



2025 IMPACT REPORT

CREATING BONDS THAT CURE



Tony Markel
Vice Chairman

Gary Markel
Founder & Chairman

Kerry Irvin
Chief Executive Officer

To Our Partners in Purpose,

Every day, America's Special Operations Forces community continues to shoulder extraordinary burdens in service to our nation. Whether actively serving at the Tip of the Spear or carrying the lasting impacts of service long after the uniform comes off, service members, veterans, spouses, caregivers, children, and survivors face challenges few Americans will ever fully understand. It is our profound honor to walk alongside them on their journey toward healing, resilience, and renewed hope.

In 2025, Operation Healing Forces remained steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that no member of the Special Operations community faces crisis, healing, recovery, or reintegration alone. Through our continuum of care, we provided life-changing support to thousands of service members, veterans, caregivers, survivors, and family members across the nation.

One of the most significant accomplishments of the year was the continued growth of our **Special Operations Additional Resources (SOAR) Program**. As requests for immediate needs and crisis support reached unprecedented levels, OHF invested more than \$1 million in direct assistance to help individuals and families overcome urgent challenges ranging from mental health care and medical treatment to emergency travel, financial hardship, caregiver support, food insecurity, housing stability, and other critical needs. In many cases, our team was able to respond within hours, providing help at moments when it mattered most.

At the same time, our **Therapeutic Retreats Program** continued to serve as a cornerstone of healing and connection. Throughout the year, 55 retreats brought together Special Operations couples and Special Operations caregivers in environments designed to foster trust, resilience, and renewed hope. Through meaningful peer-to-peer connection and shared understanding, these retreats help strengthen bonds, deepen relationships, and remind participants that they are part of a community that understands their experiences, values their sacrifices, and stands ready to support them long after the retreat concludes.

While the numbers reflected throughout this report are important, they tell only part of the story. The true impact of Operation Healing Forces is found in the lives behind those numbers: a veteran in crisis who finds a pathway toward healing when all hope seems lost; a family that remains intact because support arrived at the moment it was needed most; a caregiver who discovers strength, connection, and understanding among others who share a similar journey; or a service member who gains access to life-changing care that restores hope for the future. These stories are the reason we do this work.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of our donors, partners, volunteers, and advocates. Your support allows us to meet the Special Operations community in moments of need, swiftly deliver life-changing programs and services, and ensure that those who have sacrificed so much in service to our nation never have to face hardships alone. We are equally grateful to our Board of Directors, whose commitment to covering 100% of all administrative and operational expenses ensures that **every dollar donated directly supports our programs and the people we serve**.

As we look toward the future, our mission remains unchanged. The needs within the Special Operations community continue to grow and evolve, and so does our determination to meet them. Together, we are **Creating Bonds That Cure™**, strengthening families, restoring hope, and ensuring that America's Quiet Professionals and their loved ones have access to the care, connection, and support they deserve.

Thank you for standing alongside us in this mission. Because of your generosity and belief in those we serve, healing happens, resilience is strengthened, and America's Special Operations families are reminded that they are never alone.

With gratitude,

Gary Markel
Founder & Chairman

Tony Markel
Vice Chairman

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Chief Executive Officer



ABOUT US

Their Lives Are Our Mission

Operation Healing Forces (OHF) serves the Special Operations Forces (SOF) community through programs that strengthen resilience, foster healing, and provide support during life's most challenging moments.

For more than two decades, America's Special Operations Forces have operated at the forefront of our nation's most complex security challenges. While the nature of global conflict continues to evolve, the demands placed on SOF service members and their families remain extraordinary. Today's SOF community faces a relentless operational tempo, rigorous training requirements, frequent separations, global deployments, and the unique pressures that come with serving in the nation's most elite military formations.

These challenges do not end when a deployment concludes or a service member transitions from active duty. The impacts are often felt across entire families and throughout every stage of the military journey.

Operation Healing Forces exists to ensure that these warriors, veterans, caregivers, and family members never face those challenges alone. Through therapeutic retreats, immediate needs assistance, wellness support, workforce development, transition resources, and a lifelong alumni network, OHF provides opportunities for healing, growth, connection, and hope.

Since our founding, OHF has proudly served thousands of members of the SOF community while investing millions of dollars in programs designed to strengthen families, improve well-being, and create lasting bonds that support long-term success and resilience.

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.

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.



WHO WE SERVE

America's Quiet Professionals: Strengthening the Force Behind the Mission

At the heart of our mission is a simple belief: when SOF families are strong, warriors are better equipped to thrive both in service and in life.



America's Special Operations Forces are entrusted with some of the nation's most critical and complex missions. Known as the "Quiet Professionals," these highly trained warriors operate around the globe in environments that demand exceptional skill, adaptability, and resilience.

While public attention often focuses on periods of active conflict, today's SOF community continues to serve in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex global environment. High operational demands, evolving threats, extensive training cycles, frequent relocations, and prolonged family separations remain a constant reality for many service members and their loved ones.

Behind every SOF warrior stands a network of spouses, children, caregivers, and family members who share in the sacrifices required to sustain mission readiness. These families navigate uncertainty, transitions, injuries, caregiving responsibilities, and the everyday challenges of balancing military service with family life.

Operation Healing Forces supports the entire SOF family through every phase of the journey—from active service and recovery to transition and beyond. Our programs are designed to strengthen resilience, promote wellness, foster meaningful connection, and provide support when it is needed most.



REINTEGRATION

Helping service members, veterans, and families navigate military life, transition, recovery, and life beyond service.



REHABILITATION

Providing resources, support, and opportunities that promote healing, growth, and long-term well-being.



RESILIENCE

Strengthening individuals, relationships, and families so they can thrive through life's challenges.

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.

SERVE

OHF serves America's SOF community through programs that provide critical support during times of hardship, crisis, recovery, and transition.

EMPOWER

OHF empowers SOF warriors and their families by providing resources, opportunities, and support systems that strengthen resilience and foster long-term success.



THERAPEUTIC RETREATS HEALING THROUGH CONNECTION



Operation Healing Forces conducts therapeutic retreats for Special Operations Forces (SOF) couples and caregivers at locations across the United States—and in select global regions near where SOF personnel are stationed—completely free of charge to participants. Each retreat is led by a SOF veteran, spouse, or caregiver whose shared experiences foster trust, understanding, and meaningful peer connection.

Designed to strengthen relationships, promote resilience, and support long-term well-being, OHF retreats provide participants with a dedicated opportunity to step away from the demands of military service and caregiving responsibilities to focus on themselves, their families, and their future.

While many participants arrive seeking relief from the cumulative effects of deployments, operational demands, injuries, caregiving responsibilities, or transition-related stress, they often leave with something even more valuable—a renewed sense of hope, stronger relationships, and a community of support that extends far beyond the retreat experience.

At the conclusion of each retreat, participants become part of the OHF Alumni Network, gaining access to ongoing wellness resources, family-focused programming, alumni events, and opportunities for continued connection and support throughout every stage of the SOF journey.



RETREAT IMPACT AT A GLANCE

55 RETREATS
CONDUCTED
IN 2025

399
Therapeutic
Couples Retreats
Since Inception

24
Therapeutic
Caregiver Retreats
Since 2019

3,192
Couples
Served

96
Caregivers
Served

1,096
Individuals
Served

“The struggles of transitioning from the military are real. There is an overwhelming sense of loss... community, tribe, purpose. To have the opportunity to participate in one of these retreats provided by OHF has been life-changing.”

- The Oroskos,
OHF retreat alumni





SOF COUPLES RETREATS STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS

OHF's Couples Retreats provide Special Operations Forces couples with an opportunity to reconnect, strengthen communication, and invest in the health of their relationship. Through peer connection, restorative experiences, and shared understanding, participants build resilience and strengthen the foundation of their family.

Participants leave with:

- Stronger communication and connection
- Renewed trust and understanding
- Practical tools to support long-term relationship health
- Meaningful relationships with others who understand the unique realities of SOF life
- Increased resilience and confidence to navigate challenges together
- A lasting connection to the OHF Alumni Network and ongoing support resources

“ Finding ways to stay connected when you're across the world has been the hardest part, and eventually it led to a separation. Going on this retreat saved our marriage. For the first time in four years we could actually focus on each other and see the love we have for each other at our core. ”

- Nicholas and Kyndra Hayden

2025 SURVEY RESULTS



Over 99%
reported improved communication with their spouse following the OHF retreat.



97%
reported continued improvements following the OHF retreat, six months to once year after.



100%
would recommend Operation Healing Forces to other SOF couples.



96%
believe that the peer-to-peer exchange during the retreat aided in their personal recovery.



96%
believe that outdoor recreational activities aided in their personal recovery.



96%
reported increased confidence participating in recreational activities following the OHF retreat.



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



97%
learned of new benefits or resources available to their families on the retreat.



CAREGIVER RETREATS: HONORING HIDDEN HEROES

Operation Healing Forces developed Therapeutic Caregiver Retreats to provide rest, renewal, and connection for the caregivers who quietly serve as the backbone of the Special Operations Forces community.

Whether supporting a wounded, ill, injured, or transitioning service member or veteran, caregivers often balance extraordinary responsibilities while managing families, careers, and their own personal well-being.

These retreats offer a dedicated space for caregivers to step away from daily demands, connect with others who understand their experiences, and focus on their own healing and wellness.

Through peer support, restorative activities, and meaningful connection, participants build resilience, find renewed hope, and gain access to resources that strengthen both themselves and the families they serve.

By caring for caregivers, OHF helps strengthen the entire SOF family and reinforces the bonds that support long-term healing, wellness, and resilience.



“

In those few days, I found more than just rest. I found connection, shared strength, and healing in the presence of others who walk a similar path. This included the unspoken sacrifices, the long nights, the constant unknowns. There was comfort in not having to explain and only to be understood.

”

- Colleen Fink,
SOF Spouse





SOAR PROGRAM: SUPPORTING FAMILIES THROUGH CRISIS, RECOVERY, AND BEYOND

Operation Healing Forces' Special Operations Additional Resources (SOAR) Program serves as a vital source of support for the Special Operations Forces community, helping service members, veterans, caregivers, and families navigate times of hardship, transition, and growth.

At the heart of SOAR is the Immediate Needs Program (INP), which provides rapid, compassionate assistance to wounded, ill, injured, and Fallen SOF service members, veterans, and their families.

Whether facing a medical emergency, unexpected financial hardship, family crisis, or significant life transition, SOF families can access critical support when they need it most.

Recognizing that long-term well-being requires more than emergency assistance alone, SOAR has grown to include resources that strengthen the entire family unit. Participants may access workforce development and transition support, financial wellness resources, personalized wellness coaching, and connections to trusted community partners who can help address physical, emotional, relational, and financial challenges.

To further strengthen these efforts, OHF expanded its team with the addition of an Alumni and Wellness Coordinator, creating new opportunities for continued engagement and support long after an immediate need has been met. Through alumni events, wellness initiatives, family-focused programming, peer connection, and ongoing resource navigation, OHF is building a stronger network of support that promotes resilience, stability, and lasting well-being across every stage of the SOF journey.

Today, SOAR is more than an emergency assistance program—it is a pathway to hope, healing, and connection that helps ensure no member of the Special Operations Forces community has to face life's challenges alone.



SINCE 2019

4,270
Immediate Needs
Cases Completed

11,750
SOF Community
Members Served

14,000+
Projected to be Served
by End of 2026

SOAR IMPACT

2025 IMPACT

975
Immediate
Needs Cases

1,900
Family Members
Served

\$998,243
in Direct Assistance

Rapid Response Support, Often Within 24 Hours

SOAR Success Story

As Gabe Huerta and his family navigated one of the most challenging chapters of their lives following his heart transplant surgery, Operation Healing Forces provided critical support through its SOAR Program. Facing significant emotional, physical, and financial demands, Huerta received adaptive equipment and financial assistance that helped ease immediate burdens and provided stability for his family during a time of uncertainty.

“

Your commitment to serving veterans and their families is more than admirable—it's life-changing. You didn't just offer resources; you offered hope, dignity, and a reminder that we weren't alone. That kind of impact is immeasurable.

”

- Veteran Gabe Huerta



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Operation Healing Forces believes that strong communities create stronger families. As the needs of the Special Operations Forces community continue to evolve, building meaningful connections between those we serve and those who support our mission remains essential.

Through strategic outreach, partnerships, volunteer engagement, alumni involvement, and public awareness efforts, OHF cultivates a growing network of advocates dedicated to supporting the long-term well-being of SOF service members, veterans, caregivers, and their families.

OHF staff, alumni, Board Members, National Advisory Council representatives, and community partners work together to expand resources, strengthen relationships, and create opportunities that promote resilience, connection, and hope.



Together, we are building a stronger community of support for those who have dedicated their lives to serving our nation.



RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

At Operation Healing Forces, we recognize that every donation represents a profound act of trust. We are committed to honoring that trust through responsible stewardship, financial transparency, and an unwavering focus on maximizing impact for the Special Operations Forces community.

Each year, OHF undergoes an independent financial audit conducted by a respected external accounting firm, ensuring accountability and adherence to the highest standards of nonprofit management.

What makes OHF truly unique is the commitment of our Board of Directors, who cover all administrative and fundraising expenses associated with operating the organization. As a result, **100% of every public donation directly supports the programs and services** that strengthen, heal, and empower Special Operations Forces service members, veterans, caregivers, and their families.

From crisis assistance and therapeutic retreats to wellness resources and family support programs, every dollar entrusted to OHF is invested in creating meaningful, lasting impact for those who have sacrificed so much in service to our nation.

2025 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

REVENUE & SUPPORT	
Total Revenue and Support	\$6,952,479
PROGRAM INVESTMENTS	
Therapeutic Retreats	\$3,966,279
SOAR	\$1,863,782
Total Program Services	\$5,830,061
Total Overhead Expenses	\$1,114,566
Total Expenses	\$6,944,627
Year-End Net Assets	\$2,437,363



RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

Operation Healing Forces is honored to be recognized by leading nonprofit evaluators for our commitment to transparency, accountability, financial stewardship, and program effectiveness.



These distinctions reflect our commitment to ensuring that every donor dollar is managed responsibly and invested in programs that strengthen, heal, and empower the Special Operations Forces community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gary Markel,
OHF Chair

Anthony “Tony” Markel,
OHF Vice Chair

Robert McBride,
OHF Secretary

Robert Mizell,
OHF Treasurer

Ronald Campbell

Chris Caughran

John “JD” Dolan II

Royce Imhoff II

Michael “Erik” Kurilla

Brian Leclerc

Joshua Onyschuk

Bryan Sanders

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Operation Healing Forces’ National Advisory Council is composed of distinguished military leaders, veterans, business professionals, and advocates who provide strategic guidance, expertise, and support in advancing OHF’s mission.

James Attkisson

Lieutenant General (Ret.) Fran Beaudette

Major General (Ret.) John Borling

Christopher Carroll

James Chadwick

Jean Cloutier

Dani Cooper

Curtis “Curt” Donaldson

Dan Doyle, Jr.

Peter Jacobsen

Sebastian Junger

Mary Paige Kurilla

Brock Miller

Cynthia P. Schwarzkopf

General (Ret.) Raymond A. “Tony” Thomas, III

IN MEMORY OF KEITH LECLERC

Operation Healing Forces honors the life and legacy of Keith Leclerc, a dedicated member of our Board of Directors whose belief in this mission and the Special Operations Forces families we serve left a lasting mark on our organization.

Keith’s steady leadership, generosity, and unwavering support helped strengthen Operation Healing Forces and advance our commitment to wounded, ill, and injured Special Operations Forces service members, veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors. More than a board member, he was a trusted friend and advocate who cared deeply about the people behind our mission.

Keith’s legacy will continue to inspire our work, and we remain profoundly grateful for the time, wisdom, and heart he shared with Operation Healing Forces. He will be deeply missed and forever remembered.



1954 - 2025

HELP US CONTINUE CREATING BONDS THAT CURE™

WAYS TO SUPPORT

- Donate
- Become a Monthly Supporter
- Attend an Event
- Sponsor a Retreat
- Volunteer
- Share Our Mission

DONATE





OPERATION HEALING FORCES

5100 West Kennedy Boulevard, Suite 100
Tampa, Florida 33609

info@ophf.org

(727) 631-9713

operationhealingforces.org



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