

Operation First Response 2020 Annual Report



Over a Decade of
Serving Disabled Veterans and Their Families with Emergency Financial Aid

www.OperationFirstResponse.org



Letter from our Executive Director

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Senior Advisors and Staff of Operation First Response, we thank you for your support.

Together we have served over 23,689 families with emergency financial aid. We could not accomplish our mission without the generosity of our Donors and the hard work of our Volunteers.

It is in times of crisis that Americans come together and support each other. As we are all aware of the recent events regarding COVID-19, we can safely assume many agencies and programs will need support in the coming days, weeks and months. While the medical component is of great concern, we at Operation First Response are focused on the non-medical side, the impact of not having income due to lost wages. We know that people who perhaps have never needed services in the past will suddenly be at the point of need. OFR will be providing essential assistance such as food, mortgages and rent, utilities, vehicle repairs and other basic needs.

All of our 2020 events were canceled due to COVID-19, there are still concerns about the possibility of having events in 2021. We believe now more than ever that it is crucial for all types of funding to be able to give the needed assistance and aid to our Active-Duty Service Members, Disabled Veterans, Gold Star Families and our First Responders.

We will not be able to support these families in crisis without your support now!

Together, we are stronger!

Warm regards,

*Peggy Baker
Founder/Executive Director*



Our Mission

Operation First Response serves our nation's wounded, injured and critically ill active-duty Service Members/Disabled Veterans, Gold Star Families and First Responders with personal and financial needs.

Services are provided from the onset of injury, throughout their recovery period and along their journey from military life into the civilian world. Financial aid varies as each case is based on individual needs ranging from rent, utilities, vehicle payments, groceries, clothing, and travel expenses.



Our Core Values

- Assisting our Military Families

We are determined to make a difference in the quality of life for injured or critically ill military service members and their families. We relentlessly seek resources, both inside the military and outside, to help fill the gap caused by injury or severe illness during service to our country.

- Respecting Privacy and Dignity

We value, respect and protect the privacy and dignity of the families we serve.

- Personal Accountability and Respect for Others

We accept that we are part of a larger team dedicated to the same goals and objectives. We understand that as a team member we are accountable for our actions and the reflection of those actions upon the organization. We work with others in a way that demonstrates that we value them and their contributions and have high expectations of what they will contribute. We value the perspectives and experiences that others bring to the team.

- Integrity

We are honest and trustworthy and do what is right when no one is watching. We understand the pain that violating the public trust will cause to our organization, our teammates and ultimately to the families we serve.

Goal Oriented

We have two main goals:

- To honor the service and sacrifice of every military family.
- To build a network of support and funding with a sense of urgency that supports our mission and meets our high ethical standards.

Our Programs



Operation First Response Military Family Assistance Program

OFR provides financial aid to wounded, injured and critically-ill Active-Duty Service Members/Disabled Veterans and their families during the recovery period of the service member. We also provide financial aid to those who are making the transition of military life to civilian life after being medically retired. There is a significant lapse of time, from six months to one year, between the retirement and the onset of VA benefits causing many families to lose homes and not be able to provide for the basic needs of their families.

The Last Mission Project

OFR provides financial aid to combat Veterans suffering with PTSD that attend in- house counseling and therapy treatment to gain the skills needed to cope with the symptoms they experience. Many Veterans must make the decision between their family finances and receiving this needed therapy.

Our Programs



Operation First Response Project Specialized Training

OFR has partnered with Cisco IT Professional Trainers from VITT Inc to offer specialized training courses for our Active Duty Wounded Warriors while they are within the Warrior's Transitional Units and our Veterans and their caregivers.

Operation First Response Project Tutor Program

The families of our wounded, injured and critically ill active-duty Service Members and Disabled Veterans face unparalleled challenges in the transition to the civilian community. We understand their unique needs and are committed to assisting them with their successful integration into higher education and career fields. We have partnered with a tutoring service that has provided educational services for over 30 years. This program is also available to our Heroes' family members.



Our Programs

Operation “Final Salute” Project

OFR has had the honor of sponsoring hundreds of portraits of our Fallen Heroes painted by the artist Kaziah Hancock. These portraits are treasured by the families of our Fallen (this is NOT exclusive to Killed in Action) and allow all of us to be part of the “Final Salute” to these amazing Heroes that gave all for each of us. It reminds the families that our grateful nation will never forget their sacrifices.

Operation First Response Backpack Program

OFR sends backpacks to wounded Service Members located at combat support hospitals in theatre. These backpacks are filled with a set of clothing, hygiene products, a handmade blanket, and a phone card and sent to a POC to be given to our wounded upon arrival. These items enable our wounded to have some personal items considering many have their uniforms cut off in the battlefield and it may take weeks for personal items to be returned.

Operation First Response Random Act of Kindness

OFR is offering Random Act of Kindness Initiative Cards to all Gold Star Families. There is no cost for the cards for the Gold Star Families.



Comments from our Heroes and Partners

I am so impressed at how hands on OFR is with the people they help. I am usually wary donating to organizations and then finding out that they are so large that very little of the donations reach the people that they are supposed to help. The way OFR works truly impressed me. Thank you for what you do for these people who lives were forever altered by the violence of war.

Ms R

We thank the Operation First Response team for their generous support. Your organization has heard and assisted the otherwise voiceless. As of July 2020, the financial assistance resources for Veterans in the metro Atlanta area have been depleted. Without the help of Operation First Response, we would have had numerous veteran clients that would be unable to obtain the financial assistance required for their wellbeing and quality of life.

Respectfully,
The Warrior Alliance

My name is Steven Routt, and I am a 23-year Veteran of the US Army and Army Reserve and Army National Guard. I served with honor as a Non-Commissioned Officer, aviator, combat medic, and a nurse during three armed conflicts. Like Operation First Response, my desire to continue supporting those who stood for freedom has never left me. I currently work as a Veteran Peer Navigator with a partnering organization in the veteran space. I write to you today to share my knowledge of, experiences with, and great appreciation for Operation First Response and their mission. For more than three years I have had the great pleasure of working closely alongside Operation First Response. I consider them a highly effective and valued resource as a force multiplier in the disabled Veteran community. Throughout my working relationship with Operation First Response, I have come to admire the sincerity and integrity of their program. A deep desire to strengthen and uphold those that chose a path in harm's way guides their mission and ensures that the impact on the lives of Veterans and their families affected by war is positive, swift, and successful. This inspires those of us who partner with them and instills a deep sense of accomplishment in supporting their uplifting endeavors. Working to develop and implement solutions to the issues we face as disabled Veterans, I have perspective on the tremendous value that the efforts of Operation First Response bring to our lives. Like you, I look forward to supporting and participating in the greatly impactful mission that Operation First Response has undertaken.

Steven P. Routt



2020 Events

Due to COVID-19 restrictions all 2020 events were canceled

Major Contributors



Direct Premium Buys

Low Family Charitable Foundation

Miriam L Halsey Foundation

The Kim and Harold Louie Foundation



Carl Monk



Wawa, Inc

Joseph Pieri



Judith Picarelli

The Williams Foundation

The Lawrence S. Simon Revocable Trust

Joseph Drummond

Whitney Jones

Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta





Board of Directors

Board Chairman – Phil Irizarry
President – Peggy Baker
Secretary – Lauri Hauser
Treasurer - Danielle Ferguson
Director of Special Projects – Bob O’Donoghue
Board Member – CPL Ronny Porta (RET)

Senior Advisors

Nick Constantino
Carl Monk

Executive Staff

Founder/President – Peggy Baker
COO - Executive Office Manager & Case Manager – Sarah Baker
CFO - Executive Office Assistant & Case Manager – Crystal Krueger





2020 Financials

INCOME

Contributions - \$714,684.00

In-Kind Contributions - \$274,455.00

Interest Income - \$124.00

Total Income - \$989,263.00

Net Assets - \$913,019.00

EXPENSES

Services Provided Directly to Veterans - \$836,107.00

General Operating Costs - \$23,528.00

Fundraising Costs - \$20,046.00

General Operating Costs for 2020 were 2 %

Fundraising Costs for 2020 were 2 %

Over 95% of our funds went directly to serve our Heroes and their families with emergency financial aid.





2020 Accomplishments and Impact

2020 Statistics

1,849 Wounded Heroes and their Families received assistance with:

- Mortgage and Rent
- Utilities
- Vehicle Payments
- Groceries
- Air Transportation
- Ground Transportation
- Lodging
- Mentorship and Resources

40 Requested items sent to Active-Duty Service Members in theatre.

1550 OFR Hygiene Bags were given to Veteran Homeless Shelters.

To Date Statistics (2004-2020)

23,689 Wounded Heroes and their Families received assistance with:

- Mortgage and Rent
- Utilities
- Vehicle Payments
- Groceries
- Air Transportation
- Ground Transportation
- Lodging
- Mentorship and Resources

40 Requested items sent to Active-Duty Service Members in theatre.

11,407 OFR Backpacks were sent to combat support hospitals in theatre.

1,572 OFR Hygiene Bags were given to Veteran Homeless Shelters.



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