

COMBINED 
ARMS



**2019 ANNUAL
IMPACT REPORT**



★ Letter from the Board Chairman and CEO

2019 was the biggest year for Combined Arms yet! We were able to serve our 72 member organizations by connecting over 7,000 veterans, military, and families to them for customized resources via our integrated referral platform, the Combined Arms Center, and engaging family events. Some of our other key accomplishments of 2019 have been in the areas of strategic development, the merger with LSVA, securing key partnerships to scale our mission and vision, recruiting and training new teammates to increase our ability to serve more veterans and organizations, and the growth of the Combined Arms model to other fragmented markets.

The merger with Lone Star Veterans Association aligned two great organizations and boards of directors in order to reach more veterans and families by combining the best of both models. New strategic partnerships with academic institutions like Texas A&M, University of Texas, Rice University, the Bush Institute, and several key public agencies like the US Department of Veterans Affairs have also increased our ability to scale and expand our ability to serve more organizations and veteran families. Our new teammates have added capacity in several key areas such as development, marketing, and collaboration programming.

Although 2019 was great for the Combined Arms system, 2020 will be even better! We are launching several new initiatives that will invest in the professional development of our member organization's up and coming leaders, continue to upgrade our technology and co-working space, and continue to collaborate across sectors to achieve the greatest results for our member organizations and veteran families. Please use this annual impact report to navigate our offerings as a backbone organization dedicated to uniting the community to accelerate the impact of veterans and their families. Together, we will help redesign the transition experience to elevate communities through innovative collaboration.



Bryan Foster, Chairman



John Boerstler, CEO

★ In this 2019 Annual Impact Report

- Metrics of Impact
- The Mission and Vision of Combined Arms
- Events Uniting Veterans and their Communities
- Veterans Uniting After the Uniform Part 1
- Highlights of Accomplishments
- Partners & Collaborators
- Veterans Uniting After the Uniform Part 2
- Financials & Board of Directors
- The Future of Combined Arms
- Call to Action for Supporters



★ Combined Arms Metrics of Impact

72 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

HAVE JOINED THE COLLABORATIVE

9,000+ CONTACT RECORDS

ARE NOW A PART OF OUR NETWORK

7,085 NEW, UNIQUE

VETERANS SERVED

RESULTING IN 86% YEAR OVER YEAR INCREASE

20,000+ RESOURCES

CONNECTED TO VETERAN CLIENTS

The Economic Impact of the Combined Arms Collaborative Model

\$400,000 COST SAVINGS

PER YEAR FOR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

1,034 VETERANS CONNECTED

TO CAREERS THROUGH OUR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

The Combined Arms model of accountability requires that all 72 member organizations respond in 96 hours or less to a veteran. Since inception, there has been a 50% reduction in average response time and a productivity improvement of 8% across member organizations. [To learn more about impact of Combined Arms in collaboration with our member organizations, click here.](#)

★ The Mission and Vision of Combined Arms

2019 was a year of resounding growth & success for Combined Arms and our partners in support of the mission to unite the community to accelerate the impact of veterans on Texas. The Combined Arms system is a one stop resource that succeeds by raising up the entire community to ensure no Veteran falls through the cracks and the agencies serving them more accountable. The collective buy-in from our member organizations and veterans we serve has reinforced the need for our collective impact model. In 2019, Combined Arms helped served 86% more veteran clients than in 2018 (7,085 versus 3,800). This year saw the merger with Lone Star Veterans Association, combining their grassroots engagement model with Combined Arms' methodology and technology to achieve scale in building a larger network of vetted social services designed to optimize veterans' personal and professional networks. Combined Arms grew our team to amplify and expand the base of services that Combined Arms reaches, bringing in more expertise and experience to actively engage the veteran community through events, marketing, and technology. This year, we also achieved the Platinum Seal of Transparency on GuideStar, a universal standard in grading the efficiency and efficacy of nonprofits through verified metrics and progress. To dive deeper and learn more about the impact of Combined Arms, click here.



A scene from Vet Connect Day at the Combined Arms Transition Center, where veterans go for a personal connection to our community and benefits our member organizations offer.

★ Events Uniting Veterans and their Communities

Engaging the community that veterans and their families call home is one of our most effective methods of increasing mission awareness. 2019 was monumental in scaling the reach of our signature events. [To stay up to date and be informed of our upcoming events, visit us here.](#)

The Annual Combined Arms Convening

This is the only time each year every organization in the collaborative convene all in one place, and with this time, all of the member organizations work together on determining the upcoming year's goals that serve the veterans and families that Combined Arms serves, and form committees. As a value add to the attendees, subject matter experts were brought in for interactive panels on corporate giving and many more topics to sustain and grow impact.



Member Organizations and their staff in attendance at the Combined Arms Convening.

The LGBTQ Military Ball

Held at the Julia Ideson Downtown Library this year, this event had 150 attendees and dedicated sponsors in support of this event. The message, intent and actions were clear: Combined Arms serves all who have served. This event brings together and unites veterans and allies and embraces their diversity.

[To pre-register for 2020's LGBTQ Military Ball, click here.](#)



Veterans & allies in attendance at the this year's LGBTQ Military Ball.

★ Events Uniting Veterans and their Communities

The Veterans & Community Picnic

For the third year in a row, Amegy Bank graciously donated their backyard space to host an annual gathering for veterans, their families, and their friends. With nearly 1,000 in attendance, live musical performances, and our member organizations and new corporate partners present; this was an exemplary feature event in community building.



Operation Santa

For the 10th year in a row, this veteran driven toy drive event celebrated the holiday season by giving back to the families of underprivileged veteran families. Toys and gifts were gathered around the city and Christmas trees were distributed all with the dedication of a volunteer corps deployed courtesy of [the Astros Foundation](#) and [Interfaith Ministries](#), a member organization, graciously hosted the event at their Midtown Houston facility.



Above: families, friends, supporters, and volunteers at our signature events.

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COMBINED ARMS

★ Veterans Uniting After the Uniform

Carlis Miller

Carlis found purpose after his service when he became a platoon leader with The Mission Continues and is active in Team Rubicon, two of our key member organizations. He currently serves as a board member for the American Cancer Society and is a cancer survivor—he now shares his story and experiences to inspire others to live a life of service and giving back. His story began when meeting Kevin Doffing, Combined Arms COO, and attending Community Leader Training where he appreciated the time and trust put into him as an individual. "Carlis represents everything the Community Leader should be, a kind heart, a desire to serve his fellow veterans, and the drive to work hard," Kevin says. He recognizes the importance of the mission transitioning veterans due to what he went through with his own from the United States Marine Corps. He now serves as a board member for Combined Arms! When Carlis wears the Combined Arms t-shirt, he says that it shows he's passionately invested. He wants his friends and family to know that when anybody they know are transitioning to civilian life, that they can go to him directly. He represents Combined Arms with pride and the camaraderie we bring.

[If you want to have an impact on veterans transitioning to civilian life, click here.](#)



Carlis Miller (left) with Earl Lundy, Gym Manager (right).

Highlights of Accomplishments

Transition Center Upgrades

As member organizations expand alongside Combined Arms, steps are taken to ensure that the East Downtown Houston veteran transition center is an open and welcoming workplace that is conducive to collaboration. Sunline Office Furniture graciously made an in-kind donation of \$80,000 in brand new cubicles to serve the member organizations that work at the transition center, providing a value-add to the annual cost savings of \$400,000. Private office space has all been converted to free meeting areas/co-working space that any veteran service organization or individual veteran can reserve.

Combined Arms Fitness Center Upgraded and Unveiled

In March 2019, Earl Lundy - US Army Veteran, The Mission Continues Platoon Leader, Travis Manion Foundation Mentor, and now Combined Arms Gym Manager - used his story and journey of recovery from injuries to raise awareness for adaptive fitness training. This event is called #LundyStrides and is an actual journey by land and water made by Earl! The Brian Cushing Foundation along with the Houston Texans donated equipment from their gym to serve the mission keeping veterans not only mentally healthy, but physically improving.



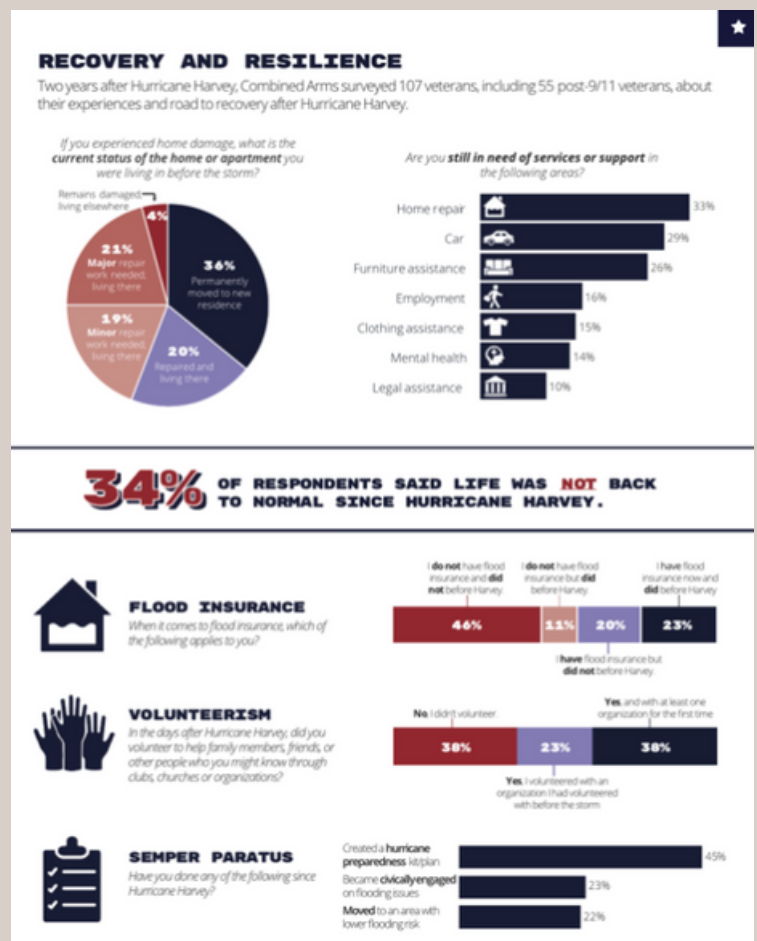
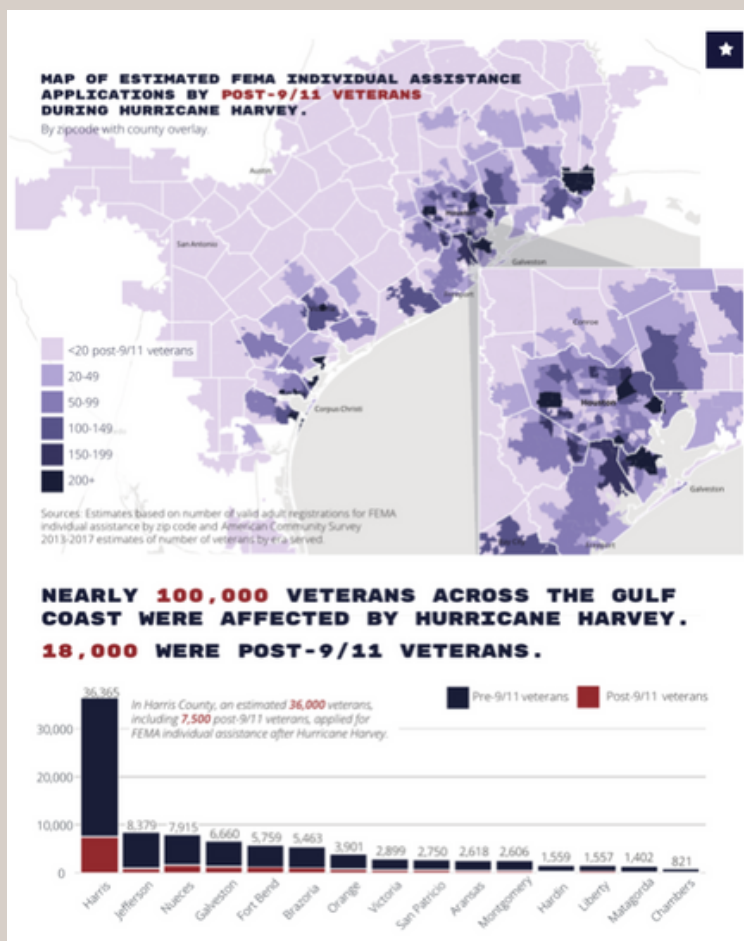
Boxing class at the CAX Fitness Center, this and many more classes are free to any veterans.

Highlights of Accomplishments

Bob Woodruff Foundation Hurricane Harvey Research

Through a partnership with the Bob Woodruff Foundation, Combined Arms and January Advisors have teamed up to understand the impact of Hurricane Harvey on the veteran population of Houston and the Gulf Coast region, and the response by social service providers. On this interactive data dashboard, the effects of Harvey are examined in order to understand the true impact of a large scale natural disaster and used to implement solutions for the future.

Combined Arms gives special thanks to Bob Woodruff Foundation for supporting veterans affected by Hurricane Harvey and this initiative.



A sample of the infographics researched and presented in the Hurricane Harvey.

Highlights of Accomplishments

This year, Combined Arms Collaboration Committees expanded from four to seven! As the organization expands, so does the need to establish new committees.

The Professional Growth Collaboration Committee member organizations placed over 1,034 Veterans in new careers, with a median starting salary of \$60,050, and 15 Military Spouses, with a median starting salary of \$51,770.

The Essential Services Collaboration Committee created a new “auto-prescription” strategy based upon enhancing awareness and access to critical resources for the most vulnerable population - single parents. The result is that our system now recognizes when a single parent under, or close to, the living wage enters our system and auto-prescribes a bundle of resources including: legal, employment, housing, financial assistance, VA Benefits, food, and clothing.

\$60,050 STARTING MEDIAN SALARY

FOR VETERANS IN NEW CAREERS



Collaboration Committees sharing their new goals at a panel at the Combined Arms Convening.

Highlights of Accomplishments

The Wellness Collaboration Committee underwent an operational pause to redefine its mission. The focus shifted from increasing the volume of clients seeking mental health resources, to establishing a year-long training series for Continuing Education for licensed mental health professionals working in the collaborative, and public education in mental health.

The Social and Volunteering Collaboration Committee transformed into the Social Impact Collaboration Committee. Whereas the former mission was focused on collaborating on producing social and volunteer events with multiple agencies, the new mission is to unite the community to help one veteran family in need a month. The term “Micro-impact” was coined to describe the new purpose of the committee.

The Education Collaboration Committee was reactivated in the Fall of 2019 for a new mission. Understanding the essential role that education plays in economic stability, the committee decided to produce two highly impactful education symposiums dedicated to career direction, scholarships, and enhanced economic stability. Only the planning was completed in 2019, but the two symposiums will occur this year in 2020.

A Caregiver Committee was established in 2019 to address the unique needs of the caregivers of disabled veterans. Knowing that helping the caregiver is also helping the veteran, this committee was necessary to improve the capabilities of caregivers to deliver care, while also taking care of themselves.



Collaboration partners speaking to our member organizations about best practices.

Highlights of Accomplishments

The newest committee established was the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Collaboration Committee to serve the interpreters who served alongside our veterans in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. This committee's goals are to establish a new education scholarship for SIV's, and provide social integration and camaraderie with the veteran community of Houston. The head of this committee, Cress Clippard, arranges airport greetings that have welcome parties ready once the SIV veteran and their families walk out of the terminal and move onto set foot into their new home. After an arduous visa process, relief sets in knowing that their journey is over, but the anxiety of resettling in a new country, and that's where this committee also picks up the ball. Member organizations work with this committee to ensure that they are welcomed with open arms and have access to the resources of our network.

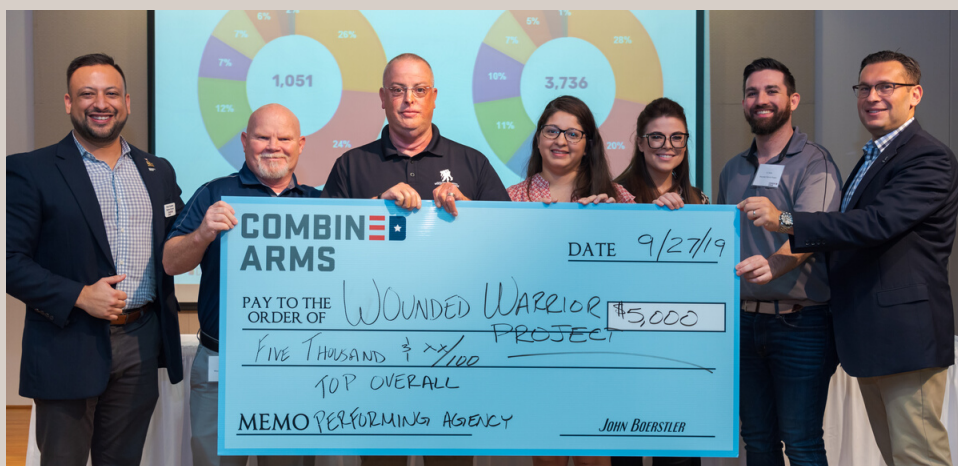
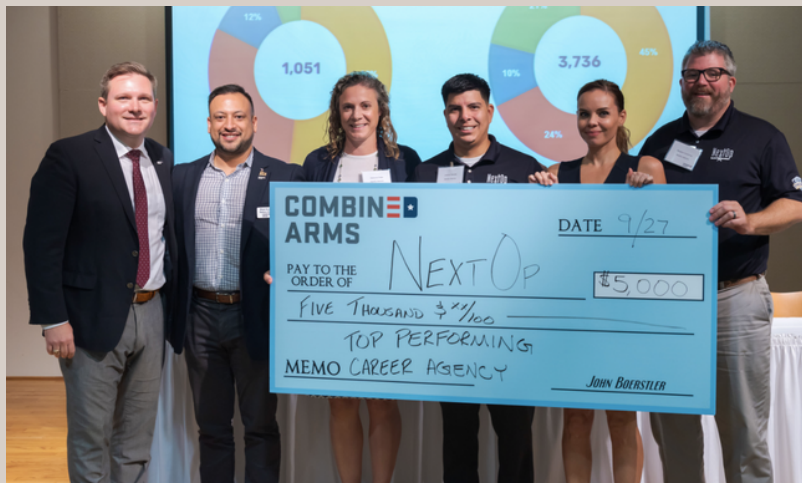
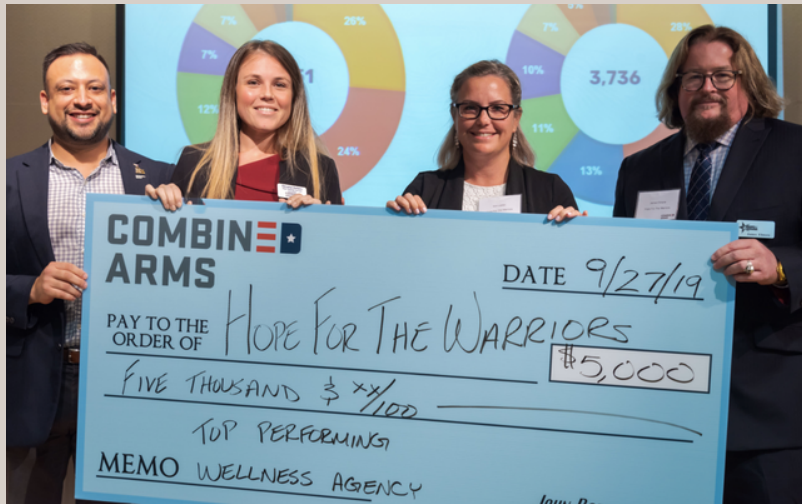


A warm welcome for a newly settled SIV family, courtesy of our newest Collaboration Committee.

Highlights of Accomplishments

The Top Performing Member Organizations are Awarded

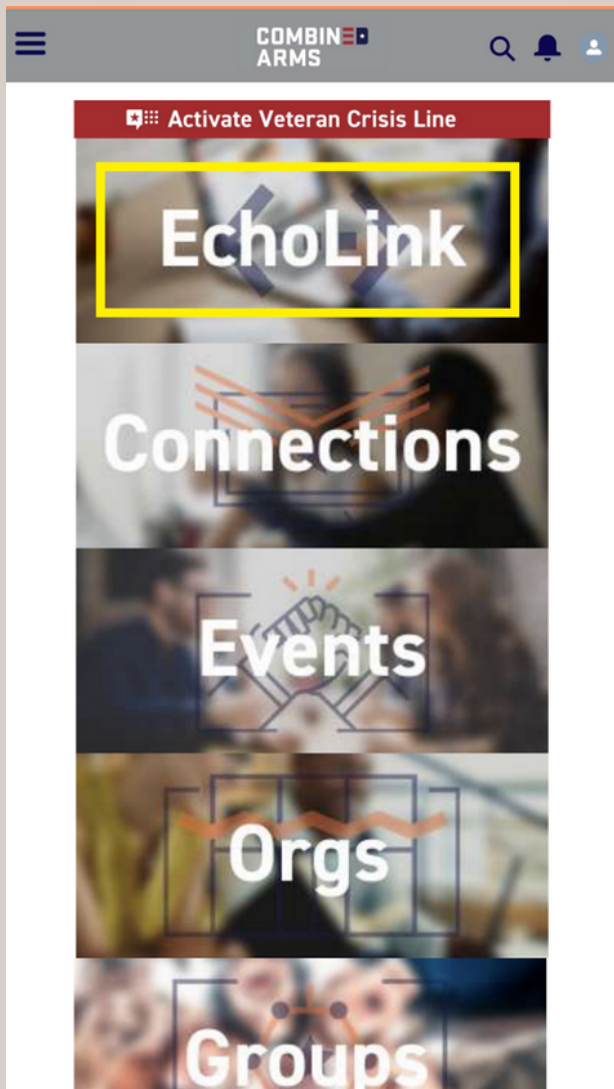
Competition helps cultivate high performance and the Combined Arms system incentivizes the organizations that strive towards not only serving veterans and their families efficiently with the metrics to quantify impact. Of the many veteran service organizations that excel under our system, these are just a few.



Highlights of Accomplishments

The Combined Arms Mobile App

The Combined Arms mobile app was developed to accelerate the impact and connections made into the CAX platform. Through the mobile application, member organizations can check on new connections, respond back to clients, or update the status of an existing connection. All the while, community leaders and member organization employees can utilize EchoLink to make instant referrals while out in the field. To download the app onto your smartphone, [click here for iPhone IOS](#) and [here for Android](#).

A screenshot of the EchoLink portal form. The top navigation bar is grey with the 'COMBIN ARMS' logo, a search icon, and a user profile icon. Below the bar is a large blue header 'ECHOLINK'. Underneath is a paragraph: 'Combined Arms can connect your clients easily with our EchoLink system. Quickly fill out the form below to start accessing more than 375 resources in the Combined Arms network.' The form itself is white with a blue border. It has a title 'EchoLink' and a welcome message: 'Welcome to EchoLink! Let's connect your client to resources. What is their email address?'. There is a red asterisk icon next to the label 'Email Address' and a text input field. A blue 'Next' button is at the bottom right of the form. Below the form is a red warning message: 'Please make sure that you do not leave a "space" after the email address. It will generate an error in the system.' Underneath is a section titled 'Quick tips:' followed by three numbered tips: 1. Make sure the veteran understands that Combined Arms and other organizations will be reaching out to them. They need to be ready to answer emails and their phone. 2. Know what organization and resources you want to connect the veteran to! You are a leader in the veteran community, so be sure you are making a knowledgeable referral on behalf of this veteran. 3. Can't find the exact resource you want to connect the veteran

A list of resources available within the app (left) and a Echolink portal (right).

Highlights of Accomplishments

Combined Arms Community Leaders

Combined Arms has recruited, trained, and equipped 178 new community leaders , with a potential addition of 61 community leaders on January 24th. These potential additions could drastically surpass the 100 projected Community Leaders goal that was originally forecasted. Two additional efforts that we've expanded on have been inclusion of BP as a partner to Combined Arms, and work with the Bush Institute's Warrior Wellness Alliance. With BP, we have entered a partnership where we will be training their VRG (Veteran Resource Group) employees as Community Leaders for referrals, will be including our kiosk in their headquarters, and will be including the mobile application & training as SOP for BP new veteran hires. With the Bush Institute Warrior Wellness Alliance Pilot, Combined Arms will be serving as the technology component for veteran organization peer networks to serve as Community Leaders and refer veterans to clinical services. This will be piloted in Houston, Central Florida, and Colorado in 2020.



Raymond Amador, Community Leader with Combined Arms.

Highlights of Accomplishments

Rice University Joins Forces with Combined Arms

In collaboration with Rice University and the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies, Combined Arms invested in veterans within our member organizations with scholarships to the LeadRICE Program. This training and experience cultivates the best strategic models and practices encourage these leaders to bring the best methods to their careers and networks. They immediately implemented what they've learned, and more veterans will be chosen to attend this program in 2020 because of the significant strides made in 2019.



Tana Plescher

Harris County Lead Outreach Coordinator,
Grace After Fire



Damion Martin

National Projects Manager,
The Mission Continues



Staff members from our member organizations speaking to the impact of the LeadRICE Program.

Partners and Collaborators

The mission of Combined Arms wouldn't be possible without the dedication and support of our major donors and partners. When our Donor Partners support Combined Arms, they're making a statement: veterans belong in Texas and it is our collective duty to make sure that they thrive here. We partner with the best of the best because we serve the best of the best. The corporations, foundations and major donors who join us on our mission intrinsically understand the value of veterans and their influence on Texas. [To learn more about becoming a partner, click here.](#)



★ Veterans Uniting After the Uniform

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LGBTQ Veterans Group ★



Michelle Barnett

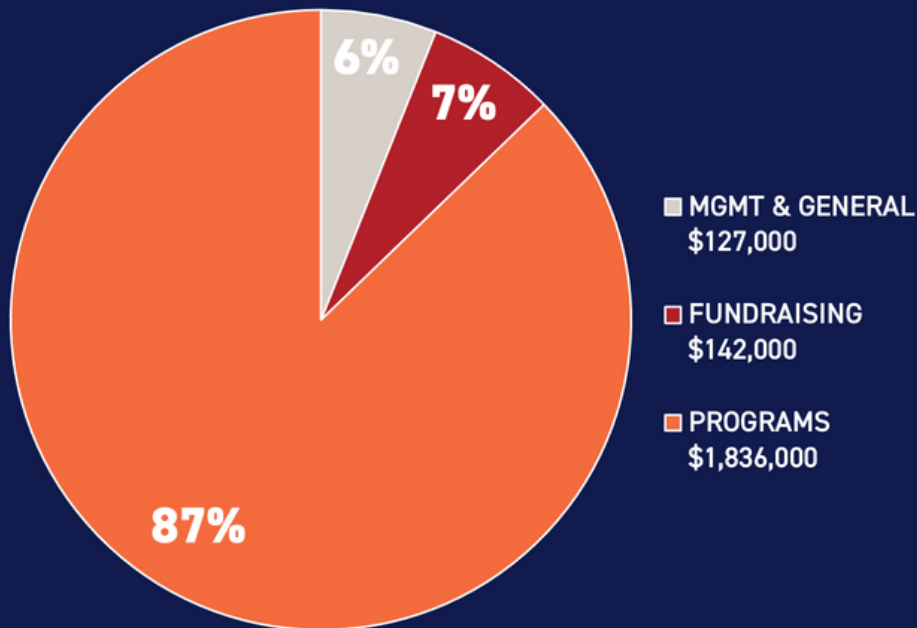
Michelle is a Program Coordinator & Community Supervision Officer at Veterans Treatment Court for Harris County Adult Probation Department. Throughout her career, she's seen veterans fall through the cracks of the justice system, and strives to make sure it never happens again. Michelle credits Combined Arms with connecting her to a network of veterans like herself, uplifting her physical and mental health, and finding a positive sense of camaraderie and belonging after she transitioned after service in the United State Army. She's currently active as a Community Leader and works with member organizations heighten awareness of underserved veterans. Prior to the inception of Combined Arms, she worked in the veteran services space and has since become an advocate for the collaborative model. She has personally taken part and seen the collaborative action between member organizations within Combined Arms.

[If you want to support the impact of leaders on their community like Michelle, visit us here.](#)

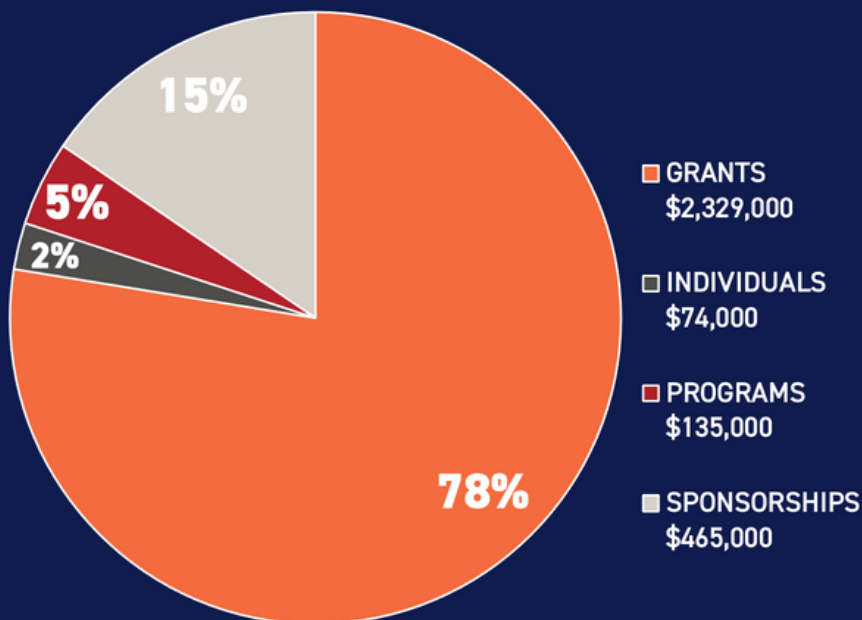
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Financials

Expenses



Revenue



Board of Directors

Bryan Foster, Chairman
Lauren Gore, Vice Chairman
Andrew Puhala, Treasurer
Ashley Eastin, Secretary
Jonny Havens, At-Large Member
Steven Hummer, LtGen, USMC
Brian Ivany
Jiten Agarwal
Brooks Ballard
Kelli Betner
Nathan Cook
Winston Elliott
Doug Foshee
Barry Mattson
Carlis Miller
David Nightingale
Tony Phillips
Bill Pritchett
Kelsey Smith
David Ulrey
Corey Vickers

The Future of Combined Arms

Strategic Objectives

These were developed collaboratively with our staff and partners to ensure that the mission does not veer off course, and significant progress has been made in 2019 towards achieving milestones within each of these.

S01: Scale our strategy, operations, and tactics to serve more member organizations and more veterans.

S02: Optimize our processes impacting member organization collaboration, technology platform usage, and client experience.

S03: Replicate our model in other communities to develop new and innovative best practices that can positively impact the optimization of the system.

Enabling Objectives

E01: Develop diverse revenue streams and support mechanisms that fuel the system for scalability and sustainability over time.

E02: Ensure Combined Arms continues to improve financial and operational processes in order to attract and retain the most qualified and dedicated staff and board members to accomplish our mission, vision, and strategic objectives.



The Future of Combined Arms

New Markets and Expansion Initiatives

Texas

Combined Arms is a proud partner of the Texas A&M University System which has played a large role in the successful development, deployment, and overall success of our model. The Texas A&M University System will continue to contribute to the successful implementation of the Combined Arms proposed statewide network to fill gaps in services and provide care coordination to Texas veterans and their families of all generations faster and more effectively. The Texas A&M University System and Combined Arms partnership is uniquely positioned to successfully develop and deploy the Veterans Network to improve veteran family care coordination through the System's 11 Universities and 8 state agencies located throughout Texas, along with our other state agency partners like TWC, TVC and 50+ others throughout the state.

Combined Arms also partnered with the University of Texas Institute for Military Veteran Family Wellness to help conduct a needs assessment in El Paso County and the Austin region along with 50+ incredible partners. Through streamlined assessments and customized resources based on individual veteran needs, our partnership is simplifying and accelerating the connection point between veterans and resources.

We welcome any academic institute and public agency that wants to partner with us to accelerate the impact of veterans, [click here to inquire about our how.](#)



Call to Action for Supporters

Combined Arms is dedicated to uniting our community by activating the power of veterans and has developed as a backbone organization to increase collaboration of veteran-serving organizations to better serve veterans. We need your help to reach more veterans and to continue making an impact on our community! Your donations will go directly to serving our veterans in their transition through workshops, community connectivity, trainings, education, fitness, and so much more! Join our movement to be #UnitedAfterTheUniform. Make a single donation today or select a give monthly membership to empower veterans and their families as they transition into their new mission: civilian life. Do more than support our troops. Help them thrive by donating. Click on any of the links below!

CORPORATE GIVING

SUPPORT CAREERS AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

INDIVIDUAL GIVING

ONE PERSON CAN HELP START A MOVEMENT

MAJOR GIFT DONATION

HELP SUSTAIN A MULTI-YEAR MISSION

Getting the word out and even joining Combined Arms on the ground are integral to expanding the reach of our mission and message. Here are more ways to contribute!

LAUNCH A FACEBOOK FUNDRAISER

USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SOCIAL GOOD

VOLUNTEER WITH US

PARTICIPATE IN CHANGE

HOST A BENEFIT EVENT

FUNDRAISE AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL

