

VAIL VETERANS PROGRAM

2018 YEAR IN REVIEW



MISSION

Provide military injured and their families with innovative and transformational programs that build confidence and improve lives.

VISION

To cultivate a nationwide community of injured Veterans and their families that provides innovative, world-class programs, rooted in the mountains, to strengthen lifelong relationships and reinforce purposeful lives.



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FOUNDER LETTER

Vail Veterans Program commemorated its 15 Year Anniversary on March 7, 2019 with a special dinner held at the Vail Fire Department attended by First Responders, Veterans, adaptive ski instructors and volunteers for an evening of inspiration. In 2004, our first program hosted seven wounded warriors from Walter Reed Army Hospital. The last evening of that event, Staff Sgt. Heath Calhoun expressed his feelings about the week in Vail, "I am not sure why you all did this for us but you changed my life," said Calhoun. Those words provided insight into the healing power of our program. The mission of Vail Veterans Program is as important today as it was in 2004 as we continue to provide innovative and transformational programs for Veterans and their families.

In our 2018 Annual Report, you will see how the diversity of our programming is providing lasting and positive impacts on Veterans as they strive to find a "new normal" after a life-changing injury. Our foundation is helping to renew hope, strengthen families and improve the lives of our Nation's Heroes.

As our foundation looks to the future we will continue to provide the highest standard of programming for Veterans and their families. We believe our strength and uniqueness, as an organization, is the ability to evolve to meet the changing needs of our Nation's Heroes and their families.

Ryan Kelly attended our first program in 2004 and returned for the 15 year celebration dinner on March 7, 2019. Ryan shared what his experience meant to him in 2004, "Learning to ski and snowboard after losing my leg in Iraq in 2003 was an incredible opportunity, but the true transformational part of Vail Veterans Program was the confidence this physical challenge instilled in me to pursue other goals after my injury. Without a doubt the self-confidence played a major role in paving the way for me pursuing my current profession as a helicopter pilot and for setting my personal life goals higher than I would have ever imagined prior to my injury," said Kelly.

As we commemorate our 15th Anniversary, I want to thank our generous donors and partners, as well as our dedicated staff and volunteers; your commitment is making a difference in many lives.

With Sincere Gratitude,
Cheryl Jensen



Cheryl congratulates Retired SSGT Heath Calhoun and his daughter at the 2010 Vancouver Paralympic Games.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER

In 2019 we are celebrating the 15th Anniversary of Vail Veterans Program. Cheryl Jensen's vision was simple - provide a path to healing rooted in the heart of the Rocky Mountains.

In the following pages, you'll find how that simple vision evolved into the programs that we see today, providing support for not only wounded Veterans, but also their caregivers and children. You will also find stories, statistics, and highlights that paint a picture of what your generous support has made possible over the last year.

Since 2004, the words of Heath Calhoun have echoed throughout the years. A 2019 Winter Mountain Adventure participant recently shared with us, "I'm sure you hear it a lot, but that week really did change my life." In the last 15 years, there have been many similar life-changing stories from over 3,000 wounded Veterans and their families that have had the opportunity to discover their path forward, find inspiration and belonging, and create a community of mutual support.

None of these stories would have been possible without our staff, supporters, volunteers, and partners that embody the fundamental characteristics of family that define the organization. But I want to especially thank our founder, Cheryl Jensen, who built the one-time ski trip into the organization that you see today, and who has earned the unending gratitude and respect of the entire VVP family.

More so than anything else, I've been amazed by the profound outpouring of generosity and kindness that the Vail community represents. That is truly what sets this organization apart. It is my great privilege to work alongside so many like-minded individuals and partners.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Humphreys



Retired SGT Carla Best excited to hit the slopes with the assistance of Vail Adaptive Ski Instructors and Lindsay Humphreys.

AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT

Vail Veterans Program (VVP) is life-changing for our wounded Veterans and their families. I first heard of the program while my husband was an inpatient at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 2015 after he stepped on an IED and lost both of his legs. He came to me so excited that our family would be going to attend the Vail Winter Program. At that time, he was not medically cleared to attend so he set a goal in physical therapy to get well enough to attend the program. We first attended the Winter Mountain Adventure program in March 2016 where my husband re-learned not only downhill skiing, but gave cross-country skiing a try as well. As a wife, it was such an emotional moment to be able to ski beside my husband. I saw something inside him shift as he regained confidence and realized that his injury would not hold him back. We also attended the Summer Family Program where we participated in numerous adaptive activities including rock climbing, fly fishing, whitewater rafting, and horseback riding.

As a caregiver, life is never easy. VVP recognizes this and offers Caregivers Retreats and the Caregivers Reunion program to all caregivers. The activities are designed to challenge us and help us find better ways to navigate our unique situations. We were able to go zip lining, hiking, practice yoga, and have a spa day. The most valuable gift the program gave us was a connection to other caregivers throughout the country, building lasting friendships and a strong support network.

VVP continues to grow and expand as the wounded Veteran and caregiver community changes and grows. I am forever grateful for my time at the Vail Veterans Programs, from the confidence they gave my husband, to the unforgettably fun activities, and the cherished friendships I have made. Thank you to all those who support VVP.

- Veteran HM2 (SAR) Julie Bologna, wife of Retired Navy Seal Harold Bologna



Our work has been transforming lives for 15 years!



15 YEAR MILESTONES

In 2003, just months after the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the number of military service injuries dramatically increased. VVP Founder, Cheryl Jensen, felt compelled to find a meaningful way to provide support to service members who were injured. Recognizing the powerful impact of adaptive sports on people with physical and invisible injuries, Jensen wanted to offer these recently wounded Veterans the opportunity to heal through adaptive sports in the uniquely empowering mountain environment. She partnered with then Army Captain Dave Rozelle, who had just lost his leg while serving in Iraq. Together, they secured funds to cover all costs associated with hosting patients of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. In March of 2004, the very first winter program took place in Vail, CO.



WINTER MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE

Fourteen years ago, US Marine Chris Fesmire laid in a hospital bed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center where he had just arrived from being severely injured by an IED during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Two hours into his stay at the hospital he was joined by two special visitors, Cheryl Jensen and Captain Dave Rozelle. They handed him a Vail ski area trail map and invited him to their newly formed organization that was teaching our Nation's Heroes how to ski and snowboard. Despite the fact that Chris had arrived to Walter Reed missing both of his legs, he sat up in bed and reviewed the map determined to be in Vail four months later. The day Chris arrived in Colorado for the 2nd Vail Veterans Program in 2005 was a day that changed the direction of his life forever. Chris fell in love with skiing, mountain biking and the healing environment of the beautiful Rocky Mountains which he has called home for the last 10 years.

The Winter Mountain Adventure program started as a small ski and snowboard program in 2004 and has grown to host 36 wounded Veterans, 22 family members and six military hospital staff in 2018.



*"The Vail Veterans Program saved my life. Without it, I'm not sure where I would be."
- Retired Marine Corps Sergeant Chris Fesmire*

*"VVP began as a one-time event, but the strength of our program over the last 15 years is based on forming relationships between our service members and their families. Our participants are empowered by each program they attend as they discover their own path to success."
- US Army Lieutenant Colonel David Rozelle, VVP Board Member.*

*"The commitment of our supporters to this special program has been instrumental in changing the lives of these injured heroes and has created a strong bond with the well over 3,000 participants who have attended the program since its inception in 2004. It is an opportunity for our community to extend a personal thank you to those who have given so much for our country."
- Vail Veterans Program Founder Cheryl Jensen*

SUMMER FAMILY PROGRAM

In 2006, the organization heard that not all wounded Veterans enjoyed winter snow. One Veteran shared, "I love what you all are doing to teach the patients of Walter Reed to ski but I do not like snow or being cold."

The idea of the summer program was created to share the beauty of Colorado in the warm summer months. What began as a small program hosting 12 wounded Veterans is now a five-day program for the entire family that includes a variety of outdoor activities. In 2018, the Summer Family Program hosted 22 wounded Veterans, 22 caregivers and 45 children to help reconnect families and provide time to heal in the unique mountain setting.



“There are a lot of great service organizations out there. What’s different about the Vail Veterans Program is that my family is a part of it. That’s what’s so profound about this program. Not just for me as an injured service member, more importantly for my family - Vail Veterans Program helped my family move on. We got through this because of Vail, because of Beaver Creek, because of this community.”

- Retired Army Colonel Greg Gadson

“The Summer Family Program creates family cohesion and bonding. Just like I’ve gone through rough times, I know they have, too. By us being together as a family, it creates fulfillment, enjoyment, trust and, most of all, communication. I am beyond extremely thankful with the work the community does for our disabled vets. From the Escobedo family, please receive our deepest gratitude and humble thank you. You guys really impact our lives for the better.”

- Retired Army Staff Sergeant Henry Escobedo

WINTER FAMILY PROGRAM

The Vail Valley continued to roll out the red carpet for our Nation's Heroes, and included the entire family in the winter of 2008. After the incredible outcomes witnessed when families joined the summer program in 2006, the organization knew that incorporating spouses, sons, and daughters would be an integral part of VVP's culture. The bonding that takes place among families that are on a similar journey proves to Veterans and their children that their family is not alone.



"It's oftentimes hard to describe how one moment in time can change your world, but the Winter Family Program was the most pivotal moment in my entire healing process. It gave me a glimpse of freedom, even with my injuries. Since being on the slopes, I have a renewed spirit and hope for a healthy and adventurous future. I started looking outside of medication and to the outdoors for healing. I did not realize the anxiety and fear that had grown in my children and wife. After they saw me trying new things, they each started to let go of some of their fear and we began moving and living much more freely. Getting out in the sun, feeling nature again, and realizing it can all be done safely with some modifications -- it's a whole new beginning."

- Retired US Army Staff Sergeant Frank M. Laguna

GOLF IN THE ROCKIES

In August of 2012, nine Veterans arrived in Vail for a two-day tournament at Red Sky Golf Club. One of the transformational outcomes that came from the one-time tournament was the unique effect that the sport had on Veterans' mental state. Cheryl Jensen described it saying, "We try to quiet our mind when we play golf. As one of the guys told me, 'This is the first time in a while I haven't thought of my time in Iraq. It takes golf to shut off our brains.' To be able to focus is another step to finding a new normal." And for many of these Veterans, normal also means golf with their peers. "They never get to have this kind of quality time with one another." Cheryl, an avid golfer, admits the event was an experiment. "But the outcome," she says, "was better than I ever thought it would be." That experiment has turned into an annual program that has remained small and intimate to encourage bonding and building life-long relationships.



"There is a certain calm you feel when you're standing on a tee box looking out at the hole in front of you and you feel the sun on your neck and a slight breeze in your face. Golf lets you get away, if even for a few hours. Golf has helped me and continues to help with my rehabilitation every time I go out and play, or even when I just practice."

– Retired US Army Staff Sergeant Tim Johannsen



"These stories are so real and they are the stories of people overcoming incredible obstacles right before your eyes.

We have a mission at HPI of helping individuals and teams perform at the highest level possible in extreme environments. There is no group that represents that better than the Veterans who come to HPI.

I want them to find significance of what they have been through and I want them to create a whole new chapter, an understanding about what is still possible. How inspiring they can be to other people and the kinds of contributions they can continue to make to mankind."

– Dr. James Loehr

Author & Co-Founder of the Human Performance Institute

VETERANS PATH TO SUCCESS

Since 2016, 182 wounded Veterans have attended the Veterans Path to Success Program offered in partnership with Johnson & Johnson's Human Performance Institute (HPI). Veterans have learned from industry experts how to create their definition of success outside of the military. They are guided through a series of goal setting exercises that provide a framework to prioritize activities and behaviors critical to success. Achievable goals are defined, and participants are given tools to manage stress in order to meet the challenges of everyday life. The training program assists wounded Veterans in acknowledging their "old" story, while helping them to identify their "new" story for future success outside of the military.

RESILIENCE TRAINING

Resilience Training was defined as the next step in the Path to Success journey. Veterans are invited back to Vail to learn how to redefine and leverage stress for growth. The training focuses on moving between stress and strategic recovery to help build resilience and enable higher performance. This in-depth, groundbreaking training solution helps Veterans assess and manage stress in a new way. By oscillating between stress and strategic recovery, participants become more equipped to handle stress and prevent burnout. This approach focuses on redefining stress - not avoiding it - to help build resilience and enable high performance to their advantage as a tactic to maximize performance.

CAREGIVERS RETREAT

We are humbled by the strength and compassion of full-time caregivers for severely wounded Veterans. In 2015, Vail Veterans Program announced the first program dedicated to the amazing wives, girlfriends, mothers, sisters, and partners of wounded Veterans. The first group of inspirational women gathered in Vail, CO for empowerment programs while engaging in yoga, meditation, outdoor adventures, spa treatments, and group meals. The Caregivers Retreats continue to take place every fall in response to a critical need for caregivers support.



"I have experienced what it means to have a band of brothers, and now I can truly say that I now have a band of sisters. I'm so grateful for organizations like Vail Veterans Program that change people's lives. Walking through the town of Vail felt like I was in a Hallmark movie, your town is absolutely breathtaking! At times I caught myself just taking deep breaths to take it all in. I will forever be appreciative of attending the retreat and all the people that made it possible. I learned so much and will put it all to use."

- Mary Jo Fernandez, Caregiver to a Wounded Veteran



"There are very few organizations that embrace the uniqueness that is the caregiver role and really come in to help find ways to support us becoming a better partner, caregiver, and mother. VVP has the best program in the nation for caregivers. The bond you get to form with fellow caregivers who understand our walk of life because they are walking it right beside you is a soul awakening experience. As a caregiver, we often neglect ourselves and when you are not taking care of yourself you can't really fully take care of someone else. The Caregiver Reunion gives you the ability come back into your world with renewed energy and renewed perspective."

- Pam Frustaglio, Caregiver to a Wounded Veteran

CAREGIVERS REUNION

In 2018, VVP partnered with Johnson & Johnson's Human Performance Institute to introduce caregivers to the Resilience Training course. The Caregivers Reunion provides much needed respite, resources, and stress management training that addresses critical needs in the journey and life of a caregiver. Caregivers enjoy four days of rejuvenation while learning how to manage stress, develop resilience, and strengthen lifelong relationships, all while healing together in the therapeutic Rocky Mountains.

This innovative, holistic approach is the first of its kind and the only program in the nation to offer this type of empowerment training to caregivers of wounded Veterans.

FINANCIALS

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

| ASSETS | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Cash Accounts | 299,695 | 193,514 |
| Investments | 1,738,839 | 4,090,410 |
| Accounts Receivable | 97,673 | 24,417 |
| Prepaid Supplies | 53,268 | 53,769 |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | 2,189,475 | 4,362,110 |
| Net Fixed Assets | 23,551 | 17,435 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | \$2,213,026 | \$4,379,545 |
| LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS | | |
| Accrued Compensation and Payroll Taxes | 125,238 | 54,764 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 125,238 | 54,764 |
| NET ASSETS | | |
| Temporarily Restricted Net Assets | 181,593 | 123,750 |
| Unrestricted Net Assets | 1,906,195 | 4,201,031 |
| TOTAL NET ASSETS | 2,087,788 | 4,324,781 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS | \$2,213,026 | \$4,379,545 |

2018 amounts unaudited and subject to adjustments.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

| REVENUE | UNRESTRICTED | TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED | 2018 TOTAL |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Contributions and Grants | 1,149,894 | 142,750 | 1,292,644 |
| Investment Income | 217,726 | | 217,726 |
| In-Kind Contributions | 689,976 | | 689,976 |
| Net Assets Released from Restrictions | 200,593 | (200,593) | |
| TOTAL REVENUE | \$2,258,189 | (57,843) | \$2,200,346 |
| EXPENSES | | | |
| Program | 1,733,000 | | 1,733,000 |
| Fundraising | 203,366 | | 203,366 |
| Administrative | 226,987 | | 226,987 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$2,163,353 | | \$2,163,353 |
| In-Kind Estate Bequest* | 2,200,000 | | 2,200,000 |
| CHANGE IN NET ASSETS | 2,294,836 | (57,843) | 2,236,993 |
| NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR | 1,906,195 | 181,593 | 2,087,788 |
| NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR | \$4,201,031 | 123,750 | \$4,324,781 |

*An estate bequest of real property from a long time donor. The property was subsequently sold and funds invested in our diversified portfolio.

OUTCOMES

100%

of Veterans would recommend to others

"The combination of raw adventure, a secure family setting, heartfelt volunteerism, top-tier instruction, and VVP's impressive organization make this THE best veteran's event that I've attended. One would be very hard-pressed to find all of the aforementioned attributes at one single event. That's what makes VVP so unique."

94%

of Veterans achieved their goals

"I believe in it. The program's mission statement is exactly what most, if not all the veterans achieved."

100%

of Veterans improved confidence

"I definitely found that my body is physically capable of managing much more than I thought I could physically. This helped me to build more confidence to do more physical activities."

89%

improved their communication with family

"The Vail Vets family has helped me keep my family together..."

95%

of Veterans created meaningful communities of mutual support

"We were able to bond over new shared interests, make new friends, learn from others' experiences, and openly talk about our challenges and/or triumphs in a supportive environment. The support system is simply unreal."

95%

of Veterans report a more positive outlook on life

"It is an extremely caring and loving environment. It is overwhelmingly important to have veterans know that people love them and this is what the program does."

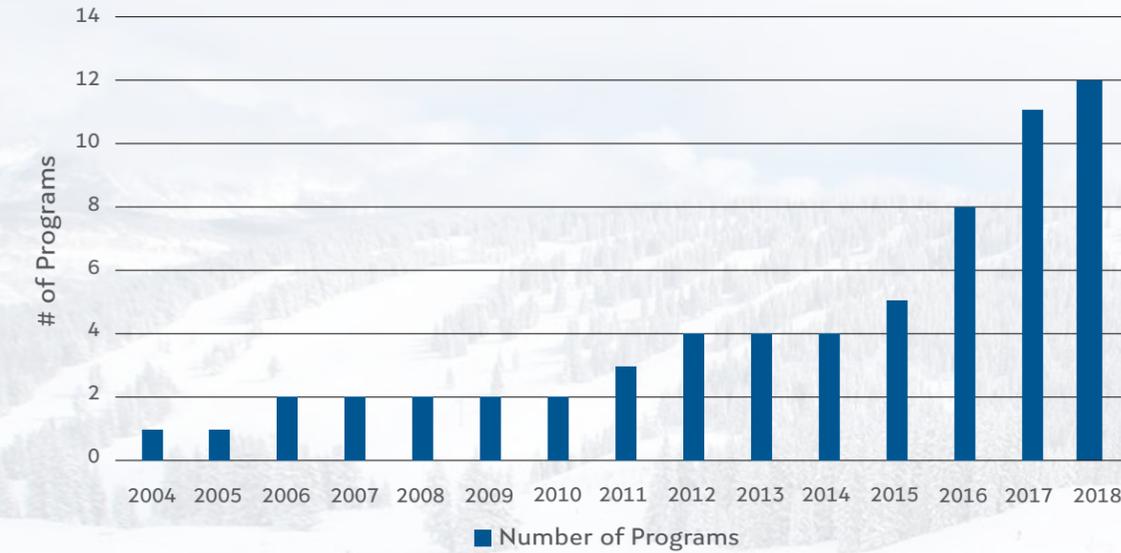
87%

of Veterans developed stronger coping mechanisms

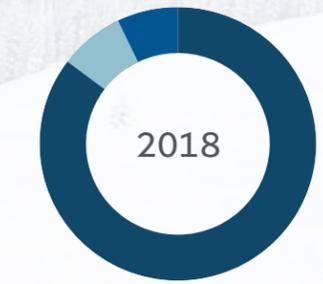
"Vail is one of the few places in this world where I have felt accepted and didn't feel out of place. I felt relaxed and at peace for the first time in years. I felt like I had family for the first time in my life."

HISTORIC GROWTH

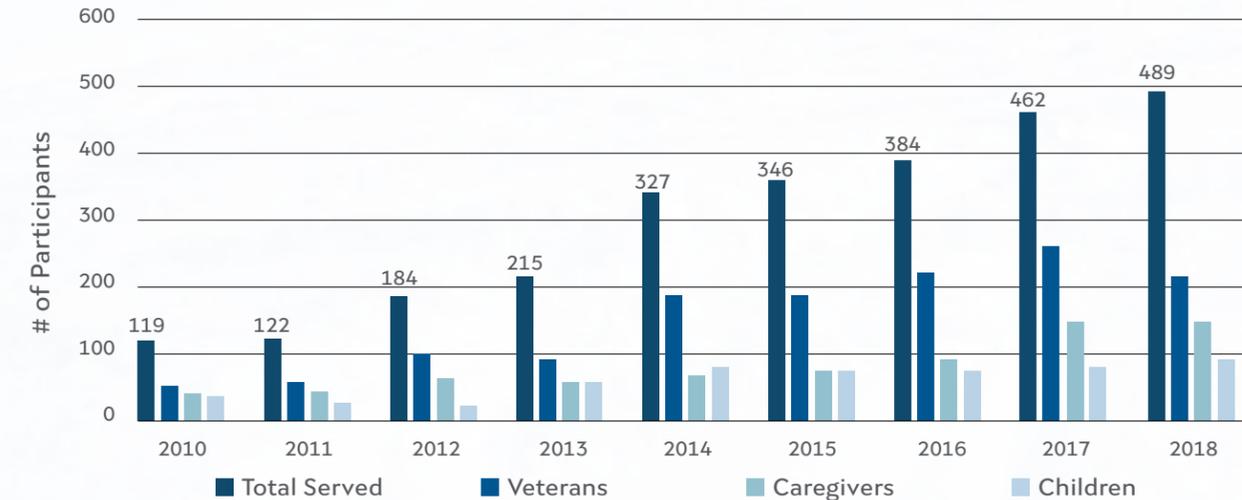
Program Growth



Summary of Expenses



Participant Growth



| | | |
|----------------|-------------|-------|
| Programs | \$1,733,000 | 80.1% |
| Administration | \$226,987 | 10.5% |
| Fundraising | \$203,366 | 9.4% |

THANK YOU TO OUR 2018 DONORS

\$100,000 +

Anonymous (*one-time bequest*)
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 Vail Resorts EpicPromise
 Wounded Warrior Project

\$50,000 – \$99,999

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\$10,000 – \$24,999

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The donor list represents contributions made between January 1, 2018 - December 31, 2018. We have carefully reviewed the names listed. However, if you find an error or omission, please email info@vailveteransprogram.org or call 970.476.4906.

\$1,000 – \$4,999

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Stuart "Wylie" Galvin
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Anne & Chris Gilbert

Gerald & Candi Glenn
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Great Divide Construction Company
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Suey-Ju Kao
Benn Kayne
John Kingseed
Kirby Cosmo's
James Kleckner
Thomas Kortuem
Diane Kovalik & Scott Raub
Barbara Krichbaum & Kent Erickson
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Bettan Laughlin
Lazzerini Farms
Terri & Joe LeBeau
Tamara & Glenn Lester
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Jennifer Mason
Trudy & Robert Matarese
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Philanthropy & Service Group
at Vail Mountain School
Pledgeling Foundation
Michael Price

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Red Sky Golf Club
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Celeste & Keith Reisinger
Dawn & Robert Riddle
The Right Stuff
SYNC Performance
John Roach
Vanessa Roach
Karen & Roland Robertson
Julie Rust
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Gwen & Rick Scalpello
Richard & Vicki Schwartz Fund at the Rochester
Area Community Foundation
Julie & Saul Schwarz
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Richard Stovall
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Patricia Thatcher
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Usborne Books & More
US Paralympics
Vail Brewing Company
Vail Mountain Coffee & Tea
Vail Professional Firefighters Association
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Mike Wheeler
Patty White
Joan Whittenberg
Vali & Willy Wilcox
Brian Woodell
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Valinda & Steve Yarberry
Steve Zemke



*Deceased

Up to \$99

Anonymous (4)
 Amazon Smile
 Steve Amerine
 David & Susie Anderson
 Daniel Andrews
 Rebecca Anthony
 Susan Armijo & Roger Miller
 Dovie & Chuck Armstrong
 Erik Bechun
 Dillon Behr
 Olga Belyanina
 Linda & Jack Bowes
 Tim Brown
 Sara Jane Brunetti Dow
 Geornelyn & Eduardo Buenavente
 Nancy Clarke
 Jeffrey & Doreen Clevenger
 Chad Cundiff
 Patti & Ross Dixon
 Kelly Faltis
 Fay & Thomas Fenstermacher
 John Lee Froman
 Nora Fryklund
 Kim Fuller
 Mary & John Geraghty
 Mary & Jac Griesdieck
 Casady Henry

Susan Hewitt
 Tamara Higgins
 Erin Ivie
 Elizabeth Jacks
 Jeffrey Kaftan
 Amanda Kelly
 Kevin Kieler
 Laura Kupperman
 Chris Larson
 Sean Lynes
 Erin Maloney
 Joseph Mansfield
 Janifer McDougall
 James McGill & Bob Ricks Foundation
 Ellen Meinelt
 Burt Merial
 Mazy & Bob Miller
 Yadira Miller
 Joseph Notarianni
 Nancy Nottingham
 Steve Ossello
 Chester Panzer
 Paypal Charitable Giving Fund
 JK Pfeffer
 Ruth & Tom Powers
 Derek Proctor
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Gary Robinson
 Maria Robinson
 Barbara Schotzko
 Luke Schwartz
 Louann & George Shapiro
 Barbara & Clark Shivley
 Lynne & Mark Siefert
 Gay & Richard Steadman
 Pamela Stenmark
 Judith & William Stothoff
 Kenneth Swartzmiller
 Cheryl Tanner Holman
 Fiona Tomlin
 Sandy Treat
 Carol Varner
 Joseph Ventimiglia
 Lawrence Wald
 WalMart
 Karin Weber
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 Wells Fargo Community Support Campaign
 Mike Wetzel
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 SSGT Kaleb Wayne Weakley (Ret)



2019 CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS

JANUARY

13 – 18 Winter Family Program

MARCH

3 – 8 Winter Mountain Adventure

APRIL

10 – 13 Caregivers Reunion Retreat

JUNE

16 – 23 Black Mountain Ranch: Family Support Program

JULY

4 4th of July Parade and Patriotic Concert

AUGUST

4 – 9 Summer Family Program

19 – 23 Golf In The Rockies

SEPTEMBER

4 – 8 Caregivers Retreat

19 – 22 Resiliency Training – Vail

OCTOBER

13 – 16 Veterans Path To Success 1

20 – 23 Veterans Path To Success 2

DECEMBER

TBD Caregivers Reunion Retreat

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