

RESILIENT WARRIOR WELLNESS PROGRAM

Background:

The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and Unified Combatant Command (COCOM) is responsible for training and equipping our U.S. military Special Operations Forces (SOF) of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force.

The Pararesuemen, also known as “PJs”, are the U.S. Special Operations Command (AFSOC) and Air Combat Command (ACC) special warfare operators. These are our only elite military combat “operators” specifically trained and equipped to conduct full spectrum Personnel Recovery (PR) in both conventional and nonconventional operations around the world by providing emergency combat rescue and lifesaving trauma operations services for the most dangerous missions. As the best-trained technical combat and medical specialist in the world, they frequently deploy with U.S. Navy SEALs and Army Special Forces.

Challenge:

Only recently, 2010, has the Department of Defense (DoD) acknowledged that these frequent and dangerous combat exposure and deployments have stressed and seriously negatively impacted the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of the operators, AND their spouses and children. They are facing serious mental and behavioral outcomes like post-traumatic stress (PTS), high divorce rates, increased suicide, and substance abuse within the family.

What compounds this problem is that the operators often decline to acknowledge and seek treatment or support for these conditions due to perceived negative squadron or career consequences or “stigma.” While the DoD and USSOCOM has created a Preservation of the Force and Family (POTFF) resiliency initiative to help address this growing crisis, too little government resources, time and funding have been invested to effectively address this growing problem. USSOCOM POTFF claim “that humans are more important than hardware- SOF Truth 1: People, not equipment, make the critical difference.” While we totally support this position, sadly, billions are being spent on military hardware in comparison to

only “pennies” that are be allocated to support the operator and family critical wellness needs and most importantly, our DoD is not coming close to satisfactorily addressing this critical problem. Consistent military operational success can NOT be achieved and sustained if our U.S. Department of Defense is not fully committed to supporting the whole Special Operations Forces Family; that including the immediate personal family unit of each operator.

Solution:

In 2018, Shawn Cassidy, Founder/CEO of the Leadership and Freedom Center and Tony “NG” Negrón, retired U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sergeant and Pararescueman, founded the “**Resilient Warrior**” Wellness program within the **Pararescue Foundation**, www.pararescuefoundation.org.

The Pararescue Foundation, an IRS 501(c)(3) public charity organization, was established in 2017 to bridge the gap between government resources and the unique resiliency, transitioning, educational, tragedy and legacy preservation needs of Pararescue service members, veterans, and their families. The PJ Code and Motto: “These Things We Do, That Others May Live.”

The Resilient Warrior Wellness Program (RWWP), which has been fully vetted by DoD, is hosted at the Lodges at Gettysburg Leadership & Freedom Center in historic Gettysburg, PA.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2_44_uTZ28
www.leadershipandfreedomcenter.com.

This program was created to address the serious mental, emotional and physical wellness gap not being adequately addressed by DoD. The RWWP provides operators and their spouses/families with wellness behavioral tools, proven techniques, and shared life experiences in a safe and trusted environment. The 6-day transformational resiliency getaway, in an intimate, secluded, and experiential learning environment, offers 10-12 couples (cohort size) the resiliency takeaways to build, protect and preserve the Force and Family.

The Resilient Warrior Team

[https://www.leadershipandfreedomcenter.com/team](http://www.leadershipandfreedomcenter.com/team) is comprised of multidisciplinary subject matter experts in the fields of clinical psychology,

emotional intelligence, mindfulness, social work, equine therapy, nutrition, civil war history, Gold Star Spouses (widows), and U.S. Special Operations Forces active and retired duty. The most recent addition to our Team is Ms. Emily Kraines, Gold Star Spouse and widow to USAF Sergeant Peter Kraines, a Special Tactics Pararescueman with the 24th Special Operations Wing, who died in 2019 from injuries sustained in a training incident while performing mountain rescue techniques in Idaho. Emily is the mother of two young children.

Request:

To offer and operate the Resilient Warrior four times a year, funds are needed to underwrite lodging, food, air and ground transportation, program supplies and 6-full-time faculty members. Our annual operating budget is \$239,000, or \$4,979 per participant. All program donor and sponsor funds will be paid to the Pararescue Foundation and are tax deductible. We are seeking Corporate; Non-Government Organizations and individual donations and we are grateful for any donation to support our wellness mission.

On behalf of all the PJ operators, spouses, and their children, we would like to thank you for your consideration in supporting a program committed to addressing and serving the critical wellness needs of our U.S. Special Operations Forces and their families.

Questions and/or Donations may be directed to:

The Pararescue Foundation (EIN# 81-1692762)
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