

Bluffton Today

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BLUFFTON TODAY

A man from Maine will ride his bicycle across the United States this summer to help raise money for Marine Corps families.

Daniel Buckley's 4,000-mile journey will begin July 29 and start from Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island in Beaufort and is projected to end in San Diego, Calif., 13 weeks later, the length of time it takes for a Marine recruit to complete training.

Buckley hopes to raise \$500,000 through individual donations to create an endowment for the Marine Graduation Foundation through his "No Marine Alone Project."

The Marine Graduation Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting families in need with the necessary travel expenses to attend the graduation of their new Marine.

Buckley's son, Sgt. Timothy Buckley, is a Marine and graduated boot camp in 2008 from Parris Island. He is now an embassy guard in Zambia.

"Graduation day is very significant in the life of every Marine and in the lives of their families as well," Buckley said. "To earn the title of United States Marine is a process so rigorous and transformational that family members are often shocked by their child's new demeanor. Upon reuniting with their son or daughter, brother or sister, they suddenly realize that the child of 13 weeks ago has become an adult, worthy of great respect and admiration. Sadly, too many new Marines stand proudly in formation knowing that their family is not among the cheering throngs in the bleachers.

"I wanted to do something to help new Marines and their families and ensure that no Marine should ever stand alone on the proudest day of their lives."

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