



Veterans Medical Leadership Council

2023 Annual Report

**VETERANS
HELPING
VETERANS
AVOID CRISIS**



HELP US PUT A STOP TO THE SPIRAL EFFECT

A Veteran loses their

Job

then their

Home

then their

Connection

then their

HOPE



Veterans Medical
Leadership Council

We recognize that the challenges our Veterans encounter extend far beyond the battlefield. Social determinants such as access to healthcare, employment opportunities, stable housing, and social support systems play pivotal roles in shaping their mental health outcomes. Moreover, the shadow of suicidal ideation looms large over many Veterans, a stark reminder of the urgent need for action and support.

Our programs work upstream to prevent the spiral towards Veteran Suicide. In the State of Arizona alone, there are over three Veteran Suicides per day **. By preventing the loss of a job or the loss of a home, the VMLC believes we break the spiral that leads to loss of connection and loss of hope.

Amid these daunting realities, we find hope and resolve. Our goal today and every day is not merely to acknowledge these issues but to actively work towards solutions that are not just beneficial but lifesaving, life-sustaining, and life-improving.

Together, let us embark on this crucial journey of understanding, support, and action, ensuring that no Veteran is left behind in their struggle for mental well-being. Thank you for joining us in this important endeavor.

** National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS), AZ-VDRVS Report, 2015-2022 data, Dr. Charles Katz, Arizona State University, 2024.



Mission Statement

To provide a forum for community leaders to advocate for initiatives which enhance the quality of Veteran healthcare and services, and to assist Arizona Veterans in crises that fall outside state and federal funding guidelines.

2023 Impact

92% of every dollar raised goes toward our programs



\$344,090

total distribution



\$10,000

in gift cards



321

Veterans and families helped



\$4M+

raised and dispersed since inception



\$1,700

average support per Veteran



70%

of funding goes to housing



Bridging the Gap for Arizona Veterans

In the crucible of life's challenges, our Veterans often find themselves on the precipice of uncertainty. The threat of homelessness looms, financial burdens weigh heavily, and health struggles cast shadows over their well-being. Yet, in the face of such trials, it is our collective duty to extend a helping hand, to be the lifeline that ensures they remain housed, employed, and resilient in their journey toward renewed stability – to "Bridge the Gap" for Arizona Veterans.

Specifically addressing housing and vehicle repair issues upstream can have a significant impact on preventing downstream problems such as unemployment, homelessness, and mental health crises.

In partnership with the Veterans Affairs (VA) Social Workers in Phoenix and Prescott, and with the unwavering support of individuals, organizations, and corporations in our communities, we stand as a bastion of support. Our aspirations extend even further to Southern Arizona as we envision a future where no Veteran is left behind, where our programs serve as beacons of hope throughout the State of Arizona.

To each of you who have lent your support, your generosity serves as a testament to the enduring spirit of compassion and camaraderie. Your contributions breathe life into our endeavors, enabling us to weave a safety net of support for those who have sacrificed so much for our nation.

In the coming year, let us unite with renewed vigor and determination, for our goal is clear: to tell our story, to increase donations, and to extend a vital bridge of support to even more Veterans and their families.

Together, let us continue to honor and uplift those who have served our nation with resolute courage and devotion. For in our collective efforts lies the promise of a brighter tomorrow for our honored Veterans.

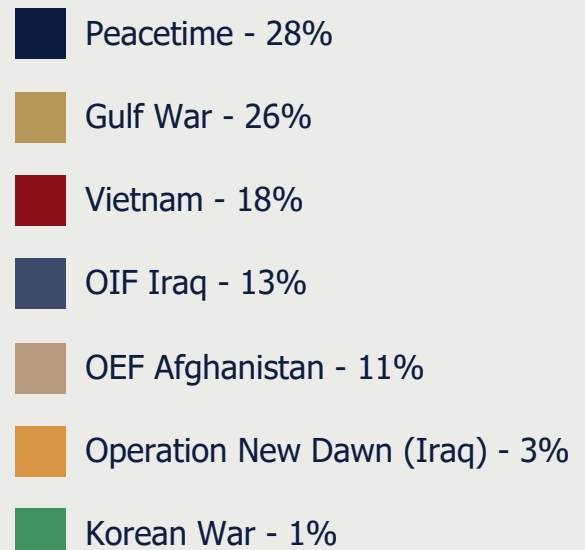
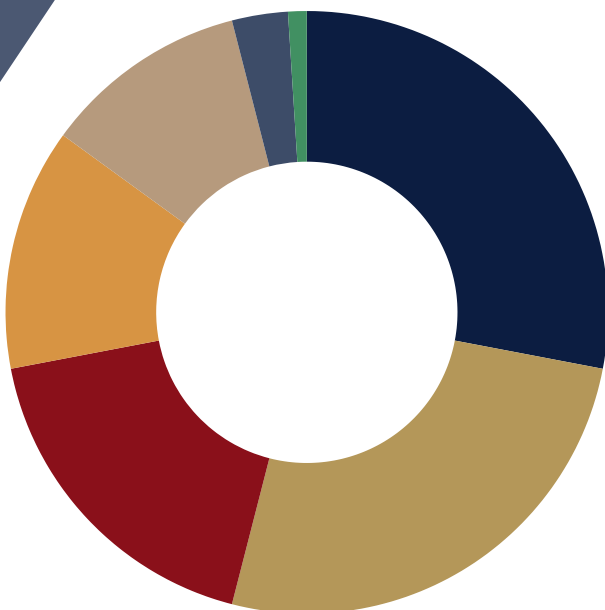
With deepest gratitude and warm regards,

Tom Eisiminger, Jr.
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired
President
Veterans Medical Leadership Council and Charities
info@vmlc.org
360.433.8937

ESTIMATED NEED

When it comes to Veterans in need in Arizona, we are just scratching the surface. In the Phoenix area alone, the Phoenix VA Medical Center estimates that there are 400+ Veterans seeking assistance such as that provided by VMLC. We were able to help 229, just shy of half. Our aim is to assist 100% of the Veterans we serve. We are working toward achieving that goal every day but can only do so with your help.

Veterans by Era of Service





2024 Goals - Arizona

- Increase annual donations to \$750,000 to fully support VA Medical Center social programs
- Continue to focus on alternative therapies to assist with Veterans' mental health
- Boost awareness of VMLC's impact on the Veteran community
- Increase grant and corporate contributions by a minimum of 20% (\$56,000+)



**Follow Us
on Social**



@vmlcaz

Donate Today





How long does it take for a Veteran to receive funds?

Once approved, checks are mailed within 24 hours directly to the service provider (e.g., landlord) or organization owed the debt. Checks are never sent directly to Veterans.

Can a Veteran approach the VMLC for assistance directly?

No. Veterans are referred to us by VA social workers who have confirmed their Veteran status and assessed their needs.

Are there organizations in other states that are similar to VMLC?

We are assisting Veterans in numerous states in their efforts to develop similar programs in their communities.



For the third year in a row, the VMLC received a \$7,500 Season for Sharing grant from The Arizona Republic and azcentral.com, helping prevent 5 Arizona Veterans and their families from becoming homeless.

Averting Crisis Through Housing Assistance

A Bridge for Those in a Time of Need

The housing crisis for Veterans and their families has been exacerbated by rising home values, mortgage rates and rental costs in Arizona. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, between January 2020 and January 2021, the number of Veterans in homeless shelters in Arizona increased by 10%. Many more found themselves unhoused, living in makeshift shelters or cycling through temporary arrangements with others.

There is good news. The latest AHAR report found that the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness decreased by 11% nationwide in 2022. That said, the report's point-in-time data estimated that on a single night in 2022, roughly 33,129 Veterans were unhoused. In Arizona, the number was 857. Vulnerable servicemen and servicewomen—whether already homeless or in danger of becoming so—are still very much in need of financial assistance to stabilize their living situations.

That's where VMLC comes in. We provide a financial bridge for those that find themselves temporarily unable to cover housing costs. VMLC disperses 70% of its funds annually to Veterans and their families seeking housing related assistance.



Returning Warrior Program

A Bridge for Veterans in Crisis
Over \$4,000,000 Given To Date

The Returning Warrior Program was established in 2009 to financially assist Veterans transitioning back into the civilian community who are having difficulty meeting basic needs. We have since opened the program to all Veterans regardless of their status. Veterans partner directly with VA social workers in Phoenix and Prescott to ensure they are receiving all the benefits available to them. Social workers then refer Veterans to VMLC for assistance as appropriate.



\$344,090

total distribution



\$1,700

average support
per Veteran



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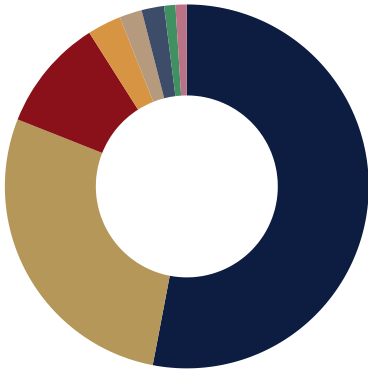
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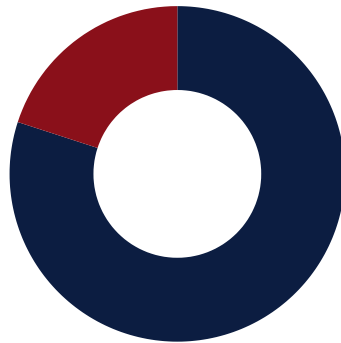
of funding goes
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Veteran Demographics - 2023



White - 53%	American Indian or Alaska Native - 2%
Black or African American - 28%	Not Disclosed - 2%
Hispanic or Latino - 10%	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander - 1%
2 or More Ethnicities - 3%	Undetermined - 1%

Support By Gender - 2023



Male - 80%
Female - 20%

VMLC generally approves requests for:

- Rent and mortgage assistance
- Utility payments
- Transportation
- Auto repair
- Clothing
- Food





BOULDER CREST
FOUNDATION



Caring for the Mental Health of Our Veterans

A Bridge to Innovative Treatment

The Boulder Crest Foundation is a leader in advancing the science behind recovery from traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress (PTS).

Founded by University of North Carolina Charlotte psychologists Dr. Richard Tedeschi and Dr. Lawrence Calhoun and based on decades of groundbreaking research, Boulder Crest's innovative Warrior PATHH (Progressive and Alternative Training for Healing Heroes) methodology is used to treat PTS symptoms and combat-related stress and anxiety. In addition to Veterans, the foundation assists first responders and their families in their recovery.

Initially, VMLC provided vital financial assistance to the mental health program, bridging the gap as state and federal government programs were being developed to support it. The VA and State of Arizona have since funded Boulder Crest, and we have shifted our attention to raising awareness about this groundbreaking mental health program among the Veteran community.

VA mental health providers can refer Veterans in need to Boulder Crest programs in Arizona, Virginia and, through its mobile training teams, other states nationwide.

"This generation's Agent Orange is traumatic brain injury and PTS. For them, there are no battlefields. No front lines. Recently, enemies of the U.S. have used asymmetrical warfare, drones and IEDs to inflict maximum damage. Our Warriors return to civilian life with double the rate of post-traumatic stress than the general population—and veterans with traumatic brain injuries are three times more likely to commit suicide than their civilian counterparts. VMLC is committed to helping today's Veterans recover, and Boulder Crest is a lifeline for many."

Tom Eisiminger, Jr.

"I felt so alone in my struggles and truly broken. But my biggest takeaway from the Warrior PATHH program: I'm not alone, and I'm not broken. I learned how to transform my trauma from my military and law enforcement careers into strength and growth, so I can thrive in life. I'm committed to going home and creating a deep connection with my wife, my children, and my grandchildren."

James, Warrior PATHH participant

Learn more at <https://bouldercrest.org/> about the work of Boulder Crest Foundation and its positive impact on the lives of Veterans.



How Your Donations are Helping Our Veterans



The VMLC was honored to receive the amazing donation of a vehicle following our 2023 Hero's Luncheon with the stipulation that the vehicle go to a female Veteran in need. The VMLC then provided the vehicle to a USMC Veteran who was not able to be with her young daughter due to lack of a vehicle and family difficulties.

Meineke Mike, a VMLC councilmember out of Mesa, made needed repairs to ensure the vehicle was roadworthy.

The VMLC helped a Veteran and her two daughters stay in their home through the holidays following a long bout with COVID that went through the house. The VMLC allowed the Veteran to decrease worry of caring for herself and her children until she could return to work.

The VMLC funds helped a Veteran keep the utilities on in his home, saved his vehicle from getting repossessed and brought a great sense of relief to him and his wife; Both are unemployable due to their disabilities and bills had been stacking up since April 2022 after he lost his job. Having financial peace of mind decreased the Veteran's thoughts of suicide and saved his life. Thank you VMLC!

“Please let the team know I appreciate and am very thankful for The VMLC payment for my car. As a former SSVF social worker who has assisted my fellow Veterans in obtaining assistance-it was hard for me to accept the option for myself. Payment via credit card - an additional thank you as I know that option is a special case. This has been extremely helpful for my mental health. I no longer feel so invisible as a female Veteran. You have no idea how much this boosted not giving in to the war within as they say.

VMLC assisted with a rental payment and a car payment for a Veteran who experienced financial hardship after a change in employment status due to a change in her health. The Veteran was feeling desperate after depleting savings and after applications with other agencies were denied. Without VMLC's assistance, the Veteran did not know how she was going to make those payments. The Veteran was so relieved and thankful to hear her VMLC application had been approved and she could breathe easier knowing those expenses were paid.

“I received a message from the Veteran that was assisted and he was very appreciative of funds. “Through your help, I was able to get my truck back, up and running. I really, really appreciate it-you guys do a fantastic job. Thanks again.” The VMLC assistance helped the Veteran get back on his feet by providing a means for Veteran to be self-sufficient. The Veteran could not afford a major vehicle repair bill, but with his vehicle was able to obtain work to make ends meet.

SAVE THE DATE

Our next luncheon is November 7, 2024, at the Commemorative Air Force Museum in Mesa!

Honoring Veterans and Supporters at the 20th Annual VMLC Heroes Patriotic Luncheon



The 2023 VMLC Hero Honorees



Guest Speaker

Col (Ret), Kim
"KC" Campbell,
U.S. Air Force.





MC Mike Broomhead was surprised with the VMLC Patriot's Award.



Miss San Carlos Apache also attended the luncheon.



The Cowgirls Historical Foundation was well represented.



Councilmember Arni Cook and VMLC President Tom Eisiminger.



The Rosie the Riveter Association, Phoenix Chapter once again demonstrating their support for the war fighter.



Honored to have the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. with us this year.

Solar Projects



Thanks to the generosity of USAA, the VMLC was able to provide solar powered refrigerators to Diné Veterans with diabetes so they can store life saving insulin.



What We've Been Up To



Following a very public Veterans Day event, Senator Krysten Sinema brought her Veterans Advisory Council (VAC) and several representatives of the Veterans non-profit community together behind closed doors. This meeting included the VMLC's very own Tom Eisiminger. This closed door session was a way to thank local Veteran Centric non-profits for our efforts on Veteran causes, on Veterans Day Weekend.



Tom Eisiminger & Bob Dalpe, represented VMLC as we were honored for our COVID Relief efforts at the 100th Anniversary of the 1st Navajo Nation Council meeting at the start of the 25th Navajo Nation Council.

Brad Pederson CEO of MD Helicopters joined us and Delegate Carl Slater presented us with the certificate. Arizona Governor, Katie Hobbs, was also in attendance.



Dave Rosenfeld, 1st VP, and Cynthia Vargas, Council Member, were welcomed to the USAA Regional Headquarters to discuss USAA's Corporate Philanthropy and the impact they are making working with the VMLC. We're grateful for the support of Patrick Fitzhugh, USAF Veteran and Regional Site Director for USAA, in charge of their corporate philanthropy. USAA has generously supported the VMLC mission with both its Returning Warrior Program and the Native American Support.



Trailer loaded with toys donated by Maag Toy Foundation headed to the Navajo Nation.



In October, we joined Nation's Finest to recognize Arizona's unsung heroes: Veterans and Civic Leaders who go above and beyond for our community. They are the true embodiment of the values that make our nation great. Congratulations to VMLC Councilmembers George Bliss, Sam Young, and VMLC supporter and Civic Leader Mike Broomhead, Veterans Pat Upah, Reggie Yates, RJ Mitchell, and Veteran Civic Leader Dr. Sue Sisley.

Primary Donors



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US Army

Dave Rosenfeld
1st Vice President
US Army

Bob Dalpe
2nd Vice President
US Air Force

Jake Gregory
Treasurer
US Marine Corps

Arni Cook
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