

HONORING MILITARY, VETERANS, FIRST RESPONDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

# 2022 IMPACT REPORT



# Our Impact Over the Years

## 2011 DALLAS MEMORIAL MARCH

Carry The Load began with a Dallas Memorial March at White Rock Lake in Dallas, TX on Memorial Day 20-hours and 11-minutes | 400 participants | \$50,000

## 2012 NATIONAL RELAY

Started the National Relay with an East Coast Route from West Point, NY to Dallas, TX 2,000 miles | 1 Rally | 13 states

## 2016 WEST COAST ROUTE

Added a West Coast Route from Seattle, WA to Dallas, TX 6,600 miles | 33 Rallies | 18 states

## 2017 CARRY THE FLAG

Introduced the Carry The Flag Education Program

## 2018 VA NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

Strategic collaboration with the VA National Cemetery Administration; added National Cemeteries as Rally points. 67 Rallies | 26 states



## YEAR IN REVIEW

Our fiscal year started off in September 2021 with a nation yearning to participate with Carry The Load in person. People were excited to raise their hand and serve their community. They realized that what they needed the most was personal touch.

As seen in this year's short film "**Transition: How A Memorial Day Journey Sparked Freedom**", volunteering with Carry The Load has a healing effect deeper than anyone could ever imagine.

By walking in the **National Relay**, beautifying sacred grounds at **VA National Cemeteries**, pushing physical limits in a **Heroes Challenge** workout, or sharing a loved ones' story with a stranger, these are all ways people have experienced healing and in turn now help pass that on to others.

Together, we offer that personal touch, an outlet for our heroes to continue to serve and financial support to help provide a continuum of care for the many challenges our military, veterans, first responders and their families may face.



**234,377+**  
participants

**Join us.**

**Grow with us.**

**There's no stopping now.**





## 2019 MIDWEST ROUTE

Added a Midwest Route from Minneapolis, MN to Dallas, TX  
11,500 miles | 81 Rallies | 40 states

## 2020 MOUNTAIN STATES ROUTE

Added a Mountain States Route from Minot, ND to Dallas, TX before pivoting Memorial May to  
15,500 virtual miles and culminating with the Dallas Memorial Drive.

## 2021 A DECADE OF HONOR

Celebrated A Decade of Honor  
15,500 miles | 76 Rallies | 42 states

## 2022 NEW ENGLAND ROUTE

Added a New England Route from Burlington, VT to Dallas, TX  
20,000 miles | 96 Rallies | 48 states



## OUR MISSION

To provide active ways to honor and remember our nation's heroes by connecting Americans to the sacrifices made by our military, veterans, first responders and their families.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is for all Americans to unite in honoring the sacrifices made by our nation's heroes.

## OUR PROGRAMS

- Awareness
- Continuum of Care
- Education



93%

of money raised goes toward our programs

# AWARENESS

*VOLUNTEER. PARTICIPATE. DONATE.*

## MEMORIAL MAY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Highlights from the 11th Memorial May include celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the National Relay, launching a fifth relay route and increasing overall in-person and virtual participation by 36 percent. Adding the new route extended Carry The Load's reach further in the New England and Gulf Coast States including Florida. People participated by walking with the National Relay team, joining a rally and the Dallas Memorial March, educating a youth group, engaging on social media and fundraising throughout the 32-day event.

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

- \$2,100,000 funds raised
- 214,000 participants
- 2.9M social media impressions
- 1.89B earned media impressions
- 20,000 miles
- 96 rallies
- 5 relay routes
- 1 mission



## TOP TEAM CAPTAINS

The following team captains raised more than \$10,000 each during 2022 Memorial May.

Timothy Allen | J&J NA PHARMA VLC  
Stephen Holley | Team Holley  
JJ Leonard | Team Stream  
Bradford Adatto | ByrdAdatto  
Bryan Bledsoe | Fighting Eagles  
Burson Holman | Granite Properties  
William Taylor | Bradley's BBQ  
Kory Ryan | Ryan Law  
Sean Slone | CoreLogic  
Rod Gregg | Team Paladin  
Tommy Hicks | Red White & Blues  
Cody Bandars | Freedom and Liberty  
John Muschalek | Hilltop Securities  
Chris Sambar | Team Sambar  
Chris Kilburn | Chris's Misfits  
David Lindsey | West Coast Relay Team  
Debbie Wright | Inspired Americans  
Yvonne Freeman | Una Stamus  
William Searles | New England Relay Team  
Jim Shubzda | Team Tough  
Craig Williams | Animal Tribe  
LaTisha Brandon | The Container Store  
Support Center & DC  
Ames Hutton | Team Bravo  
Esther Hernandez | MSAG Warriors  
Marty Sheetz | Delta Dental Striders



## LESSONS FROM THE FRONT

Carry The Load's podcast, Lessons From The Front, shares stories from guest's experiences on the front lines. In September 2022, episode 57 featured Dallas Police Chief Eddie Garcia who talks about his first years of policing, plus goals as Chief of America's eighth largest police force. More compelling public servants and stories are shared each month.

Lessons From The Front is released bi-monthly on Carry The Load's YouTube and Facebook pages as well as on more than 20 podcast platforms. We invite you to listen and learn from the service of our active military, veterans, and first responders.

## AMBASSADOR NETWORK

Carry The Load extends its reach through an incredible group of ambassadors who volunteer their time to raise awareness for our mission. Our ambassadors cover the nation, come from diverse backgrounds, and have a variety of experiences to share. They continue to serve by conducting media interviews, engaging in youth group activities, speaking at corporate and community events, and more.

## STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Carry The Load's strategic partners are like-minded organizations working in collaboration to help spread awareness of the service and sacrifices of our nation's heroes.



## BEYOND MAY

Throughout the year, community leaders hosted Carry The Load outreach events. Activities included volunteer projects, corporate outings, recognition at major and minor league sporting events, concerts, golf tournaments, sporting clays tournament, and ways to participate in person and virtually. This type of outreach promotes service in our communities and grows awareness for Carry The Load's mission. Our impact in communities continues to grow.

## PATRIOT DAY

Carry The Load hosted a National Day of Service and Remembrance where volunteers helped beautify and clean headstones at National Cemeteries across the U.S. In addition, fitness buffs tested their limits in a Heroes Challenge workout. More than 3,000 people took part in Carry The Load's Patriot Day activities to honor and remember the lives lost during the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

## VETERANS DAY

Each year Carry The Load finds creative ways to help Americans thank our Veterans on November 11. This year's highlights included engaging walkers and joggers along Dallas' popular Katy Trail who wrote more than 100 letters and delivered them to the Dallas VA Hospital. Carry The Load also engaged our youth by providing educational materials on social media and Carry The Flag activities for youth groups. Many also walked in a Veterans Day parade in Frisco, TX; an activity Carry The Load looks forward to expanding across the country in the near future. We also promoted Carry It Anywhere events on Veterans Day where supporters helped raise \$10,605.





## 2022 CORPORATE PARTNERS

Carry The Load would not have grown to where we are without the support of our Corporate partners, who help fund our Awareness events. Through employee engagement, employee resource groups and collaborations, our events provide an active way to engage employees. The real magic happens when allies and their veteran co-workers work side-by-side to serve their local community and heal those around them.







2022 National Relay Team



# CONTINUUM OF CARE

*WORKING AS A FORCE MULTIPLIER*

## WORKING AS A FORCE MULTIPLIER

Carry The Load's Continuum of Care program is built upon a strategic collaboration among our corporate and non-profit partners. The program raises much needed awareness and funds to assist with the challenges facing our military, veterans, first responders and their families.

In addition to the healing our heroes and their families experience by continuing to serve with Carry The Load, peer-to-peer fundraising and corporate support strengthens nationwide services such as counseling, adaptive training, suicide prevention, equine therapy, service dogs, job placements, transition, home improvements, hope for homeless veterans, education scholarships for children of the fallen, and more.



# \$12,075,472

Total funds distributed to  
our non-profit partners  
since 2011

## 2022 NON-PROFIT PARTNERS

Carry The Load works as a force multiplier by establishing an environment of collaboration and financial support. That allows our partners to be even more innovative and strategic in providing the highest quality of direct services to those in need.

### **22Kill dba One Tribe Foundation**

911 At Ease International, Inc  
A Badge of Honor, Inc  
A Soldier's Hands

### **Adaptive Training Foundation**

### **America's Mighty Warriors**

Army Scholarship Foundation  
Attitudes & Attire  
Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star  
Courage Foundation  
CreatiVets

### **Custodes Libertatis Memorial Foundation**

Dallas County MHMR dba  
Metrocare Service

### **DPAS Assist The Officer Foundation**

EOD Warrior Foundation  
Equest  
Farmers Assisting Returning Military  
First Responder FaceOff Foundation  
FORGE

### **Freedom Mobility Foundation**

Gold Star Parents Retreat  
Gratitude Initiative

### **Healing Warriors Wind River Ministries**

Heroes Movement

### **Heroes on the Water**

### **Higher Ground**

Homeless Veterans Services  
of Dallas

Homes 4 the Brave  
Memories of Honor  
MilVet

Ministering Our Military

Motorcycle Missions

Patriot PAWS Service Dogs

Project Echelon Racing

Recovery Resource Council

Save The Brave

### **Sheep Dog Impact Assistance**

SHIELD616

Spirit of a Hero Foundation

Strength for Service,  
SUDS

The Gratitude Initiative

### **The Todd Krodle Foundation**

The Warrior's Keep

### **Tip Of The Spear**

Tragedy Assistance Program  
For Survivors

Transition Skills Training, Inc

Trinity Oaks Enterprises

### **Valor Ranch, Inc**

VETS: Veterans Exploring  
Treatment Solutions

VETTOCEO INC

### **Warrior Spirit Project**

Warriors Heart Foundation

We Defy

Whiskey Bravo, Inc

Woody Williams Foundation

**\*2022 Beneficiaries in bold**





# VETERAN RECOUNTS HOW CARRY THE LOAD HELPED SAVE HER LIFE

Kevin Reece | WFAA | May 24, 2022

Carry The Load's stated mission is to restore the true meaning of Memorial Day. But countless veterans will also tell you how the organization helped save their lives.

That's the story Corena Mitchell will gladly tell anyone who asks. WFAA reporter Kevin Reece met her on the ground floor of Dallas' World Trade Center, where she admitted the first part of her story did not start well.

**"I was suicidal," Mitchell said, recounting her life after 16 years in the Army. "I felt that my life would be easier if I wasn't there."**

Her job in Iraq in the early 2000s was to write and compile "Killed in Action" reports. She would write, with as much specificity as possible, who, when and where American soldiers died: reports that would eventually end up in the hands of their families.

"In about nine months, I would say, I wrote 60 reports like that," she said, also admitting that a dozen of those reports were for friends and coworkers she knew personally.

Fast forward several years, and trying to function with undiagnosed PTSD, she was a mom with two kids.

She was trying to finish a college degree, but she was still contemplating the best way to die.

"I wanted to graduate before I ended my life," she said. "Because I wanted my kids to know that mommy had her degree. I wanted something important to be at "What do you make of that logic now?" Reece asked. "It's silly," Mitchell said. "It wouldn't have meant anything to my girls."

The turning point, she said, was the day she turned on the TV and saw a veteran named Coleman Ruiz carrying an American flag from West Point, New York all the way to Dallas. At the time, Mitchell said she would rarely leave her house because her PTSD was so severe.



**Corena Mitchell**  
U.S. Army Veteran

But for Ruiz, who was walking across the country, she made an exception.

**"So, I got in my car and I tried to find him," Mitchell said. "I just need to talk to him. I just needed to see him."**

Mitchell did not find Ruiz that day. But after moving from New Jersey to Dallas, she shared that story when she became involved as a volunteer with Carry The Load.

And in a film that will play Memorial Day weekend at the Carry The Load event, they did finally meet.

"He needs to know that walk, that determination that I saw in him, he gave that to me to get the help I needed," Mitchell said in the film.

And now, all these years later, she is returning the favor. That ground floor of Dallas' World Trade Center is home to [Carry The Load's non-profit partner], Attitudes and Attire. Mitchell leads its "Boots to Heels" program. With clothes and counseling, she helps female veterans like herself transition to the civilian work force.

"And it was the first time I thought, I'm not alone. And the answer isn't to end my life. I cried, and I got the help I needed," Mitchell said, of the first time she met with the staff of Attitudes and Attire. "So, I like to say that Attitudes and Attire, they saved my life."

And that's the purpose of Carry The Load: honoring the lives lost by making a commitment to the lives we can still save.

"There's people, there's help," Mitchell said. "There's so many people out here willing to help with that transition. And that's what Attitudes and Attire and that's what Carry The Load, that's what we're doing."

And that's what they promise to keep doing for every Memorial Day yet to come.



# EDUCATION

*INSPIRING PATRIOTISM*







Carry The Flag is designed to inspire patriotism in our nation's youth. It gives kids of all ages a way to serve in honor of those who served for our freedom. It teaches the next generation about sacrifices made by our military, veterans, first responders and their families. It also helps kids earn service hours while applying lifelong skills like teamwork, responsibility, respect, decision making, communication and leadership.

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

- 5,075 Participants
- 203 Registered Groups
- 33 States

The program is free and flexible, making it ideal for any youth group to implement. It provides guidance on activities that help kids learn more about our nation's heroes and how they can serve in their community.

- Develop storyboards to honor and remember a hero
- Give a presentation on patriotism
- Learn the history of the American flag
- Meet local heroes and hear their stories
- Earn community service hours
- Raise and lower the flag
- And so much more!

## HOW IT WORKS

- 1) Organize your group
- 2) Download our free resources at [carrytheload.org/programs](http://carrytheload.org/programs)
- 3) Inspire patriotism in your community

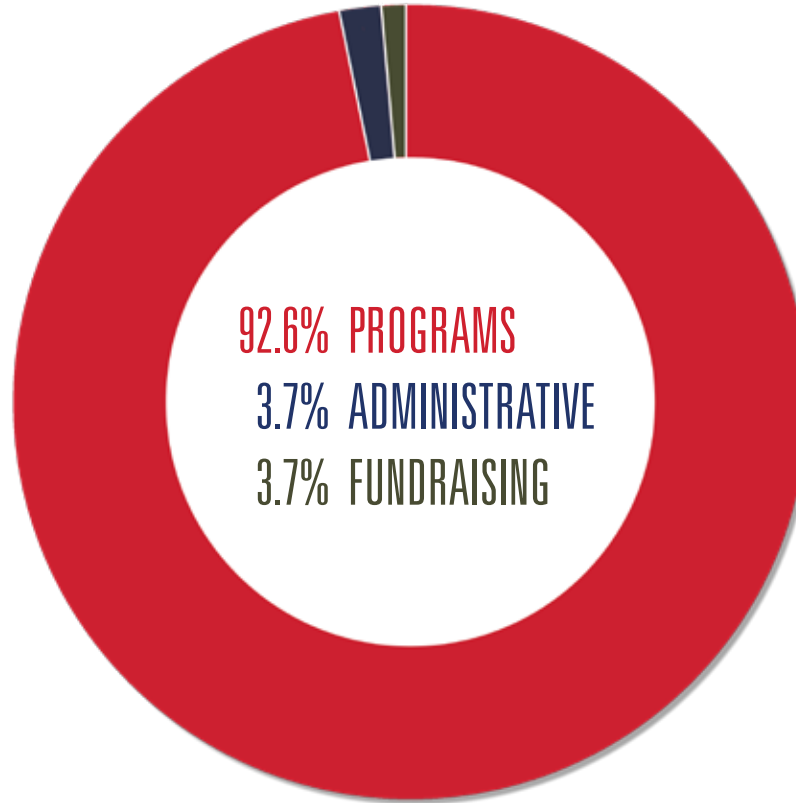


## FOUNDERS BRIGADE

The Founders Brigade is an exclusive group that each pledge \$5,000 per year for two years to provide the working capital to advance Carry The Load's mission. Our goal is to secure 100 members, resulting in \$1,000,000 of combined commitments. We thank these individuals who have already made the commitment.

Debbie & John Ahmed  
Joe Barrett  
Pryor Blackwell  
Bracari  
Don Clark  
Craig Couch  
Dill Driscoll  
Flat Top Ranch  
Dr. Terry Gemas  
Jack Furst  
Buffalo Harms  
Steve Holley  
Sean Magee  
Brent Owens  
Scott Rohrman  
Brad Whitnell  
Nikoh Foundation

## WHERE THE MONEY GOES



# \$38,058,334

Total funds raised  
since 2011

## BREAK DOWN OF PROGRAM SPENDING





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carry The Load's all volunteer Board of Directors consists of a diverse group of veterans and allies. Each member donates his or her time and expertise to further our mission.

**Stephen Holley**  
CEO & Co-Founder  
U.S. Navy SEAL Veteran

**Craig Couch**  
Treasurer

**Todd Boeding**  
U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

**Mike Devlin**

**Hallie Johnston**  
U.S. Army Veteran

**John McCaa**

**Ismael "Junior" Ortiz**  
Ret. Lt. Col., U.S. Marine Corps

**Aaron Rigby**  
U.S. Navy Veteran

**Debbie Wright**  
Executive Director

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## A MESSAGE FROM STEPHEN

To summarize this year's impact, we have had an incredible year of growth, healing, and support. Speaking on behalf of the Board of Directors, our mission is a unifying force in every sense of the word. The one thing we all have in common is that we are Americans. Our mission brings uncommon people together in agreement on the debt we owe the men and women who have served to protect our freedom. Especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice for us.

As we carry out our mission, we work year-round to share stories of bravery and sacrifice. To both honor those who serve and teach the next generation through their example. Personally, my wife Molly and I have raised our kids with Carry The Load. Through the stories, they have learned about sacrifice. I challenge you to do the same. Encourage our youth to thank military service members, veterans, first responders and their families at every opportunity. It's our duty to show gratitude and unify around the privilege that we have them as our protectors.

Thank you for joining this movement. I look forward to seeing you in 2023! Who are you carrying?

Stephen Holley  
Co-Founder, President & CEO of Carry The Load  
Veteran U.S. Navy SEAL





# WHO ARE YOU CARRYING?



ALWAYS  
REMEMBER

