Community Engagement

This year, our staff worked with students and educators from across the region. These schools represented 60 districts with a number of first time attendees. Our Tour Guides worked with 9,600 students and teachers both onsite and in the classroom. We also worked with a number of community groups including VA PTSD groups and senior centers. Through social media and our website, we engaged with 1,403,636 community members online.

New Programs

By popular demand, we are now offering personal tours of the Memorial and Museum each day we are open. Our Vietnam Veteran Tour Guides are generously sharing their time, expertise and stories with visitors each day the Museum is open from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. They are also on site the first Saturday of each month starting at 11 a.m.. Their experiences offer unique insight into the history of the Vietnam Era and our site. Please plan your next visit while they are on site!

Our Memorials on the Move traveling kit is available to teachers to bring our site into their classrooms. Featuring 17 poster sized images and related lessons, students can analyze the symbolism and meaning behind the different parts of the Foundation's site. With many schools unable to travel to the site for class trips, this program allows brings the site to them along with the legacies shared by our Vietnam Veteran Tour Guides.

Our You Be the Curator traveling kits were expanded to include Soundtrack of a Changing Nation: The Music of Vietnam, an in-classroom experience based in our latest exhibition. Working with our website, students are assigned a song from a curated playlist taken from the exhibition. After listening to the song and exploring the lyrics, students create a photo exhibition with photos from the Vietnam Era that help breakdown the context and meaning of the song.
Professional Development Programs

In February, our Classroom Connections series kicked off with Soundtrack of a Changing Nation: The Music of the Vietnam Era. In conjunction with our exhibition, the program gave teachers tools to bring the rich musical history of the Vietnam Era into their classrooms. Vietnam Veterans Joe Leone, Michael Ioli and Jim McGinnis along with Veteran John Antonellis shared their perspectives on how music shaped their tours of duty and lives after they returned home.

Our 17th Annual Interdisciplinary Forum on the Vietnam Era, hosted in partnership with the New Jersey Council for Social Studies (NJCSS), was a sold out success. The morning began with an inspiring presentation from Medal of Honor Recipient Paul “Bud” Bucha. Callie Wright, Educator for the VVMF presented on using literature about the Vietnam Era in the classroom. NJCSS Executive Director Hank Bitten shared his insight into teaching about Vietnam in the classroom during the Vietnam War.

In celebration of the Vietnam Era Museum’s 20th Anniversary, this year’s Forum featured our first annual Teacher of the Year Award, given to an Educator who has made an impact on the region’s classroom curriculum by teaching about the Vietnam Era. Frank Dunn of Boonton High School was our first awardee. Recently retired, Frank, a Vietnam Era Veteran, has joined us as a Tour Guide.
An American Legacy

Thanks to a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities we hosted Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis: Preservation and Grace and the American Legacy. Actress Jill Lawrence brought Mrs. Kennedy to life, conveying her personal and professional struggles and victories, a poignant portrait of the First Lady, wife, mother, and activist vividly came alive.

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis: Preservation and Grace and the American Legacy

Jim Biringer, Vietnam Veteran, NJVVMF Volunteer

Vietnam Voices: Books & Joe

This fall, we launched our Vietnam Voices: Books & Joe series featuring Vietnam Veteran authors from around the region:

Billy Terrell
The Other Side of Rock and War: One Man’s Battle to Save His Life, His Career, His Country, and the Orphans He Left Behind

Joe Rosato
Dog Tags and Wedding Bands and Voices Over Troubled Water

Ken Palmer
Wasted Blood: Facing the Music in Vietnam

Donald McNamara
Which the Days Never Know: A Year in Vietnam by the Numbers