



OHF INTEL

Spring 2026

A Quarterly Report from Operation Healing Forces.

To The Operation Healing Forces Organization,

I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the unwavering support you provide to the Special Operations community, and especially for the support you have shown my family.

I was first introduced to OHF in 2018 during a very challenging period in my life. At the time, I was struggling with chronic PTSD and TBI, and the uncertainty surrounding my future weighed heavily on both my family and me. OHF stepped in when we needed help the most and gave me the tools and support necessary to rediscover joy in life and be more present for my wife and children.

Although my symptoms significantly improved over time and my outlook became much more hopeful, I experienced a relapse of TBI symptoms two years ago. This led me to return for two months of outpatient treatment at a TBI clinic. Determined to continue improving my overall well-being, I reached out to OHF again after learning about a virtual mental health program. While I wasn't entirely sure what to expect, a brief conversation encouraged me to give it a try. That decision has proven to be a blessing for both my physical and mental health.

During this same period, my wife was also in need of support. For many years, she had been grinding her teeth in her sleep, which caused significant issues and discomfort. She required a proper mouth guard, but due to unexpected expenses with our vehicle and refrigerator, we were unable to afford one at the time. Once again, OHF stepped in—this time to support my wife's well-being. An OHF representative coordinated directly with the dentist to help us receive the care that our insurance was unable to provide.

Both my wife and I are incredibly grateful for the compassion, generosity, and dedication shown by OHF. Your continued support has made a meaningful difference in our lives, and we cannot thank you enough for all that you do

*With Sincere Appreciation,
Carlos and Hope Ordonez
Operation Healing Forces Alumni Family*

Celebrating 15 Years of Impact

Founded in 2011, Operation Healing Forces has spent the last 15 years Creating Bonds That Cure across the Special Operations Forces community. This milestone reflects the strength of every supporter, donor, partner, volunteer, and family member who has walked alongside this mission through the years.

To those who have been part of OHF since the beginning, and to those who joined along the way, thank you. Your belief in this mission has helped create lasting impact for SOF service members, veterans, and their families for the past 15 years and will continue to shape the future ahead.

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SUPPORTING CONFIDENCE AND GROWTH

When Giselle “Gigi” was just six years old, her family’s life changed in ways they never expected. What began with one seizure quickly turned into frequent seizures, countless medical appointments, specialist referrals, medication changes, and long nights filled with fear. After months of searching for answers, Gigi was diagnosed with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome, a rare and severe form of epilepsy that at one point caused up to 20 seizures a day.

For her mother, Eve, an active-duty service member balancing military responsibilities while caring for her family, the emotional weight became overwhelming. “There were nights where I’d cry myself to sleep because she was having seizures at night and I wasn’t sure if she would wake up the next morning,” Eve shared.

After a long referral process, Gigi was finally able to receive specialized treatment through Duke Children’s Hospital, where doctors recommended a vagus nerve stimulator to help regulate seizure activity. Slowly, signs of progress began to appear.

As the seizures became more manageable, the focus shifted from emergency medical care to helping Gigi move forward in school. The seizures and learning difficulties caused by Gigi’s condition had impacted both her academic progress and her confidence in herself and in the classroom. Specialized tutoring became an important part of helping her rebuild that confidence and continue learning alongside her peers. While the family



*“It’s a lot for a seven-year-old,” Eve said.
“I’m just so proud of her and how resilient she is.”*

worked to secure a scholarship that would provide long-term tutoring support, the immediate cost of those services created a significant financial strain.

During that critical time, Operation Healing Forces stepped in through the Immediate Needs Program to help cover the cost of tutoring, easing the financial burden on the family and ensuring Gigi could continue receiving the care and educational resources she needed without interruption.

At Operation Healing Forces, support extends beyond the service member alone. Military families often carry immense emotional, physical, and financial stress behind the scenes, especially when navigating medical crises involving a child. By caring for the entire family unit, OHF helps create stability during some of life’s most difficult moments, ensuring families feel supported, connected, and less alone.

While there are still appointments, procedures, and challenges ahead, Gigi’s family is moving forward with renewed strength and optimism. With continued support and the opportunity to keep learning, growing, and thriving, Gigi now has a brighter path ahead.



Joe and Olivia Monet enjoying time in the mountains during their Aspen retreat.

TIME WITHOUT THE LOGISTICS

For more than two decades, Joe Monet has served in the Special Operations community, spending much of his career deployed, planning complex operations, and operating at a relentless pace. As an Air Force Combat Controller turned Force Modernization leader within Air Force Special Operations Command, the demands of the mission rarely slow down.

Through every assignment, deployment, and transition, his wife Olivia has remained beside him. “Over the course of the career he’s gone so much,” Olivia shared. “There’s so much that you go through in this career field that you don’t talk about.”

After more than ten years of marriage and years spent moving from duty station to duty station, the couple finally returned home to Florida last summer. But even with a slower pace waiting at home, truly stepping away from the pressures of military life was not something that came easily.

“Being a Special Operator, you’re always switched on,” Joe explained.

That constant state of readiness is one reason Operation Healing Forces Therapeutic Retreats are intentionally designed to remove the burden of planning and logistics from participating couples. For many within the SOF community, careers are built around preparation, coordination, and carrying responsibility for others. Coming home to plan another trip or manage more details can feel overwhelming after years of operating in high-demand environments.

“One of the biggest things for me was not having to think about anything,” Joe said. “After a long day at work, I don’t want to come home and try to plan a trip. I’m just so bogged down.”

Their Therapeutic Couples Retreat in Aspen offered something different: uninterrupted time together, space to reconnect, and the opportunity to experience something that once felt far outside of reach financially.

“Without this opportunity, we would never be able to have those experiences,” Joe shared.

For Olivia, some of the most meaningful moments were found in the simplicity of being together. Learning to ski side by side, encouraging each other on the mountain, and experiencing a new adventure together created a sense of connection that military life had rarely allowed them the time to fully enjoy.

During the retreat, Olivia told Joe something he will never forget. “She told me it was one of the happiest and most at-peace versions of me she had ever seen.”

For the Monets, the retreat created space that military life rarely allows. Away from the constant pace of schedules, responsibilities, and operational demands, they were able to reconnect, experience something new together, and focus fully on one another.



Comfort That Promotes Healing: Jockey's Weighted Blanket Donation

A generous contribution from Jockey International, Inc. is bringing meaningful support to Special Operations Forces service members and veterans.

Earlier this spring, Operation Healing Forces received 100 weighted blankets from Jockey, each one intended to provide comfort and support for those navigating the lasting effects of service. Some of the plush, therapeutic blankets have already been provided to individuals in coordination with the Tampa VA Hospital system, with additional distributions to continue as others in-need are identified through OHF's SOAR program.

For many in the SOF community, quality sleep can be difficult to maintain. Weighted blankets provide gentle, even pressure that helps calm the nervous system and promote more consistent rest, offering a practical tool to support recovery and overall well-being.

"As we celebrate our 150th year as a company, we've had a longstanding commitment to support those who have served our country," said Jake McGhee, Vice President of New Business Development & Community at Jockey International, Inc. "We love the Operation Healing Forces mission to restore lives, strengthen families and honor sacrifice. We know that our weighted blankets can add that extra bit of comfort and support to those who need it, and this is a small way for us to say thank you to veterans who have given so much."

Each blanket represents a thoughtful investment in the well-being of those who have carried the weight of service. As they are placed into the hands of veterans, they will provide comfort in moments when it is needed most.



OHF team members prepare 100 weighted blankets for distribution as a resource to support comfort, stress relief, and overall well-being



OHF SOAR Program Manager Phillip Fong visited the Tampa VA, delivering weighted blankets to service members and veterans in need.



A Tampa Tradition with Purpose



Representatives from the Laxer Family Foundation present a check to Operation Healing Forces at the Tampa office.

An iconic Tampa tradition once again brought people together for something greater than the experience itself.

Hosted by the Laxer Family Foundation at its signature restaurants, Bern's Steak House and Haven, Whiskey Tampa Foxtrot blends culinary excellence with a clear sense of purpose. Through thoughtfully curated evenings, the series creates an environment where connection comes naturally and support takes on deeper meaning. This year, Operation Healing Forces was honored to be part of the experience as a beneficiary.

Behind the event is a foundation deeply rooted in community. Since 2018, the Laxer Family Foundation has focused on expanding opportunity for at-risk and aspiring youth, honoring U.S. veterans, and supporting the next generation of culinary talent. That commitment is reflected not only in their mission, but in the way they bring people together to support it.

As the Laxer Family Foundation shares, “Our desire to help our Veterans and provide opportunities to improve the lives of others in our community stem from our family's deep history rooted in Tampa Bay. We are honored to support locally, and beyond.”

That sense of local investment and shared responsibility carries throughout the Whiskey Tampa Foxtrot experience. Conversations unfold between courses. New connections are made. And a collective understanding takes shape around the importance of supporting those who serve, and the families who stand beside them.

Operation Healing Forces is grateful to the Laxer Family Foundation, and the teams at Bern's Steak House and Haven, for creating an experience that continues to bring purpose and people together.

Welcoming Frank Cole to the Operation Healing Forces Team



Operation Healing Forces proudly welcomes Frank Cole as OHF's new Deputy Director of Development

Frank brings more than two decades of experience shaped by military service, intelligence roles supporting U.S. missions abroad, and a deep personal commitment to the Special Operations community. His career, spanning military operations, intelligence assignments with the Defense Intelligence Agency, and leadership positions in the defense industry, gives him a unique understanding of the challenges SOF families face and the support they deserve.

Frank's journey of service began after 9/11, when he left the Merchant Marines to join the U.S. Air Force. Over the next 12 years, he served as a Combat Controller and Air Traffic Controller, supporting missions that demanded precision, teamwork, and resilience. He later contributed to intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations across Afghanistan, Iraq, and multiple regions of Africa, gaining firsthand insight into the realities faced by deployed service members. Frank continued his national security work as a civilian with the Defense Intelligence Agency, completing assignments at U.S. Embassies around the world.

After leaving government service, Frank transitioned into the private sector, where he helped lead business development and strategic growth efforts for both emerging technology firms and major defense contractors. His work centered on building partnerships, supporting complex programs, and connecting operational needs with innovative solutions. These experiences strengthened his belief that the people behind the mission, service members, veterans, families, and caregivers, deserve strong, consistent support long after service ends, especially when unseen wounds remain.

Frank's connection to the SOF community is deeply personal. He has volunteered with organizations that support veterans and families and has remained closely tied to the community that shaped him. At Operation Healing Forces, he brings that same sense of purpose to his work every day, helping build the partnerships and resources that ensure SOF families have the stability, healing, and support they need to thrive.



An Evening of Honor and Impact

This spring, Operation Healing Forces was honored to welcome hundreds of dedicated supporters, advocates, partners, and patriots to two unforgettable Evenings of Honor and Impact. These meaningful gatherings are made possible by those who champion OHF's mission, amplify the stories of the Special Operations Forces community, invite others to stand alongside the cause, and help raise awareness of the critical support these extraordinary families deserve.

In March, Operation Healing Forces welcomed former Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin to *An Evening of Honor and Impact – Naples*, where he shared perspectives on the evolving landscape of American foreign policy, leadership under pressure, and our collective responsibility as a nation to support those who continue to defend our nation.



In May, OHF hosted *An Evening of Honor and Impact – Chicago*, featuring a compelling panel discussion with OHF Board Member General Michael “Erik” Kurilla. Drawing from his experience leading some of the most consequential military operations of the modern era, including as Commander of U.S. Central Command, General Kurilla shared perspectives on Operation Midnight Hammer, global security challenges, and the extraordinary demands placed on today's Special Operations Forces community.

While each event featured distinct conversations and perspectives, both evenings were united by a shared purpose: strengthening the network of support surrounding Special Operations Forces service members, spouses, caregivers, and families while advancing the mission of Operation Healing Forces.

OHF now looks ahead to upcoming *Evening of Honor and Impact* events in Tampa and Richmond. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities or reserve a table, contact Courtney.Bilyeu@ophf.org

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

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 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.

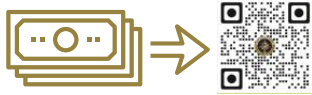
Donating stock to charity is as easy as calling your financial advisor and providing transfer instructions. To learn how to make a stock donation for Operation Healing Forces, visit <https://OperationHealingForces.org/Donate> or contact **Kerry Irvin** at kerry.irvin@ophf.org.

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 to find out how

OHF's Retreat Program and SOAR Program 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.

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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 or by mail to:

Operation Healing Forces
5100 West Kennedy Blvd, Suite 100, Tampa, FL 33609
(727) 221-5071



Creating Bonds That Cure
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