

# News Release:

## COVID 19 response to help our local military veterans



Akron, Ohio (April 3, 2020), The Props and Pistons Festival, hosted by Inspire Aviation a 501c3 non-profit, is a family oriented air show held each year at the Akron-Fulton Municipal Airport. It offers an affordable and fun experience for the entire family to experience flying demonstrations, aircraft on display, an automobile & custom motorcycle show as well as a veteran's remembrance ceremony. All proceeds from the event stay in the local area to conduct several outreach efforts including hospital visits, local schools & youth group outreach to promote aviation and other STEM careers, as well as conducting Problem Based Learning at Akron STEM High School.

The ongoing COVID19 pandemic has restricted our ability to provide outreach so we have created an "Inspire Aviation" YouTube channel. Videos will be uploaded every few days to give students, and the general public, a quick educational overview of a topic or career. We are hopeful the viewers of these videos find some inspiration to learn more about the topic or career.

We know everyone has been impacted by the COVID19 pandemic, especially our military veteran population which makes up many of our event spectators. Our festival features a special tribute to our military through a local veteran's motorcycle ride and remembrance ceremony. All proceeds from this ride goes to the non-profit SAM (Serving Area Military) Center in Massillon, OH. The SAM Center provides the following services to our nation's heroes and family members.

**Commissary:** distressed military veterans, widows, and their families are provided groceries, food cards, gas cards, clothing, and household items. Providing these items helps to reduce undue stress after their service and it plays an instrumental role in ensuring those who served our country have basic living essentials

**Holiday meals:** veterans and their families are provided Thanksgiving and Christmas feasts, gifts, clothes, household items, gift cards, and other items. This program ensures distressed veterans are able to provide their families with a happy holiday season. It also ensures for many veterans who, due to the stressful nature of the holidays, do not seek out other damaging habits such as drug or alcohol abuse by minimizing their stress.

**Lodging kits** are provided to homeless veterans who are provided with government housing. These kits include blankets, towels, food, cleaning items, and other household items for their new housing. These kits alleviate undue stress in the veteran's reintegration into basic living furthermore, it allows the veteran to concentrate on finding employment, becoming independent, and becoming self-sufficient in today's world.

During the month of **March** the volunteer staff at the SAM Center provided **400 families over 10,000 pounds of food/items** for our veteran population. **The SAM Center is currently operating a drive thru pantry on Fridays from 10am-2pm. Veterans are welcome to utilize the drive thru each Friday until we get through this pandemic.** Because of the life changing work the SAM Center does every day, Inspire Aviation has committed \$1,000 to support their programs for the month of April. As the pandemic continues we will commit extra funds in the coming months. Inspire Aviation encourages everyone to make a donation to the SAM Center.

**For more detailed information please visit the following websites:**

[www.flyohio.org](http://www.flyohio.org) or [Facebook.com/flyohio](https://www.facebook.com/flyohio)

[www.servingareamilitary.com](http://www.servingareamilitary.com) or [facebook.com/servingareamilitary](https://www.facebook.com/servingareamilitary)

For further inquires contact: Mike Bowser, Chairman, Props & Pistons Festival  
330-807-4065, [mike@inspireaviation.org](mailto:mike@inspireaviation.org)  
or  
Bryan Bowman, President, SAM Center  
[support@servingareamilitary.com](mailto:support@servingareamilitary.com) (330) 685-7678

**Inspire Aviation** is an Ohio based 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity. Their mission is to help educate the general public in areas of Aviation and other STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) related topics.