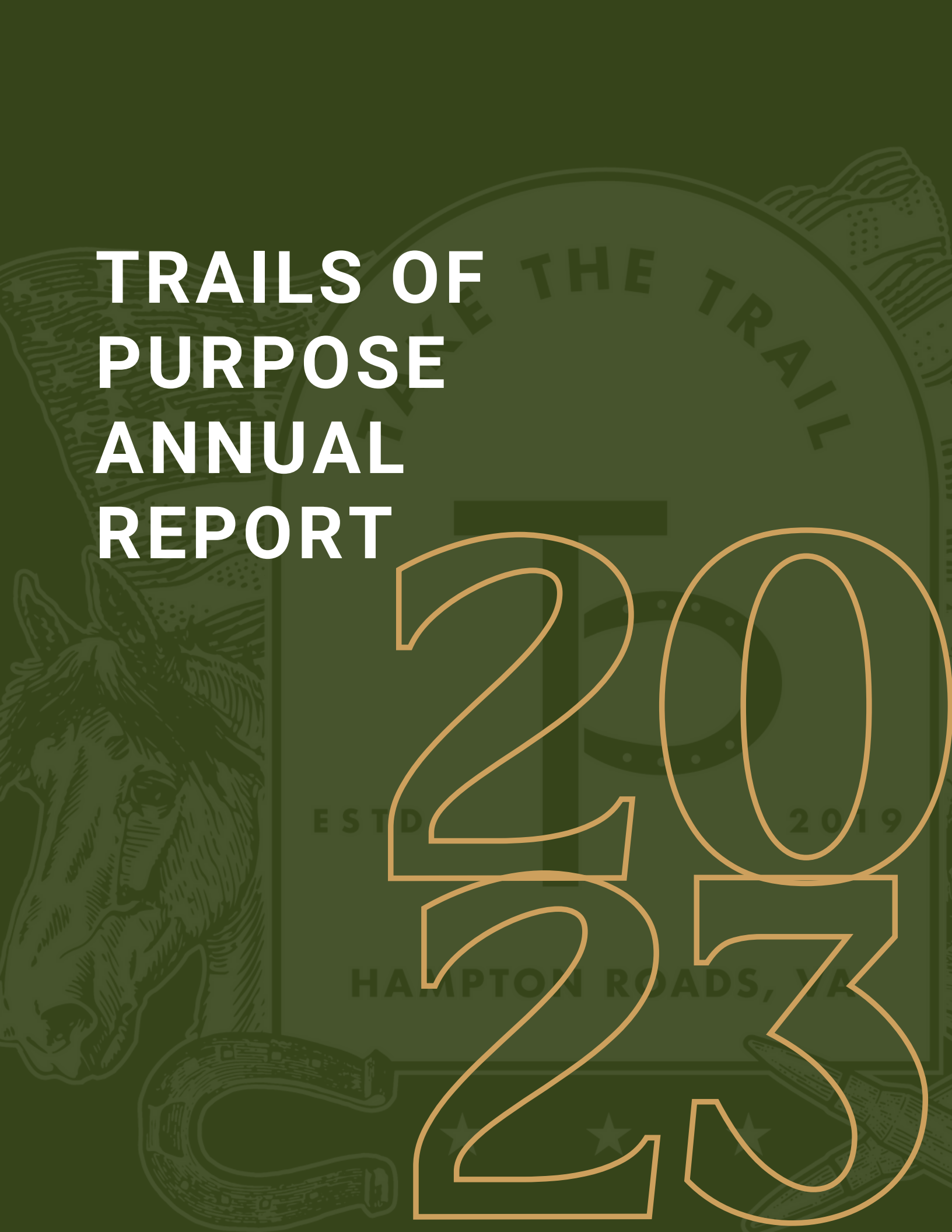


**TRAILS OF  
PURPOSE  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**2023**



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Thank You to our Supporters

# INTRODUCTION

Trails of Purpose (TOP) is a 501(c)(3) PATH Int'l (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) member center. Our Mission is to support service members and their families in their fight to overcome the negative effects of trauma, transition, and trials that result from their service in the military.

We do this through the use of equine assisted psychotherapy and mental health education. All services are provided free of charge. We focus on military community's mental health wellness to address the root causes of military-related suicides as a result of trauma experienced. This can be in the form of PTS, Social Anxiety, Social Displacement or Isolation, and/or Physical Trauma. In efforts to bring the community together we serve communal meals at every single one of our classes, as well as incorporate team equine (horse) activities.

By bringing in various professionals in the mental health field, we can offer counseling services and guided meditation at no cost. We focus on the holistic biopsychosocial-spiritual wellness of the client.

Trails of Purpose recognizes and values the need for a deeper healing solution for our service members in their fight against trauma, trials, and transitions. We work ceaselessly to offer support to each service member and family member in their journey to overcome with no time constraints. These men and women have fought for us and sacrificed so much of their lives. We feel passionately that it is our duty to give back.

# LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

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To the Trails of Purpose Board, Staff, Volunteers, Participants, and Supporters,

As another year comes to close, I find myself in full awe and humility of all I have been able to witness over this past year. I will never be “used” to being a part of this organization. The Mission is simple and steadfast, and yet, it is fresh and innovative at every turn. I am incredibly thankful to God for all of you who have joined in making 2023 another wildly successful year full of healing. From the guidance of our 8 Board Members and dedication from our staff, we have continued in trend by raising more funds this year than last, and providing more than double the service hours of 2022.

In quarter one of 2022, we focused on maintaining our normal client caseload capacity, Recovery group, Reactivation program and Saturday groups. We have found great success in our Reactivation Program (12 week closed group focused on decreasing depression and anxiety). Our metrics track clinical improvements in each cohort. We have run 5 cohorts of the 12 week program this year and will continue the momentum into 2024.



**“The Mission is simple and steadfast, and yet, it is fresh and innovative at every turn.”**

# LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

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In quarter two of 2022, the organization worked hard to launch the Trailblazers Active Duty Children's group. This group has run nonstop since February and serviced over 65 children with all positive feedback. During this quarter, our team continued to work on the WARR-P TBI Program from the Portsmouth Medical Center.

Excitedly, also in quarter two, Trails of Purpose pursued its second farm location in efforts to lessen the wait time and expand our ability for group sizes. Although it was a bit of a challenge with the Virginia Beach City Council, they came to accept our proposal and support the plan to launch the new farm. We launched officially on Veterans Day at One Red Maple in Virginia Beach, owned by Ricky and Dory Bledsoe.

Quarter three of the year proved to be a challenging one. While we said goodbye to our Department Head, we welcomed a new one- Ms. Mackenzie Dressing! Mackenzie has seamlessly stepped right into the fast paced environment and has been a value add ever since. Mackenzie works hard to keep our Mental Health Department programs running smoothly. This includes an organization wide caseload of 75 clients, and 5-8 weekly groups.

Additionally in quarter three, we launched The Headway Program, a free workshop for active duty commands. We have since serviced over 75 service members from 6 different commands and received feedback that 100% would recommend the program and return for more services. I am wildly proud of this program and truly believe it can be nationally implements for the DoD within 5 years.



# LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

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Through this year, I have seen our Equine Programs Director, Amanda, stretch and bend to meet every single request brought to her. As I always say, she is worth her weight in gold to our organization and I could not make this facility run without her. I have had the privilege to trust our social media content with our new Social Media Coordinator, Alex. She is on fire for our missions and outreach. As always, I continue to be impressed with our clinical team. These clinicians have exhibited nothing but passion and commitment to our community. Not once for a second can I question their dedication. Thank you, team.

In quarter four we focused on closing out the year strong with a few new groups for spouses, while maintaining our normal operations. This final quarter was heavy in partnership building and strategic planning for the next year.

On average this year, our team saw an average of 80-100 participants every week with 6 days of operation. Our current wait list for services sits at 15-20 people at any given time. Yet again, the demand seems to continue to grow each year despite us stretching our capacity and increasing our professional team size.

Thank you to our entirely volunteer based Board of Directors. Thank you to our incredible and sacrificial staff members. Thank you to our dedicated volunteer team. This engine can not and will not run without you. You are the blood, sweat, and tears that displays passion. You are what makes this mission genuine.

My best,

*Kayla Fallon Arestivo, President, LPC*

# MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

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Dear Board of Directors and Community,

As we approach the end of another year, it is the perfect time to reflect on Trails of Purpose's achievements, challenges, and growth. The year 2023 has been one of significant growth and accomplishments and I would like to take a moment to highlight some of the key milestones that made this year special.

Our dedication to exceptional support has resulted in the vast number we served this year and continue to serve our military community, which includes active duty, veterans, and active duty family members. We listen to their concerns, adapt to their needs, and provide them with a place to grow and heal. Trails of Purpose deepened our engagement with the community. We supported local charities, sponsored events, and embraced digital transformation as well, streamlining our processes and enhancing our online presence. This has not only improved efficiency but has allowed us to better connect with our community, partners, and people in need.

As we look back on these achievements, let's also acknowledge some of the things Trails of Purpose faced and overcame, as that has made Trails of Purpose stronger and more resilient. There was change within the therapist department, we welcomed a new Mental Health Department Head, me!



**“We listen to their concerns, adapt to their needs, and provide them with a place to grow and heal.”**

# MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

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We have big goals and objective for 2024, which include:

- Adding two more licensed part time therapists, or one more full time licensed therapist
- Continue to supervise interns and graduate students:
  - The graduate students would be able to provide individual, group, and marital counseling under the supervision of the Mental Health Department Director (no PTSD or severe trauma clients)
- Revamp our initial intake questionnaire/process to help refer out sooner if needed in an appropriate manner
- Continue to provide Safety Stand Downs, Headway Programs, and trainings to different organizations and commands in the community
- Continue to hold biweekly Spouse Serenity Group
- Create and hold numerous Spouse Workshop
  - Creating an educational course for spouses for when their loved ones are away, how to handle and cope with one deploying, and/or the transitions of them coming home, as well as how to tips to help a spouse potentially suffering from PTS and ways to manage
- Create and hold numerous PTSD Workshop for service members and veterans, an 8 week program that helps them identify PTSD, triggers, knowing they are not alone, communicating with family, and ways to manage symptoms
- Having another full time therapist become ESMHL certified
- Adding new horses to use for EAP services

I am confident that in 2024, we will continue to build on these successes and continue to serve more and more people. As I have stepped into this role thus far in 2023, I have noticed numerous things, about myself personally and about Trails of Purpose. Each person that I have met so far has a story, a unique journey of their own. I have loved seeing the “ah ha” moment for several clients already and seeing that joy come back in their eyes. Trails of Purpose is unlike any other organization I have worked for and I hope every client and the Hampton Roads community can see how special this farm truly is.

Thank you for your time and consideration as always!

Respectfully,

*Mackenzie Greenlee, LMFT*



# MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

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Dear Members of the Board and TOP Community,

It has been nearly 4 years since I started working with Trails of Purpose, and every year I find myself having the same thought: “I can’t believe how much we’ve grown this year”. This year is no different and, for me especially, that sentiment rings as true as ever.

In the fall of 2022, I left my full-time desk job to both pursue self-employment in my own horse-related business and to dedicate more of my time to my work with TOP, as it is with horses and helping others that I find the most fulfillment. This past summer I shifted from my role as a hourly part-time employee with the organization to that of a more full time director role, in an effort to meet the current needs of those we serve at TOP as well as planning for future staff growth within the organization.

From Q1 through Q4 of this year, we have continued existing group programming as well as creating additional offerings to continue to meet the needs of our community and maximize the number served; our Trailblazers group for active-duty dependents and our Headway Program for military commands are 2 examples of these new for 2023 offerings.



It has been nearly 4 years since I started working with Trails of Purpose, and every year I find myself having the same thought: “I can’t believe how much we’ve grown this year”.

# MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

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On any given week at TOP, our therapy herd and I are working with 7-9 different groups, with participants ranging from as young as 8 to veterans in their 80's. In addition to these weekly groups, our horses work 6 days a week with individuals, couples, and families in more intimate Equine Assisted Psychotherapy sessions; if anyone is under the impression that being a therapy horse with TOP is an easy retirement gig, they'd be wrong!

As equine department head, I have been fortunate this year to work in a supervisory role with some talented individuals driven to get involved in our mission via certification through PATH, Intl. as Equine Specialists in Mental Health and Learning (ESMHL), and hope to continue to work alongside these folks upon their completion of this credential. While I truly love everything that I get to do in my role as lead ESMHL for our organization, I am humble enough to know that having additional team members with fresh ideas, perspectives/experiences, and talents would only benefit our team and those we serve.

One of my favorite additions in 2023 is our "Volunteer Deep Dive" sessions that allow me to work more closely with our volunteer base to continue their training by enhancing both their horse skills and help them better serve our participants by providing education and tips relevant to their roles at TOP. We've gotten great feedback on this offering and will continue to provide these sessions on a monthly basis, which I'm excited about!

Looking forward to 2024, my goals include revitalizing and adding to our existing curriculum, assisting with management of our new volunteer platform, continuing to serve as a mentor for those pursuing certification, working with our mental health department head on new programs, and working towards program expansion at our Virginia Beach location. While we have grown and achieved so much this year, I know there is still plenty of work to be done this coming year and I have no doubt I will be saying the same thing this time in 2024: "I can't believe how much we've grown this year".

Thank you for your support,

*Amanda Rosenstein, ESMHL*

# MEET OUR TEAM

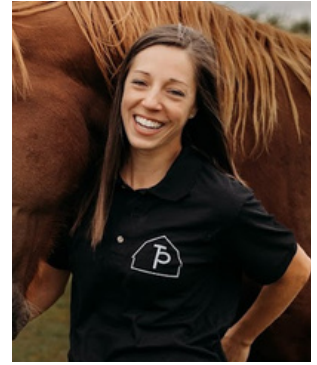
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Kayla Arestivo



Kyle Arestivo



Amanda Rosenstein



MacKenzie Dressing



Alexandra Floyd



Madeline Vann



Ricky Bledsoe



Justin Adickes



Saul Gomez



Chelsea Connors



James Johnson



Nick Deterding

# MEASURING 2023 PROGRESS

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I am honored and humbled to be a part of this organization. Watching the year over year growth continues to take me by surprise each winter. TOP is growing out of a desire to meet the demanded need from our military community and not the other way around. We grow because our nations military personnel and their respective families need us to. Their wellness and healing is our primary demand signal that keeps increasing in strength. I am so proud to be able to walk along side of each of you as we serve them. ”

-Kyle Arestivo



## 2023 Recap



Volunteer Hours: 4,224

Counseling Sessions Provided: 3,136

Military Service Hours: 5,443

Money Raised: \$308,474

Money Spent: \$295,928

\*All stats YTD as of 12/4/2023

# HIGHLIGHTS

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We could not be more proud of the progress made in 2023. Check out these highlights:



## **SECOND LOCATION IN VB**

- Thanks for the generosity to the Bledsoe family, we were able to expand our services to a second farm in Virginia Beach



## **FAMILY GROUP THERAPIES**

- This year we built out our group therapy programming for both families, spouses, and active duty children!



## **ACTIVE DUTY COMMAND WORKSHOPS**

- This summer we launched a 6 hour workshop that is offered for free to active duty commands and focuses on stress management and communication.

Trails of Purpose will continue to push forward in hopes of continuing to double our service hours provided in year 2024.

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# 2024 FOCUS

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Being a part of this organization has shown me time and time again the power of an important mission and community. Watching TOP grow year after year has amazed me in so many ways.

- Chelsea Connors, Director



## EXPANDING OUR TEAM

- Our 2024 goal for the TOP Team is to hire another full time clinician, an additional part-time Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning, and one part-time administrative secretary.

## OPERATING SIX DAYS A

## WEEK IN TWO LOCATIONS

- Our 2024 goal for the TOP facilities is to continue full time operations of 6 days a week in Chesapeake while slowly rolling out programatic offerings in Virginia Beach to reach full time by Summer of 2024.

## RAISING 425K IN

## DONATIONS

- Our 2024 goal for the TOP funding is to maintain at the constant growth rate we have had with funding for previous years. We hope to raise \$425k in efforts to sponsor over 4000 hours of free mental health counseling.

# THANK YOU

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To our Supporters,

We are filled with immense gratitude for the instrumental role you have played in Trails of Purpose's 2023 journey. Your unwavering support has been the driving force behind our accomplishments, and we wanted to take a moment to express our deepest thanks. Your generosity has had a profound impact on our ability to provide free mental health care to our military community. Whether it was through your financial contributions, valuable time, or both, your commitment to our cause has made a tangible difference. We understand that your support goes beyond mere financial assistance; it is a vote of confidence in our mission and a shared belief in the positive change we aim to bring about. Your dedication to Trails of Purpose is truly inspiring, and we feel privileged to have you by our side.

As we look ahead to 2024, we are excited about the possibilities that lie before us. With supporters like you, we are confident in our ability to continue making a meaningful impact in the mental health world. Your ongoing support is vital to our success, and we are sincerely grateful for the trust you have placed in us. We are honored to count you among our cherished supporters and look forward to keeping you updated on our progress in the coming months.

## Contact

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