

# National Museum of the Marine Corps:

## MOVING FORWARD TO TELL THE STORY OF TODAY'S WARRIOR

**M**ore than a year ago, the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC), in cooperation with the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, broke ground to fulfill a nine-year-old commitment to be the home for *all* Marine Corps history. When the work is finished on this 126,000-square-foot Final Phase (the name coined for this project), NMMC will have more than doubled in size, and the circle, as well as the Corps' story, will be complete.

Included in the new spaces will be not only historical galleries covering the Corps' history from 1776 to the present, but also a giant-screen theater, an expanded education suite and children's gallery, a combat art gallery and studio, a Hall of Valor, and a Marine Corps Sports gallery, as well as a changing exhibits gallery.

Much has happened since the groundbreaking, both on the building and with defining the design and content of the new spaces. As construction crews have been taking down existing walls and building new ones, the Final Phase team has been finalizing plans for how to tell the story in the most compelling way. The museum's exhibit design team has been shaping the visual story, while a team of writers from NMMC and historians from Marine Corps History Division has been crafting the written storyline. Design development is complete.

"It's imperative that we get these galleries right because the memories of recent wars are so very fresh. The sense of pride and of loss is still raw, especially for visitors who have recently lost loved ones in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is the most important thing we've done yet; these galleries will honor warriors in uniform today," Lin Ezell, NMMC director, said.

To get the story right, the museum put together



*Photo courtesy of the National Museum of the Marine Corps*  
An artist rendering of the Desert Storm/Desert Shield exhibit for the final phase of the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

a diverse group of senior advisors to guide the process and to ensure that the whole story is told. The new historical galleries will tell of Marines in both combat and humanitarian efforts, as well as on the home front. These galleries will communicate every Marine's story because, while not every one of them served in combat, they are each important to the mission. The senior advisors told the team that if they do not tell the Marine family story they "will have missed the mark." The team took that to heart and has not only included an exhibit on the Marine family, but has also woven it into the overall exhibition. At current count, 575 artifacts have been chosen to illustrate Marine Corps history in the new galleries. These include everything from a McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 Hornet to a set of blood-crusted ribbons.

"When telling the story of 'no better friend, no worse enemy,' there's no museum better positioned to do this than the National Museum of the Marine Corps," Ezell said. ♦ 1775 ♦

*For more information about the National Museum of the Marine Corps, please call 703-784-6107 or visit the museum's website at [www.usmcmuseum.org](http://www.usmcmuseum.org).*