





Upstate Warrior Solution was formed in 2012 by a small group of local veterans and community leaders who desired to see one organization serve as a "community quarterback" for all issues related to military servicemembers, veterans, and their families in the Upstate. It has been an honor to help build this organization over the last five years and as the Executive Director and President, I'm very proud of what we've been able to accomplish – guided by our values of selfless service, loyalty, and integrity.

Now that we have completed our fourth year of operations, we would like to provide our partners, stakeholders, and friends with a 2016 Annual Report that gives a snapshot of the work we are doing in our community and unique stories of the warriors and families that we serve on a daily basis. 2016 was a transformational year for our organization as we realigned our programs to more closely model what we do each and every day – our Outreach & Case Coordination, Fellowship Academy, and Community Engagement programs are our mainstays. These programs are also helping us further our vision to restore our warriors with a sense of purpose and to empower the community to be responsive to our warriors and their families.

Despite this progress and these great successes in the community, there is still a considerable population of warriors we have yet to identify in the Upstate, and we firmly believe that no warrior should ever be left behind. There are over 100,000 veterans in our service area with more coming to the region every year, and we need the support of our local communities to bring every warrior into the fold.

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, our mission is to connect warriors and their families to resources and opportunities, lead them through the process of self-empowerment, and to inspire the community to embrace local warriors and their families as valued neighbors and friends. We're able to accomplish this because the Upstate SC community believes in that mission and supports us with their time, talent, and treasure. We strongly believe our latest generation of warriors constitutes a portion of our greatest national treasure, and by serving them along with past generations of warriors, we will collectively empower them to lead productive and purposeful lives as citizens in our community.

May this 2016 Annual Report and the inspiring stories of our warriors that live right here in the Upstate serve as a reminder that we must all strive to incorporate these men and women into our community. Thank you for your continued support!

All the best,

Charlie Hall
President
Upstate Warrior Solution



How Upstate Warrior Solution Helps

In 2010, a group of concerned active military, veterans, and nonveteran community leaders came together to form a strategic planning team to discuss the availability of assistance programs and services for returning Upstate veterans. The team found that there were a number of wellness resources in the Upstate but scarcely any of them were veteran-centric. They revealed large gaps in services offered to Upstate veterans and discovered that there were no existing local organizations providing service coordination, or serving as a “community quarterback” for warriors, especially in the Upstate’s rural areas.

The strategic planning team determined that the creation of a local organization was needed to provide essential care and assistance to Upstate veterans, as well as military service members still in uniform serving in the National Guard, Reserves, and Active Duty in the area. After reviewing the practices of national, state, and community-based veteran organizations, it was determined that a community-based model focused on developing “knee to knee” relationships with participants provided the most successful platform for identifying and serving the local veteran and warrior community.

In 2012, Upstate Warrior Solution (UWS) was formally recognized as a 501(c)3 organization. From 2012-2014, UWS was an all-volunteer organization and began to establish a foothold in the Upstate community. In 2014, the team was able to secure a grant from America’s Warrior Partnership in Augusta, Georgia, which enabled the organization to grow operationally with staff and programs. This national level funding has also facilitated sister organizations in Charleston and Aiken. UWS has been formally

operating with funding, staff, and programs since 2014 and has offices in Greenville, Spartanburg, and Clemson, covering five Upstate counties with a physical presence in each location.

UWS continues to follow the model determined by the original strategic planning team, centered around creating personal relationships between staff, volunteers and veterans. The following key strategies are utilized to serve our veterans as they readjust and reintegrate to civilian life.

- ★ *Connect with the warriors we intend to serve and educate warriors on the resources that are available to them*
- ★ *Educate the community and our partner agencies on warrior-specific needs*
- ★ *Advocate for warrior care through careful case-coordination, providing thought leadership in the development of the local service infrastructure, and letting private and public leaders know what they can do to help*
- ★ *Collaborate with public, private and nonprofit stakeholders across the Upstate*

UWS programs concentrate on five pillars of support:

- ★ *Healthcare & Benefits*
- ★ *Education*
- ★ *Employment*
- ★ *Housing*
- ★ *Individual and Family Wellbeing*

2016 Community Impact



Total Warriors Served
1346



Warrior Family Members
1480



Warriors Assisted with Healthcare and Benefits
310



Warriors Assisted with Employment Services
293



Warriors Assisted with Family Support or Other Community Support
323



Warriors Assisted with Safe and Sustainable Housing
248



Warriors Assisted with Education Benefits
151

Our Mission

Upstate Warrior Solution’s mission is to connect warriors and their family members to resources and opportunities, lead them through the process of self-empowerment, and inspire the community to embrace local warriors and their family members as valued neighbors and friends.





Lee Mahaffey

HOME AND BELONGING MEAN SOMETHING DIFFERENT TO EACH OF US, and Lee Mahaffey learned the importance of that early in life. A South Carolina native, Lee moved around the state. He and his mother never quite settled anywhere. As a small boy in bad neighborhoods, Lee learned the hard lessons of perseverance and determination, how to fight and press on, but he also learned to love adventure and new people and places. He lived everywhere from a car to a beach to a trailer to a hotel. Home became a feeling, a sense, rather than a place, and – as Herman Melville once wrote – “it wasn’t down on any map; true places never are.”

After twelve different schools, Lee finally became the first person in his family to graduate high school. Not settling, feeling the tug of adventure and travel, compelled to do his part, Lee joined the Marine Corps in early 2005 under an open contract without the guarantee of any specific occupational specialty.

“I just want to do my part, do my job, and be a part of history,” he told the recruiter in Greenville, SC. The Marines assigned him to a motor transportation unit aboard Camp Hansen, Okinawa, but he soon injured his shoulder. Lee was placed in charge of training, but as his nagging to deploy

peaked in August 2006, the Corps (usually one to oblige those requests) sent him to Iraq.

Once in theater, Lee ended up on route clearance teams removing enemy explosives along main roads. Traveling across Iraq, he also landed on security teams and behind vehicle-mounted machine guns. Posted in Al-Taqaddum, “TQ,” adjacent to infamous battlegrounds Habbaniyah and Fallujah, Lee suffered a debilitating blow to the head. Yet, Lee persisted (as Marines often do), finished his tour in Iraq, and returned to Okinawa in the spring of 2007 before being transferred to Camp Pendleton, CA.

Lee was married the same year and welcomed a daughter to the world the following year. However, the extent of Lee’s injuries was unknown (to anyone but himself) until he collapsed during physical training and was sent to the naval hospital. Assessments revealed he couldn’t continue service and was later discharged.

After moving back to Greenville, SC and months of aimlessness and losing countless veteran friends to suicide, Lee connected to Upstate Warrior Solution (UWS) through a VA social worker. Recognizing Lee’s perseverance

and potential, UWS extended a fellowship, and Lee soon found himself deep in the veteran community of upstate South Carolina. The first warrior he met, a fellow Iraq veteran said, “I’m tired of people telling me I have 100% [disability rating], and I should just be happy. Sometimes, I just drive home the same way every day and I see this tree and I just want to drive my truck full speed right into it. I just want to get some rest.” Lee understood immediately and convinced the veteran there was hope.

The next person he met was a Vietnam veteran, and the two talked at length. Lee slowly realized how much he could do for him, what resources he could share. Hope swelled in the veteran’s eyes. Lee knew his new friend wouldn’t go home and make a bad decision, one he couldn’t undo. The gentleman stuck out his hand, and Lee gripped it saying, “If you ever need anything or if you just want to shoot the breeze, call me.”

The man replied, “This is what I needed – more than anything – today. You just don’t know what you’ve done for me.”

Lee said, “I think I have some idea, sir. You’re so very welcome.”





Amanda Nix

NO STRANGER TO THE OUTDOORS, AMANDA NIX GREW UP IN a woody corner of northern Michigan. As a child, she climbed trees, ran through the woods, built forts, and she learned the nuances of the wildlife. She was a tomboy. That area of Michigan juts out from the Midwest and is surrounded by state and national forest areas, tributaries, and the Great Lakes. Amanda was quite at home there, but college drew her down south to Bob Jones University in Upstate South Carolina.

After studying at Bob Jones for a time, Amanda decided to join the military. Uncertain at first, she finally decided on enlisting in the Navy. This time, the Great Lakes were much different than she remembered. She landed in Michigan's southwest neighbor, Illinois, at U.S. Navy Recruit Training Command. After graduating Navy boot camp and a brief stint at a Charleston naval school back in South Carolina, she graduated from a military police academy in Texas. From there, the Navy sent Amanda to serve as a dispatcher in Chesapeake, Virginia at a base nestled along the expansive Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (yes, that's a real name) just above the North Carolina line. There, she happily settled into service as an emergency dispatcher for an entire

base, alerting fire rescue squads and security. She also coordinated with local law enforcement on occasion.

However, military life – as monotonous as it seems for one in uniform – doesn't allow much complacent contentment. After several months as a dispatcher in Chesapeake, Amanda was promoted to E-5 – no small feat for just three years in service – and stationed on Andros, one of the largest but least-populated of the inhabited Bahamian islands.

A startling transition, Andros was no Great Dismal Swamp.

Andros certainly wasn't a Midwest state jutting into the frigid Great Lakes either. Surrounded by warm, clear Caribbean water and sparsely populated, the island had no sizable supply chains or grocery stores. The Navy had to ship in provisions. The atypical Bahamian experience was short-lived, and Amanda was – yet again – sent back Stateside to a military canine unit in Jacksonville, Florida. She was back in a rich, green landscape and winding networks of streams connected to the Atlantic, and she was finally working with animals again. She had returned to the purpose, structure, and belonging she

had come to love.

Yet, after five and a half years in uniform, Amanda understood that military life was unfavorable to settling down and growing a family. She left the service and moved back, alone, to upstate South Carolina. Back in college, solitude persisted and Amanda's frustration caught the attention of someone working in the registrar's office.

"Hey," the lady said, gentle and attentive, "You know we have a VA rep here."

The lady directed Amanda to Upstate Warrior Solution, and she discovered an oasis on campus called Patriot's Place. She found counselors, coffee, food, forms, and – most importantly – fellow veterans. It was a place in which she could slide back into familiar language and culture.

The new ease allowed Amanda to land a job working with animals again, this time the wild sort. Once again, she found herself outdoors and crawling through attics and crawlspaces (admittedly, not as much fun as a childhood fort) chasing squirrels and rodents. She found herself setting traps for bats. Every day was something new, something interesting and even fun. Eventually, she found herself home.



The Burgesses

IN THE SWELTERING SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN SUMMER OF 2010, Corporal Kelly Burgess sat next to a row of dozing Afghan soldiers inside a military transport plane several thousand feet above Helmand Province. Corporal Burgess had volunteered to accompany the Afghan soldiers from Kandahar to another coalition base. High above the hotly contested combat zone, Corporal Burgess sat against the metal wall, her M16 muzzle-down between her knees, a hand on the pistol grip. Even at altitude, the heat and stale air oppressed. Beside her, several Afghans sat slumped against the thick webbing draped over their seats, mouths open, arms loose. She was not in the infantry. She was a supply clerk, later promoted to Sergeant, but she was also a mother and wife. She had given birth to her son, Dominik, just six months before deploying.

Back in California, her husband, Corporal Jonathan Burgess, stayed with Dominik and finished his service in the Marine Corps infantry. Having deployed twice, Jonathan found himself sitting amid Marine Corps wives, Dominik perched on his lap, at a gathering on Camp Pendleton. "Oh, so did you two meet in the Marine Corps?" someone asked. Jonathan said, "No, but we got that a lot. We actually grew up together."

Jonathan and Kelly had known each other most of their lives and were married in 2007. They attended the same middle, junior, and high schools. They and their families had even trained in karate together for many years, a family sport. Kelly and her brother had followed in the footsteps of their father and grandfather, who had served in the Army.

After three deployments between them, a new child, and a year of unemployment, Jonathan and Kelly returned to their home town in search of the support network, to return to school and civilian work. The struggle didn't end there.

The couple worked low-paying jobs in manufacturing and the service industry as they worked their way through college, ever-grateful of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill. Before the Burgesses saw their bachelor's degrees, they would see a lost pregnancy, near homelessness, five jobs, the death of two grandparents, the suicide of a dozen fellow Marines, and the gift of three more children. The clouds finally lifted.

Once the Burgesses began to connect with fellow veterans and community resources, they began to thrive. In 2014, Jonathan started working for Upstate Warrior

Solution as a program manager, then started the Spartanburg office as its program director. As Jonathan continued his work in program management at a local health system, Kelly joined a business team of fellow female veterans, working from home and using the skills she learned in the Marine Corps and college.

Now, they've turned their sights towards their community. They continue to volunteer and contribute in any way they can, to be a positive influence, to pay forward what was given to them, and to affect change, small or large. The story continues just as it began: one step at a time, always forward, and always together.





Jacob Thompson

ON A HOT, RAINY SOUTH CAROLINA TUESDAY ON PARRIS ISLAND, weather alarms and bellowing Drill Instructors drove scores of Marine Corps recruits – Jacob Thompson, a small-town Alabama native, among them – into safe areas and away from a severe thunderstorm. The announcement droned on: lightning within five miles of Parris Island. Another strike happened that September morning of 2001. With Al-Qaeda terrorists at the controls, Flights 11 and 175 slammed into the World Trade Center.

Jacob became a Marine Corps electrician in early 2002 and was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He had barely joined the unit when a senior leader asked, “Hey, who wants to deploy?” Jacob raised his hand, and deploy, he did.

After a six-month stint in Bulgaria fixing bridges and refurbishing an orphanage, Jacob wound up on another deployment to Kuwait in 2003. A year later, the Corps sent him aboard a Navy ship for several months. Finally, in November 2005, Jacob flew straight into Baghdad and was assigned frequent work along a main supply route – among the deadliest during the war – which led to key areas of Iraq, including Fallujah.

One day in Iraq, Jacob and several others were filling sandbags inside the base and stacking them high and deep to impede potential attacks. One moment, he was placing a sandbag atop another and the next, he woke up several feet away, clothes and equipment awry. A terrorist had driven a vehicle bearing high-explosives into a nearby generator. Jacob had survived and continued his work.

After Iraq, Jacob went to 2nd Medical Battalion. This time, his sixth deployment was to Afghanistan. One commander noted, “The guiding principle was ‘Afghanistan is not Iraq,’ so we [focused more] on living in an austere environment.” It was, indeed, austere.

Jacob gave initial assessments for incoming patients, from ages six to seventy. Being a Marine electrician, he also had the critical task of maintaining constant generator-supplied electricity to the hospital. There was no shortage of work, and Jacob took his refuge in it.

A hard worker and squared away Marine Sergeant, Jacob thoroughly planned his final year in the Corps and his transition to civilian life. Yet, it wasn’t quite as he had anticipated. He was free to do as he pleased after leaving the service. The leadership – and brotherhood – were gone. Alone, no one worried whether

he went to work or how he wore his uniform. Work had become his habit, his nature, so he chose a job that would allow him to fulfill his deep need to work and provide. He worked long laborious hours fixing generators in a musky, fluorescent-lit facility in South Carolina. Even after clocking out, he continued working.

Work meant motion, and motion was the absence of the stark rumination he feared. His marriage declined and eventually altogether dissolved. He changed jobs a few times, but the dark vacuum of solitude and reflection loomed. His work led him to the Cliffs, a neighborhood in the Carolina foothills. After a polite conversation, one of his customers said, “Have you ever heard of Upstate Warrior Solution?” The gentleman gave Jacob the organization’s phone number, and Jacob finally reached out, which led to Mikey. A lady in Georgia had been looking for a worthy owner for her young dog. Mikey became Jacob’s service dog, his best friend, “and Mikey found a new home.” No longer feeling a terrible downward pull, Jacob used Upstate Warrior Solution to get him back into school, thanks to the Post 9/11 GI Bill.



Company Spotlight

An Interview with Tatiana Gonzalez,
President of Athena Global Operations



L to R: Amanda Beauchamp(USAF), Tatiana Gonzalez(USAF), Kelly Burgess (USMC)

Empowering people to succeed, to progress, to get the job done.

UWS: So, you're a veteran, correct? When did you join the military?

TG: Yes. I joined the Air Force in 2001.

UWS: When did you get out?

TG: I left active duty in 2008, and I went reserves until 2012.

UWS: Did you deploy at any point?

TG: Yes. We went to Kuwait and South Korea.

UWS: When and why did you decide to start your own company?

TG: It was probably right around 2013 I got the idea of finally doing it, you know, starting my own company. I wanted to start my own business to create my own environment, an environment to help and empower people to succeed, to progress, to get the job done. [...] It's important to make money, sure, but it's not why we're there. The reason I started Athena had more to do with giving back to the field employees, to give them better resources to fulfill the mission handed on to us from the government or whoever our client might be. [...] If I start with the foundation that realizes veterans have a greater handle on that, on the expertise and experiences required for that, then we could do a better job, provide higher quality, and create that successful atmosphere.

UWS: Tell me about Athena Global Operations. What's your team like when it's at its best?

TG: They are at their absolute best when we're able to come together as a team and fulfill a project the way the client wants it done. One time, an emergency came up, a contract that fell through, and we took the job. We helped 162 employees get on-boarded within 48 hours and we got them back-paid within a week. What makes me proud is when a client calls and knows they can dump anything on us, they know Athena can handle it and get it turned around. [...] I've had a client hand me an unrestricted credit card, not something you see another company do for some companies, which I think speaks volumes about our team and what we can do. We helped another company achieve an "exemplary" score for a first-time audit on their cybersecurity counterintelligence needs. It's all because I

have a top-notch team, too. Kelly is a mom, a female veteran, she has four kids, and I think most employers would be put off by that right away, but I saw in her what I thought she could do. She's become a serious proposal writer and editor, and she's applied her military skills to the civilian side, a total success. Yamille has a child, she's been with me a while, knows what she's doing, and always does a fantastic job. I can always count on her. It's hard to imagine what we would do without her. Amanda has two children and works from home, but that doesn't stop her or slow her down. I can rely on her to get things done, and I trust her judgement on that. We all have our strengths and weaknesses [...] and I'm so proud of them.

UWS: What value do veterans bring to the business world?

TG: Now that I work with both veterans and civilians, I can say veterans have a whole different work style. Even if they don't understand what they're doing, they find the answer or they ask, they keep trying, and "no" and "that's not my job" are not in their vocabulary. Sometimes you just have to get the job done with what you have, and that's what the military instills in them. We stood up a company in Kuwait in a short amount of time, worked odd hours, and the team navigated the time difference, the pressure of the project time line, and military terminology without needing much guidance or coaching.

UWS: How would you describe the benefits of hiring veterans to other employers?

TG: They come with a toolbox ready to go. They understand integrity. They understand work hours don't always end at 5pm. They understand a flexible schedule. Abnormalities rarely scare them. They also usually take criticism really well.

UWS: Do you have any advice for female veterans just joining the civilian workforce?

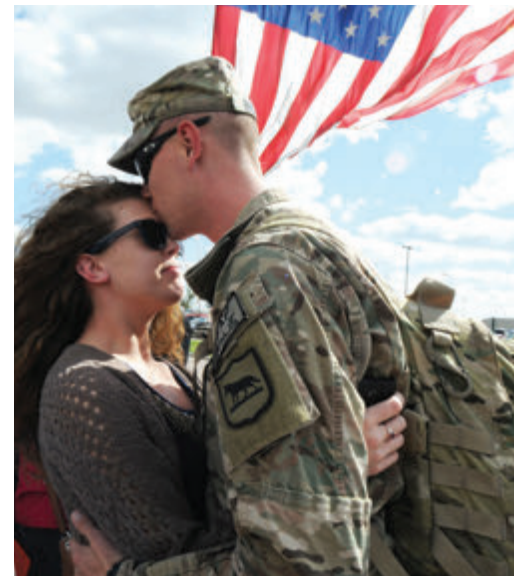
TG: Yes. Understand employment law and what it means for a company to be an Equal Opportunity Employer. You don't have to put up with certain things like harassment or fear of reprisal for pointing out injustices. You shouldn't be afraid of having a voice or being properly compensated.

UWS: What advice would you give other veterans who want to start their own business?

TG: Do a lot of research and planning. Don't invest too much of your assets or savings into the business. Use resources like Upstate Warrior Solution who are willing to help you at no cost. Rely on those organizations for networking and marketing purposes. If you're looking for work, you need to understand not everyone will give you a \$60,000 salary for an entry-level position. If someone offers you a job or you're working with a recruiter, be responsive and engaged. Manage your expectations.

UWS: What does the future hold? What can we expect from Athena?

TG: What I hope for is that we continue growing, working well together. We're going to keep stabilizing but also bidding on bigger things, larger contracts, as we identify more opportunities.



Testimonials

★ I am a wife of an Army Veteran who was wounded while serving in Iraq and he recently passed away. Upstate Warrior Solution has always been there for me and my family. Before and after my husband's death, UWS provided physical and emotional support. If we need something I know that I can call on them, and if I don't call them, they call me. The women and men of Upstate Warrior Solution are like family.

Bethany Pannell
Wife of Post-9/11 Army Veteran

★ There are many Vietnam Veterans out there, including myself, thankful that the latest generation of Veterans are stepping up to help all our upstate Warriors. To borrow and paraphrase from the Rangers: UWS, lead the way!

Craig Burnette
PhD U.S. Army Vietnam Veteran

★ [Upstate Warrior Solution] is the "must have" veteran resource connection.

Ben Spencer
US Navy Special Warfare Technician

★ Upstate Warrior Solution is the best Veteran Group I have ever been involved with. The staff truly cares; not only about the veterans needs but also their families. UWS is very quick to help and won't stop until they have a solution. I love volunteering because UWS is more like family than an organization. I would highly recommended them to anyone transitioning from military back to civilian life, or just needing some advice. Love y'all you are great..

Shawn Cloran
Post-9/11 Navy Seabee Veteran
Spartanburg Police Department



★ Upstate Warrior Solution assisted me in finding an amazing job opportunity I never would have even considered otherwise. Thank you, Upstate Warrior Solution!

George Eastergard Jr.
Pre-9/11 Navy Veteran
Veterans United Home Loans

★ UWS has made a true impact on my life through networking and social activities. Those people have inspired me to live a happier more productive life.

Sid Eargle
Post-9/11 Marine Veteran

★ UWS is an amazing organization! They genuinely care about warriors and are there to help in any way they can. I would recommend them to any veteran transitioning out of the military.

Alexander Ng
Post-9/11 Army Veteran

★ The Team from Upstate Warrior Solution is dedicated to taking care of Service Members and their Families. My wife and I have experienced this First Hand during our transition process. They are a talented group of people who understand the transition process and the challenges associated with leaving the force. More than problem solvers...they are opportunity creators. I'm proud to be associated with this group of professionals. The Greenville UWS is a model program that should be patterned and replicated throughout the country.

Eric Schwartz
US Army (Retired)

★ The Men and Women of Upstate Warrior Solution go above and beyond for upstate veterans. I look forward to continuing my relationship with and support of UWS, as they create opportunities to enhance the lives of upstate vets!

Shawn Currie
Post-9/11 Marine Veteran



Upstate Warrior Solution Programs

UWS staff members and volunteers have worked diligently over the past year to develop meaningful relationships with local transitioning warriors, and in turn, have built programs that model the work that is done on a daily basis to support these warriors and their families.

Outreach and Case Coordination Program

The UWS Outreach and Case Coordination Program is the foundation of our service delivery model to our warriors. Each of our three offices has an outreach component, staffed by volunteers, Fellows, and other warriors that seek out their brothers and sisters in the community. Whether they be veterans, National Guard, Reservists, Active Duty, or family members, UWS outreach staff serve as the front line ambassadors to our warrior community. When warrior clients need specific services, UWS Case Coordinators (full time caseworkers) in each of UWS's three offices work with these warriors to direct them to community based programs, maintaining a relationship with the warrior as services are delivered.

From Fellowship Alumnus —

Orenthia Thomkins
Master Sergeant,
SC Army National Guard

*MSG OJ Thomkins (center)
with his fellow soldiers
during his 2013 deployment
to Afghanistan*



Fellowship Program

The UWS Fellowship Program is designed meet these challenges head on by providing disabled veterans with the tools they need to excel in their professional and personal life. Throughout the program, our fellows explore topics that enhance their skills in community leadership, team leadership, team dynamics, interpersonal communication, public speaking, spirituality and knowledge of community infrastructure. The process begins with a two-day orientation and continues with a six-month workforce development internship within UWS. Below are the core practices UWS uses to develop warriors through the Fellowship Program.

- ★ *Attend monthly personal and professional development workshops (Fellowship Academy)*
- ★ *Receive mentoring from a UWS staff member and a non-UWS community leader*
- ★ *Work alongside the UWS employment program manager to develop their resumes, portfolios and professional networks*
- ★ *Serve the community and other warriors through outreach, case-coordination and other service opportunities*

Community Engagement Program

The UWS Community Engagement Program is critical as our Board of Directors are insistent that our community take ownership of our local warriors and their families. As a result, we have developed partnerships with over 50 local providers. These partners are non-profit organizations, federal, state, and local government programs, and private sector corporate groups that assist us with our mission. Here are a few of our top community partners from 2016:

- ★ *Department of Veteran Affairs – Healthcare & Benefits Administration*
- ★ *Goodwill Industries of the Upstate and Midlands*
- ★ *13th Circuit (Greenville/Pickens) and 7th Circuit (Spartanburg/Cherokee) Veteran Treatment Courts*
- ★ *Alston Wilkes Society*
- ★ *Habitat for Humanity of Greenville County*
- ★ *United Ways of the Piedmont, Greenville County, Pickens County, Anderson County, and Oconee County*
- ★ *Upstate Veterans Alliance Network*

Additionally, in 2016 we partnered with our community providers on over 200 local events to raise awareness about our programs and to educate the Upstate's warrior and non-warrior populations on the services that are available to our warriors and their families.

ORENTHIA (OJ) THOMKINS has been in the SC Army National Guard for over 20 years and he is a recent graduate of our UWS Fellowship Program. His unit was mobilized in 2013 for a deployment to Afghanistan and he served as a platoon sergeant for that year-long deployment. It certainly changed his life, and as a result of his experiences in combat, he experienced significant challenges adjusting back to normal life with his family and career. After several personal and professional setbacks, OJ met some veterans on the UWS team and decided to apply for the Fellowship Program. He was accepted and served as an Outreach Fellow in the Greenville office during the fall of 2016. OJ subsequently found full-time employment and has developed stronger, healthier relationships with his family, friends, and soldiers in the Guard, where he continues to serve one weekend each month. He now is a part of the UWS family, and we are proud of his humility and accomplishments as he continues to serve his community today.



Improving Our Community Impact

2016 was a year where Upstate Warrior Solution added to its community leadership by forming three new Advisory Boards in each of our three areas of operation: Spartanburg County, Greenville County, and the Tri-County (Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee) area. These Advisory Boards are called Community Action Boards (CAB) and they supplement the work of our amazing Governance Board of Directors, as well as providing planning and thought leadership to our programs in each of these areas.

Spartanburg Community Action Board

The UWS Spartanburg County CAB was formed in the fall of 2016 and is composed of community leaders all local to Spartanburg. This CAB works alongside our Spartanburg Team that is headquartered in Spartanburg Community College's downtown campus, in downtown Spartanburg. Our Spartanburg CAB is focused on veteran housing issues, and was responsible for assisting with the formation of the 7th Circuit Veterans Treatment Court which will be in full operation in mid-2017.

Chair

Craig Burnette

Department of Veterans Affairs, Retired

Vice-Chair

Chuck White

Community Leader

UWS Governance Board Liaison

Marianna Habisreutinger

Community Leader

Secretary

Jonathan Burgess

Former UWS Spartanburg Director

Simon Stickland

Wofford College ROTC Department

James Thompson

Alston-Wilkes Society

Neal Urch

Community Leader

Sheila Henderson

Vision 2 Destiny Logistics Group

Heather Witt

United Way of the Piedmont

John Fix

UWS Spartanburg Office Director

Joe Lesesne

Wofford College Athletics Department

Tony Payne

Southern Wesleyan University

Peter Moore

Community Leader

Jay Bearden

Spartanburg Regional Hospital

Lynn O'Dell

Spartanburg County Veterans Affairs

Greenville Community Action Board

The UWS Greenville County CAB was formed in late 2016 and is composed of community leaders all local to the Greenville area. This CAB works alongside our Greenville Team that is headquartered in the same building as the VA's Vet Center on Pelham Road in Greenville. Our Greenville CAB is focused on veteran's legal issues, housing solutions, and creating innovative programming to support our warrior families.

Chair

Don Koonce

Community Leader

Vice-Chair

Bobby Cox

Sig Sauer

UWS Governance Board Liaison

Craig Brown

Greenville Drive

Housing Committee Chair

LeAnne Carswell

The Carswell Expert Real Estate Team

Family Support Committee Chair

Stacey Reeves

Department of Veterans Affairs

Legal Committee Chair

Troy Tessier

Wyche Law Firm

David Suddeth

Greenville Health System

George Blevins

Greenville County Veterans Affairs

Carlos Phillips

Greenville Chamber of Commerce

Bert Wilkins

Wilkins and Bouton, LLC

Kay Fitzsimmons

Blue Star Mothers

Howie Thompson

Greenville City Police Department

Ivory Matthews

Greenville Housing Authority

Natalie Worley

United Housing Connections

Nate Moore

Director, UWS Greenville Office

Tri-County Community Action Board

The UWS Tri-County CAB is still being formed and our Governance Board and staff are working with our community leaders to select qualified members to assist with our mission in Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee Counties. During 2017, our team will build out this Board and also select several focus areas in order to support our Tri-County warriors and their families: programming to support our warrior families.

UWS Governance Board Liaison & Chair

Dan Cooper

Tri-County Technical College

Pickens County Vice-Chair

Larry Martin

Alice Manufacturing

Derrick Popham

Director, UWS Tri-County Office

Oconee County Vice-Chair TBD

Anderson County Vice-Chair TBD



The work of our growing Community Action Boards has been optimized by our partnership with the Upstate Veteran's Alliance Network (UVAN). UVAN is an organization of over 60 community partners across the UWS coverage area (5 Upstate Counties) that has quarterly gatherings to educate the community on veteran-specific resources and also share best practices for the coordination of warrior cases and service delivery. UVAN also gained national and state level recognition being the first MyVACommunity task force in the state of South Carolina, which is a formal partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs, helping VA develop a stronger presence in our local community. Robert Kappel (SC Army National Guard) and Charlie Hall (Upstate Warrior Solution) are the co-chairs of UVAN and continue to push the organization to think outside of the box and be the force for change with the delivery of services for our Upstate veterans, uniformed servicemembers, and their families.

Leadership Development in our Community

In 2016, Upstate Warrior Solution had the opportunity to work closely with community leadership groups such as Leadership Greenville Class 43 and Leadership Pickens Class of 2017. These men and women understand collaboration, thought leadership, and action. We were honored to join forces for the betterment of our local warriors and the communities for which we live.

Leadership Greenville Class 43 selected a project proposed by UWS, which led to a joint re-build effort with Rebuild Upstate and a tailored marketing and communications plan designed to enhance the UWS brand and increase exposure. The housing project included a new roof and a greater quality of life for a local warrior. We couldn't have accomplished this without LG Class 43, Rebuild Upstate, and the many volunteers from Safelite Auto Glass.

In August 2016, our Tri-County Program Director was selected to participate in Leadership Pickens and has since teamed up with many community leaders and organizations to raise money for a Dream Center project, which will be completed in Spring of 2017.

The integration of services across our five-county area of operations wouldn't be possible without the willingness and commitment of these fine partners. Community leaders and citizens from all walks of life come together, bringing their diverse talents and resources together to generate real solutions for our community. These groups are invaluable to our warrior community, have changed the lives of many, and for that, we are grateful!



Leadership Pickens – Derrick Popham representing UWS

Leadership Greenville Class 43 – Kevin McBride representing UWS





Our Locations

We have three offices strategically located in areas of the Upstate that are readily accessible to our warrior clients.

SPARTANBURG OFFICE

Director: John Fix, SGM, US Army Retired
220 E. Kennedy Street, Room 157, Spartanburg, SC 29302
864.977.1288

GREENVILLE OFFICE

Director: Nate Moore, Cpl, US Marine Corps Retired
3 Caledon Court, Suite A-2, Greenville, SC 29615
864.520.2073

TRI-COUNTY OFFICE

Director: Derrick Popham, SSgt, US Marine Corps Retired
518 College Ave, Suite 140, Clemson, SC 29631
864.722.9039

OVER THE PAST YEAR, Clemson Military and Veteran Engagement has worked closely with Upstate Warrior Solution's Clemson office in multiple facets. I have personally referred dozens of veterans at Clemson and in the surrounding area to Upstate Warrior Solution for housing, employment, healthcare, and other needs. Clemson's Student Veteran Association has also supported various efforts of Upstate Warrior Solution such as the Homeless PIT Count initiative and the Spring into Clemson event. Our organizations are also working together to host an Upstate Warrior Field Day event where veterans and their families across the Upstate can compete in fun and competitive games and events and build upon our military and veteran community. I look forward to working with Upstate Warrior Solution on this and other initiatives as we continue to support each other as work toward our goals of helping veterans in our communities.

Brennan Beck

Asst. Director for Military & Veteran Engagement
New Student & Family Programs
Division of Student Affairs Clemson University



COVER WARRIORS



Henry and Eva are on to their newest venture, opening Thyme and Play restaurant in Greenville.

Former US Navy Petty Officers Henry and Eva Vega and their family are featured on this cover of this report. Eva and Henry were in the Navy for over twelve years of combined service and both had multiple deployments supporting the Global War on Terror after 9/11. Henry and Eva are graduates of the Greenville Technical College Culinary School and are opening their own restaurant called Thyme and Play. Thyme and Play will be a restaurant in Greenville focusing on serving families with special-needs children and other family members. Upstate Warrior Solution is proud to be a part of this family's transition from active duty to the Upstate community.



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Director of Economic Development, Tri-County Technical College

SPARTANBURG COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD HONORARY CHAIR

Marianna Habisreutinger

Spartanburg Community Leader

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Craig Brown

Owner/President, The Greenville Drive

“THE WILLINGNESS WITH WHICH OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE LIKELY TO SERVE IN ANY WAR, NO MATTER HOW JUSTIFIED, IS DIRECTLY PROPORTIONAL TO HOW THEY PERCEIVE VETERANS OF EARLIER WARS WERE TREATED AND APPRECIATED BY THEIR NATION.”

— George Washington

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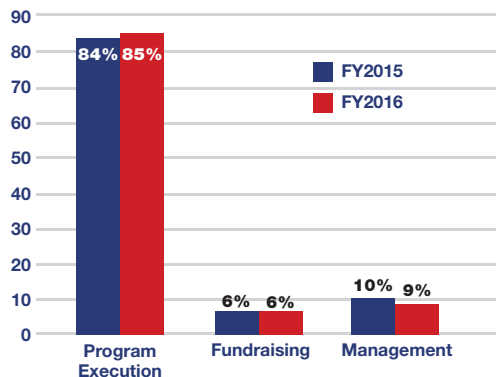
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FY2016 Financial Report

YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
REVENUES			
Corporate Donations	\$ 139,062		\$ 139,062
Individual Donations	141,213		141,213
Grants	461,701	120,000	581,701
Fundraising Event Income	197,180		197,180
Donated Services, Material and Space	49,559		49,559
Sublease Income	30,034		30,034
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	57,918	(57,918)	
TOTAL REVENUES	1,076,667	62,082	1,138,749
EXPENSES			
Program Services	913,997		913,997
<i>Supporting Services:</i>			
Management and General	96,591		96,591
Fundraising	66,216		66,216
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,076,804		1,076,804
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS			
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	144,451	10,000	154,451
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$ 144,314	72,082	\$ 216,396

UWS remains committed to financial transparency and keeping 100% of funds raised in the Upstate for our warrior-centric programs. Audited financial statements and IRS Form 990s are available as requested and are also maintained on our website.



Help us Change Lives

With your help and support, Upstate Warrior Solutions can continue to make an impact on the lives of veterans and their families. We stand united in taking the responsibility to make our veterans feel as safe as they made us feel during times of national crisis. It is now our turn to provide them with the opportunities they deserve that lead to a fulfilling and prosperous life.

A donation is a great opportunity to care for these warriors who have put their lives on the line to defend our country. Your donation will go directly to serving our mission to connect warriors and their families to resources and opportunities, lead them through the process of self-empowerment, and inspire the community to embrace local warriors and their family members as valued neighbors and friends.

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Heroes 5K
(Road Race/Furman University)
March

Cliffs Members Salute UWS Golf Classic
(Golf Tourney/Cliffs Valley)
May

Big Break Warrior Edition
(Golf Competition/Thornblade)
May

Warrior Classic
(Golf tourney/Pebble Creek)
September

Thank You to Our Contributors



MEDAL OF HONOR

(\$10K+)

1st Lt. Peter F. Cureton Jr. Foundation
A Hero's 5 K
Americas Warrior Partnership
Mary Black Foundation
Craig and Vicki Brown
Jim and Deborah Demint
Greenville County Redevelopment Authority
John and Gretchen Klein
Michael and Susan Riordan
ScanSource, Inc.
South Carolina Charities, Inc.
Spartanburg County Foundation
Spartanburg Young Professionals –
1831 Gala
Spartanburg Women Giving
The Graham Foundation
United Way of Pickens County
United Way of The Piedmont Behavioral
Health Taskforce
Windsor-Aughtry Commercial Group



LEGION OF MERIT

(\$2500 – 4,999)

John and Sherry Bearden
Bill Brodie
Bon Secours St. Francis Health System
Jan Childress
Greenville Swamp Rabbits
Elysian Magazine
Focused Solution
Fox Run Country Club
Greenville Rotoract Club
Holy Cross Episcopal Church
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Tee and Sherry Hooper
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Just One More Sports Bar
Charles and Audrey Linke
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Powdersville Self-Storage
Raymond James Financial
Ridge Runner Corvettes
Smart Family Foundation
South Carolina Tel Con
Spartanburg Day School
Sundown Riders Motorcycle Club
TAP INC
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Wells Fargo Foundation
William M. Webster IV



BRONZE STAR

(\$1000 – 2,499)

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Andy and Lynne Falatok
Fatz Cafe
Fountain Inn Presbyterian Church
Greenville Health System
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Integrity Texas Funding, LP
J W Martin Homes
James and Lee Foster
JHM Hotels
Erwin & Nancy Maddrey
Michelin
Modern Real Estate
Morgan Lodge #22, Knight Pythias
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Robert S Morris
Charles Moseley
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Northwest Middle School
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Peace Center
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League
Marion Powell
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C. Niles Ray
Ben Reed

Kenneth Rice
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John and Renee Stanton
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Swingin Hammers Construction
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The Buchanan Family Charitable Fund
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The Southern Financial Group
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USBA, Inc.
Jean Varat
Judy Camp and David Via
William and Langhorne Webster
John B. White
David and Susan Wilkins
Don Wilson
Kathy Wofford
YMCA of Greenville
Amy Zimmer

SILVER STAR

(\$5K – 9,999)

Paula and Stan Baker
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Baughman Family Charitable Fund
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Cintas Corporation
Contec
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Barry Hamrick
McKissick Family Foundation
Northstar Financial
Pebble Creek Golf Club
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Tryon Equestrian Partners
Lori and Mike Wallach
Wharton-Smith, Inc.

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Judy Camp and David Via





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