



IMPACT REPORT 2023

TRANSFORMING LIVES



FOUNDER LETTER

Dear Friends,

The 20th Anniversary of Vail Veterans Program marks a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to supporting injured military service members and their families.

This anniversary serves as a poignant reminder of the ongoing challenges of veterans and their families, as they navigate their life post-injury. The goal of Vail Veterans Program is to provide a supportive community where individuals can find understanding, camaraderie and tools to rebuild their lives.

During our March 2024 program, a participant shared with me, “As I approach closing the chapter on my 24-year service in the Navy, I constantly found myself struggling with a lot of inner demons that left me feeling lost and depressed, with no hope or direction for my future. My mental health struggles in the Navy have been so debilitating, that at times, I often questioned why I’m even still here. But this week in Vail has given me a new lease on life. I know that I want to continue to serve my brothers and sisters in arms, and find a way to make a positive impact on their lives in whatever capacity I can. So, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for sparking that fire inside me, and allowing me to find purpose again in my life.” – Ashley Aldeguer, SCPO, USN (Ret.)

Thank you to our generous donors, volunteers and partners. Your unwavering commitment and generosity have been the bedrock of our success enabling us to make a meaningful difference in the lives of wounded service members and their families.

Gratefully yours,
Cheryl Jensen
Founder



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER

Dear Supporters,

In commemorating Vail Veterans Program 20th Anniversary this year, programs are as meaningful today, as they were in March 2004, when our founder, Cheryl Jensen, started with an idea and worked tirelessly for 20 years not only bringing her vision to life, but also sharing her passion for our mission and the work we do with others.

For the brave men and women who have served our country and experienced a devastating life-altering military service injury, the healing journey can be overwhelming. Through our vital military hospital partnerships, and with the generous support from our donors, volunteers, and community members, we are able to show our wounded veterans and their families how the mountains can truly heal. Today, our Vail Veterans Program family includes more than 4,700 program participants. We look to the future with excitement and inspiration to continue building upon the programs we offer and growing our family.

We are incredibly grateful for your generosity and belief in our work. Together, you have helped us transform the lives of our Nation’s Heroes. Please accept our deepest appreciation for the impact your support continues to have on our military service members and their families.

With heartfelt thanks,
Jen Brown
Executive Director



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 veterans and their families through innovative, world-class programs, rooted in the mountains, to strengthen lifelong relationships and reinforce purposeful lives.



OUR STORY

For 20 years, Vail Veterans Program has been bringing wounded service members and their families to Vail, Colorado to overcome a grievous injury that forever changes the life of a wounded veteran and their loved ones.

With the help of your support, our intentionally-created programs are provided at no cost to participants, and help define new recreational possibilities that build confidence and improve lives, and address the ongoing critical needs faced by our Nation's Heroes. For participants, Vail holds a special place in their hearts.



MOUNTAINS HEAL

"You can't help but feel amazing when you are in this environment. There is so much good energy here and you can feel the community support."



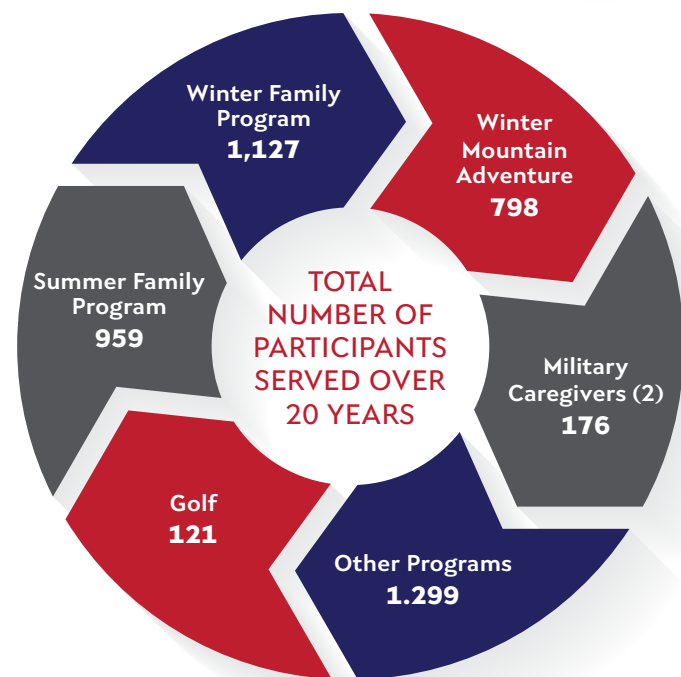


COMMEMORATING 20 YEARS

Since 2004, your generous support has encouraged over **4,700** wounded veterans and family members to see beyond their life-altering injury. Through **12,000** program days, you've helped provide healing experiences for the entire family.

In 2003, the war in Iraq resulted in a significant number of catastrophic injuries for our troops. Founder Cheryl Jensen rallied our community to bring seven wounded veterans to Vail to learn adaptive skiing. What began as a humble vision, and a belief that nature and skiing could heal those who have sacrificed while serving our country, has since become a pillar for showing wounded military service members how to recognize their own strength, resilience, ability and potential, despite a visible or invisible injury.

The evolution of our programs signifies our commitment to respond to the ongoing and changing needs of wounded veterans and their families. It also demonstrates your continued partnership and support for those defending our freedom. We remain compelled to create long-lasting positive outcomes and a continuum of care for our Nation's Heroes and hope you will continue to help us transform lives for many years to come.



Scan To Watch Our
20th Anniversary
Video

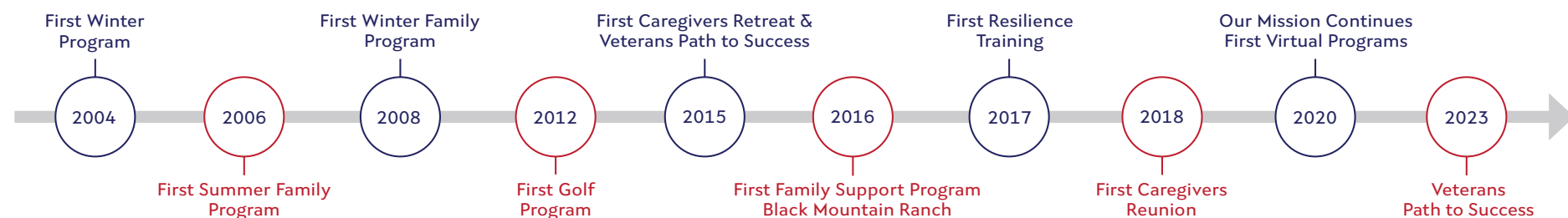


INSPIRATION

"I don't know why you did this for us, but you changed my life."

– Heath Calhoun
2004 Program Participant

Heath's words had a profound effect on founder Cheryl Jensen, and became the inspiration for her efforts to help heal and empower injured service members throughout their lifelong healing journey.



PROGRAMS

WINTER THERAPEUTIC OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

There is a freedom found in the mountains that encourages a release of boundaries, and discovery of inner strength, confidence and hope. Our Winter Therapeutic Outdoor Programs create the opportunity for wounded veterans and their families to learn adaptive skiing and snowboarding, allowing them to explore newfound abilities, while overcoming challenges that may resemble other aspects of their lives. Vail Veterans Program believes the mountains have a special way of healing the entire family.

SUMMER THERAPEUTIC OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

Summertime in the mountains reveals a vast variety of ways to explore the outdoors. Our wounded veterans experience adaptive access to rock climbing, horseback riding, whitewater rafting, zip lining and fly fishing, together with members of their family. Summer Therapeutic Outdoor Programs reconnect families and expose them to beautiful, tranquil places in nature.

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

In partnership with Black Mountain Ranch in McCoy, CO, alumni families are invited to a week-long adventure showcasing western heritage, while continuing their healing journey on a working Dude Ranch in the mountains of Colorado. Wounded veterans and their families enjoy fun new outdoor activities and have time for relaxation in a safe and peaceful setting. Family Support Programs also include other unique opportunities where families can unplug from daily challenges, reconnect and build lifelong memories.

ALUMNI PROGRAMS

A variety of alumni programs throughout the year allow past participants to stay connected as well as honor special moments such as birthdays, graduation, and the holidays.

GOLF IN THE ROCKIES

Golf provides a special opportunity for camaraderie among wounded veterans through the opportunity to play several spectacular championship courses and learn from PGA teaching professionals. In addition to refining golf proficiency, participants develop new skillsets that focus on concentration, balance, coordination and emotional stability, which can be transferred to other aspects of life. This shared passion unites veterans and creates a community of mutual support.

MILITARY CAREGIVER RETREATS

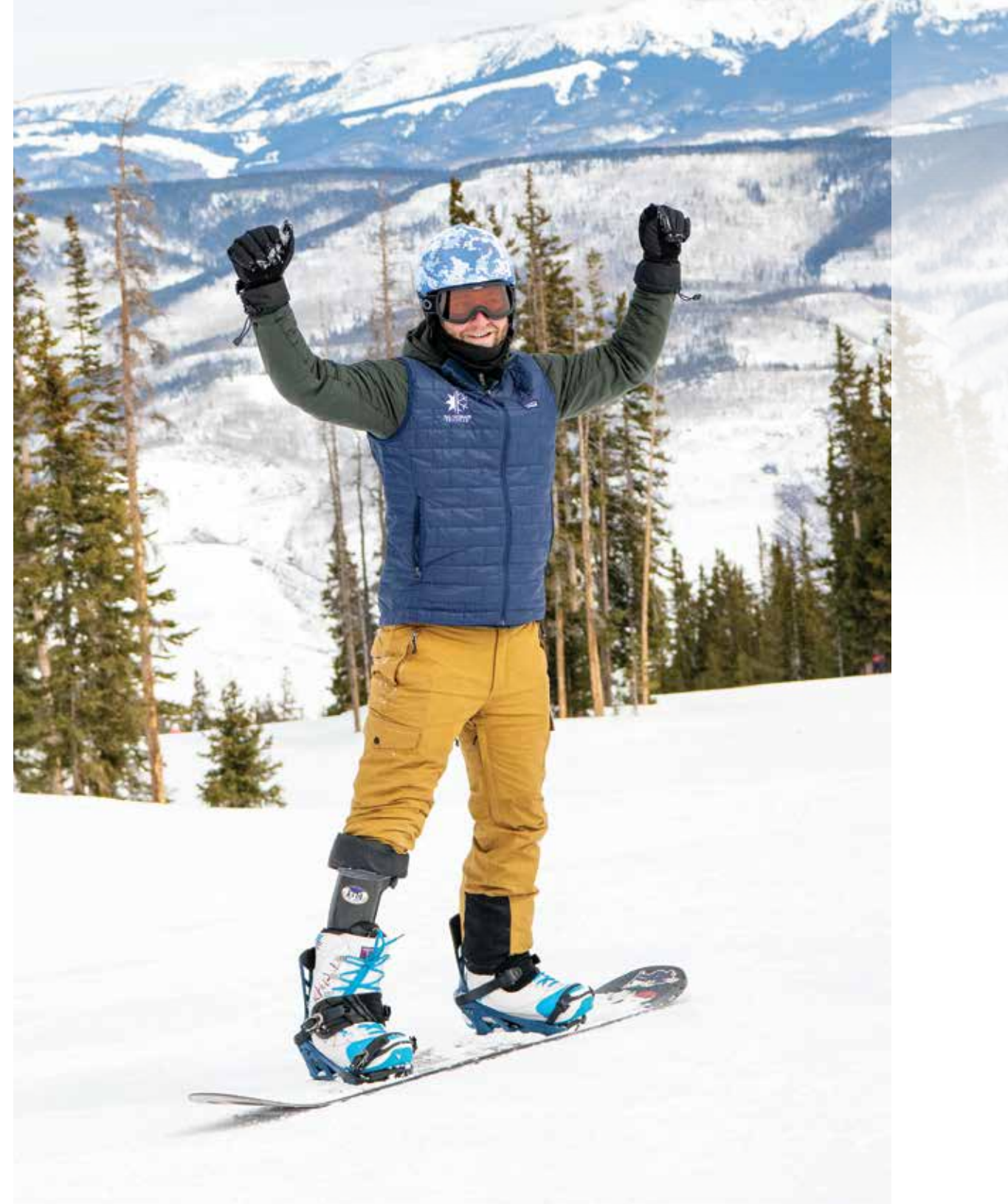
Our military caregivers are given time to focus on their own health and wellness in a safe and nurturing mountain environment. Workshops focus on stress management, resilience, sustainable coping mechanisms and personal goal setting. Outdoor activities such as walking, hiking and a backcountry Jeep tour, along with evening meals, let caregivers connect with others facing similar challenges.

VETERANS PATH TO SUCCESS

Wounded veterans learn to expand their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual energy for increased performance, engagement and resilience. Personal development coaches lead workshops to guide participants in defining their new sense of purpose, and their “new story” after a military service career. Movement and nutrition sessions help create healthier rituals. Time spent outdoors clears the mind to welcome new possibilities.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

Virtual programs offer opportunities to learn from professionals, focus on self-care, fitness, and nutrition and encourage further connection and personal growth.



OUR PROGRAMS TRANSFORM LIVES

“Vail Veterans left a profound impact on my quality of life; I saw the possibilities and opportunities that exist outside of my comfort zone.”

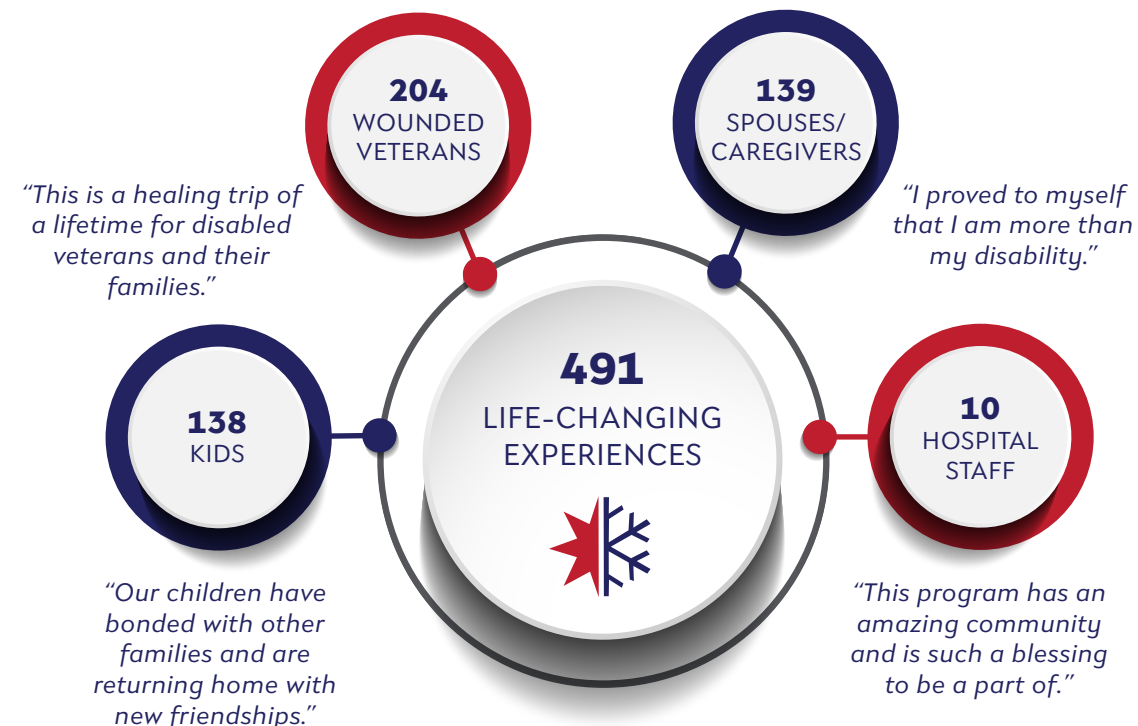


**VAIL VETERANS
PROGRAM**



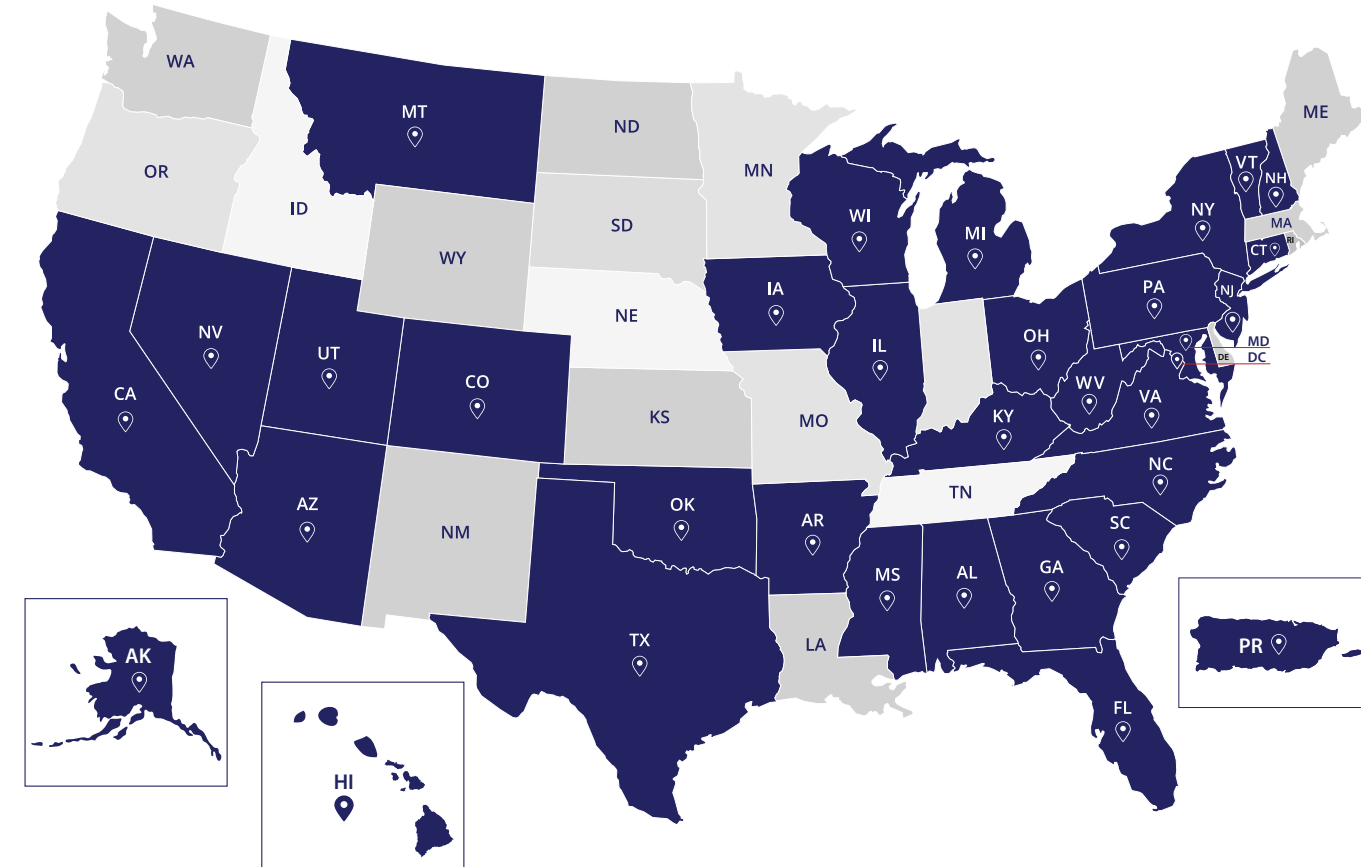
IMPACT

In 2023, with the steadfast support of our generous donors and sponsors, our transformational programs have positively changed the lives of wounded military service members and their families.



OUTCOMES

Your support enabled **491** participants from **34 states** to achieve their program goals in 2023.



8
ALUMNI & VIRTUAL
PROGRAMS

9
IN-PERSON MULTI-DAY
PROGRAMS

789
PARTICIPANT PROGRAM
DAYS IN VAIL, CO

99%
ACHIEVED THEIR
PERSONAL GOALS

98%
DEVELOPED STRONGER
COPING MECHANISMS

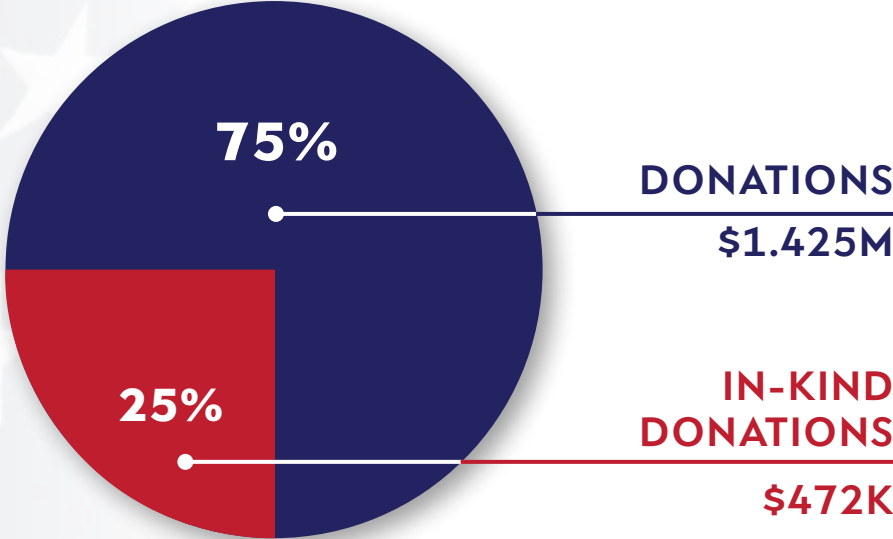
97%
GAINED A MORE
POSITIVE OUTLOOK
ON LIFE

95%
HAVE INCREASED
CONFIDENCE

93%
SET NEW GOALS
AFTER ATTENDING
A PROGRAM

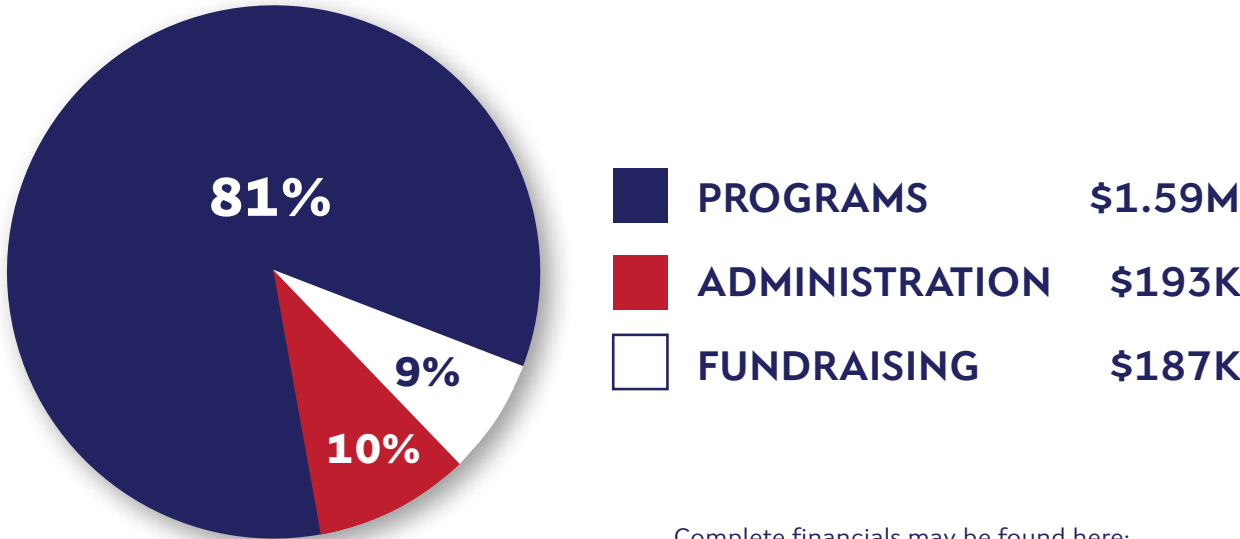
75%
REDUCED STRESS &
LEARNED NEW STRESS
RECOVERY TECHNIQUES

REVENUE



In 2023, with your help, Vail Veterans Program invested **\$1.9M** in life-changing programs for wounded veterans and their families.

EXPENSES



Complete financials may be found here:
vailveteransprogram.org/fiscal-transparency



STRENGTHENING
FAMILIES

“These new adventures to work together as a family, conquer fears and see that we can still go and enjoy life, no matter what challenges we’ve faced, are immeasurable.”

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*Denotes Deceased
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2024 PROGRAMS

Winter Family Program
January 28 - February 2, 2024

Winter Mountain Adventure Program
March 3 - 8, 2024

Summer Family Program
July 14 - 19, 2024

Family Support Program:
Black Mountain Ranch
August 11 - 17, 2024
August 18 - 24, 2024

Golf in the Rockies
August 19 - 23, 2024

Military Caregiver Retreat
September 4 - 8, 2024

Military Caregiver Reunion
September 25 - 29, 2024

Veterans Path to Success
October 14 - 18, 2024



VAIL VETERANS
PROGRAM

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