owe the success of this outing to the generosity of our leadership donors, whose support was crucial. We extend our deepest gratitude to Webster Bank, Primi Italian Steakhouse, Axis Construction, the Lambert Family, Stand Up and Be Counted, and Malpigli Insurance. Their contributions exemplify the community spirit that drives our efforts.

In addition to our leadership donors, we are thankful to all our

sponsors, corporate foursomes, golfers, and volunteers. Special congratulations go to our board member J.M. Peters and his foursome from Endless Round, who took the top positions in the tournament.

Reflecting on the success of this event, we are inspired to continue our work with renewed energy and dedication. The enthusiasm and support demonstrated during this outing motivate us to strive even harder to fulfill our mission. We look forward to hosting more events in the future, bringing together our community to support and honor our veterans.

We look forward to next year's outing, with more golf challenges and new friends and supporters.



Recap of Our 30th Anniversary Gala



Our 30th anniversary gala brought together a lively crowd of 345 supporters from across Long Island, each adding to the incredible energy of the evening as we celebrated three decades of service to our nation's heroes. The night was filled with heartfelt tributes and vibrant camaraderie, creating an atmosphere that reflected our shared

dedication to supporting veterans and their families.

Highlights of the evening included the moving Red Carpet Salute, where we honored 13 distinguished veterans, and powerful words from Theresa Regnante as she reflected on the legacy of Frank L. Regnante and the launch of the Future Leaders Alliance, an initiative aimed at fostering community

engagement and leadership among the next generation in Frank's memory.

Setting the tone for a memorable night, the American Bombshells delivered a stirring performance of the national anthem, followed by entertainment throughout the evening from the Todd Barrie Jazz Trio. Our emcee, Doug Geed, returned for the second time,

Top: The Regnante family — Virginia, Theresa and Tom, pictured with Frank Amalfitano, CEO & President of United Veterans Beacon House, as they accept the Legacy Award in memory of their beloved father, Frank Regnante.

Right: Donald Cakouros, a proud Korean War Army Veteran and one of our first board members, pictured with the American Bombshells celebrating our 30th Anniversary





Cynthia LaRocca, DNP, RN, NPD-BC, and Army Veteran, selected by her Northwell family to be honored during our Red Carpet Salute Ceremony, where she proudly walked the red carpet and received a challenge coin in recognition of her service

bringing his familiar warmth and enthusiasm to the event.

Looking toward an inspiring future, board member Col. Michael J. Hults, USA (ret.) and longtime supporter Victoria Ryan unveiled the Beacon House Legacy Project, an ambitious and transformative vision that will serve as a vital hub for veterans. This 25,000-square-foot headquarters and community center will not only provide a centralized location for essential services but will also establish a unique campus where veterans can access what they need in a dedicated space. With the addition of a first of its kind 100-bed living facility for aging veterans, this project represents a critical step forward in ensuring veterans can find a community, support and dignity as they move forward in life.

The excitement continued with our first-ever live auction, which was a remarkable success, as guests embraced the spirit of the evening with generous bids and cheerful applause. Together, we celebrated this milestone event and expressed our profound gratitude to our business and agency partners, whose steadfast support has made our mission possible for 30 years.

Meet a Veteran (from page 1)

Struggling to adapt to independent living, Carew's challenges eventually led to homelessness. While he slept at night on his sister's couch, he realized that he "needed a place to just get stable." He eventually called United Veterans Beacon House.

"The first person I talked to helped me. I went from the stress of being homeless to knowing I had a place to stay."

As a new resident in one of Beacon House's group homes, Carew found comfort and friendship among his fellow veterans.

"As a vet, it is difficult to talk to people about our experiences. Everyone's story is different, even if you're all in the same space," shares Carew. "It could be psychological trauma, addiction—you just don't know."

Carew quickly came to realize the importance of being both actively engaged and in regular contact with his case manager.

In fact, his very first day at the group home included the weekly house meeting, where veteran residents meet to share their struggles and experiences; they also receive guidance and information on how to address their individual challenges.

Inspired by those around him, Carew quit smoking and "accepted the [situation] I was in. I knew I had to figure a way out by coming up with a plan."

Carew took advantage of everything Beacon House has to offer, believing that "you have to get out there and build trust [with people]."

"The most difficult part of this journey is the emotional and physical toll if you don't feel you

have people around you," says Carew. "My case manager very much listened, and she helped me to see that [regaining my independence] would be step by step."

Carew's plan included what he termed "one little step at a time". He did not put unrealistic pressure on himself; rather, he availed himself of the people and services that suited him most. While he saw that his fellow veterans had unique struggles of their own, Carew defined his own goals, and was determined to achieve them.

"You've got to take the process seriously, and act as if you don't have any more chances," he says.

The support he received at Beacon House, coupled with his own determination to succeed, resulted in real progress. Carew was offered and accepted a job with Beacon House. He says that he is now "on the other side of it" as an employee of the very organization that helped him.

He is uniquely qualified to know what it takes to get from that first call to making tangible progress toward realizing a goal. Carew's sense of purpose and personal fulfillment shine through as he recounts his experience.

"The next step in my plan is to get my own place, and to start enjoying life again."

If you or someone you know is struggling following military service, United Veterans Beacon House can help. We provide safe shelter, programs and services designed to assist veterans with emotional, psychological, and physical challenges. Real assistance is just a phone call away, at 631.665.1571.

Bank of America Provides Substantial Funding to UVBH – \$300,000!

Bank of America announced in December 2024 that it allocated \$300,000 to United Veterans Beacon House for use in expanding agency services to our veterans.

Two distinct donations comprise the overall contribution: \$100,000 toward the establishment of Beacon House's Unmet Needs Program, and \$200,000 to enhance and update Beacon House's technology.

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation completely funds the

launch of Beacon House's Unmet Needs Program, which will enable the agency to expand its outreach efforts and services to veterans that currently fall outside of the agency's scope of services and related funding.

Bank of America's Neighborhood Builders program, which helps non-profits address critical needs, awarded Beacon House \$200,000 to enhance and upgrade the agency's technology. These upgrades will enable UVBH to provide streamlined services while freeing up

time for its employees to focus even more time on veterans.

"We are thrilled and humbled by Bank of America's support of United Veterans Beacon House – and the veterans we serve," says Frank Amalfitano, UVBH president/CEO.

"Bank of America's generosity illustrates its belief both in our mission and in our determination to fulfill our promises to Long Island's veterans – namely, that we will assist any veteran with any need at any time."

Through the Lens *Highlights with Our Veterans*



Veterans outreach and engagement in 2024 included an Islanders Game, Suffolk County Veterans Stand Down, and Beacon House events Mission in Motion and the annual Fourth of July BBQ.

Restoring Homes, Restoring Hope

The Elsie Project



Top: LIREG's Paul Schapero cuts the ribbon on the latest home revitalization, joined by Beacon House leadership team, board members and representatives from key supporters who brought this project to life – LIREG, Lowe's, National Grid and SC Contracting. Right: Cpt. Lissette Lugo, US Air National Guard and Allison Geraghty

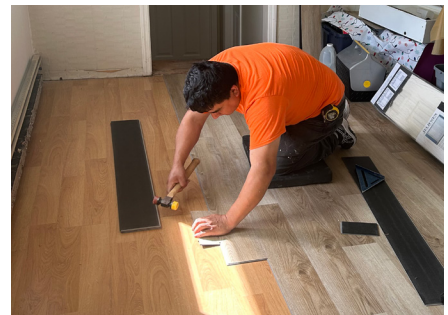
At United Veterans Beacon House, we believe every veteran deserves more than just a roof over their head—they deserve a home that reflects dignity, respect, and a sense of belonging. Our Restoring Homes, Restoring Hope initiative was created to do just that: transform outdated or neglected properties into modern, welcoming residences for homeless veterans. Through this initiative, we not only provide permanent housing but also create environments where veterans can rebuild their lives with pride and stability.

This marks the third home completed under this life-changing program. Thanks to the generous support of our community partners, the project embodies the very essence of collaboration and commitment to those who have served.

LIREG (Long Island Real Estate Group) kickstarted the project with a \$30,000 contribution, while in-kind donations from National Grid, Lowe's, Asplundh, and S&C Contracting ensured every detail of the renovation was thoughtfully addressed. Together, these contributions have transformed the property into a beautiful, permanent residence for six formerly homeless veterans, offering them not just shelter but a place to truly call home.

The initiative is more than a rehabilitation effort—it's a promise to our veterans that they are valued and supported. This achievement stands as a testament to the power of community and the collective dedication to honoring those who have given so much. Together, we are revitalizing homes and restoring hope.

Stay tuned as we continue to expand this initiative, ensuring that more veterans receive the support and housing they deserve.



Above: The team in action, creating a renewed, updated home environment for our veterans.

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT | CLAUDIA TROIANO

Claudia Troiano — successful businesswoman, world traveler, doting grandmother. Devoted to improving the lives of our veterans, Claudia's low-key vibe belies the magnitude of her contributions to Beacon House.

Following a 20-year graphic arts career in advertising, Claudia spent two years baking custom cakes for individuals and groups she cares about. Ultimately, she joined her husband's successful business, Trojan Power Coating, and for 20 years she played key roles in the company's expansion.

Claudia's two children, Rachel and Lawrence, enjoyed the benefits of a mother actively engaged in her children's education. She volunteered for the PTA and other school activities, including the production of their middle school yearbooks. In fact, it was Claudia's involvement with her children's community service project that introduced her to Beacon House.

"When my children chose veterans as the basis of their project, it opened a doorway into understanding their (veterans')



unique challenges," shares Claudia. "I came to know Beacon House, and I've never looked back."

While Claudia and her family traveled together when the children were young, her true passion for travel intensified in later years as she visited such far-flung places as Tanzania, India, Dubai, Kuala Lumpur, Bali and the Maldives — to name but a few!

Claudia's granddaughter, who is nearly 14 years of age, is a special light in Claudia's life. The two spend time together doing adventurous things, including obstacle courses and zip lines in the trees. They

are both foodies, and love trying new places to eat; they sometimes recreate their favorite foods at home!

As for her support of the veterans' community on Long Island, Claudia has consistently supported the organization through generous donations and volunteering. For many years, she has ordered the food and manages UVBH's food pantry. Three years ago, she started a knitting group and produced scarves for veterans, bringing over 20 hand-knitted scarves each year to Beacon House for distribution to those most in need.

"My natural inclination to participate has been a driving force in my engagement with veterans," says Claudia.

Claudia's generosity and kind heart personify the adage *there is more joy in giving than in receiving*. Her contributions and kindness to our veterans are so greatly appreciated by everyone at Beacon House, and we look forward to many more years of working together!



This holiday season be the light that brightens a life

Donate now to give a veteran the gift of a brighter future and help us light the way in 2025.

[CLICK HERE](#)