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UPS Veteran Takes Life-Changing Trip

Honor and closure is the mission



Honor Flight's mission is defined by their name, **to honor our veterans**. For many, coming home can be a mixed bag. Some come back to warm welcomes, and a loving family and others are not that fortunate. Many never receive the honor they should. **On this trip, 23 WWII Veterans that had never visited the memorial were honored.**

Director of Security Matt Woodruff shared,

"I can honestly say this is a (Top 5) moment in my life and military career. What Honor Flight established for these heroes is beyond what words can say. To be a part of seeing 23 WWII heroes and getting to hear incredible stories. It is a moment I will never forget. I look forward to continuing my involvement and engagement with Honor Flight."



My Body Guard -Become a Guardian

When I met Jim Galgano (pictured in the headline image above), the first thing he said was, "Have you met my body guard?" **I could feel his immense appreciation he had for Matt, both on this trip and now.**

Matt is a career military man. He is a 26-year UPSer and a 19-year U.S. Army CID officer. Having had several deployments, you would think there's not much that can shake this guy. But this was a life-changing experience for him.

"I have had an engaged military career with many life-defining experiences. That said, I have an enormous amount of respect for the WWII Veterans. The commitment and sacrifices they made. It's not comparable to conflicts today."

To put this in perspective there were [25 million battle deaths in WWII](#), and 416,800 were from the United States.



Matt got involved with Honor Flight in 2016. This was his first opportunity to be a guardian on a trip. **Guardians are volunteers.** They must pay their own way and complete a training class prior. They are vital to the success of the Honor Flight Network Program. **Without them, many veterans would not have the chance to see the memorials built in their honor.**

During trips, a group of eight veterans and three guardians team up. The guardians ensure all the paperwork is complete and ready for the trip. They meet the veterans at the airport and help them get their boarding passes and IDs ready. **It's not a stretch to say they become as close as family during this trip. Their number one goal is to make sure each veteran feels honored as a hero.**



Jim Galgano (headline image) and his three brothers are all veterans. He heard about honor flight while in Jerome. Someone saw he was wearing his WWII cap and asked him if he had been to the memorial. They gave him the information for the Honor Flight website, the next thing he knew he was on a plane.

In many cases, our veterans do not have the means to travel to see the memorial. It seems the least we can do, to do this, for them.



Martin (pictured above) served in the Philippines. His daughter told him about Honor Flight. He shared, *"I have never felt as honored in my whole military career as I did on this trip."*



Ray was on the beach as they raised the flag on Iwo Jima. A grenade injured his leg. He had never visited the memorial. He joined the military with six of his friends. *"It's what everyone was doing."* He never second-guessed his commitment.



Mary is one of two female U.S. Marines to make the trip. Career military, she shared, *"I made several friends on this trip, and I actually knew the other lady Marine. It was a great experience."*

[Honor Flight](#) made its inaugural tour in May of 2005. As of 2016, they have honored 20,558 U.S. heroes with a trip to their memorial.

Consider becoming a volunteer. It will change your life. If you know of any veterans, who would qualify let them know about Honor Flight.