



SOLDIERSTRONG



A LOOK BACK AT 2023

STRONGTIMES

A quarterly newsletter with life-changing impact.

VOL. VI, NO. 5 2023

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A MESSAGE FROM CHRIS MEEK

Dear Patriots,

As we look to the New Year, I pray that Americans recommit themselves to remembering the sacrifices that post-9/11 veterans have made and continue to make for us all.

for many of our nation's heroes, some of those wounds still linger and will impact their lives forever.

That is why SoldierStrong's mission, in some respects, is more important now than ever before. Because there is still so much more work to be done on behalf of post-9/11 veterans at a time when other current events have divided our attention.

I implore us all as Americans to look to the future with hope in our hearts without forgetting the past and the patriots who still need our support.

Thank you for supporting SoldierStrong's mission so that we can continue to help veterans take their next steps forward in life after service. I pray that 2024 will allow us to accomplish even greater things on behalf of veterans across the nation.

God bless,

Chris Meek, Co-Founder and Chairman

It has been over twenty years since the harrowing events of 9/11 and over two years since the withdrawal from Afghanistan. Since then our nation has turned our collective attention and directed our prayers to the conflicts in both Ukraine and Israel. Though these conflicts are certainly worthy of our time and attention, I ask that you still remember and pray for the scores of patriots who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and left their time in service with both the visible and invisible wounds of war.

Those wounds do not simply go away just because a war is over or any given amount of time has passed. Unfortunately,



UNITED RENTALS DONATES MORE THAN \$90,000 TO SOLDIERSTRONG THROUGH TURNS FOR TROOPS INITIATIVE

United Rentals Inc., the world's largest equipment rental company, in partnership with Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing, donated \$91,400 to SoldierStrong through the Turns For Troops program this year. This is the seventh consecutive year that United Rentals has donated \$50 for each lap that NTT IndyCar Series driver and SoldierStrong Advisory Board Member Graham Rahal completes in specific races throughout the IndyCar season. Since its inception, Turns For Troops has raised more than \$1.8 million to help support the recovery of America's injured veterans.

URNS FOR TROOPS

Powered by  **United Rentals**

“UNITED RENTALS HAS CALLED ATTENTION TO THE SACRIFICES AND NEEDS OF AMERICA'S VETERANS. WE ARE INCREDIBLY HONORED THAT UNITED RENTALS SUPPORTS OUR EFFORTS AND IS THERE FOR VETERANS WHO HAVE GIVEN SO MUCH. SIMPLY PUT, WE WOULD BE UNABLE TO FULFILL THE HIGHEST IDEALS OF OUR MISSION WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF UNITED RENTALS.”

- SoldierStrong co-founder and chairman Chris Meek



THE GRAHAM AND COURTNEY RAHAL FOUNDATION HOSTS 3RD ANNUAL VINO FOR VETS EVENT TO BENEFIT SOLDIERSTRONG

Combining their love for fine wines with their passion for our military veterans, The Graham and Courtney Rahal Foundation (GCRF) hosted the organization's third annual Vino For Vets event to benefit Turns For Troops and SoldierStrong this past October in beautiful Napa Valley, California.

Hosted during the harvest season, Vino For Vets is a couples-exclusive, weekend-long wine experience. The Foundation team does impeccable work researching and selecting some of the most sought-after, rare, and delicious wines to bring forward to guests. The intimate experience was a wonderful time and included unique and genuine company that all share in a love of wine and collective interest to better the lives of our nation's veterans. SoldierStrong co-founder and chairman Chris Meek, SoldierStrong Chief Technology Officer Mike Premi and Sharon Mozgai, representing our partnership with the University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technologies, were all honored to attend and present on SoldierStrong's efforts to better the mental health of veterans.



SOLDIERSTRONG RECOGNIZES ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Delivering on our commitment to help military veterans take a significant academic step forward, SoldierStrong is proud to recognize the recipients of our annual scholarship initiative, SoldierScholar. Since 2012, SoldierStrong has awarded more than \$500,000 in scholarships.

Though the post-9/11 GI Bill has helped thousands of veterans with their post-secondary education, there are still funding gaps that can become insurmountable obstacles toward the completion of a degree. Military service and education have long served as two of many pathways to prepare the next generation of great American leaders. Providing the very best of our nation with access to education when they return from service is the least we can do in honor of their sacrifices. Congratulations to the following SoldierScholar recipients:



MICHELLE HUMPHREYS

Old Dominion University,
Bachelor Degree in Civil
Engineering, U.S. Navy
Veteran



KATHLEEN HIGGINS

Old Dominion University,
Bachelor Degree in
Mechanical Engineering,
U.S. Navy Veteran



CATHERINE MANNING

Georgetown University,
Bachelor Degree in
Political Science, U.S. Air
Force Veteran



MARRILER WILSON

Syracuse University,
Master's Degree in Public
Administration and
International Relations,
U.S. Air Force National
Guard Veteran



JOSE A. BAEZA-RUIZ

Syracuse University,
Bachelor Degree in
Business Analytics, U.S.
Marine Corps Veteran



SOLDIERSTRONG PRESENTS COMMITMENT TO SERVICE AWARDS TO SYLVIE LÉGÈRE AND FLAGS OF VALOR

Each year SoldierStrong is proud to present the Commitment to Service Award to an individual and a corporation who have demonstrated exemplary and inspirational leadership and provided material support to our mission to help service members and veterans. It is our honor and pleasure as an organization to announce Sylvie Légère and Flags of Valor as the individual and corporate recipients of SoldierStrong's 2023 Commitment to Service Awards.

Sylvie Légère is a social entrepreneur, investor and philanthropist. She and her husband, Todd Ricketts, demonstrated their commitment and compassion for America's veterans by donating a robotic exoskeleton to SoldierStrong in 2021. Thanks to their generosity, SoldierStrong was able to ensure that paralyzed veteran Tyler Densford could walk again and enjoy a higher quality of life. In 2022, SoldierStrong was thrilled to welcome Mrs. Légère to the Advisory Board, a position she has since used to further raise awareness about our mission.

“SYLVIE HAS LONG FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS THAT UNITE PEOPLE FOR THE COMMON GOOD, WHICH IS AT THE VERY CORE OF SOLDIERSTRONG'S MISSION. IT TAKES INNOVATION AND A WILLINGNESS TO MAKE AN INVESTMENT IN THE COMMON GOOD FOR AMERICANS TO GIVE BACK TO OUR NATION'S HEROES IN A MANNER THAT WILL TRULY CHANGE LIVES - SYLVIE HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT CONSISTENTLY THROUGH HER COMMITMENT TO VETERANS. I AM INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL TO SYLVIE FOR LEVERAGING HER VOICE AND PASSION FOR THE POWER OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE THE LIVES OF VETERANS”

- Chris Meek on the impact of Sylvie Légère's work



Flags of Valor is a patriot-owned and veteran-operated maker of handcrafted wooden custom pieces, in particular American flags, with a mission to bring American values to the forefront of everyday life. Their range of patriotic products are made in the United States and crafted for this generation to pass onto the next. Flags of Valor empowers veteran organizations, including SoldierStrong, by donating 10% of all proceeds to nonprofits making a difference in the lives of veterans.

“IT IS AN HONOR TO PRESENT SOLDIERSTRONG'S CORPORATE COMMITMENT TO SERVICE AWARD TO FLAGS OF VALOR AND FOUNDER BRIAN STEORTS FOR THE STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO GIVE BACK TO OUR NATION'S HEROES AND THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT SERVE THEM. I ADMIRE BRIAN AND HIS TEAM FOR KEEPING VETERANS FRONT OF MIND IN THE WORK THAT THEY DO AND RECOGNIZE THAT IT UNDOUBTEDLY INSPIRES OTHER ENTREPRENEURS AND BUSINESSES TO FIND AVENUES WITHIN THEIR OWN ORGANIZATIONS TO BENEFIT OUR HEROIC VETERANS”

- Chris Meek on recognizing Flags of Valor

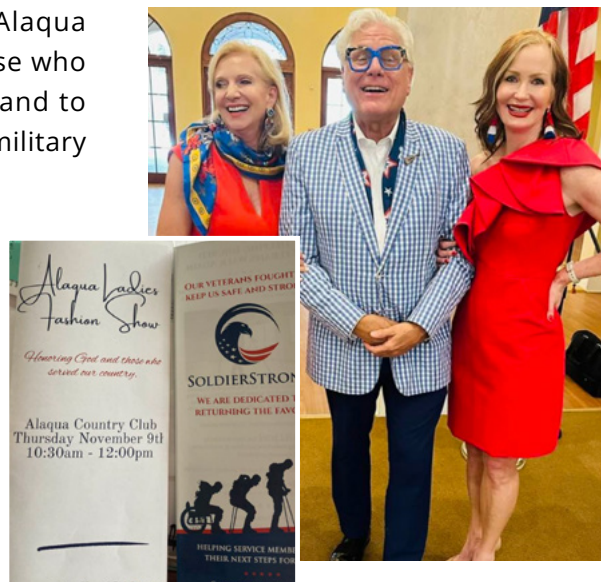


PATRIOTS DISPLAY SUPPORT FOR SOLDIERSTRONG'S MISSION AT VETERANS DAY EVENT IN FLORIDA

The Alauca Ladies Fashion Show took place on November 9 at the Alauca Country Club in Longwood, Florida. The event, honoring God and those who served our country, was held in acknowledgement of Veterans Day and to raise awareness and funds to further SoldierStrong's mission to help military veterans take their next steps forward in life after service.

Highlights from the luncheon include:

- SoldierStrong Vice Chairwoman COL Kimberly Moros served as keynote speaker
- A one-of-a-kind fashion show produced by Linda Koldenhoven
- Entertainment provided by Robert Dempster, host of "The Positive Patriot" radio show
- Trips of a Lifetime silent auction presented by AmFund

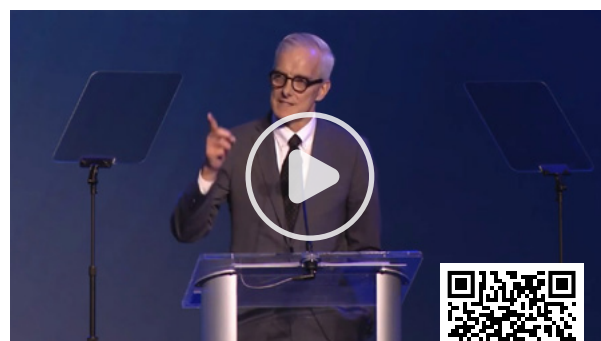


IOWA ASSOCIATION FOR JUSTICE RAISES MORE THAN \$18,000 FOR SOLDIERSTRONG

SoldierStrong was incredibly honored to be recognized by the Iowa Association for Justice (IAJ) as their 2023 Justice in Deed partner. As a partner, we were grateful to have SoldierStrong representative Gentry Collins present on behalf of our organization to over 400 Association members at their annual convention on November 9 in Des Moines, Iowa. IAJ raised more than \$18,000 in monetary support for SoldierStrong this year from Iowa trial lawyers involved in the Association through their continued efforts to uplift our mission.

SOLDIERSTRONG, USC RECOGNIZED BY VA SECRETARY AT 2023 VHA INNOVATION EXPERIENCE

At the recent 2023 VHA Innovation Experience, while reiterating the VA's commitment to innovation to meet the healthcare needs of veterans, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough recognized SoldierStrong's partnership with the University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technologies for our efforts to advance the use of technology to prevent suicide through Battle Buddy, a virtual human-led mental health and wellness application. Use the QR code to check out a video of Secretary McDonough's statement!



SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH



SOLDIERSTRONG PROGRAM DIRECTOR STEVE STARK PRESENTS AT EKSO BIONICS' 10TH ANNUAL USER GROUP MEETING

Ekso Bionics, a company that develops and manufactures the robotic exoskeleton devices, known as SoldierSuits, which SoldierStrong donates to help paralyzed and injured veterans walk again, hosted the company's 10th Annual User Group Meeting in San Rafael, California on November 9-10. SoldierStrong's SoldierSuit Program Director Steve Stark was honored to attend the meeting where he had the opportunity to learn more about upcoming exoskeleton innovations, hear from clinicians, engineers and exoskeleton users, and give a presentation on SoldierStrong's tireless efforts to donate exoskeletons to veterans across the country. We were touched by the positive feedback and thanks we received from meeting attendees and look forward to working with our partners at Ekso Bionics to continue expanding access for veterans to this life-changing technology in 2024 and beyond.



SOLDIERSTRONG AMBASSADOR SGT DAN ROSE SPEAKS WITH FOX NEWS CHANNEL'S MARTHA MACCALLUM

SoldierStrong Ambassador Sgt. Dan Rose, a retired U.S. Army veteran and the recipient of the first SoldierSuit donation made by SoldierStrong, joined FOX News anchor and SoldierStrong Advisory Board member Martha MacCallum on her podcast, The Untold Story. Sgt. Rose spoke with Mrs. MacCallum about what drew him to serve our country, his service in Afghanistan and the roadside improvised explosive device which left him paralyzed, and how SoldierStrong helps wounded veterans make the transition into civilian life easier through the donation of revolutionary medical technologies. Thank you to Martha MacCallum for using her platform to highlight SoldierStrong's mission over the past decade and to Sgt Rose for his willingness to share his story.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LISTEN



NEXT STEPS FORWARD WITH CHRIS MEEK

Join SoldierStrong co-founder and chairman Chris Meek for his weekly podcast every Tuesday at 1 PM ET/10 AM PT for an uplifting hour focused on personal empowerment, commitment to overall wellbeing and motivation to achieve more than you ever thought possible.

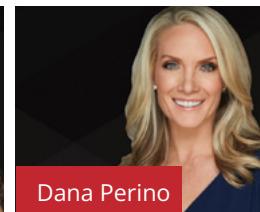
In 2020, Chris began hosting Next Steps Forward with Chris Meek via the VoiceAmerica Talk Radio Network, the industry's leading producer and online broadcaster of on-demand talk radio programming. Next Steps Forward hosts leaders from the worlds of business, sports, entertainment, medicine and politics to engage thought-provoking discussion to help us all take the next steps forward in our journey to better ourselves.



Col. Greg Gadson



Dr. Alveda King



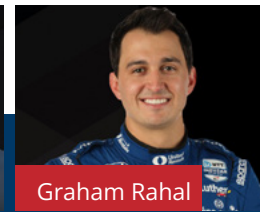
Dana Perino



Charles Haley



Martha MacCallum



Graham Rahal



Scan to visit site



Join us every Tuesday at 1 PM ET
Learn More at NextStepsForward.com

DONATE TO SOLDIERSTRONG THROUGH THE COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN

Current federal employees and retirees can now support SoldierStrong's mission to donate revolutionary medical technologies to Veterans Affairs medical facilities by donating through the Combined Federal Campaign at GiveCFC.org using the following number: #59778.

Here are the meaningful ways you can choose to support SoldierStrong through the CFC:

1. Donate to SoldierStrong through payroll deduction (CFC donors' favorite giving option). As a CFC vetted charity, you can pledge directly to our mission. Just \$5 per paycheck to SoldierStrong makes a big difference.
2. Already donated? Consider increasing your recurring gift or adding a one-time gift.
3. Invite co-workers and federal retirees you know to continue supporting their favorite causes through the CFC.



SOLDIERSTRONG PARTNERS

SUPPORT SOLDIERSTRONG TODAY!

Your donation or partnership holds the power to catalyze change. By donating to SoldierStrong you become a partner in our mission to help change the lives of our veterans and help them take their Next Steps Forward.

Ready to take action?

Here is how you can make a difference:

- Go to SoldierStrong.org to make a donation today
- Host a fundraising event which benefits SoldierStrong. Contact events@soldierstrong.org to get started
- Include SoldierStrong in your will or living trust
- Create a Facebook fundraising event for SoldierStrong
- SoldierStrong participates in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). If you are a current or retired Federal Employee interested in supporting our work through the workplace charity program, please note that our **5-digit number is #59778**
- To make an in-kind donation, set up a matching gifts program, or to request more information, contact SoldierStrong via email at info@soldierstrong.org or call us at **888-898-3235**
- Thank you for considering SoldierStrong. Your donation will positively impact the lives of our veterans. [Please donate today!](#)

SOLDIERSTRONG PARTNERS

As our mission evolves to meet the ever-changing needs of the community we serve, we recognize that we could not fully accomplish our mission without the help of our current partners below:



GE Foundation



BECOME A PARTNER OR CORPORATE SPONSOR

In the past ten years, we have accomplished so 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 technology and therapy they desperately need and deserve. We are actively seeking new partnerships and would love to speak with you about partnership opportunities!

Learn More: SoldierStrong.org | **Call:** 888.898.3235 | **Email:** info@soldierstrong.org

