



SOLDIERSTRONG

# 2022 IS OFF TO A GREAT START!

*"Land of the Free because of the Brave!"*

## STRONGTIMES

*A quarterly newsletter with life-changing impact.*

VOLUME V, NO. 1 MARCH 2022

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### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN/FOUNDER



Dear Friends, These last two years have been a struggle for many of us and as I sit down to address you I am reminded why I started SoldierStrong and why I am so grateful to live in our great country.

It all boils down to one simple truth – after surviving 9/11, I wanted to find a meaningful way to give back to those who so bravely serve our country. I recognize that our freedoms and our way of life is only possible due to the brave men and women who serve in our military and our first responders.

SoldierStrong is filling a much needed gap in veteran healthcare. We have found a way to give back to those who have served and sacrificed so much so that we may enjoy the benefits of living in America.

Despite the challenges and hardships we have experienced, I am pleased to say we are making a difference through the various donations we have been able to make - all thanks to people like you! In this issue of our quarterly newsletter, StrongTimes, I am excited to tell you about some of these donations and other interesting updates.



# 2022 LIFE-CHANGING DONATIONS!

We ended 2021 strong and as a result of your support, in the first quarter of 2022, we have made 2 iBOTs® PMD donations to two deserving veterans - Peter Townsend and Nathan Gonzalez. In this issue, I'd like to share Peter's story and in next quarter's StrongTimes issue, I can't wait to tell you about Nathan!

## VETERAN FINDS NEW LIFE WITH IBOT®

BY KEVIN MCCONLOGUE *Press Examiner. March 16, 2022*

Getting around had been an issue for the past couple of years for an Auburn Township resident, but one device has changed his life.

Peter Townsend, of Auburn Township, is a U.S Army veteran currently battling multiple sclerosis. His daily routine had been made tough because of his disability, until one day in December 2021.

Just a couple of days before Christmas, Townsend was the recipient of an iBOT® Personal Mobility Device from an organization called SoldierStrong, a national nonprofit that helps military veterans take their next steps forward by connecting them with revolutionary medical technologies.

The iBot® is not your average wheelchair. It is a mobility device that can climb stairs, allow users to rise from a sitting level up to six feet tall and can even travel through sand, snow and standing water.

Even with the snowy conditions on the ground at his home in Auburn Township, Townsend was still able to get outside and do some work.

"It's amazing the type of terrain this thing can travel on," Townsend said. "I've been outside almost nonstop with it. It can go up to 20 miles without a charge. It truly has been a life changing device."

Townsend served in the Army from 1982-86. After serving, he attended the physician's assistant program at King's College, and began serving as a PA for more than 15 years.

In 2008, he was diagnosed with primary progressive multiple sclerosis, a condition found in only 15 percent of MS patients. Due to his condition, he had to medically retire in 2014.

"I was at the point where walking started to become a chore," Townsend said. "The symptoms had started to worsen over the years to the point where I was in treatments and receiving a lot of care."

Because of his veteran status, Townsend is able to receive medical care through the VA Medical Center in Wilkes-Barre. It was there where he was able to try out the iBot for the first time. He expressed his interest in the device for himself, and was selected by SoldierStrong as a recipient of an iBot.



*"It's amazing the type of terrain this thing can travel ...I've been outside almost nonstop with it."*

"It was a huge surprise that I wasn't expecting," Townsend said. "Normally the cost of this device is around \$32,000, which is very difficult for the average veteran to afford. I can't thank SoldierStrong enough for their extreme generosity. This has truly made a huge difference in my life."

"There are many things the average person takes for granted in daily life, but for people like Peter, this revolutionary technology allows them to enjoy everyday activities and thrive in ways they simply wouldn't be able to without it," SoldierStrong chairman Chris Meek said.

"SoldierStrong is incredibly honored to provide this technology to someone as deserving as Peter in an effort to give back in a small way to a patriot who so selflessly and honorably to his country."

Now that getting around is significantly easier, Townsend can't wait for spring weather to fully arrive. He's looking forward to accessing places he hasn't been to in years like the hiking trails of various Pennsylvania State Parks.

"I used to love hiking, but obviously my disability has not allowed me to be as mobile as I want," he said. "Now this summer, I plan to spend a lot of time outside and traveling and am really looking forward to it."

March is also MS awareness month in the United States. Townsend is spending a little extra time this month being thankful for all the blessings he has received over the last year.

"This machine has truly been life changing," he said. "It makes me feel like a new person. I'm doing things I haven't been able to do in years and I am so thankful."

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US TO MAKE THESE LIFE CHANGING GIFTS POSSIBLE!

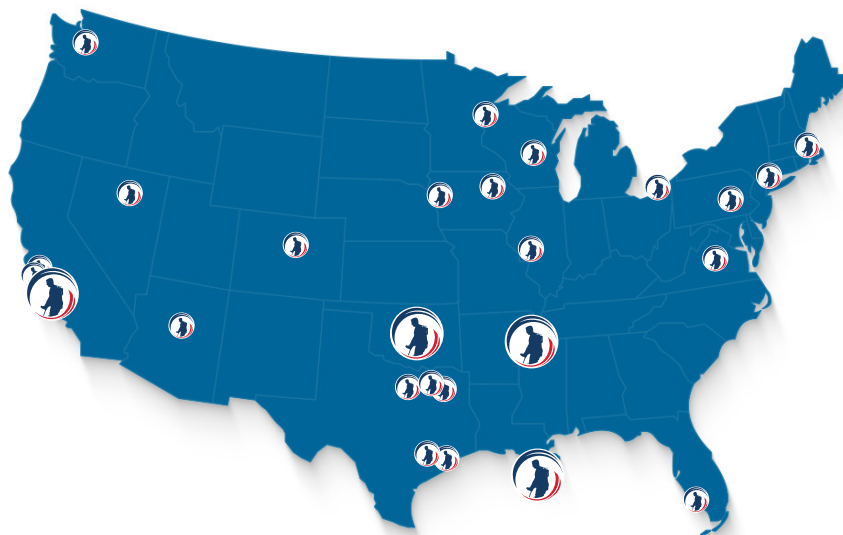




# DONATIONS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



*TOTAL of 30 "SoldierSuits" Donated-To-Date thanks to your support!*



*Donated 56 REAL Systems to 17 VA medical centers*



## REAL RECOVERY





**February 2, 2022**

## **SOLDIERSTRONG IS HIGHLIGHTED AT DALLAS MAVERICKS GAME.**

SoldierStrong was honored to attend a Dallas Mavericks game where we had the opportunity to share one of our amazing programs – the SoldierSuit. Specialist Johnnie Williams, who is a veteran of the United State Army joined me at the game and he demonstrated his ability to walk again with the SoldierSuit!

In 2003, Johnnie was serving in Iraq when a Humvee accident left him paralyzed. Johnnie is an incredible man, not only did he serve in our great military, but he is also a Track and Field Paralympian and represented the United States at the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio. It was an incredible night and we are grateful to the Dallas Mavericks for having us and for Johnnie for traveling to be with us to demonstrate the SoldierSuit and raise awareness of the SoldierStrong mission.



### **Upcoming Event: April 10, 2022**

SoldierStrong to be highlighted at the Orlando Magic Game. This is the last game before playoffs and the Orlando Magic will be playing against the Miami Heat. A full stadium is expected and we are honored to be with Bryce Cherryholmes, Staff Sergeant, USMC, (Ret.), who will be demonstrating the SoldierSuit. Bryce is one of our Ambassadors and does an incredible job explaining how the exoskeleton, a.k.a. SoldierSuit, has changed his life.

**Make sure to check it out!**

# STRONGTIMES HIGHLIGHTS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## NEW BOARD MEMBER



### MICHELE MERRELL

Michele Merrell is a senior level technology and telecommunications executive with 30 years experience in corporations ranging from start-up to mature, private, public and pre-IPO. She is currently the President of Merrell Consulting Group, a global marketing consulting consortium. She is an experienced practitioner in marketing, digital marketing, branding, advertising, social media, internet development, product marketing, public relations, crisis communications, public affairs, corporate communications, investor relations, and corporate social responsibility. She has worked on numerous mergers, acquisitions and joint venture agreements, as well as IPOs during her tenure.

Since 2014, Michele has served on the Board of Directors for three international corporations and is on the international Board of Directors for the Global Telecom Women's Network (GTWN). She is also the North America President for GTWN, an organization that actively promotes and mentors women in the global telecommunications and technology industries. She has received numerous awards and recognition over the years for her business and leadership acumen. We are thrilled to have her join our Board!

### NEXT STEPS FORWARD, WITH CHRIS MEEK: PODCAST ON VOICEAMERICA

An uplifting hour where my prominent and inspirational guests focus on personal empowerment, commitment to overall well-being and the motivation to achieve more than we ever thought possible in order to better our lives.

Each week, my guests and I will delve into each aspect of the three keys that add energy, excitement, direction and purpose to everything that we do.



Col. Greg Gadson



Dr. Alveda King



Dana Perino



Charles Haley



Martha MacCallum



Graham Rahal

*Join us every week at 1pm ET!*  
*Learn More at [NextStepsForward.com](https://NextStepsForward.com)*





# SOLDIERSTRONG PARTNERS



## BECOME A PARTNER OR CORPORATE SPONSOR

In the past ten years we have accomplished much thanks to the support of our partners, corporate sponsors and thousands of Americans that believe our veterans deserve the best medical care there is to offer. SoldierStrong is committed to providing America's heroes with the equipment and therapy they desperately need and deserve.

We are actively seeking new partnerships and would love to speak to you!

***You can also help us expand our efforts by simply following us on social media and sharing with your family and friends!***



**Learn More:** [SoldierStrong.org](http://SoldierStrong.org) | **Call:** 888.898.3235 | **Email:** [info@soldierstrong.org](mailto:info@soldierstrong.org)