GET INVOLVED
BY GETTING
ACTIVE FOR
OUR HEROES

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Get involved by getting active for our heroes.
Active Heroes’ mission is to strengthen active duty military, veterans and their families in order to provide the coping skills to manage the stress and the triggering points that lead to suicide. Active Heroes is dedicated to connecting and helping America’s military families through community outreach, home repairs, physical and mental therapy, and community reintegration.

We are on a mission together to prevent veteran suicides.

Twenty-two veterans per day commit suicide.

One U.S. veteran attempts suicide every 80 minutes.

Military suicides increased during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

From 2009-2011, record numbers of veterans have made suicide attempts.

Active Heroes continued our support of veterans and their families in tremendous ways during 2014. We put a huge focus on providing free events, seminars, volunteer projects, and team leader training for our veterans and families. No other charity in America puts this much emphasis on providing FREE events for military families, and we are proud that more than 12,000 veterans have joined us in participating.

Our Carry The Fallen team leader trainings have helped to make an impact in communities across America to promote teamwork among our volunteers. This training has proven to directly save veterans lives by building camaraderie and friendships with team members. Our team leaders and volunteers tracked 155 cases of veterans claiming to be suicidal and were instrumental in reaching out to our struggling comrades and families, connecting them with Active Heroes events, other social functions or direct assistance in their regions.

2014 was also the year that we saw big changes at the Active Heroes Retreat Center. More than 2,000 volunteers worked on the 144 acres and helped to clean up 30 percent of the land. We also completed work on several projects, including the construction of the first pergola, more than 40 benches, 16 picnic tables, 10 grills, trails, and the side entrance parking lot. Your donations helped to get the equipment needed to clean up the rest of the land and develop the entire retreat.

More than 650 veterans visited the retreat in its first year, and the results were amazing. The veterans enjoyed the retreat’s “Healing Areas” designed for relaxation and reflection, as well as the archery area, trails and the new statues honoring heroes. The retreat will continue to be the place where Active Heroes can do the most to help heal the invisible wounds of war.

Active Heroes has an important mission that will continue in the years ahead. We are making great strides in combating veteran stress and veteran suicide. Using our retreat and our new military family community center, we will host hundreds more free events, seminars, and volunteer projects to directly benefit those who sacrificed for our freedoms. 2014 was an instrumental year in beginning many of these new programs, and 2015 will continue the fight to take veteran suicide from 22 per day to zero!

Sincerely,

Troy Yocum
Founder & President, Active Heroes
**ACTIVE HEROES BUILDS MILITARY FAMILY COMMUNITY CENTER**

Active Heroes spent much of 2014 on the construction, remodeling, and planning for The Active Heroes Military Family Community Center, which will open in early 2015.

Located at 8701 Old Bardstown Road in Louisville, just south of I-265, the Center will feature a wide variety of free support, seminars and activities for military service members, veterans, and military families, free seminars on education opportunities and financial planning, resiliency training to help reduce veteran suicide, connections for veterans to resources from the Legal Aid Society and Disabled American Veterans, a common area for guests to relax and interact, wireless internet, and the Active Heroes Store.

Monthly activities available through Active Heroes will include cross-fit workouts, yoga, meditation classes, acupuncture treatments, hiking events and scheduled camping dates for the retreat listed in the front lobby.

“This community center will be a pilot program where we are going to test how much the military families will enjoy seminars, activities and service connections,” said Troy Yocum, president and founder of Active Heroes. “It’s important that our community here in Kentucky supports the 340,000 veterans and all of their family members. This first-of-its-kind Military Family Community Center is a big step toward accomplishing that goal.”

**2014 FINANCIALS**

During Active Heroes’ third year, we focused on how we can affect the lives of veterans and their families through our four programs. Each program expense is listed on our 2014 IRS Form 990, which is available on our Web site (activeheroes.org/financials). We set our goals for fundraising and administration expenses to be as low as possible while still being able to function efficiently to support hundreds of veteran families.

**ACTIVE HEROES MILITARY MAKEOVERS**

In 2014, Active Heroes partnered with Wave 3 News and repaired three homes over three months for military families in Kentucky and southern Indiana. We also partnered with local companies in Louisville, KY, including Ashley Furniture, Charlie Wilson’s Appliance, Steepletons, for the furniture, bedding, toys, paint, supplies and more for the home reconstruction projects.
Garners Much-Needed Attention for Veterans

Active Heroes Retreat Center and Nature Park

Many active duty military, veterans and their families dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) struggle with going out into the public. Integration is the first step towards healing. The Active Heroes Retreat Center and Nature Park is designed to give these families a safe place where they can intermingle with the public and have “Healing Areas” to enjoy time alone. Located on 144 beautiful acres seated in between rolling hills and valleys with four dedicated flat sections, it will be the first retreat in America that is stream-lined for active duty military, veterans and military families. No long application process and no long waiting list. Military families will be able to come with their DD214, VA Card or active duty military card and get in free to enjoy great outdoor activities and healing areas.

When completed, the retreat center and nature park will have such amenities as solar-powered cabins, campfires, healing gardens, climbing walls, hiking and biking trails, archery ranges, petting zoos, equine therapy and a small artificial lake stocked with fish. The facility will be open to the public to help with the integration healing for individuals and their families. Every last weekend of the month, the retreat will be open only to military families. This is to help those who are struggling with a greater level of PTSD and do not want to be around the public.

Community Outreach/Veteran Home Repairs

Active Heroes helps military families by providing community outreach, volunteer projects and home repairs for military families. Our community outreach also educates the public of the challenges and needs of veterans and their families.

Active Challenges/Suicide Prevention Outreach

Active Heroes builds teams of active duty military, veterans, military families and supporters to help prevent suicide and teach coping skills to deal with PTSD by using physical fitness as a way to set goals in life. We give purpose to the teams by setting fundraising goals to help with programs that have measurable impact for military families. The impact of the Team Active Heroes (Team Building) program can be measured in the camaraderie that is built with our more than 9,500 team members who have participated in physical fitness events across America and on military installations across the world.

MANY HANDS MAKE MILITARY FAMILY RETREAT CENTER A REALITY

More than 2,000 volunteers, including more than 1,500 civilians from local companies such as Brown Forman, Early Times, The Home Depot, Wave 3, Sam’s Club and Foresters Insurance, worked on the 144 acres that houses the Active Heroes Retreat Center.

Team Depot sent 65 volunteers to the Active Heroes Retreat in Shepherdsville for a day of volunteering. They showed up with a positive attitude, a huge amount of motivation, and a $15,000 grant from Home Depot, which was used to purchase construction materials and rent equipment. The volunteers travelled from 13 different Home Depot locations in Kentucky, Indiana and West Virginia.

Jeremy Milly is a district manager for Home Depot locations in Louisville, Lexington, West Virginia, and southern Indiana. He joined Team Depot for its Active Heroes project, which was also his first visit to our retreat.

“We’ve had a partnership with Troy and Active Heroes for the last several years. We thought, what better project than to reach out to Active Heroes, say that we want to apply for a grant and come out [to the retreat] and help them out,” he said.

For Joe Autry, the store manager at the Home Depot on Breckenridge Lane in Louisville (and Team Depot Community Captain for volunteer work in this area), volunteering at the retreat isn’t a new experience.

In addition to clearing several acres’ worth of brush and foliage, the team built two pergolas for one of the retreat’s healing areas, as well as several benches.

Over 30 Foresters employees assisted with landscaping and removal work and also constructed several park benches.

“We were really impressed with the amount of planning and thought that Active Heroes has put into the retreat,” said Dawn Gardner, a member of the Foresters legacy council for the KY/TN regional branch. “I think everybody enjoyed their day; they kept mentioning how much progress they were seeing with their work and how much they’re looking forward to coming back.”

Active Heroes partnered with SkillsUSA, a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA students built sixteen 8’ picnic tables, planter boxes and welding fabrication (grill) for the retreat during a carpentry contest among the students. Steve Anderson and Johnny Sewell, Iroquois HS SkillsUSA advisors, finished picnic tables not completed during the competition.

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“Almost immediately the families flocked to the healing areas to relax.”

said Troy Yocum, president and founder of Active Heroes. “We were overjoyed when the tables, grills and boxes arrived at the retreat. Almost immediately the families flocked to the healing areas to relax.”

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JOE AUTRY
HOME DEPOT
STORE MANAGER

STAND AT ATTENTION
GARNERS MUCH-NEEDED ATTENTION FOR VETERANS

Our Annual Stand At Attention Competition grew to three new locations in 2014. With Raleigh, NC as its main base, the event had more than 200,000 visitors in Raleigh, Wilmington, NC, Houston, TX and Santa Ana, CA. The US Army Veterans took the win for 2014.

During the Stand at Attention events, members from the Navy, Army, Air Force, Coast Guard and Marines compete to see who can stand at attention the longest. Participants will start at 10 a.m. and go until the last one is standing or 8 p.m., whichever comes first. All donations to each branch will help military families in need.

During the 2014 event, volunteer Kaylyn Mintz completed 80 push-ups at the event as part of the push-up contests and the video went viral. The volunteers made appearances on Queen Latifah Show, Inside Edition and the Doctors to share how the Active Challenge events help military families bond. Video footage from the 2014 Stand At Attention Competition was used for a documentary about Heroes on Discovery Channel.

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The Hike for Heroes team successfully completed the entire Appalachian Trail to raise awareness for Active Heroes. The veteran-led team completed more than 2,200 miles from April through September.

Active Heroes held its 4th annual Free Memory Miles events honoring fallen heroes.

Active Heroes awarded Lifetime Funds to three recipients through partnership with the Community Foundation of Louisville.

Active Heroes was able to provide a special adaptive athletic wheelchair for a paralyzed veteran.

Fifteen veterans signed up for college through Active Heroes’ partnership with Sullivan University.

Active Heroes partnered with EarlyTimes to host five military families at Churchill Downs for the Kentucky Derby, which included a VIP experience.

Active Heroes partnered with Kentucky National Guard Resiliency Training program, located at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, KY, for presentations to 150 soldiers.

Active Heroes paid off Funeral costs of $2,500 for a Marine veteran family.

Active Heroes has helped thousands of active duty military, veterans and their families with financial support, home repairs and programs to combat PTSD and veteran suicide with donations from people like you! To make a donation, please contact our office at 502.277.9280 or visit ActiveHeroes.org.