

2016

Annual Report



LETTER TO SUPPORTERS

It is ancient wisdom that we never really know what stuff we're made of until we are forced to contend with difficulties. It's easy to shine when things are going well, but when the tide turns against us and our best laid plans come apart, we have to reach down deep inside and tap that inner reservoir of strength we are endowed with by our creator to see us through hard times.

Young men and women returning from the battlefields bearing grievous wounds – physical, psychological or both – know of which I speak. They knew they were going in harm's way and that injury was very possible, but no one can truly anticipate the gravity of serious injuries until they become reality. They have to reach down deep inside to find the strength to carry on.

This reality is true of them and it is also true of us – those of us who are committed to helping wounded veterans work their way through readjustment to civilian life, acquiring the skills they need to find useful and rewarding employment, dealing with missing limbs and scars they acquired in Afghanistan or Iraq, and perhaps toughest of all – learning to cope with the trauma that impairs their ability to deal with daily challenges.

Post-traumatic stress is emerging as the most persistent and debilitating of all the battlefield legacies. In an op-ed for The Washington Times I wrote that, "Combat stress is brutal and no one who hasn't experienced it can imagine what it is like. The daily stress, the constant explosions, the sight of comrades being blown apart, the uncertainty of knowing when your own time will come – all begin to gnaw. People that are subjected to this stress for a long period of time begin to develop a blank stare as if they were adrift in another dimension, aloof to their surroundings."

In The Hill I noted the alarming rate of suicide among veterans – about 20 per day. The Veterans Administration has hired 5,300 new mental health providers "but the unprecedented pressures on our volunteer service members being sent back to the war zone again and again suggest strongly that we will be contending with increasing

pathologies associated with post-traumatic stress for many years to come."

We of the Coalition have done yeoman's work. Today the charity rating agencies give us high marks, ranking us among the best of the best. We are proud of this progress but our revenues continue to decline. In fact, all of the charities focused on veterans report drop-offs in public support, some of them by substantial margins. There is a general perception that the wars are winding down and the need is not as great as it was. This is part of a much broader pattern. Support for virtually all charities across the board is significantly down for a variety of reasons I find difficult to explain.

We have serious work to do. To the extent support of groups like ours is on the wane because of a perceived decline of need that perception is off the mark. The reality is that while our medical establishment can and does take remarkably good care of the physical injuries suffered by military personnel, it has not come up with effective treatments for post-traumatic stress. Indeed, there is increasing evidence that for many of our wounded this stress gets worse over time and continues to manifest itself several years out. Thus we have this troubling surge of suicides among veterans – especially wounded veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress. The passage of time brings them little relief.

We are in the trenches doing all we can to provide assistance and support to our wounded veterans who need and deserve our aid. I hope and trust that in time the need for our services will decline, but for now it continues to increase. All of which leaves us struggling to provide support services to those in need with declining revenues. We need your help today more than ever.

Respectfully Yours,

David W. Walker
President and Chief Executive Officer



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YEAR IN REVIEW

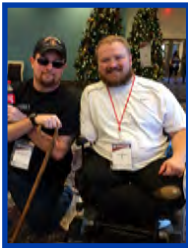
In 2016, the Coalition was once again front and center at a variety of public events around the country publicizing the plight of wounded veterans and rallying support for them. We were at the nation's largest Memorial Day event – a grand parade in Washington, D.C. Our President and CEO David Walker joined actors Gary Sinise and Joe Mantegna, and legendary astronaut Buzz Aldrin. Walker made a speech prior to the parade which was broadcast to troops stationed around the globe



and to 1.5 million national TV viewers through 400 unique media outlets. Hundreds of thousands of people line the avenues of our nation's capitol every year to observe the parade and honor veterans. The highlight was our award of \$12,000 to Marissa Strock, a double amputee from Michigan, who was grievously injured by an IED in Iraq. Marissa may have lost her legs but she has not lost her patriotism or spirit. She told us, **"Thank you [Coalition] for making it possible to have a place to live while I work towards accomplishing my goal...I want to be able to help other people with similar injuries train and stay active."**

In November we commemorated Veterans Day by joining with the American Veterans Center in Washington, D.C. There Mary Herrera and Rob Jones participated in panel discussions of how wounded veterans learn to cope with not only the pain of their wounds but also the impact of psychological impairment. The Coalition team was incredibly busy across the nation on November 11. Jil Hinds and Coalition ambassador Jack Scalia paid tribute at the Georgia Veterans Day Parade and Freedom Ball in Atlanta. Mary Herrera and Marty Badegian teamed up for multiple events honoring veterans in Tuscon, Arizona, while Donny Daughenbaugh, Matthew Pennington, Rob Jones and Shilo Harris joined forces in northern Virginia for the Coalition's Annual Veterans Day fundraiser.

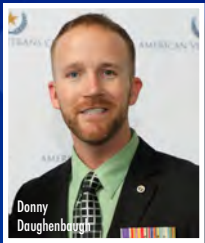
By popular acclaim, our 2016 Road to Recovery Conference & Tribute (R2R) in Orlando Dec. 12-15, was the best ever. More than 250 applied for the 90 available slots. With their families they totaled more than 400 people. This event – where veterans connect with each other and draw strength from each other – is a life changer. **"It has been a life changing and inspiring week! My family's take away from this event is that we can overcome our difficulties and we cannot let anything stop us from living life to the fullest."** - 2016 R2R Attendee



We again participated in the prestigious annual Hollywood Christmas Parade. There Jill Hinds and Mary Herrera joined actor Jack Scalia in a celebrity car, and our Nashville friend, Cassidy Diana, rocked the red carpet in our honor. Also our holiday meal and Secret Santa gift check programs disbursed nearly 1,100 checks to severely disabled veterans in need during the holidays.

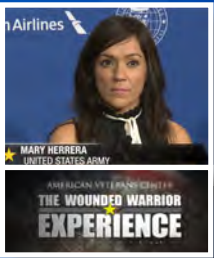


The credibility and influence of the Coalition is demonstrated and enhanced by the star-studded array of celebrities – movie and TV stars, athletes, comedians and music industry heavyweights – who donate their time, energy and reputations to record public service announcements (PSAs) on our behalf that are carried on radio, TV and digital networks all over the country. In 2016, we released messages from – Kelsey Grammer, William H. Macy, Bebe Neuwirth, Craig T. Nelson and Katharine McPhee.



"It is refreshing to be a part of a group that does what they say they will do."
- Actor,
Robert Patrick

"The Coalition stepped in and changed my life in two days. They took me from a place of despair to sustainability."
- Veteran,
Assal Ravandi



The Coalition has appealed to thousands of federal workers through CFC presentations and we are among an exclusive group that is represented globally in CFC Overseas.



EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

The Coalition has long recognized that the most vital service we can provide to wounded warriors is to help them find transition and find productive employment in the private sector. This is critical not only in terms of helping them earn a living and support their families, but also in terms of their sense of self-worth.

To the fullest extent possible, the Coalition provides employment opportunities, both full and part-time, directly to wounded vets. More than two-thirds of our employees are wounded veterans or their primary caregiver. They are exemplary employees and predictably they bring a unique understanding to the challenges faced by the people we are here to help.



Karen Stang, CVR
Northrop Grumman

At previous R2R conferences we have consistently included job fairs where experts from government and the private sector offer guidance to severely disabled veterans seeking employment. In 2016, we ratcheted this program up a notch by bringing in prospective employers that offered

personalized career support and had immediate job openings.

By closely partnering with Northrop Grumman's Operation Impact Network of Champions and receiving invaluable support from the DoD Recruitment Division, the job fair was a huge success. Some 124 wounded veterans (and spouses) applied for jobs of whom 31 were granted on-the-spot interviews. Four job offers were made and another 64 offers were projected to be made at a later date (after subsequent interviews – the standard employment process). The prospective employers had nothing but praise for the quality of the applicants.

Attendees were also able to obtain help with resumes and partake in a career assessment workshop provided by Operation IMPACT (Injured Military Pursuing Assisted Career Transition). This is a unique, award-winning, diversity program within Northrop Grumman that focuses on assisting wounded veterans as they transition from the military to the private-sector.



Mark Escherich TSA Rep.
with R2R Attendee

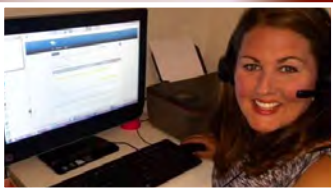
HEROES THANKING HEROES PROGRAM



Director, Asst. Director and
Membership Manager



HTH Representatives at 2016 R2R Event



Representative at Work

2016 marked the tenth year of the Heroes Thanking Heroes program which provides transitional part-time, flexible employment to wounded veterans or their primary caregivers, enabling them to make phone calls from their homes, most often to personally thank donors. Qualified participants obtain basic training and experience, thereby preparing them for other potential jobs. Since its inception, over 225 disabled veterans or their caregivers have participated and they have been responsible for over 1.6 million completed calls.

"If it was not for the Heroes Thanking Heroes (HTH) program giving me a job working from home, I would not have been able to find any employment."
-James Davis, disabled veteran

"I am not alone anymore! One of my greatest blessings was to become a part of the Heroes Thanking Heroes Team. It helped me realize I am not alone going through this after journey of war with my husband." -Jessica Temple, wife of wounded veteran



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT:

Cash Contributions	\$ 12,023,945
Gifts in Kind	\$ 4,011,158
Unrealized Gain on Investments	\$ 52,377
Realized Gain on Investments	\$ 983
Dividend and Interest Income	\$ 72,011
Other Income	\$ 274,844
Total Revenue, Gains and Other Support	\$ 16,435,318

EXPENSES:

Total Program Services	\$ 10,810,061
Fundraising	\$ 3,672,497
Management and General	\$ 1,180,887
Total Expenses	\$ 15,663,445

The Coalition 2016 Audited Financial Statement is available on request by contacting us at info@saluteheroes.org or writing to: Coalition to Salute America's Heroes
552 Fort Evans Road, Suite 300, Leesburg, VA 20176
A copy of the current Coalition IRS Form 990 can be viewed at www.saluteheroes.org



Tune into the Coalition's radio program hosted by Emmy-nominated actor Jack Scalia

www.radioactivebroadcasting.com
"Today's American Veteran." Or you can go to www.saluteheroes.org/todays-american-veteran-radio-program/



Special guests include: Dr. Ben Carson, Frank Stallone, Karri Turner, Col. Allen West, Barry Foote, Stephanie Krammer, Rep. Ryan Zinke, Larry Manetti, Boone Cutler and many more



"Wounded veterans are not getting a fair break, it's much too difficult for them when they come home with serious injuries to try to raise their families and pay the rent or mortgage and other bills. I think if you are a real red, white and blue American, you always want to contribute." - Actress, Raquel Welch

COALITION IN THE NEWS



The death toll rises (Excerpt)

July, 2016 op-ed by:
David W. Walker

We know also that just because a veteran returns from the battle without visible physical wounds, that does not mean he or she is safe and secure.

A few years ago, a Rand Corporation study predicted that more than 300,000 veterans would be impacted by PTS related to the war on terror. That study did not anticipate that the war on terror, particularly our military commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq, would continue with no end in sight. A salient conclusion of the Rand study was that the PTS would manifest itself in counterproductive behavior such as alcohol abuse, drug dependency, marital stress, criminal behavior and even suicide.

Now we have in hand a new study from the Veterans Administration (VA) concluding that

as of 2014, 20 veterans are committing suicide every day. That adds up to 7,400 veterans taking their own lives. That accounts for 18% of all suicides in the country, though veterans make up less than 9% of the overall population.

And the suicide rate is rising. From 2001 to 2014, the civilian suicide rate rose about 23.3%, but the suicide rate for veterans jumped more than 32%. The unprecedented pressures on our volunteer soldiers being sent back to the battlefields again and again suggest strongly that we will be contending with increasing pathologies associated with PTS for many years to come. The chosen few who shoulder the burden of our nation's defense are paying a stiff price for their patriotism – a price we are only now beginning to recognize.



SURVIVE. RECOVER. REBUILD.

THE COALITION IN ACTION

We devote considerable effort to addressing the needs of the wounded veterans we serve and our many programs designed to help them cope, but through all this we tend to omit another significant aspect of our work – THE FUN WE HAVE. Our work is so rewarding because of the people we meet; those who have sacrificed so much for our country, the spouses and caregivers who work with them and the many donors and supporters who share their time and resources. Everyone comes together with abundant good humor and optimism united in their shared values and objectives.



FIELD MANAGEMENT TEAM

Donny Daughenbaugh, USMC (Ret.)
Vice President, Field Operations

Jorge De Leon, U.S. Army (Ret.)
Field Representative, West

Mary Jessie Herrera, U.S. Army (Ret.)
Field Representative, West

Jil Hinds, U.S. Army National Guard veteran
Field Representative, Southeast

Shilo Harris, U.S. Army (Ret.)
National Spokesperson

Col. Martin L. Badegian, U.S. Army Res. (Ret.)
Special Projects Officer

Rob Jones, USMC (Ret.)
Field Representative

SURVIVE. RECOVER. REBUILD.

COALITION ANSWERS THE CALL

The mission of the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes is to help severely-wounded veterans and families of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn and Operation Inherent Resolve recover from their injuries and illnesses, and to inspire other organizations and the general public to participate in this effort.



2016 DONATIONS MARCHING ONWARD

EMERGENCY FINANCIAL AID

We help severely disabled veterans meet a wide range of day-to-day urgent financial needs – particularly if they are waiting for their disability benefits to begin or have lost income because their spouse or parent had to quit working to become their caregiver. This aid is used to cover pressing basic expenses such as:

- ★ Utility bills
- ★ Mortgage and rent
- ★ Food and necessities
- ★ Car payments/repairs
- ★ Medical bills
- ★ Home maintenance

\$290K



HOLIDAY MEALS

\$283K



HOUSING

\$93K



FOOD, UTILITIES
& GAS

\$124K



AUTO REPAIRS &
PAYMENTS

EMERGENCY AID MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our primary mission is to provide direct financial support to wounded veterans returning from the battlefields who must wait for months to receive their benefits, and often find themselves unable to pay for the basics – food, rent, car payments, medical bills, kids' clothing, etc. We verify the applicants and process payments quickly. (For the sake of their privacy, we do not give their full names.) Some examples of aid requested and fulfilled in 2016:

- ★ Army veteran Anthony F. from Tucson, Arizona was medically retired after losing a limb during combat in Iraq. He desperately needed \$595.00 for food and overdue bills.
- ★ Retired Army SSG Stephen M. from Colorado Springs, Colorado was paralyzed while serving in Afghanistan. He called asking for \$2,219.34 to pay his rent, auto repairs and overdue utility bills.
- ★ USMC LCpl Jesse B. from Spokane, Washington suffers from severe PTS after serving in Iraq. He asked for \$428.83 for urgent auto repairs.

- ★ Retired Army SSG Cassandra A. from Tennille, Georgia was paralyzed while serving in Afghanistan. She asked for \$629.18 to avoid eviction.
- ★ Disabled Army Pvt. Tyree H. from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma suffers from severe PTS after serving in Iraq. He needed \$3,508.47 to avoid homelessness.

"Thank you so much for helping me in 2016. Especially with my vehicle repairs to get to my medical appointments." SSG Karl M., U.S. Army (Ret.)

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COALITION PROGRAMS



2016 Scholarship Recipient

VETERAN CIRCLE MEMBERSHIP

A free membership designed to provide a network for America's combat-wounded troops. Qualified members receive numerous benefits including: being eligible for holiday meal and gift checks, receiving updates of events and employment options across the nation, special discounts, scholarship opportunities and the ability to communicate with other disabled veterans in a private environment.

EXPANDING AWARENESS

A major thrust of the Coalition's work is and must be raising awareness of the critical needs faced by many wounded veterans who often must wait months or even years to receive the benefits to which they are entitled. Therefore we engage in a variety of events such as parades, festivals, community events and assorted media appearances described in this publication. We also enlist celebrities who record and share public service messages for the Coalition.

RECREATIONAL OUTINGS AND EXPEDITIONS

The Coalition organizes sporting events, outdoor expeditions and a host of activities that provide wounded veterans time to recreate and interact with their peers who are also overcoming their injuries.

PUBLIC INTERACTION

The Coalition informs millions of Americans about the needs of our veterans and how they can help through its direct mail program. The Thank You Card Program distributes hundreds of thousands of cards each year to

wounded troops. We also encourage the public to ask Congress for more adequate financial assistance and compassionate treatment for injured service members.



Field Rep. Sgt. Mary Herrera

GIFT IN KIND

Our relationship with other non-profit organizations allows us to be the key factor in facilitating the disbursement of donated goods. In 2016, we partnered with Feed the Children and successfully distributed over 80,000 books and food items to military bases across the nation.

GRANT PROGRAM

The Coalition provides direct funding to thousands of wounded veterans in need, and also offers grants to other organizations that support disabled veterans and their families in a variety of ways. We have a dedicated committee that reviews monetary endowments to other groups that reflect our own priorities. An example is our continuing support of the Rocky Mountain Hyperbaric Association for Brain Injuries. In 2016 we gave them a \$10,000 grant, for a total of \$50,000 over the past two years. Studies have shown that hyperbaric therapy is very effective in treating traumatic brain injuries and post-concussive syndrome. We also donated \$10,000 to Hero Homes, (pictured below), a housing project for



combat-wounded veterans in Virginia. Followed by a second grant to Dog Tag Bakery, a veteran training and employment program in Washington, D.C.

COALITION FRIENDS:

Danny Aiello
Jason Alexander
Ashley Bell
Jack Black
Lynda Carter
Tim Conway
Larry Csonka

Charlie Daniels
Tony Danza
Jamie Farr
Jeff Foxworthy
Kelsey Grammer
Lee Greenwood
Charles Grodin
Valerie Harper

Felicity Huffman
Tommy Lasorda
Brenda Lee
William H. Macy
Joe Mantegna
Katharine McPhee
Craig T. Nelson
Jack Nicklaus

Oak Ridge Boys
Robert Patrick
Burt Reynolds
Kenny Rogers
Jack Scalia
J. K. Simmons
Joe Theismann
Rusty Wallace



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