

Pensacola NMCRS Kicks Off 2024 Active Duty Fund Drive

By Garrett Dipuma, Naval Air Station Pensacola Public Affairs

PENSACOLA, Fla. – Pensacola-area Navy and Marine Corps tenant command leadership and command representatives met Feb. 21 onboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola to launch the 2024 Pensacola Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) Active-Duty Fund Drive.

The drive, set to begin March 1, is a voluntary opportunity to provide funds for the direct benefit and support of fellow Sailors and Marines.

“Ninety-one percent of everything that we give goes directly to our Sailors and Marines,” said Marine Aviation Training Support Group 21 (MATSG-21) Commanding Officer Col. Aaron Brunk, the chairman for this year’s drive. “That is a very, very low administrative cost compared to other charities.”

NMCRS, which does not receive government funding, has helped Sailors and Marines and their families deal with crises, prepare for the future, solve problems and find peace of mind through financial assistance and education for 120 years. NMCRS can also support retired Sailors and Marines and the widows and children of Sailors and Marines who have died.

“The theme of the fund drive every year is ‘By Our Own, For Our Own,’” said Pensacola NMCRS Director Joy Barnes. “That means that it’s service members raising funds that go back to support other Marines and Sailors in their time of need.”

Examples of support provided include budgeting classes; counseling; emergency loans; financial and administrative support for funeral services; temporary lodging and meal assistance; and no-interest loans.

According to Barnes, the Pensacola NMCRS raised more than \$810,000 last year for the non-profit charity. Much of NMCRS’s support is accomplished through volunteers at the Pensacola office and in the NMCRS Thrift Shop, located in building 3736 onboard Corry Station.

“Last year, we had 59 volunteers contribute more than 8,300 hours of service,” said Barnes.

Service members can learn more through their command’s coordinators and key personnel, who can answer questions and provide contribution forms. Individuals interested in learning more about the Pensacola NMCRS can find information at <https://nmcrs.org/locations/pensacola>.

NAS Pensacola, referred to as the ‘Cradle of Naval Aviation,’ is designed to support operational and training missions of tenant commands, including the Naval Aviation Technical Training Center (NATTC); Naval Aviation Schools Command (NASC); Marine Aviation Training Support Groups (MATSG) 21 and 23 and serves as the headquarters for Naval Education and Training Command (NETC).

Photo:

Marine Aviation Training Support Group (MATSG) 21 Commanding Officer Col. Aaron Brunk addresses the crowd during the Pensacola Navy Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) Active Duty Fund Drive Kickoff Breakfast Feb. 21 at the Mustin Beach Club onboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola. Brunk is the 2024 NAS Pensacola NMCRS Active Duty Fund Drive chairman, working with tenant commands to raise awareness and funds to support NMCRS programs and services available to active duty Sailors and Marines. The NMCRS Active Duty Fund Drive begins March 1. (Official U.S. Navy photo by Garrett Dipuma)

Interviewees:

Joy Barnes

Director, Pensacola Office, Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society

Col. Aaron Brunk

(Pensacola-area NMCRS Active Duty Fund Drive Chairperson)

Commanding Officer

Marine Aviation Training Support Group (MATSG) 21