



**VETERANS  
BRIDGE HOME**

**#BeTheBridge  
Crowdfunding Campaign**

**This is your CALL TO ACTION - be a CONNECTOR!**

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Friends,

I hope this finds you well. I am proud to announce that the 2020 Crowd raiser was extremely impactful and thanks to all your efforts a total of \$43,000 was raised. It was because of this effort we developed meaningful connections, opened doors to new opportunities, and were able to connect with others during a time of uncertainty.

This year, we are asking you, and other individuals who are personally invested in our mission, to help us raise \$60,000 between June 14 and July 9. The enclosed packet will provide detailed instructions on how you can help us achieve that goal through digital crowd raising methods.

With your support we will be able to remain ready and able to serve and support the Veterans and families in this region.

[#BeTheBridge](#)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Blake Bourne'.

**Blake Bourne**

Executive Director

# What is Crowdrising?

Crowdrising is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising small amounts of money from many people, typically via the Internet. Anyone can raise money; you just need to ask!

# What is Your Role?

Your role as a “Connector” for VBH is to find supporters, like yourself, who think the mission of serving those who have served is an important one and will donate to ensure it continues. We are asking our “Connector” to raise a minimum \$1,000. This details below will outline step-by-step instructions for how to personalize this campaign and tap into your personal network to reach this goal.

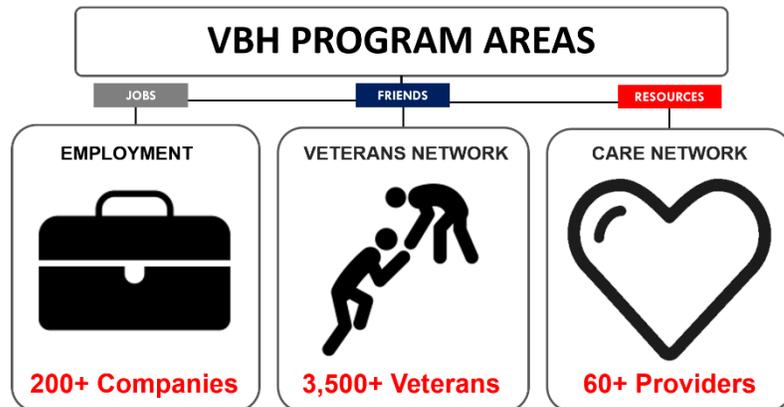
# What’s Our Mission?

As an advocate for VBH, it is crucial that you have a solid understanding of who we are and what we do so that you are able to effectively communicate our mission.

## **To build a stronger community, one Veteran at a time.**

Veterans Bridge Home (VBH) is a focused entry point for veterans transitioning. The civilian community can feel very overwhelming and confusing to a veteran who has recently transitioned from a place with a constant mission, unit, and support system. Veterans Bridge Home serves as a single point of contact to help navigate veterans to connect with the right job, friends, and resources.

3 Pillars of Strength



## **How to start your own Facebook Fundraiser**

1. To create a fundraiser for a charitable organization, **click here** or follow these steps:
2. Click  **Fundraisers** in the left menu of your News Feed.
3. Click **Raise Money**.
4. Select **Veterans Bridge Home (Charlotte, NC)**
5. Once VBH is selected, choose a cover photo and fill in the fundraiser details. (we've provided one for you, see below)
6. Set your goal for a minimum of \$1,000.
7. Ensure the currency is set as USD.
8. Set the fundraiser end date to July 9, 2021.
9. Facebook will create a default title for your campaign, “<NAME>’s Fundraiser for Veterans Bridge Home.” You can create your own unique title, but important elements to any title are your name and Veterans Bridge Home.
10. It will also create default language that answers the question, “Why are you raising money?”

*“Want to join me in supporting a good cause? I'm raising money for Veterans Bridge Home and your contribution will make an impact, whether you donate \$5 or \$500. Every little bit helps. Thank you for your support. I've included information about Veterans Bridge Home below.*

*Veterans Bridge Home is a Charlotte-based organization that connects Veterans and their families, in any state of transition, to the community. Through our network of partners, we help Veterans navigate employment, create social connections, and settle their families. We look at the whole Veteran and connect them to the resources needed to be successful and thriving leaders in our community.”*

11. You can use the default language or personalize the language and explain why this cause matters to you, like this:

*“Please join me in supporting a cause that’s important to me. I'm raising money for Veterans Bridge Home [www.veteransbridgehome.org](http://www.veteransbridgehome.org) and your contribution will make an impact and will ensure Veterans receive the services they need after transition. Thank you for your support. I've included information about Veterans Bridge Home below.” #BeTheBridge*

*Veterans Bridge Home is an organization that connects Veterans and their families, in any state of transition, to the community. Through our network of partners, we help Veterans navigate employment, create social connections, and settle their families. We look at the whole Veteran and connect them to the resources needed to be successful and thriving leaders in our community.”*

12. Choose a fundraiser image. This could be a photo of you in uniform, a photo of a loved one who served, or a photo of you participating in a Veterans Bridge Home event. If you do not have any photos that you love, there are Veterans Bridge Home logos attached below. & Click **CREATE!**

Timeline

**Overview of Crowd Raiser Timeline**

**June & July**

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thr.	Fri.	Sat.
	14 June Week 1 Post!	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Week 2 Memorial Day	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Week 3	29	30	1	2	3
4	5 Last Week Week 4	6	7	8 Reminder Post – Last Day	9 Last Day!	

## **Sample Posts to Keep Your Fundraiser Active**

Many of your friends on Facebook are inclined to give to a cause that you care about, but if they may get distracted and forget to support your campaign. By posting weekly updates you are keeping the campaign alive and you are helping more of your friends see it. Active posts, those with lots of comments, likes, and shares, have a better chance to be seen by more of your friends.

Here are some example posts and a schedule to keep the campaign working. The posts are grouped by broad categories (Veteran, spouse, family member, and nonveteran) that might help you find your voice. Feel free to use all, part or none of these examples, but whatever you do, make sure to add to your post weekly.

### ***If you are a Veteran***

**Week 1 (June 14-20)** – *“Please join me in supporting a cause that’s important to me. I’m raising money for Veterans Bridge Home [www.veteransbridgehome.org](http://www.veteransbridgehome.org) and your contribution will make an impact and will ensure Veterans receive the services they need after transition. Thank you for your support. I’ve included information about Veterans Bridge Home below. #BeTheBridge!”*  
*Don’t forget June 14<sup>th</sup> is Flag Day & The US Army’s Birthday!*

### **Week 2 (June 21-27)** –

Want to honor a Veteran? Example:

Be sure to include a picture of the Veteran you are recognizing.

*I want to honor SSG Seth Ricketts, US Army Infantry. Seth was KIA Feb. 27th in Afghanistan. Help me honor him by donating to Veterans Bridge Home. #BeTheBridge!*

### **Week 3 (June 28-July4)** –

Why is Veterans Bridge Home Important to you?

*“Veterans Bridge Home has been an important part of my transition into the community. They have (provided employment leads, helped me build my professional connections, helped me navigate available resources) so I can continue to excel and I’m grateful. To keep the mission going, I ask you to support Veterans Bridge Home. #BeTheBridge!”*

*4<sup>th</sup> of July Post Example: Include an appropriate photo of your choice or VBH Logo.*

As we celebrate Independence Day, we stop and reflect on the freedoms provided for us. A way to say Thank You is by donating to Veterans Bridge Home. #BeTheBridge!

**Week 4 (July 5-9)** – *“Just one more week left to help me reach my goal of (\$#,###) and support Veterans in transition. You can make a difference by donating today. #BeTheBridge!”*

## **Sample Posts**

### ***If you are a Veteran Spouse –***

**Week 1 (June 14-20)**– *“Please join me in supporting a cause that’s important to me. I’m raising money for Veterans Bridge Home [www.veteransbridgehome.org](http://www.veteransbridgehome.org) and your contribution will make an impact and will ensure Veterans receive the services they need after transition. Thank you for your support. I’ve included information about Veterans Bridge Home below. #BeTheBridge”*

**Week 2 (June 21-27)** *“As a military spouse, I know how hard it is to transition. Move from one place to the next and keep everything in order. That’s why I support Veterans Bridge Home. I’m grateful to have an organization like this to assist our Veterans and their families. I am asking you to donate and keep the mission going #BeTheBridge!”*

**Week 3 (June 28-July 4)** – *4<sup>th</sup> of July Post Example: Include an appropriate photo of your choice or VBH Logo.*

As we celebrate Independence Day, we stop and reflect on the freedoms provided for us. A way to say Thank You is by donating to Veterans Bridge Home. #BeTheBridge!

**Week 4 (July 5-9)** - *“Just one more week left to help me reach my goal of (\$XXXX) and support Veterans in transition. You can make a difference by donating today. #BeTheBridge!”*

### ***If you are a Parent or family member of a Veteran***

**Week 1 (June 14-20)** – *“Please join me in supporting a cause that’s important to me. I’m raising money for Veterans Bridge Home [www.veteransbridgehome.org](http://www.veteransbridgehome.org) and your contribution will make an impact and will ensure Veterans receive the services they need after transition. Thank you for your support. I’ve included information about Veterans Bridge Home below. #BeTheBridge!”*

**Week 2 (June 21-27)** – *“– “I am a proud parent of a (Insert branch of service and what they did in the military) and thanks to organizations like Veteran Bridge Home, they make Veteran transition easier. Join me in supporting our Veterans by donating today! #BeTheBridge!”*

**Week 3 (June 28- July 4)** – *4<sup>th</sup> of July Post Example: Include an appropriate photo of your choice or VBH Logo.*

As we celebrate Independence Day, we stop and reflect on the freedoms provided for us. A way to say Thank You is by donating to Veterans Bridge Home. #BeTheBridge!

**Week 4 (July5-9)** - *“Just one more week left to help me reach my goal of (\$XXXX) and support Veterans in transition. You can make a difference by donating today. #BeTheBridge!”*

## **Sample Posts**

### ***If you are a Non-Veteran***

**Week 1 (June 14-20)** – *“Please join me in supporting a cause that’s important to me. I’m raising money for Veterans Bridge Home [www.veteransbridgehome.org](http://www.veteransbridgehome.org) and your contribution will make an impact and will ensure Veterans receive the services they need after transition. Thank you for your support. I’ve included information about Veterans Bridge Home below. #BeTheBridge!”*

**Week 2 (June 21-27)** – *“As a proud patriot, I support our Veterans and I understand that not all Veterans have an easy transition. That’s why I support Veterans Bridge Home and I’m asking you to support me by making a donation to them now. #BeTheBridge”*

**Week 3 (June 28-July4)** – *4<sup>th</sup> of July Post Example: Include an appropriate photo of your choice or VBH Logo.*

As we celebrate Independence Day, we stop and reflect on the freedoms provided for us. A way to say Thank You is by donating to Veterans Bridge Home. #BeTheBridge!

**Week 4 (July 5-9)** - *“Just one more week left to help me reach my goal of (\$XXXX) and support Veterans in transition. You can make a difference by donating today. #BeTheBridge!”*

## **Thanking your Facebook Fundraising friends**

1. After a person donates, they'll receive an email confirmation to the primary email listed on their Facebook account. The email receipt shows they made this donation as a charitable contribution and that you're not receiving any goods or services in return. (Because tax laws vary by state and by country, please consult a tax professional regarding the deductibility of your donation.)
2. Your fundraiser will appear on the Veterans Bridge Home Facebook Page after a minimum donation amount of \$50.00 has been reached. Until then we will not have visibility on your campaign or your donors. To help us make sure no donation goes unacknowledged, we encourage you to keep track of your donors and the amounts given on the form provided in this packet. Another way to help us thank your donors is by tagging each of them and Veterans Bridge Home in a note thanking them for supporting you.
3. We will send a thank you note and a tax letter to every donor whose contact information you provide to us. You can record this information electronical or on paper. There is nothing worse than donating and the organization not thanking you.

## **Other Fundraising Methods (\*Don't Have Facebook\*)**

For those of you who are not on Facebook, or want to fundraise through other means, here are some options to help with your fundraising efforts:

### **Email invitation**

(Provide some information about frequency, personalizing each ask instead of BCCing a bunch of people, etc)

*"I am a proud supporter of Veterans Bridge Home. They are an organization that connects Veterans and their families, in any state of transition, to the community. Through our network of partners, we help Veterans navigate employment, create social connections, and settle their families. We look at the whole Veteran and connect them to the resources needed to be successful and thriving leaders in our community.*

*Throughout the pandemic, Veterans Bridge Home has never closed. Their staff has remained on duty to serve Veterans in person and all are focused on serving the growing needs of our area Veterans and their families. To help them continue their mission, I am asking for your support now. Join me by donating at [www.veteransbridgehome.org/donations/](http://www.veteransbridgehome.org/donations/). In the comments section of your donation, please"*

When donating, make sure your friends they make the donation in honor of you so we can track who has giving and who is connected to whom. After a person donates, they'll receive an email confirmation to the primary email listed on their Facebook account. The email receipt shows that you've made this donation as a charitable contribution and that you're not receiving any goods or services in return. As tax laws vary by state and by country, please consult a tax professional regarding the deductibility of your donation. Your fundraisers' will appear on our Facebook Page after a minimum donation amount of \$50 USD or equivalent has been reached.

**Twitter** \*\*The maxpost length is 280 characters (w/spaces) and videos can be up to 2 minutes. \*\*

**Week 1 (June 14-20)** *"Want to support an organization that's making a real difference in the Veteran community? Visit [veteransbridgehome.org/donations/](http://veteransbridgehome.org/donations/) today and donate. #BeTheBridge @VetBridgeHome"*

**Week 2 (June 21-27)** – *"As a proud patriot, I support our Veterans & I understand that not all have an easy transition. That is why I support @VetBridgeHome, and why I'm asking you to support me by making a donation to them now [veteransbridgehome.org/donations/](http://veteransbridgehome.org/donations/). #BeTheBridge"*

**Week 3 (June 28-July4)** – *4<sup>th</sup> of July Post Example: Include an appropriate photo of your choice or VBH Logo.*

As we celebrate Independence Day, we stop and reflect on the freedoms provided for us. A way to say Thank You is by donating to Veterans Bridge Home. #BeTheBridge!

**Week 4 (July5-9)** - *"Just one more week left to help me reach my goal of (\$XXXX) and support Veterans in transition. You can make a difference by donating today. #BeTheBridge!"*

**Instagram** **\*\*Note: All Instagram posts need photos to accompany them. \*\***

**Week 1 (June 14-20)** *“Want to support an organization that’s making a real difference in the Veteran community? Visit [veteransbridgehome.org/donations/](https://veteransbridgehome.org/donations/) today and donate. #BeTheBridge @VeteransBridgeHome “*

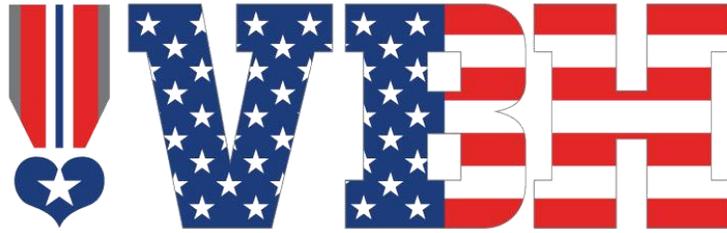
**Week 2 (June 21-27)** – *“As a proud patriot, I support our Veterans & I understand that not all have an easy transition. That’s why I support @VeteransBridgeHome, and why I’m asking you to support me by donating to them now [veteransbridgehome.org/donations/](https://veteransbridgehome.org/donations/). #BeTheBridge”*

**Week 3 (June 28-July 4)** – – *4<sup>th</sup> of July Post Example: Include an appropriate photo of your choice or VBH Logo.*

As we celebrate Independence Day, we stop and reflect on the freedoms provided for us. A way to say Thank You is by donating to Veterans Bridge Home. #BeTheBridge!

**Week 4 (July 5-9)** - *“Just one more week left to help me reach my goal of (\$XXXX) and support Veterans in transition. You can make a difference by making a donation to @VeteransBridgeHome today. #BeTheBridge!”*

Want to use our Logo for you post?



## **Connector Commitment Form**

*Be a Connector, Be the Bridge!*

**Purpose:** We are launching our month-long crowd raising campaign starting on 14 June 2021. You will have a unique opportunity to be a “Connector.” We are asking you to start a Facebook fundraiser to raise money for Veterans Bridge Home. Each Connector will be responsible for raising \$1,000 at minimum with a total group goal of \$60,000. All Connectors raising >\$1,000 will be listed by name in the 2021 Annual Report.

**Competition:** Everyone loves competition, so there are prizes for the top 3 fundraisers. First Place gets first pick, Second Place gets second pick, and Third Place gets third pick out of these three prizes:

- 1) *Autographed Panthers Memorabilia*
- 2) *Mountain House Weekend Getaway*
- 3) *T-Mobile LG Gpad5 (Tablet)*

**Connector Duties:**

- Connector commits to promoting the #BeTheBridge Crowdrising Campaign on social media for the entire campaign.
- Set up a Facebook Fundraiser with a goal of \$1,000. **June 14, 2021-July 9, 2021**
- Invite your peers, co-workers, and friends to donate or encourage them to create their own fundraiser.
- Collect all guest and donor information and provide to VBH on the forms provided for us to properly thank and send our official tax letter.
- You **MUST** sign up to be a connector in order to be eligible to win.

I am up for the challenge!

Connector name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_



## Findings from the Bob Woodruff Foundation on Covid-19

Vast numbers of veterans are likely to become unemployed, at rates that could surpass the highest level of veteran unemployment in the post-9/11 era. • Approximately 14 percent of employed veterans work in the five industries most likely to witness immediate layoffs due to COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic creates at least three conditions (emergent trauma, loneliness due to social isolation, and unplanned job or wage loss) that could culminate in a “perfect storm,” threatening the mental health of many veterans. • Veterans with pre-existing mental health conditions are at increased risk for symptoms worsening and developing new problems like substance misuse. • Social distancing and self-quarantining are necessary to help control the spread of COVID-19, but they can also increase the sense of loneliness of veterans, many of whom reported often feeling lonely even before COVID-19. • There is likely to be a surge in demand for mental health care services, but even before COVID-19 the nation was only meeting a quarter of the demand.

Veterans, especially younger veterans, have limited savings that are insufficient to support them through spells of unemployment that could last over 6 months. • Before COVID-19, over one-third of post-9/11 veterans report challenges paying their bills after leaving the military; and 59 percent of veterans 35 to 44 years old had credit card debt compared with 48 percent of nonveteran households.

Some communities will face greater struggles than others. National organizations that serve veterans, and the entities that fund them, should consider targeted support to areas most likely to be affected and with a significant share and number of veterans (for example, Myrtle Beach, Savannah, Gulfport, Las Vegas, and Orlando.)

Social connection is important for well-being. Veterans who relied on sponsored activities and events to promote social interaction may be especially vulnerable; efforts are needed to create and sustain social interaction events online and using other technology platforms, as well as proactively engaging veterans at risk of sustained or increased loneliness.

Upcoming challenges could eliminate a landscape of organizations that serve veterans. The large, diverse landscape of organizations that serve veterans have very limited annual budgets. Resource audits, general operating support for both backbone and service providing organizations, and eased restrictions from grant makers can help ensure sustainability.

## **VBH Talking Points**

- Founded in 2010, VBH is an organization that serves Veterans and military families in Mecklenburg and the ten surrounding counties by providing them with connections to the best local companies, human service providers, and personal and professional networks to help them continue to thrive and serve after their military service.
- Because VBH works with local partner organizations to support Veterans and their families, there is no Veteran they cannot help. This local, tailored, team approach to human service delivery is why they lead the U.S. in community-based support services, outpacing in real numbers (and percentage served) compared to cities like New York, Dallas, San Antonio, Pittsburgh, Raleigh, and Seattle.
- Our staff and programs, our network of providers, continued employer outreach efforts, and fellowship/networking events are proven to connect veterans and their families to the best available services and program in the least amount of time.
- Thanks to this growth and expansion VBH is proud to announce that the first VTC (Veterans Transition Center) in this region is fully open and in operation. The VTC is a 10,000 square foot home base for all things service, community, and Veteran related. The VTC aims to serve as a space for collaboration, community, and a centralized location for multiple organizations and services.
- Veterans Bridge Home has now served over 10,000 Veterans to date and provided over 24,000 + services.
- VBH's staff includes 19 people.
- Annual revenue in 2020 was \$1.5M
- 70% of all revenue went to programs