

## TARRANT COUNTY VIETNAM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

4600 Mar IV Pkwy. P.O. Box 163147  
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### Case for Support

In the 1960s – some 7,800 miles from its shore, in the jungles of Vietnam –America’s society and public opinion were being torn apart. In a decade, more than 58,000 U.S. and allied forces die in Southeast Asia... and thousands more would die from war-linked problems in the years to come.

#### **Never to be Forgotten**

More than 222 servicemen from Tarrant County, Texas made the ultimate sacrifice in that conflict and more have succumb to its legacy. Yet, there’s no monument in Fort Worth to their service and sacrifice. The Tarrant County Vietnam Memorial Foundation (TCVMF) is intent on changing that.

*Never to be Forgotten* – More than a catch phrase, It’s the *Foundation’s mission*: Leading a coalition in designing, building, and installing a permanent Vietnam War memorial to local veterans who sacrificed in Southeast Asia. The goal: Salute the impact of those who served in that conflict... their families & friends.

#### **About the Foundation**

TCVMF received its Certificate of Formation as a nonprofit corporation from the Office of the Secretary of State of Texas in March 2022. The Tarrant County Vietnam Memorial Foundation is registered as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with an IRS Tax ID No.: 88-1768251.

Management of its affairs is vested in a Board of Directors:

- Jim Hodgson - TCVMF President (Executive Director, Fort Worth Aviation Museum)
- Bruce Zielsdorf – TCVMF Vice Pres. & Communications Coordinator (Military and Civil Service retiree with more than 40 years of public affairs experience)
- Damon Harvey - TCVMF Treasurer (Disabled Marine Corps veteran and community service volunteer)
- Robert Williams - TCVMF Secretary (Military retiree and president of Military Order of the World Wars local chapter)

In the years since its founding, TCVMF has demonstrated a credible tradition of meaningful fulfillment of its mission. It's been a good steward of its resources and continues to have a positive impact on the community. TCVMF affirms its promoters have acquired all legally required trademarks and patents.

The proposed monumental effort is backed by a coalition of Tarrant County officials, the Fort Worth Parks Dept., national and local veterans service organizations, as well as patriotic groups and individuals across the region. Representatives of these groups meet regularly to define project coordination and set a path forward.

The TCVMF Board will attempt to maintain the following standing committees:

- Executive – Composed of the Foundation officers and chairs of each committee. It's responsible for conducting Board affairs in the intervals between meetings and as otherwise needed.
- Finance – Composed of three Board members, to include the treasurer as the chair.
- Development – Responsible for coordinating fundraising initiatives.
- Governance – Recommends candidates to fill Board and officer vacancies.
- Communications – Focuses on raising overall awareness of the Foundation at local, regional, and national levels.

The Board may maintain an Advisory Council to provide technical expertise and advice in specific areas such as technology, policy, law, marketing, and public relations.

*Foundation's vision:* A permanent monument in Fort Worth's Veterans Memorial Park honoring Tarrant County servicemen who sacrificed in Southeast Asia during and after the Vietnam war, as well as commemorate those losses to their families and loved ones.

Other areas of focus:

- Offer a platform for highlighting the history of the Vietnam Conflict and its impact on the Nation
- Provide occasions for the community to come together and share insights about the war
- Support educational opportunities for community members to learn more about the conflict
- Attract more visitors to Veterans Memorial Park
- Inspire future generations to consider national service as a growth prospect

The Foundation received the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency in 2021. GuideStar is the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations and the platinum rating is GuideStar's highest level of recognition.

### **About the Memorial**

The entire monumental effort simply isn't possible without an Army of volunteers. A full spectrum of skills is needed, and the volunteer, unpaid assistance of the Board continues to be key in the Memorial Foundation's charge forward.

Initially, students across the region were challenged to submit design ideas for the memorial. Student artist Ryan Scieneaux, a graduate of Brewer High School in White Settlement, submitted the winning design concept in the memorial competition completed in August 2020.

It is now being refined and modified by sculptor Michael Pavlovsky. The artist has been a professional sculptor for twenty-five years and his clients have included municipalities, institutions, and corporations as well as private individuals. His work is mostly created in cast or fabricated bronze. He recently completed a lobby sculpture for the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tenn.

The current design consists of a granite memorial listing the names of the fallen military members. Atop the memorial, is a stainless-steel cylindrical tracery of tree branches containing a downward pointing classical sword sculpted in bronze which symbolizes a fallen warrior are situated atop the granite edifice.

Brick pavers will extend out from the granite in a circular fashion and five granite benches will be situated on the brick pavement, each representing a branch of the United States Armed Forces. Additionally, visitors will enter the memorial from an entry walkway along which will be a granite wall with bronze emblems of the service branches. A POW/MIA flag will be installed in this area as well.

The granite edifice is approximately 12 feet in diameter and 4.5 feet tall. It will contain nine faceted panels, each representing a year in which Tarrant County veterans sacrificed their lives in the war. The names, rank, and military branch of the fallen are to be etched into each panel based on the year in which they fell.

Above each panel is a gently sloping, nearly horizontal panel with leaves etched into the surface, corresponding to the number of the fallen associated with that year. These nine panels emanate from the circular center of the granite edifice.

Eight of the nine faceted panels represent the years 1965 – 1972. The ninth panel will include the names of local MIAs and those who've died because of their war experience (such as deaths resulting from Agent Orange, PTSD, suicide, and other circumstances).

### **Veterans Memorial Park**

The park is dedicated to the heroic veterans of World Wars I and II. This half-acre of grounds is located on a triangular tract formed where Washington, Crestline Road, and Thomas Place intersect with Camp Bowie Boulevard in what was originally the Hillcrest Addition in Arlington Heights (4120 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth 76107).

Originally known as Camp Bowie Park or Camp Bowie Plaza, the park was maintained by the Federation of Women's Clubs before the area was annexed into Fort Worth in 1922. The park took on its military association on Oct. 29, 1950, when a red granite monument was dedicated to the World War I service of the 36th Division. The division had received its training at the original Camp Bowie located in Arlington Heights. In 1987, a memorial to World War II veterans of the 36th Division was added to the east end of the park near Washington Street.

### **Funding the Memorial**

Current cost estimates for the building, installation and maintenance of the Tarrant County Vietnam Memorial are estimated by the Board at approximately \$500,000.

#### **Fundraising Activities**

- Donor and grant solicitation
- Participation in North Texas Giving Day
- Seeking out volunteers and in-kind support
- Ongoing "Buy a Brick" campaign
- Sponsoring a veteran's name on the memorial
- Fundraising events throughout the year (for example: sporting raffles, clay shoot, fun run, classic car show)
- Multiple options to donate via Foundation's website (online, electronic funds transfer, sponsorship, and contributions in kind)

Organizations and individuals across North Texas are encouraged to help the TCVMF fundraising efforts by:

- Attending fundraising event
- Volunteering or contributing in-kind support
- Donating to the capital campaign

The estimated number of potential donors within TCVMF's geographic scope exceeds 500,000. Through continued outreach efforts, it's the Foundation's intent to significantly increase public awareness and the potential for donor support.

Deconstruction of the monument is also being considered by the Foundation's Board as a way to better understand the overall effort and identify additional funding prospects. The memorial's conceived as a collection of parts (its base, panels, engravings, seating, and commemorative bricks). Each of these items have value and could translate into specific donations or in-kind funding.

A list of component parts will help the Board visualize the cost and quantity of items needed. In turn, those costs could be translated into explicit donor opportunities.

### **Marketing Efforts**

TCVMF's major target markets include:

- Vietnam veterans and their families
- National and local veterans service organizations
- Patriotic groups and individuals across North Texas

A region-wide public awareness campaign has resulted in wide radio, TV and print coverage. Numerous fundraising events have been developed and are being executed to garner additional awareness and funding.

*A design contest is scheduled for youths in the community to submit designs for the memorial. Prizes will be awarded, and the winning student's design will be transformed into a finished memorial.*

Fort Worth City News

*On April 18, the Silver Dollar Classics Car Club (SDCCC) presented a check for \$7,500 to the Tarrant County Vietnam Memorial Foundation (TCVMF) at On the Patio in Azle. The final donation ended up being five times the SDCCC's original goal.*

Azle (Texas) News

*...the foundation's goal is to raise about \$500,000 for the project. That amount is based on existing cost estimates and may be adjusted over time.*

Fort Worth Business News

*The efforts are important... because of how poorly Vietnam veterans were treated when they returned.*

Fort Worth Report

*...like many of history's major events, it continues to affect the lives of many who were there and many others who have heard the stories.*

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

*It may seem insignificant to a lot of people: 221 individuals. But each one of them had a life. They had mothers, fathers, families, and friends.*

KDFW Fox 4 News, Dallas-Fort Worth

A comprehensive TCVMF website is active (<https://www.tcvmf.us>) that includes:

- Basic Foundation information
- An Honor Roll of Tarrant County servicemen killed in Southeast Asia
- Images and information about the memorial design
- Various donation options
- Fundraising activities
- Numerous feedback loops
- Local, state, and national veteran resources

In concert with the website, the Foundation maintains a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/TCVMF.org>) where current activities can be posted and comments received from visitors.

## **SWOT Analysis**

Strengths:

- Resolute volunteers
- Support from city and county officials
- Veterans service organization support

Weaknesses:

- Limited experience in fundraising
- Inadequate number of volunteers
- Ability to significantly enhance public awareness

Opportunities:

- Only memorial of its kind in Tarrant County
- Chance to engage community members
- Enhance youth awareness

Threats:

- Timeline to construct memorial
- Availability of engaged volunteers
- Effort being overshadowed by local events
- Fundraising shortfalls

## Summary

The TCVMF intends to dedicate the Tarrant County Vietnam Memorial on Nov. 11, 2026. While the Foundation's long-term goal is to ensure maintenance of the Memorial, it's committed to enhancing awareness and appreciation of military service among members of the community.

The Tarrant County Vietnam Memorial has the potential to make a significant impact the local community, the economy and society as a whole. By highlighting the war's history, providing occasions for the community to come together, supporting education and awareness, the memorial can inspire citizens today, as well as future generations.

## Key Contacts

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