



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

CREATING BONDS THAT CURE



A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends of Operation Healing Forces,

In alignment with Operation Healing Forces' (OHF) ongoing commitment to advancing our mission of supporting America's Special Operations Forces (SOF) community, 2023 marked a year of significant progress and impact. We take great pride in sharing the achievements and milestones that defined this exceptional year, made possible by the unwavering support of our donors, partners, and dedicated staff.

As we reflect on the achievements of 2023, we are reminded of the resilience of those we serve and the vital role our programs play in their lives. Throughout the year, OHF remained steadfast in our dedication to providing comprehensive care that addresses the mental, physical, emotional, and fiscal well-being of SOF service members, veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. It was a year of growth, resilience, and profound impact, underscoring our commitment to those who have sacrificed much serving at the Tip of the Spear on behalf of our great nation.

Our suite of programs, including Therapeutic Retreats and the Special Operations Additional Resources (SOAR) program, touched the lives of nearly 2,300 individuals in 2023, alone. These programs are designed not only to heal but to empower—equipping America's SOF community with the tools needed to thrive in the face of adversity.

One of our most significant achievements this year has been the deepened impact of our Therapeutic Retreats, which continue to serve as a safe haven for SOF couples and SOF caregivers to reconnect, forge new peer relationships, and to heal. The overwhelmingly positive feedback, with greater than 99% of participants reporting improved communication with their spouse and 98% noting improvements in multiple mental health symptoms, underscores the vital role these retreats play in *Creating Bonds That Cure* and fortifying a more resilient and thriving Special Operations community.

The SOAR program also saw remarkable growth, fulfilling 579 requests for hardship assistance and supporting 1,770 SOF members and their families in times of crisis. Whether providing emergency financial support, access to medical care, or vital resources for long-term stability, the SOAR program has proven to be a lifeline for those in need, most often responding within 24 hours of a request.

As we look ahead, we are excited about the opportunities to expand our impact even further. By forging new relationships and deepening existing partnerships, OHF is more committed than ever to ensuring that every member of the SOF community can enhance their resilience, embrace their reintegration, and lead fulfilling and productive lives. This mission is only possible because of the continued support and generosity of our donors and partners.

Together, we are truly **Creating Bonds That Cure**, making a lasting impact in the lives of our nation's heroes and their families. We are deeply grateful for your support and look forward to another year of service, growth, and shared success.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us.

With gratitude,

Gary Markel,
Founder and Chairman

Tony Markel,
Vice-Chairman

Kerry Irvin,
Executive Director

ABOUT US

Operation Healing Forces (OHF) provides a suite of programs to aid the Special Operations Forces (SOF) community which has endured decades of perpetual combat operations, extensive training, and extreme hardships as a result of their service. Although SOF account for less than five (5) percent of the Department of Defense, SOF are the U.S. military's most highly trained units and account for some of the highest casualty, divorce, cancer, and suicide rates of all the military.



THEIR LIVES ARE OUR MISSION.

We remain committed to aiding and promoting the wellbeing of those we serve throughout their lives. Once an individual or family has received services from OHF, they become a member of our wide-spread OHF Alumni Family and are networked into valuable resources and life-enhancing opportunities.

Operation Healing Forces has served nearly **more than 10,000 SOF service members**, their families, and caregivers. In addition, we have invested over **\$25 million** in the development and implementation of vital programs which have proven to reduce significant risk factors associated with the SOF community.

OUR MISSION

Operation Healing Forces' mission is to serve the needs of America's wounded, ill, injured, and Fallen Special Operations Forces service members, veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors through a suite of programs that promote long-term mental, physical, emotional, and fiscal well-being.



On a given day, U.S. SOF are deployed to more than **approximately 85 countries**, conducting operations, training, and joint exercises, and when combined with our partners, U.S. SOF's reach extends to nearly every corner of the globe.

WHO WE SERVE

America's Special Operations Forces (SOF) represent the Tip of the Spear for our nation's most complex and sensitive security challenges. Frequently referred to as "Quiet Professionals" these elite warriors are routinely called upon to undertake sensitive, strategic, and high-risk missions that require unique skills and training. With this operational demand comes equally unique challenges and pressures on these individuals and their families. SOF includes more than 70,000 personnel stationed around the world, and an estimated 40,000 Veterans. The Department of Defense depends on these specialized SOF units to defend and protect America's freedom and interests in dozens of countries globally. While Special Operations Forces comprise only 3% of the Department of Defense's fighting force, they are its most elite and highly trained warriors.

OHF pays tribute to all branches of America's special operations forces with programs designed specifically to bolster the overall well-being of active-duty SOF service members, veterans, their families, and their full-time caregivers. OHF does this by offering opportunities to reconnect with life partners; forge bonds with others who share their unique challenges; provide a helping hand in times of crisis and hardship; and build an alumni community enhancing their overall sense of well-being. Our objective is Creating Bonds That Cure through these impactful programs providing for effectively enhanced Reintegration, Rehabilitation, and Resilience in those we serve.

OUR FOCUS

RESILIENCE

SOF couples and family members experience positive emotions, a sense of control over critical aspects of life, and strengthened relationships.



Positive Emotions
Strengthened Relationships
Hope & Purpose
Pride in Service

REHABILITATION

SOF couples and families receive support for healing the body, mind, and family unit.



Connect to Care & Resources
Promote Wellness
Restorative Recreation
Respite

REINTEGRATION

SOF couples and families connect with the community, critical wellness information, and each other.



Couple & Peer Connection
Communication
Share Information & Resources
Meaningful Support



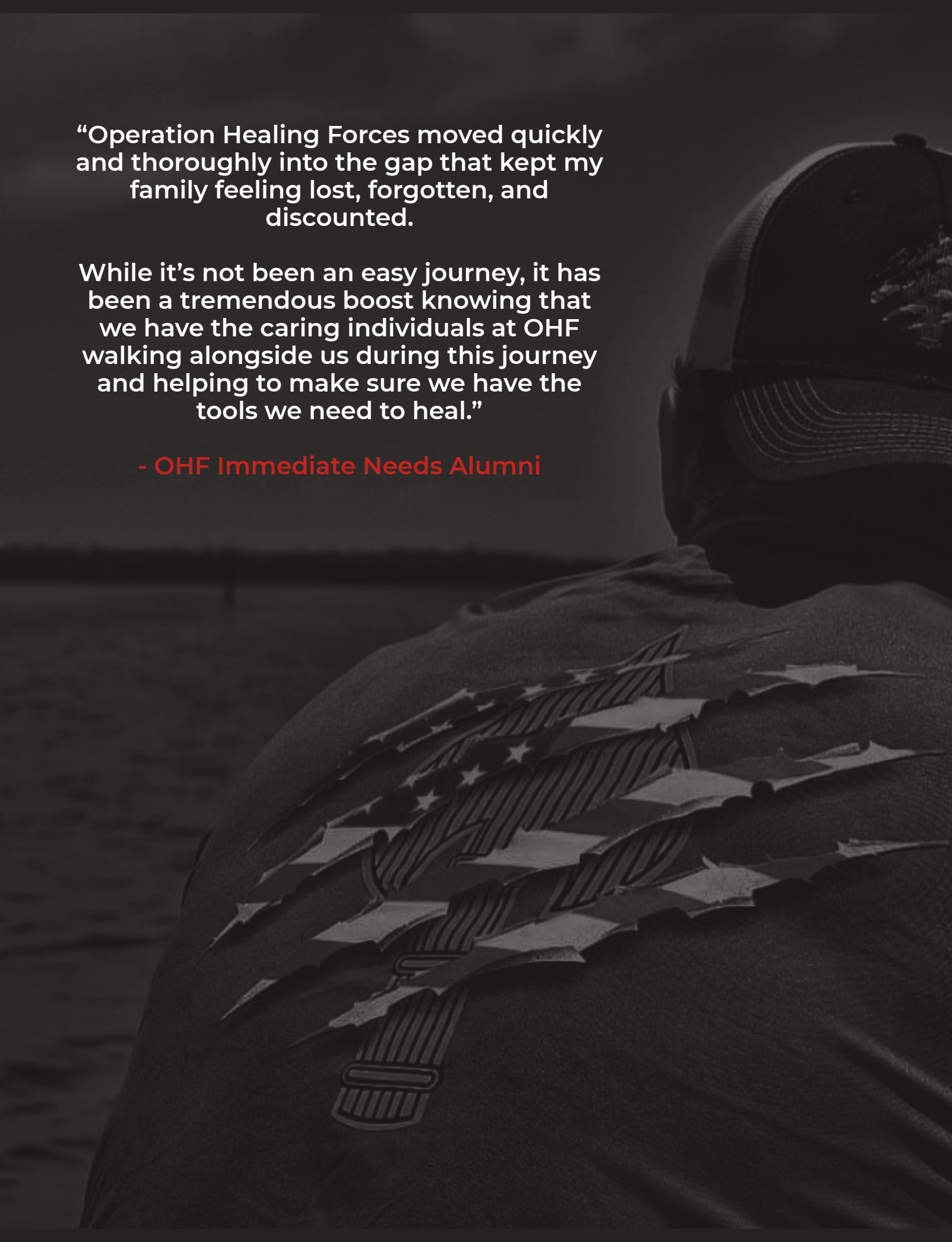
“This trip provided me with much-needed connection to the military and veteran community. Since retiring, I have felt secluded due to PTSD, loss of my identity, and loss of my military community, so getting this opportunity to reconnect with my community was a priceless gift that I can never thank you enough for.”

- OHF Couples Retreat Alumni

“Operation Healing Forces moved quickly and thoroughly into the gap that kept my family feeling lost, forgotten, and discounted.

While it’s not been an easy journey, it has been a tremendous boost knowing that we have the caring individuals at OHF walking alongside us during this journey and helping to make sure we have the tools we need to heal.”

- OHF Immediate Needs Alumni



THERAPEUTIC RETREATS

Operation Healing Forces conducts therapeutic retreats for Special Operations Forces couples and caregivers throughout the United States and abroad. Each retreat is led by a SOF Veteran or SOF Caregiver and respected member of the SOF community. OHF retreats focus on providing healing through the benefits of peer-to-peer interactions among individuals with shared experiences, challenges, and traumas. Upon conclusion of OHF retreats, participants become members of the OHF Alumni Network and are provided with opportunities and resources to build on the positive outcomes of the retreat program.

OHF's resilience-based retreats offer participants the opportunity to recharge a weary heart; reconnect with their spouse or significant other; build connections with other individuals who understand the unique challenges associated with visible and invisible injuries, multiple combat deployments, and high-intensity training; as well as feelings of isolation, depression, and anxiety which can result from the service and sacrifices made in support of our nation.

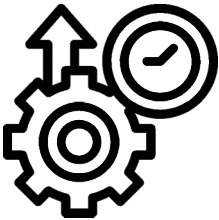


CONNECT	OHF's programs Create Bonds That Cure by providing SOF service members, veterans, family members, and caregivers connections to a network of others who can relate to the unique challenges associated with the Special Operations community. OHF case coordinators also provide priority connection to vital resources – helping participants reintegrate, rehabilitate, and bolster resilience while decreasing feelings of isolation, depression, stress, and anxiety-potential risk factors of suicide.
SERVE	OHF serves America's SOF community through the Immediate Needs Program by providing vital financial assistance for critical needs in times of hardships and crisis - most often within 24 to 48 hours of request.
EMPOWER	OHF empowers SOF warriors and their families by helping alleviate burdens from the family - allowing the veteran to focus on the mission ahead, whether it be recovery and a return to the fight, bolstering vital relationships, or the new direction of their career.

RETREAT IMPACT

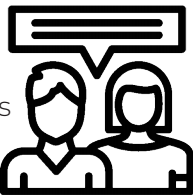


Over **99%** of respondents reported improved communication with their spouse following the OHF retreat



95% of respondents reported continued improvements following the OHF retreat, six months to one year past retreat

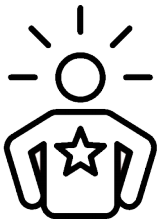
100% of respondents would recommend OHF to other SOF couples



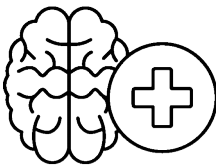
93% of respondents believe that the peer-to-peer exchange during the retreat aided in their personal recovery



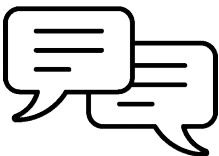
95% of respondents believe that outdoor recreational activities aided in their personal recovery



Over **96%** of respondents reported increased confidence participating in recreational activities following the OHF retreat



98% of respondents reported improvements in multiple mental health symptoms following their retreat

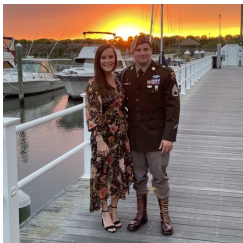


95% of respondents learned of new benefits or resources available to their families on the retreat

Operation Healing Forces designed resilience based therapeutic caregiver retreats to provide respite for SOF caregivers and to encourage self-care for those often overlooked heroes. Many caretakers shoulder the major responsibility of daily care for their wounded, ill, or injured service member along with managing the daily responsibilities of caring for a family, running a household, and their own professional careers and personal endeavors.

SOAR PROGRAM

The Special Operations Additional Resource (SOAR) Program provides numerous resources, and most notably encompasses OHF's Immediate Needs Program (INP). INP provides direct crisis support to wounded, injured, ill, and Fallen SOF service members and their families. The program covers emergency travel and expenses; medical treatment; medical and adaptive equipment not covered by government means; funeral and memorial costs; respite care for full-time caregivers, and many other forms of critical support such as rent and mortgage assistance, food costs, and support with many other basic human needs. SOAR also provides support for the long-term stability of the SOF community in areas such as job/skill certification, access to financial planning experts, and career transition assistance. The SOAR program fulfills 30 to 40 requests for assistance from U.S. Special Operation Command's Warrior Care Program each month and often within 24 hours of the request. The SOAR program experienced substantial growth in 2023 and OHF was able to assist more families than ever before.



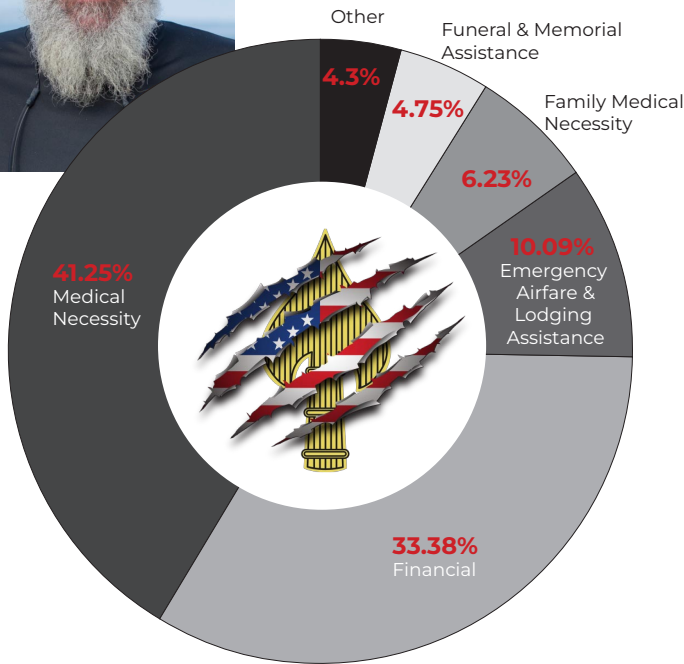
CREATING BONDS THAT CURE

COUPLES & CAREGIVERS RETREATS

Total # of Retreats Since Inception	290
Total # of Retreats in 2023	49
Total Individuals Served	2,292

OHF's Immediate Needs Program provides assistance to the SOF community in crisis, often within **24 hours** of the request.

2023 REQUEST BY TYPE



— SOAR ASSISTANCE —

SINCE INCEPTION

2,093 Requests Fulfilled
7,478 Individuals Assisted
\$3,060,999 Total Spent

2023 SUPPORT

579 Requests Fulfilled
1,770 Individuals Assisted
\$944,421 Total Spent

"OHF gave me a new perspective in life. There are 22 veterans a day that commit suicide, because of OHF, there's **one less** now."

- OHF Alumnus



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Operation Healing Forces is dedicated to helping active-duty and retired Special Operations Forces (SOF) elite warriors and their families heal, both mentally and physically, to integrate into family and civilian life, or to return to the front lines in defense of our Nation. As OHF's programs continue to grow to meet evolving needs, it is imperative that we remain steadfast in sustaining

awareness of the continued missions and challenges faced by those who serve at the Tip of the Spear. Through numerous community outreach engagements OHF staff, Alumni, Board of Directors, and National Advisory Council members build a network of resources and relationships that bolster our network and enhance our capacity to support those we serve.



RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

Our commitment to those we serve comes with a responsibility OHF does not take lightly. Each year, Operation Healing Forces is independently audited by a highly respected external accounting firm. Key financial documents including the audit report are available by request or by visiting our website: www.operationhealingforces.org/documents.

Additionally, OHF is proud of our 4 out of 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and other awards and distinctions that recognize our dedication to financial efficiency and administrative accountability including our GuideStar Platinum Rating and 2023 Top Rated award.

Stand alongside us as together we pay tribute to the sacrifices of our nation's wounded, ill, injured, and Fallen Special Operations Forces warriors and their families.

DONATE TODAY!



2023 AUDITED FINANCIALS

Therapeutic Retreats	\$2,742,923
SOAR Program	\$1,270,511
General & Administrative Expenses	\$275,864
Fundraising Expenses	\$536,362
Total Net Asset	\$1,968,855
TOTAL REVENUE FROM ALL SOURCES	\$4,977,075

OHF's Board of Directors have committed to covering all overhead costs associated with the operation of OHF.
100% of every dollar donated funds our vital and life-changing programs.



OHF has achieved Charity Navigator's top ranking of Four Stars. Described as "Exceptional" - Exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its cause.



OHF has achieved the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency Rating, the top 0.1% of the nation's non-profit organizations in terms of transparency.



OHF received the "Top Rated" rating by Great Nonprofits. Rated highly by people who experience their work first hand - clients served, volunteers and donors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Robert Mizell, OHF Treasurer
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OUR VISION

Our vision is that all members of the Special Operations Forces community are able to enhance their resilience, empower their rehabilitation, embrace their reintegration, and lead fulfilling and productive lives.

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OPERATION HEALING FORCES

Creating Bonds That Cure



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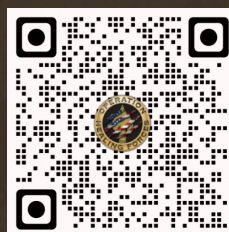
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