



# OHF INTEL

Winter 2026

A Quarterly Report from Operation Healing Forces

*Dear Friends of Operation Healing Forces,*

As we begin 2026, everyone at Operation Healing Forces does so with gratitude and optimism for the work ahead. The year before us is built on connection, care, and a shared commitment to supporting America's Special Operations Forces (SOF) community. Because of your support, hope and healing continue to reach service members, veterans, families, and caregivers who have given so much in service to our nation.

In 2025, Operation Healing Forces had the privilege of serving approximately 3,200 members of the SOF community through our programs. That support included more than 600 Immediate Needs and Crisis Support grants, totaling approximately \$1,000,000, and 55 Therapeutic Retreats that provided space for rest, reconnection, and renewal for 420 SOF community members. Across all programs, more than \$4 million was directed toward meeting urgent needs and supporting long-term stability.

These numbers tell a powerful story. They represent families steadied during uncertain moments, relationships strengthened through shared healing, and individuals supported with dignity and compassion through bonds that continue long after services are delivered.

Our mission remains focused on supporting the mental, physical, emotional, and fiscal well-being of SOF service members, veterans, their families, and caregivers. Through our Therapeutic Retreats, Special Operations Additional Resources (SOAR) program, and Immediate Needs and Crisis Support, Operation Healing Forces continues to meet critical needs while fostering lasting connection and resilience for the whole family.

None of this impact is possible without the people who stand alongside this mission each day. Board members, partners, donors, advocates, and a dedicated team make it possible to provide these services at no cost to those we serve.

As we look ahead, the vision is clear. In 2026, Operation Healing Forces will continue to expand reach, deepen impact, and remain a trusted source of care and connection for SOF families. Together, we are Creating Bonds That Cure and ensuring no member of the SOF community has to face challenges alone.

*Sincerely,*  
**Kerry Irvin**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
*Operation Healing Forces*



## Answered with Care

"This past year has been overwhelming for our family in many ways, and reaching out for help was not easy. To receive such quick and caring support and to have you be so communicative and kind has truly blown us away.

It took a lot for David to be willing to ask for help, and to have that request met with such understanding and compassion has been a profound gift."

— Shannon & David Norris,  
and family

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## THE TOLL OF TIME APART

For Nicholas and Kyndra Hayden, life in Special Operations has been shaped by long separations and constant transitions. Nicholas has served in the U.S. Army since 2008, spending the past 16 years on active duty in Civil Affairs. With deployments roughly every two years and demanding training rotations in between, time together at home was always limited.

“Finding ways to stay connected when you’re across the world has been the hardest part,” Nicholas shared. “On the phone is so much different than being there.”

At first, the distance felt manageable. Like so many military families, they adapted, adjusted, and pushed forward. But over time, the weight of missed moments, unspoken needs, and emotional distance began to compound.

During Nicholas’s most recent deployment, that distance finally caught up with them, and the growing disconnect led to a separation. With two daughters and years of life lived in between deployments, their marriage was stretched to its breaking point, not by one moment, but by the slow erosion that can happen when partners spend more time apart than together.

When they decided to attend OHF’s therapeutic couples retreat, it wasn’t about a getaway. It was about saving their marriage. “We haven’t gone away together since having our daughter,”

**“This opportunity provided us with a chance to strip down all of the external pressures and see the love we have for each other at our core.”**

**– Nicholas Hayden**

Kyndra shared. “So for the first time in four or five years, we were actually able to focus on each other.”

Throughout the week-long experience, the Haydens found something that had been missing for years: uninterrupted time. Time without distractions. Time without deployment countdowns. Time without financial stress dictating what was possible. “The financial aspect was huge—everything was provided,” Kyndra said. “Being able to go out and try new foods and activities that we normally wouldn’t be able to do... it was so much fun to connect in that way.”

From jet skiing and parasailing to an alligator airboat ride and charter fishing, each shared experience created space to slow down and be present. Just as meaningful was the environment itself.

“It was also so nice to not be in a hotel,” Kyndra shared. “Being in a home all together made it a more intimate experience.” That shared space allowed couples to relax, have real conversations, and reconnect more naturally.

Today, Nicholas and Kyndra credit Operation Healing Forces with providing the time and space that helped save their marriage and allowed them to reconnect and rebuild after years of distance.



*All smiles as Nicholas and Kyndra descend from their parasailing adventure in Naples.*

# CUMULATIVE WEIGHT CARRIED BY SPOUSES

For nine of the 20 years Mark Winton served in the U.S. Army, he was a Chaplain embedded within Special Operations Forces units, walking alongside Operators and their families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. “I served in SOF units, having both the privilege and the burden of ministering to SOF families during crisis.”

Those crises were not limited to the battlefield. While Mark was often called to support families coping with severe injuries or fatalities overseas, he also bore witness to emergencies unfolding at home. During his time serving in special missions’ units at Fort Bragg, three different spouse suicides occurred. Each loss left a lasting mark on communities already under immense strain.

“It’s intense,” Mark said. “The guys are exposed to trauma with what they do, but then even the wives are indirectly exposed.” Operators are trained for resiliency and high performance, but their spouses often navigate similar stress without the same preparation or support.

“There is a presumption that if the husband is a squared away Operator, that surely the wife can handle stress,” Mark shared. “But we have to remember no one is immune to the chaos.” According to the Department of Defense, military spouse suicide rates have fluctuated in recent years, with 133 deaths reported in 2020 and 93 in 2022. The majority of victims were female and under the age of 40, with firearms identified as the leading method.

“Spouses deal with unique burdens and with cumulative stress, and there is a deteriorating effect of that.”



Mark Winton and his family. “Half of the battle in life is knowing you are not alone.”

After retiring from the Army, the realities Mark had long witnessed as a chaplain became deeply personal. His family faced a mental health crisis involving his wife, and the care she needed was not covered by TRICARE. After Mark reached out to the Care Coalition, Operation Healing Forces stepped in to help cover the cost of her inpatient treatment. “As a chaplain, I was a part of providing care for others,” Mark said. “But to be on the receiving end, particularly for my spouse’s and children’s sake, we were deeply grateful.”

Mental health crises can affect families during service and long after it ends. Reaching out for help can be lifesaving, and access to trusted support can make all the difference for families carrying the weight of service. “I would encourage operators and their families with a familiar adage, ‘Half of the battle in life is knowing you are not alone’,”

**“To just presume that spouses can handle or deal with it on their own is a faulty presumption. They love and want to support their husbands, but the cumulative stress of maintaining that high level of readiness all the time, has an intensity that comes with it,”**  
– Mark explains.

# Where Craftsmanship Meets Purpose: JHG Collection at Mecum Kissimmee



*Custom hot rods from the Johnson's Horsepowered Garage Collection at Mecum Kissimmee*

This January, the automotive world and the Special Operations Forces community came together in a powerful way when Johnson's Horsepowered Garage named Operation Healing Forces as the beneficiary of its collection at Mecum Kissimmee.

Offered entirely at no reserve, the Johnson's Horsepowered Garage Collection featured a striking lineup of custom hot rods, many dating back to the 1930s. Each build reflected bold craftsmanship, individuality, and a deep respect for automotive history. One standout vehicle, Backseat Betty, incorporated authentic military surplus materials into its construction, blending automotive artistry with a visible tribute to Vietnam veterans and the legacy of service. Those same values carried through the collection's purpose, with proceeds from the entire auction donated to support Operation Healing Forces programs serving Special Operations Forces service members, veterans, and their families.

"This decision is personal for us," said Jason Johnson. "We have a deep respect for the men and women of the Special Operations community and for the families who share in their sacrifice. Supporting Operation Healing Forces allows us to give back in a way that honors their service and helps provide meaningful support to those who have given so much."

As the cars crossed the auction block at Osceola Heritage Park, craftsmanship was matched

with storytelling and connection. The Dunn family joined Mecum for an on-site interview that was broadcast to viewers around the world, sharing their personal experience with Operation Healing Forces and the impact of support during some of life's most challenging moments. Their story brought the mission to life for collectors and viewers alike, offering a powerful reminder of the families behind the cause.

The final day of the auction delivered another meaningful moment of generosity. Longtime OHF partner and four-time world champion Funny Car driver Matt Hagan presented a \$10,000 donation from Hagan Cattle Company, reinforcing the shared values that connected the automotive, racing, and military communities throughout the event. Together, these moments reflected what's possible when craftsmanship, community, and purpose align to create lasting impact.



*The Dunn family alongside Kindig-It Design TV personalities, founder Dave Kindig and custom car builder Kevin ("KevDogg") Schiele.*

# Making Moves That Matter: PODS Partners with OHF



This exclusively wrapped PODS container will hold donated supplies to be delivered to local SOF Veterans later this spring.

Operation Healing Forces is excited to welcome PODS Enterprises, LLC as a new partner dedicated to supporting America's Special Operations Forces community.

This partnership brings meaningful, practical support to SOF service members, veterans, and their families during times of transition. As OHF's exclusive moving and storage provider, PODS will offer in-kind container support to assist with local moves and on-site storage needs across the country. These moments of transition often coincide with recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration, when added stability can make a powerful difference for families navigating change.

Rooted in a shared commitment to service and strong ties to Tampa Bay, PODS and Operation Healing Forces come together with a common goal of standing beside those who serve and the families who support them.

"Supporting the military community has been core to our company since day one," said Irfan Bojadzija, Vice President of Residential and Commercial Partnerships at PODS. "Our partnership with Operation Healing Forces allows us to stand alongside the nation's most elite warriors and their families by providing practical help when it is needed most and strengthening our shared Tampa Bay roots in service of those who have sacrificed so much."

This collaboration strengthens the support Operation Healing Forces is able to provide to SOF families during moments of transition and recovery. As CEO Kerry Irvin shared, "Partnerships like this are vital to fulfilling our mission of restoring strength and stability to the military community. We are proud to welcome PODS as a trusted partner equally committed to honoring and uplifting those who serve, and whose generosity directly impacts the lives of our nation's heroes and their families."

# Welcoming General Michael “Erik” Kurilla to OHF’s Board of Directors



General Michael “Erik” Kurilla, U.S. Army (Retired), recently concluded a distinguished 38-year military career as the Commander of United States Central Command (CENTCOM), headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. In this role, he oversaw all U.S. military operations across 21 nations in the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia – one of the most strategically vital and complex regions in the world.

A graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point with a degree in Aerospace Engineering, General Kurilla has led at every level of command within the U.S. Army’s most elite formations. His commands have included the XVIII Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne Division, the 75th Ranger Regiment, the 2nd Ranger Battalion, and the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry (Stryker). He also served as the Director of Operations and Assistant Commanding General for Joint Special Operations Command, Deputy Commanding General for the 1st Infantry Division, and Chief of Staff for CENTCOM.

From the streets of Mosul to the CENTCOM command center, General Kurilla’s leadership has spanned some of the most challenging operations of the modern era. Between 2004 and 2014, he deployed every year in support of the Global War on Terrorism, accumulating more than five years in combat zones. He was wounded in battle while leading his men in Mosul, continuing to command even after being shot multiple times, an act of courage that earned him the Purple Heart.

Admired as a “Soldier’s Soldier,” General Kurilla is known for his humility, empathy, and devotion to those he leads. His awards and decorations include the Combat Infantryman Badge with Star, the Master Parachutist Badge with Combat Jump Device, the Ranger Tab, and the Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster. He holds an M.B.A. from Regis University and an M.S. in National Security Studies from the National War College.

Beyond his military achievements, General Kurilla remains a steadfast advocate for service members, veterans, and military families. Together with his wife, Mary Paige, he continues to champion initiatives that support the well-being of those who serve and the loved ones who stand beside them.

Today, General Kurilla brings his strategic acumen, leadership, and deep personal understanding of the Special Operations community to the Board of Directors of Operation Healing Forces, where he helps guide programs that strengthen, heal, and empower America’s most elite warriors and their families.

## Welcoming Brock Miller to OHF's National Advisory Council



Brock Miller currently serves as SVP, Incoming Chief AML Officer for Raymond James Financial (RJF). With this remit, Brock is responsible for overseeing the Anti-Money Laundering (AML), Economic Sanctions and Fraud Risk Management Programs for the U.S., Canada, and European business units of RJF.

Since joining RJF in September 2015, Brock has held progressive leadership roles across the various functions within the firm's AML & Financial Crimes Program, with a focus on program development and growing the team from less than ten (10) associates to over 200 across the globe. Prior to joining Raymond James, Brock spent many years with Ernst & Young assisting major financial institutions in designing and implementing their AML and Financial Crimes programs, with a focus on regulatory response.

At Raymond James, Brock serves on multiple Advisory Councils focused on improving associate experience and is a staunch supporter of the firm's Veterans Inclusion Network, VALOR. Although not a veteran himself, Brock has a passion in supporting U.S veterans in their transition to civilian life – especially when it comes to entering the private workforce and financial literacy.

Brock is a Certified Public Accountant, Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist and Certified Fraud Examiner. Brock graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Business Administration (accounting focus) from the University of Cincinnati.



# CONNECT WITH OHF

**Help expand OHF's impact – Please share this newsletter.**

Help spread the word about Operation Healing Forces and the battles faced by our nation's Special Operations Forces. Forward this newsletter to a friend, relative, or colleague today. You may end up connecting OHF with its next donor, supporter, or recipient family.

*“I read an article online about Operation Healing Forces a couple of years ago and as a U.S. Marine Corps veteran myself, I felt compelled to get involved.”*

— OHF Supporter David T. Maccagnone,  
CEO Multi-Bank Securities Inc.

## Helping SOF SOAR

Now more than ever, the SOF community need your support. OHF continues to expand its programs to provide for immediate needs, SOF spouses and caregivers, and assistance with career transitions, employment, and financial planning. To contribute or learn more about these programs, please contact our SOAR team at [SOAR@ophf.org](mailto:SOAR@ophf.org)

### SOAR (Special Operations Additional Resources) Programs

#### OHF's SOAR Offers:

- Immediate Needs Assistance
- Access to Financial Planning Experts
- Access to Tax Preparation Experts
- Alumni Support
- Holistic Wellness Support
- Transition Assistance

## A Home for Healing:

Operation Healing Forces offers transformative therapeutic retreats for SOF couples and caregivers, where meaningful connections are made in homes that provide the perfect setting for creating bonds that cure. A powerful way to give back to those who have sacrificed so much is by donating your home or offering your space to support these life-changing experiences.

#### OUR NEED:

5-bedroom, 5-bathroom homes at destination locales throughout North America and Worldwide.

#### TIMING:

Retreats take place over 5 days. We have needs for retreat locations in 2026 and beyond.

#### LEARN MORE:

Contact Kerry Irvin at [kerry.irvin@ophf.org](mailto:kerry.irvin@ophf.org) to learn more about opening your home to our nation's Special Operators and their spouses.





## Mutually Beneficial

Aside from helping support a worthy cause, stock donations can maximize the value of a gift to both the charitable recipient and the donor. Compared with selling appreciated securities and donating the after-tax net proceeds, a direct gift of stock has the potential to increase the net proceeds to the charity and maximize a donor's tax deduction.

When donating appreciated securities (e.g., stocks, bonds, mutual funds, etc.) with long-term holding periods of one year or more, the amount of the donor's tax deduction is equal to the average value of the high and low price of the securities on the date of the gift. You may generally deduct up to 30% of your Adjusted Gross Income for contributions of appreciated securities held more than one year.

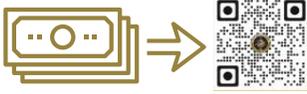
Donating stock to charity is as easy as calling your financial advisor and providing transfer instructions. To learn how to make a stock donation for Operation Healing Forces, visit <https://OperationHealingForces.org/Donate> or contact **Kerry Irvin** at [kerry.irvin@ophf.org](mailto:kerry.irvin@ophf.org).

## Giving to Operation Healing Forces is Easier Than Ever!

Simply scan or click on the  
OHF QR Code to make a  
contribution right away!



# More Ways You Can Help!



## Cash contributions.\*

100% goes to program costs thanks to our board of directors covering all overhead expenses.



## Donate a Home.\*

5-bedroom/5-bath home for a week.



**Host an in-home reception\*** introducing OHF's mission to your friends and neighbors



## Donate your airline miles.

Email Desiree at [desiree.holley@ophf.org](mailto:desiree.holley@ophf.org) to find out how

OHF's Retreat Program and Immediate Needs are especially meaningful and healing to the Special Operations Forces community because these opportunities are offered at no cost to the participants. By alleviating the burden of financial stress, deserving elite warriors and their families can access much-needed respite and focus on restoring and strengthening each other's bonds which makes a significant difference in the healing process.

OHF's transformative programs are only possible thanks to our partnership with dedicated donors like you. As you consider making a tax-deductible donation to OHF to aid the Special Operations Community, do so with the confidence that **100% of your donation** will go toward supporting our programs. This unique assurance is possible because of the committed support of our board of directors, who personally cover every penny of OHF's overhead expenses. *That means every dollar you give will go directly toward special operators and their families.*

## Thank you for your support!



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 firsthand - clients served, volunteers and donors.

## FOLLOW US on Social Media



## Thank you for supporting Operation Healing Forces

### Comments? Questions?

Please tell us what you think about our quarterly newsletter. Direct questions, comments, or to unsubscribe, e-mail us at: [info@ophf.org](mailto:info@ophf.org) or by mail to:

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