

Operation First Response 2024 Annual Report



Twenty Years Serving America's Finest and their Families
with Emergency Financial Aid

www.OperationFirstResponse.org

Letter from our President



“The heart of our work has never been just about assistance; it’s about dignity, hope, and human connection.”

Dear OFR Supporters,

Twenty years ago, Operation First Response began with a mother’s determination to protect her child. What I didn’t know then was that God would take that personal mission and grow it into a national calling — one that would allow us to stand beside tens of thousands of America’s Finest: our Service Members, Veterans, First Responders, and their families.

2024 was a year of both challenges and triumphs. Across the nation, families came to us during some of their hardest moments — facing medical crises, housing insecurity, financial strain, and the invisible wounds of service. Because of your generosity, compassion, and steadfast belief in our mission, we were able to answer their calls.

This past year, through our Family Assistance Program, we provided direct financial aid to hundreds of heroes and their loved ones — helping with rent and utilities to keep roofs over heads, covering groceries to keep food on the table, and assisting with transportation to ensure medical appointments were never missed. Through Operation Final Salute, we continued honoring our Fallen by delivering portraits to Gold Star Families, preserving their loved ones’ legacies for generations. And through our First Responder Outreach, we stood alongside those who run toward danger — including our 911 dispatchers, law enforcement, EMS, and firefighters — ensuring they know they are never alone.

The heart of our work has never been just about assistance; it’s about dignity, hope, and human connection. It’s about the phone call where a voice breaks in relief, the quiet “thank you” that carries a thousand unspoken words, and the reassurance that in their moment of need, our nation’s heroes have someone in their corner.

As I reflect on 2024, I am reminded daily that none of this would be possible without you — our donors, partners, volunteers, and friends. You are the reason we can respond with urgency and compassion. You are the reason we can say “yes” when a hero’s world feels like it’s falling apart.

As we move forward into 2025 and beyond, our mission remains clear: to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by standing with them in their time of need. Together, we will continue to protect the heartbeat of this great nation — the brave men and women who have given so much for our freedom and safety.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for believing in this mission, for believing in our heroes, and for walking this path with us.

With gratitude and unwavering resolve,

Peggy Baker - Founder & President



Our Mission

At Operation First Response our mission is to provide swift and compassionate emergency financial aid to the brave individuals and families who serve and protect our communities and our country.

We are dedicated to supporting military personnel, disabled veterans, Gold Star families, as well as police officers, firefighters, EMS professionals, paramedics, and 911 dispatchers.

Through our commitment to service, we aim to alleviate financial burdens during times of crisis, honoring their sacrifices with the support they deserve.



Our Vision

“To create a world where every individual who has dedicated their life to safeguarding our communities receives the support needed to be resilient, rebuild their lives, and thrive in the face of adversity.”



Our Core Values

- Assisting our Military and First Responder Families

We are determined to make a difference in the quality of life for injured or critically ill military service members, Disabled Veterans and First Responders.

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 and First Responder 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 Family Assistance Program

OFR provides financial aid to wounded, injured and critically-ill Active-Duty Service Members/Disabled Veterans and First Responders 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, First Responders and their caregivers.

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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.



Our Programs

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

I have tears running down my face. Thank you for approving my application. This means everything to me and my kids. We have been living off of food pantries, but now we are able to get more and fill up our freezer with food. Thank you and your team! I know that it may seem like your workdays are endless, but your work isn't done in vain. I want you to know that this food will allow my kids not to go to school hungry so they can focus on learning. Blessings!

Very Respectfully,
S.H.

And you "Fine Folks" touched mine as well, more than you may ever come to truly realize - "THANK YOU !"
What you folks have done here, and I have no doubt you have done countless numbers of times before, and will continue to do going forward, is what we Military People Affectionately and Admirably Refer To As — "ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY" .. That statement means exactly as it reads, that the individual, or in this particular instance your organization "Operation First Response" has, does and will continue to take action that far exceeds what might typically be expected, action that puts their mission ahead of themselves, that considers others before that of themselves. This is amongst the highest praise Military personnel can receive, and in this "Old Soldiers Opinion" you folks and "Operation First Response" have earned that praise.

I shall forever be grateful, shall never forget and want to again express my deepest, most heartfelt and sincere "THANK YOU!"
J.C.

I wish I could somehow express how grateful I am for you guys and how much this means. You guys just ensured my daughter still has safe transportation and gave me hope that things are going to be okay. There's no way I could tell you how much this means. Thank you for doing what you do and thank you for giving hope and light back to someone who has been in the dark for too long. If I could hug you all I would. This is so much more to me than a car payment. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

MS. B.



CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT & CRAWFISH BOIL EVENT DETAILS



SEE YOU SOON!

We look forward to seeing you at the event for a fun day of cornhole, live music, great food, a silent auction, an open bar, and industry networking - all for a good cause!

While we encourage you to try the authentic New Orleans-style crawfish being served, we will have a plenty of other options available!



DETAILS

Date: Wed, May 8
Time: 2:00pm - 6:00pm

Location:
Lost Barrel Brewing
36138 Little River Tpke
Middleburg, VA 20117

Attire: Casual

Bring cash! We will have a great raffle w/ \$5 tickets.



TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The doubles-style cornhole tournament will begin promptly at 2:30pm. All players should plan to arrive at 2:00pm for check in. Each team has four participants, two of whom may play at any given time. Winners will walk away with a trophy and bragging rights as the Cornhole Champion of 2024!

**BENEFITING THE
V3GATE FOUNDATION
& OPERATION FIRST RESPONSE**



OPERATION FIRST RESPONSE



2024 Events



WARGAMING.NET
LET'S BATTLE

HyVee.

HOMEFRONT



ROUND UP

Round up your purchase at the register and support our nation's veterans and their families.

November 1-17



American
Red Cross



Major Contributors

Shop Rite LPGA Tournament

Barbara Reynolds

Walter Bochenek

The Kim and Harold Louie Foundation



Team Toyota

Whitney Jones



Rappahannock Electric

The Better Life Foundation



God's Gift

Miriam L Halsey Foundation

Carl Monk

Joseph Pieri

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Board Chairman – Phil Irizarry
President – Peggy Baker
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Senior Advisors

Carl Monk

Executive Staff

Founder/President – Peggy Baker
Chief Financial & Operating Officer – Sarah Hartmann





2024 Financials Generated from 2024 Independent Financial Audit

INCOME

Contributions - \$520,199.00

In-Kind Contributions - \$455,368.00

Interest Income - \$25.00

Unrealized Investment Income - \$2,809.00

Total Income - \$978,401.00

Net Assets - \$778,245.00

EXPENSES

Services Provided Directly to Veterans - \$949,299.00

General Operating Costs - \$42,986.00

Fundraising Costs - \$14,459.00

General Operating Costs for 2024 were 4 %

Fundraising Costs for 2024 were 1 %

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





2024 Accomplishments and Impact

2024 Statistics

4,057 Wounded Heroes and their Families received assistance with:

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

400 OFR Hygiene Bags were given to Veteran Homeless Shelters.

68 Veterans received specialized training

73 Gold Star Families received a portrait of their Fallen Hero.

To Date Statistics (2004-2024)

37,877 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.

5,272 OFR Hygiene Bags were given to Veteran Homeless Shelters.

289 Veterans received specialized training.

828 Gold Star families received a portrait of their Fallen Hero



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