## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT.

THE MISSION CONTINUES



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## **INTRODUCTION** -

Veterans possess the drive and desire to serve others, but without access to the tools needed, their potential to make a meaningful impact at the local level remains untapped. On the other end of the spectrum, growing numbers of communities in this country are under-resourced and being left behind. The Mission Continues bridges this gap.

## OUR MISSION —

Our mission is to connect veterans with under-resourced communities. Our programs deploy veteran volunteers to work alongside nonprofit partners and community leaders to improve educational resources, tackle food insecurity, foster neighborhood identity, and more.

## OUR VISION -

Our vision is for all veterans with a desire to continue their service to be part of a movement to transform communities.

### **IMPACT** -

Since 2007, The Mission Continues has engaged over **99,500** veterans and community members in over **9,500** service projects.

The Mission Continues operates in more than **40** cities nationwide. **9 out of 10** Platoon Leaders feel they have the ability to make a difference in their community.

## 

Our core values are the set of principles that guide our choices as individuals and as an organization. Having a unified, clear view of our values helps ensure we are living out our promise every day, in every location, and to the absolute best of our abilities. As such, we expect and encourage all volunteers, staff members, and program participants to embody the following values as representatives of The Mission Continues: **Collaboration, Compassion, Inclusiveness, Integrity, and Growth Through Learning**.

## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

We value the diversity of identities, lived experiences, and perspectives that veterans and partners bring to our work. We appreciate that it is a privilege to make a difference in, with, and for the communities we serve. There is more work to do but we are committed to making The Mission Continues a place where everyone feels they belong.



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# A Message From Our President

In 2022, our work at The Mission Continues started to feel like "normal" again, signified by a steady increase of volunteers returning to serve alongside veteran leaders in communities across the country. This past year, we celebrated not only the resilience of those veterans, but also some remarkable milestones.

With our continued goal of creating opportunities for veterans to leave lasting impacts in communities, we returned to an unrestricted operational cadence after the COVID-related cool down of previous years. And it felt good. With more than 650 service and support projects in 2022, it was obvious our veteran-led volunteer force was back in action.

Led by more than 4,800 veterans, more than 8,200 volunteers joined us on the front lines of service in 2022.

We also brought back our annual Mass Deployment, deploying more than 100 veterans from across the country to Chicago for a full week of intense, focused and deeply impactful service projects during Operation Chi-Town Salute. As the team wrapped up our 6th annual Mass Deployment, we reflected on how happy we were to have that program back in our rotation, and how excited we are for 2023 and the next iteration of this special and memorable week of service.

As we returned to in-person programming in 2022, we added even more tools to prepare our veterans for their next challenge as community leaders. More than 65 veterans attended the inaugural session of Leading For All, the newest leadership development program in our portfolio, and gave us the crucial feedback needed to ensure we are delivering on our promise to provide the skills necessary to connect people across lines of difference.

We also launched a podcast, "Boots on the Ground" – a bi-monthly conversation with changemakers in the veteran space – and it was received with excitement and optimism for the veteran-related stories we're honored to share with our growing audience.

It was amazing to see the things that matter most to our veterans – connectedness, purpose, growth, community impact – back on full display and without disruption. But our work is far from done.

As we flipped the calendar from 2022 to 2023, we were filled with renewed energy to better serve our nation's veterans in the best way possible, and the only way we know how. Fueled by a transformational \$10M grant from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, we created a five-year strategic plan that is bold, innovative, and charts a path for growth that will allow us to reach more veterans and communities. 2022 was a year of wins, and now we look forward to Continuing the Mission into 2023 and beyond.

See you out there. Charlie Mike!

Kongali

Mary Beth Bruggeman, President, The Mission Continues



# **Developing "Bridge-Building" Leadership**



At The Mission Continues, we believe deeply in ensuring that our veterans have continued opportunities to develop throughout their leadership journeys. Leading For All is The Mission Continues' newest initiative - launched in 2022 - that will pull on veterans' ability to serve as "bridge builders" with others and lead in a way that truly brings people together. This three-day intensive will build upon the strengths and experiences veterans have leading across lines of difference to cultivate an environment where all feel valued and respected. Through understanding their own and others' perspectives and experiences, veteran leaders will be better prepared to seek out, consider, and factor in those perspectives. As a result, participants will be ready to lead more effectively in various areas of their lives, and ultimately take their relationships, collaboration, community-building, and leadership to new heights. They will explore their role in working collaboratively with groups of diverse individuals towards a common goal. Veterans will come away from the workshop with deeper understanding, specific tools, and a personalized plan of action for putting what they learn into practice.



## **Boots On The Ground Podcast**



Boots On The Ground Podcast sparks conversations with veterans and organizations working to address the critical issues and challenges affecting veterans, our families, and communities in need nationwide. This show is primarily an interview format and offers an opportunity to connect with

veteran community members and highlight and educate our audience on military culture, meaning, and purpose. The subject of any given episode may range from veteran mental health, the transition from active duty to veteran, women veterans, veteran service organizations, and leadership/professional/personal growth, to name a few.

Listen at missioncontinues.org/boots-on-the-ground-podcast



## Cultivating Mission-Driven Community Leaders



The Mission Continues offers an unparalleled opportunity for service-centric veterans eager to contribute to their country in new ways. We prepare veterans to lead tangible impact in their communities through a complement of rigorous programs that teach leadership skills, including community-based leadership methods, cultural competence, effective communication, and project management. These invaluable skills are infused into every one of our programs, including the Service Leadership Corps (SLC). Upon the completion of coursework and practicums, Corps members stand equipped to lead a team of volunteers as a platoon leader in their home city. In 2022, our SLC program saw 73 veterans graduate from the program through two separate cohorts. And 90% of those who completed the program said they left feeling more prepared to lead a Platoon Leadership Team in their home communities, and 83% reported that they felt more equipped to reach the goals they had set for themselves. Additionally, 97% indicated that the in-person sessions were much more effective methods of instruction in their progress. Thanks to the generous support of the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation and the Acorn Hill Foundation, the 2022 graduates of SLC's Cohorts 5 & 6 left with an increased confidence in their abilities to lead back in their hometowns. "During this weekend, our goal was to become effective community leaders," SLC Cohort 6 graduate Lilian Gregory said. "We have serving in our hearts because we are all veterans. We have to be prepared for the unexpected, like unconscious bias, that causes us to not be as effective as we could be. This weekend has reinforced our skills and capabilities to lead even more."



"SLC is bringing together a group of individuals that are passionate about their communities, they want to be a better leader, a better person and this weekend is all about that. It's been cool to hear everyone else's background and what they plan on doing with this." - Mike Montiel, SLC Cohort 6 Graduate



# **Empowering Women Veterans** to Become Authentic Leaders



The Mission Continues sees a gap between the vast leadership potential of women veterans and the added challenges that women veterans face. As more than 30% of our overall program participants are women, we have witnessed first-hand that women veterans navigate challenges with communication, identity, and confidence, all of which make their journey to leadership roles more difficult.

Since its inception, The Mission Continues' Women Veterans Leadership Program (WVLP) has found a real home in this important and previously missing space for an incredible group of natural and sometimes overlooked veteran leaders.

Since identifying that gap between the vast leadership potential of women veterans and the added challenges that women veterans face, the program has started to hit its stride.

Cohort 4 concluded in mid 2022, with a record 60 graduates from one cohort completing the program, their feedback was pretty unanimous:

- **98%** believe content will help them grow as a leader.
- **95%** become more effective communicators as leaders.
- **95%** have an increased understanding of how to leverage their network to accomplish their goals.
- **93%** indentified ways to integrate self-care into their role as a leader.

- **93%** felt more equipped to meaningfully engage in their local community.
- **93%** identified their personal values to help them lead authentically.
- **93%** understood how to access more resources that will help them accomplish their goals.
- **93%** developed more meaningful relationships with other women leaders.

Of course, we wouldn't have seen this kind of positive progress in 2022 without the unrelenting dedication of our valued partners at the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation, Raytheon Technologies, Wounded Warrior Project, Boeing, Prudential, and BAE Systems, so a special thanks for your partnership in this successful journey of 2022.



# **Opportunities to Join Us in Service**

The Mission Continues leads days of service in cities from coast to coast to bolster the work we do, bring people together, and inspire others to serve.





## Martin Luther King Jr. National Day Of Service

The 2022 Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy of Service Campaign saw organized service opportunities focused on combating food insecurity, pandemic recovery, and public space beautification that brought together veterans and their neighbors. During the campaign, our veteranled service platoons partnered with schools, public parks, youth organizations, homeless shelters, among others, to host more than 45 events with nearly 1,000 volunteers. The MLK Legacy of Service Campaign was made possible thanks to dedicated partners like Raytheon Technologies and AmeriCorps.

# United in Service: 9/11 National Day of Service Campaign

A generation of our nation's veterans were impacted by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. 9/11 changed the course of US history and continues to carry deep personal weight to many service members and veterans - it remains an annual motivator for our work. With the help of dedicated community partners, selfless sponsors, and volunteers from every corner of this nation, our veterans and partners honored 9/11 by serving in their own backyards. Our United Service campaign saw more than 50 service events with nearly 800 volunteers in attendance, powered by unwavering partners like Veterans United Foundation and Starbucks.



# **Opportunities to Join Us in Service**

The Mission Continues leads days of service in cities from coast to coast to bolster the work we do, bring people together, and inspire others to serve.

**Earth Day** In celebration of Earth Day, The Mission Continues focused on empowering veterans and volunteers to contribute to a sustainable tomorrow. In 2022, the campaign, supported by USAA, saw nearly 45 projects take place with more than 400 volunteers participating nationwide. The Puerto Rico Service Platoon tackled two Earth Day projects, with the first being at Portal de Amor and, a week later, service in El Verde Field Station in El Yunque Forest. Additional activities across the US included park and trail cleanups, planting and fostering vegetable seedlings for local community gardens, building compost bins, building park equipment and more.





## Veterans in Service: Honoring Veterans Day All November

This Veterans Day we dedicated the entire month to honor the sacrifices our veterans have made through their time in service. The national multi-week campaign saw more than 530 volunteers participate in nearly 65 projects. Platoons across the country carried out projects, including packing and distributing meals, building capacity for frontline community resources, and connecting with fellow veterans. We're grateful to our partner at Navy Federal Credit Union for engaging their staff and customers in amplifying our mission across the country, providing financial support, and volunteering at our Veterans Day service projects.



# **Operation Chi-Town Salute**

Operation Chi-Town Salute, held in Chicago, IL, marked the sixth iteration of our Mass Deployment program. From August 12-15, 2022, a team of veterans deployed from across the country, invested their time, energy, and skills to help make positive community-driven change at Maria Saucedo Academy, Englewood Veterans Garden, Hermitage Community Garden, Hope Manor II, and Kennedy-King College.

In total, more than 650 veterans, volunteers, community members, and partners convened throughout the city for four consecutive days of physically demanding and visually impactful service. Planning included regular meetings so community members could share their vision and provide their input, as well as conversations with long-standing partner organizations to ensure that the impact achieved by Operation Chi-Town Salute would directly address the community's needs. Operation Chi-Town Salute was a heightened continuation of our ongoing commitment to Chicago—and the hundreds of local veterans of The Mission Continues—who are at the heart of sustaining our collective progress.





# Board of Directors

As of December 31, 2022

In 2022, The Mission Continues was excited to welcome Elizabeth Young McNally and Catherine Gonzalez Pack to the Board of Directors. Gonzalez Pack and McNally joined a diverse Board comprised of industry leaders in defense, finance, education and more, who are committed to empowering veteran-led impact in communities nationwide. "As we continue to prioritize building a diverse and highly engaged leadership team at The Mission Continues, we are excited to welcome two extraordinary women veterans to our Board of Directors," Mary Beth Bruggeman, Marine Corps Veteran and President of The Mission Continues, said at the time. "These two leaders bring exceptional talent, expertise, and perspective that will help to guide our organization's veteran-led movement of service."

Then, in August, The Mission Continues shared the news that board member Len Kortekaas had been appointed to the role of Chair of its Board of Directors. The announcement also highlighted a transition for outgoing Chair and long-time board member Nana Adae into a new role as co-founder of the newly formed Mission Support Council.

#### Len Kortekaas

Chair I Managing Director, Merrill Lynch Los Angeles, CA

#### Mary Beth Bruggeman

Director Ex-Officio | President, The Mission Continues Washington, D.C.

#### Sally Chan

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#### **Rajiv Chandrasekaran**

Director I Head of Policy and Strategy, Emes Project LLC Seattle, WA

#### **John Culver**

Director | Group President, North America and COO, Starbucks Seattle, WA

#### **Catherine Gonzalez Pack**

Director I Reporter, American Forces Network Los Angeles, California

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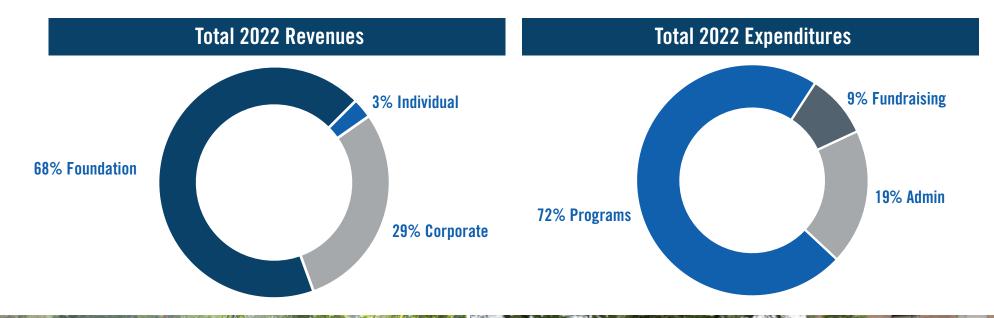
#### **Elizabeth Young McNally**

Director I Graduate, US Military Academy New York, NY

# **Our Financials**

## 2022 Total\*







# Partner Spotlight: \_\_\_\_\_ Raytheon Technologies



As we returned to more in-person programming in 2022, valued partner Raytheon Technologies announced an extended commitment into The Mission Continues' Service Platoon and Women Veterans Leadership program with a multi-year investment.

Former Board Chair, Nana Adae, summed it up by saying, "We're honored and humbled by this investment from Raytheon Technologies in our core programs. This partnership helps us take meaningful steps to elevate women veterans to become community leaders and create sustainable programming that empowers our veterans across the country."

In partnership since 2020, this latest commitment from Raytheon Technologies helps our veteran-led volunteer force to team up alongside dedicated community partners to address a wide range of challenges, including neighborhood revitalization, food insecurity, educational inequality, and much more.



# Thank You to Our 2022 Donors -

## \$5,000,000+

Anonymous

## \$1,000,000+

A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation

#### \$500,000+

Raytheon Technologies

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