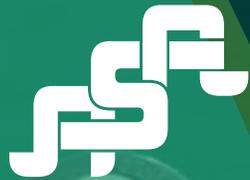


CHANGING LIVES
ONE WAVE AT A TIME



Amazing Surf Adventures

2018

Annual Report





CONTENTS

- 01 LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER
- 02 OUR MISSION
- 03 OUR STORIES
- 04 OUR IMPACT
- 05 OUR PROGRAMS
- 06 LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN
- 07 2018 HIGHLIGHTS
- 08 WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON
- 09 2018 FINANCIALS
- 10 LETTER FROM A VOLUNTEER
- 11 GET INVOLVED

01 LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

THE WAVE WE RIDE TOGETHER

As a lifelong surfer, I know the peace of surfing is undeniable to my soul – I feel it every time I get in the water. I believe it is just as important to pass this on to others, and for the past decade I have made it my life's passion to do just that. This mission is only made a reality by the countless number of individuals who have selflessly stepped forward and up to do the same.

As we look back over this amazing year, I am yet again in awe of the stories we heard and the heroes we have met. We strive to change every participant's life, not just their week – and in turn, they change ours.

While looking through the following pages, we hope you will see how Operation Surf is at work to change lives one wave at a time. This year we have seen huge growth in our organization – from the development of new structures, to new programs giving our alumni ways to continue their mission.

We look forward to 2019 as we strive to increase our wellness program and celebrate 10 years of operation. If you haven't seen it, I encourage you to take a look at our documentary, *Resurface*, on Netflix, and get an inside look at what we do. It's an honor to play a small role in this incredible organization, and I am grateful that we get to ride this wave together.

Van



VIA N
CURAZA

02 OUR MISSION

We seek to provide results-driven, nature-based programs advocating the restorative power of the ocean and surfing as a form of wellness for injured bodies, minds, and souls.

Our work aims to inspire wounded veterans and active-duty military to seek wellness in all aspects of their lives and provide them with the necessary resources and tools to continue this mindset indefinitely.



WHY WE DO IT

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other traumas can have a lasting and detrimental impact on the human body. Rates of PTSD, suicide, and other lingering effects among military veterans are so alarming the matter has been classified as a National Health Crisis by the VA and CDC.



An estimated **1 in 3** veterans are diagnosed with PTSD.



Less than 40% seek help.



22 veterans commit suicide daily.

WHY SURFING?

Surfing is a form of **healing** that promotes **wellness** through nature-based therapy.

Surfing is **strength** and **confidence**.

Surfing is **hope** and **inspiration**.

Surfing **heals** the **soul**.

HOW WE DO IT

Operation Surf aims to create an **unrivaled** therapeutic experience that continues to positively impact our participants for life. By staying true to our core values and what we do best, we change participants' lives – one wave at a time.

Inspire

Through a safe, supportive environment, our participants accomplish their goals and have an experience of a lifetime, which breathes inspiration into all involved. With respite, encouragement, and increased self-efficacy, they gain the motivation needed to face their past and current life challenges.

Empower

We empower each participant to live their best life and move forward in a healthy way by giving them courage, motivation, education, and *resources* to get the help they need and make positive change happen.

Connect

We connect people with nature – and something bigger than self – through the therapeutic benefits of the ocean and surfing. Bringing individuals together with shared experiences creates a community where people feel they are not alone and have support.

Continue

We continue to support those we serve through ongoing aftercare programs, giving them an opportunity to share their experiences, gain purpose, and give back to others.

03 OUR STORIES

We see the impact of our work first-hand every day – in the transformations we witness on the faces of our participants, the inspiring words we hear from these individuals, and the praise our programs receive from participants' families and loved ones.

As a results-driven organization, we believe it's important to demonstrate scientific proof of the effectiveness of our programs. Still, it's the words from our participants and the positive change we see in them that inspires us every day. Here are some of their stories...



RICHARD

LANCE



RENEWED HOPE AND BROTHERHOOD

LANCE & RICHARD

'You Get Serenity': Wounded Vets Transformed Through Power of Surfing –
excerpts from *Slo Tribune* article by Joe Johnston

San Luis Obispo native Lance Junker was riding in a U.S. Army truck in Iraq in 2007 transporting detainees and escaping a hostile zone at dawn when the vehicle lost control and veered through a guard rail, crashing down a 50-foot embankment.

That day changed Lance's life immeasurably, he said.

Not only did he suffer four broken vertebrae, chest injuries, and a sliced ear that was "dangling" and had to be sown back on, he has lingering memories of the wreck that killed seven fellow soldiers and injured 11.

But Lance has found peace through Operation Surf. "I brought my best friend from the Army out here, who was in the same crash, to try this out because it has helped me so much," he said. "We're reconnecting and making new memories."

"All I've talked about for the past year is surfing," Richard Brendle said. "I just had my fourth baby, but my wife knows how much this means to me, and she was amazing about it and provided the encouragement and support to allow me to be here."

"There's something about being able to talk to all these guys who have been through PTSD themselves that really helps," Kyle Kelly said. "And no pun intended, from the first day I surfed, my whole perception and attitude changed and (negative thoughts) washed away."



A FAMILY RESTORED

THE RANA FAMILY

Being the spouse of an Army Combat Infantry Veteran comes with its challenges, but also an immense amount of pride. Before Operation Surf's 6-month program, we had felt really isolated with our struggles. PTSD and TBI isn't really something that you just broadcast to friends and family members, for fear of the stigma that surrounds it. We struggled with avoidance, anxiety, isolation, difficulty communicating, and emotional numbness. When we found Operation Surf, we finally had a support system. The responsibility of my veteran's overall wellness was no longer on just me, but instead we had a community of veterans and Operation Surf staff who just simply showed up for him, for us. I can't begin to tell you what that alone did for us.

During the 6-month commitment, I saw my husband sleep without the night sweats, smile more, and show a genuine excitement for surfing. Most times he didn't want to get out of the water, and couldn't wait to surf the next day. Stress began to disappear, and I found the love in my husband that had been missing for years. Our children were involved, and were cheering beachside as their dad caught each wave. He is now teaching them to surf.

"Operation Surf has given us more than we can put into words. The impact of the ocean and surfing will be something we will carry with us and encourage others to seek the same with Operation Surf."

– Mackenzie Rana, Army Veteran spouse



STOKED ON LIFE

DERRICK

My name is Derrick Ross. I served in the U.S. Army for a little over 8 years. During my last deployment, a roadside bomb caused severe injuries throughout my body. I fractured bones in my back/neck/right ankle, broke my left femur/bones in left foot, shattered my lower left leg, received a traumatic brain injury, and was diagnosed with PTSD.

Before Operation Surf, I was unsure about my capabilities with a broken body and freshly amputated leg. I'd have full-blown anxiety attacks every morning and right before I went to sleep. I suffered from pain, depression, anxiety, survivor's guilt, night terrors, and a command that had no idea how to deal with severely wounded troops.

My first glimpse at truly living again was when I attended my first Operation Surf event. Catching my first wave was life changing. Instead of protecting my injuries, I would go full send into waves without care of being injured again.

I still struggle sometimes, but not as much. But the Op Surf community has always been supportive of me. Just recently I was offered to become a mentor at the 2018 HB Op Surf event for the newly injured. I also help out around a local adaptive athlete gym in Dallas. It's very rewarding being able to give back to other injured folks.

"Op Surf truly is saving and changes lives for the better. I really appreciate everyone for making this a well-oiled machine that helps people at their lowest parts of life. THANK YOU!!!!!!"

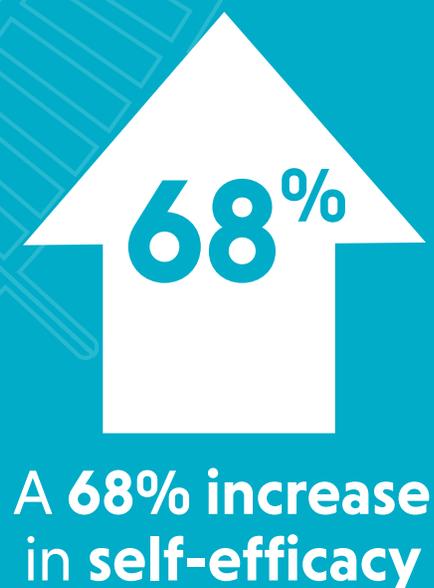
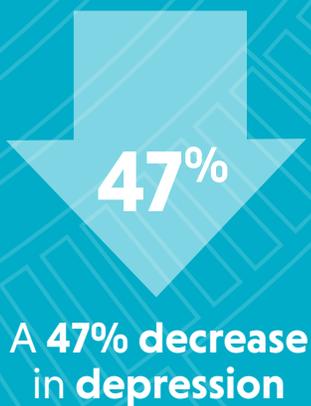
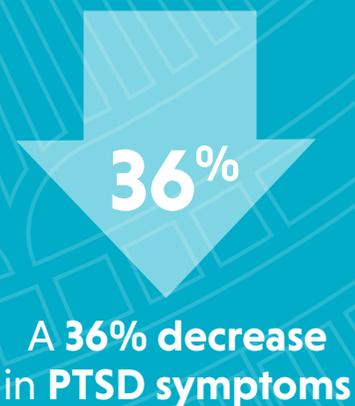
– Derrick Ross, U.S. Army

04 OUR IMPACT

THE IMPACT OF OCEAN THERAPY

Dr. Russell Crawford's book, *"The Impact of Ocean Therapy on Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder,"* suggests that surfing therapy offers an alternative form of nature-based therapy that could potentially be effective for treating veterans with PTSD.

His research on our program, Operation Surf, showed that participants experienced:





05 OUR PROGRAMS

WEEK LONG

During this all-inclusive rehabilitative program, large steps of healing take place for wounded military men and women from all over the nation – including addressing deep grief by honoring fallen brothers and sisters, learning to build trust with new people, and accomplishing goals.

The week consists of two days of travel and five days of adaptive surfing. Additional activities include a heroes motorcade from the airport, a powerful opening ceremony, group meals, nightly debriefing sessions, a closing award ceremony, and a healing paddle out to honor fallen heroes.

SIX MONTH

Focusing on four key pillars, this 6-month program aims to provide local veterans with *mentorship*, support their *families*, create a lasting *brotherhood*, and instill the peace and healing of *surfing*. It enables veterans to create relationships through shared experiences, regular communication, and common purpose.

Participants are held accountable to each other by taking on roles within the program. Regular scheduled family days and outings encourage new family relationships, and a unique sense of community develops that might otherwise never arise due to the high levels of isolation that are commonplace in veteran populations.

PARTICIPATION IS A BEGINNING, NOT AN END

Every participant of an Operation Surf program has the opportunity to continue their journey with our organization – from Veteran Support (guiding new participants through the program and sharing experiences) through Ambassador (carrying the message of Operation Surf to others), Intern (learning skills and the internal workings of our organization), and Adaptive Surf Instructor Trainee (gaining skills and knowledge from quality instructors to help teach others the gift of surfing).



06 LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



The simple definition of 'impact' is ***the action of one object coming forcibly into contact with another***. In the case of Operation Surf, that may be visualized by one of our participants getting hucked off a wave and crashing into the ocean below. And sometimes that happens. But the real impact is what hits the water with them... Past traumas, pain, and suffering all crash down into the water, and the ocean helps to heal and wash it away – and what remains when they emerge is **hope**.

That's why we do what we do – there is nothing quite as amazing and inspiring as seeing that transformation.

I recently had the opportunity to visit one of our past participants at his home in Texas and witness first-hand how this hope can manifest. When he first came to us, he planned on completing the program, going home, and ending his life. But this new sense of hope gave him a new ending, or rather beginning, to his story. Through his experiences with Operation Surf, he regained a sense of purpose in life and continues to make strides moving forward every day with a wonderful wife and a precious infant son. I was awestruck, and so very proud of him.

So, to our supporters and volunteers, know that you are making difference in the lives of people, families, and communities. You are changing the lives of heroes. And you are an integral part of our motto and passion: "changing lives, one wave at a time."

This year has been ripe with successes throughout our organization. Most notably, we see that this organization positively impacts and inspires participants, volunteers, communities, and everyone involved exponentially.

Organizationally, the Operation Surf staff has been hard at work to clarify the mission, vision, and values of our organization. We aim to promote an overall wellness approach to our participants and are implementing this philosophy on an operational level throughout the organization, as well. From our volunteers and event committee members, to our surf instructors and board members, the goal is to set a good example for our participants by living well.

Operationally, we continue to refine our policies and procedures for all facets of the organization with an increased focus on efficiency, organization, and the utilization of digital platforms to ensure successful scalability as we endeavor to serve greater numbers.

Making Financial Strides!

2018 brought the opportunity to cross-pollinate and consult with a number of organizations that helped us to overhaul, refine, and improve our fundraising strategies. These changes resulted in ***our best fundraising year yet***; allowing us to strengthen our reserves, stock our local event locations with equipment, and utilize outside resources to better educate and train our staff.

I am honored and humbled by the support Operation Surf has garnered from all who have donated, volunteered, advocated, and worked their tails off to make a difference in the lives of those we serve. You truly are giving hope and changing lives...one wave at a time.

Thank you.

Brent

07 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

2018 has been an incredible year for Amazing Surf Adventures. We've hit many new milestones that we are proud to share. To us, these achievements are a validation of the momentum we feel, and the difference our work is making in the lives of others. They demonstrate that our efforts are succeeding, and inspire us to keep striving for bigger and better things in the year ahead.

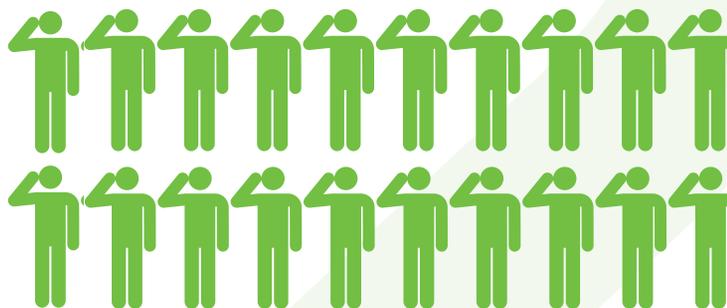




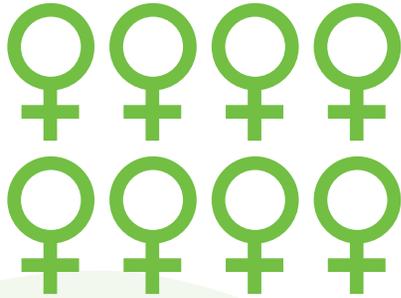
Over 60 new veterans participated in Operation Surf's week-long programs in Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, and Huntington Beach, CA.



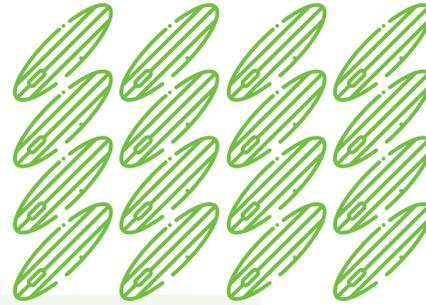
Over 500 volunteers helped Operation Surf carry out its mission, from event planning to fundraising and operations. This equated to over 12,000 volunteer hours.



Over 20 past participants came back as alumni volunteers to help and give back to fellow comrades.



Operation Surf in Huntington Beach hosted a **record number of female veteran participants** for one of its events.



Each Operation Surf community was **fully stocked with surf and beach equipment**, thanks to financial and in-kind contributions from our Sponsors and Supporters – opening the opportunity for future program growth.

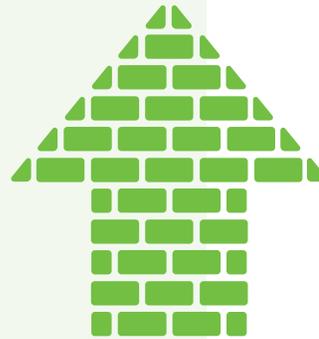


New alumni programs were developed and tested, providing the infrastructure for past participants to stay involved and help the organization mission to grow.

5 VETS/6 MONTHS



Five local veterans and their families benefited from Operation Surf's 6-month program in San Luis Obispo.



Organizational improvements added more structure to Amazing Surf Adventures, laying the groundwork for scalability and continued success.



Operation Surf held a **vision workshop** assessing current situation and future goals.

08 WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON

2018 has been an exciting year and we are inspired to think even bigger for the future. Here are our goals and initiatives for 2019, driven by our vision for expanding our work in promoting spiritual, mental, and physical healing for wounded military heroes and their families.



NEW NAME, SAME PASSION

Amazing Surf Adventures is excited to officially embrace the name **Operation Surf** as our sole identity. As we move into this name change, our core values and mission will remain steadfast – *changing lives one wave at a time* – and to always be an *amazing surf adventure* for those we serve.

We are proud to make this change, and believe that by stepping into the Operation Surf name and brand, we are finally embracing who we have always been – an organization that helps heal and honor our wounded military heroes.

“Operation Surf gave me the help I needed to continue on with life. When I say it not only changed my life, but saved my life, I mean it genuinely.”

–Bobby L.

NEW LOGO

Along with changing our name, we're also unveiling a new logo. It maintains continuity with our familiar graphic identity, while displaying our name more prominently and giving it a more modern look.



OUR 2019 GOALS



Communication is Key

Enhance communications internally and externally to highlight the impact of our programs, so we can expand our reach and engagement.



Room for Growth

Develop and expand our staff and our volunteers, provide additional surf instructor education and training, and add a Communications Director to the team.



Lifelong Relationships

Design and implement a variety of different alumni opportunities.



Focus on FUNdamentals

Increase our fundraising efforts, enhance our fundraising strategy, and strengthen collaborations with other nonprofit organizations.



Continued Care

Promote local and global resources and connections for participants, to support them after they complete our programs and help them continue their personal growth.



Always Improving

Analyze our outcomes and use them to improve wellness; create a lifelong network and sense of community, and enhance our follow up and follow through!



Celebrate Success

In 2019, we will proudly celebrate 10 years in operation!

09 2018 FINANCIALS

Amazing Surf Adventures had a fantastic year in 2018. In addition to fully stocking our locations with equipment, building our reserves, and increasing our staff education, we also reformed our fundraising strategy and direction to make 2019 an even greater success.

2018 TOTAL EXPENSES



Program	\$362,000
Overhead	\$86,640
Fundraising	\$28,240

2018 TOTAL INCOME



Foundations & Grants	\$226,400
Corporations	\$140,250
Fundraising Events	\$89,240
Merchandise	\$68,490
Individual Donations	\$58,430

10 LETTER FROM A VOLUNTEER

I have been a volunteer of Operation Surf for 3 years, and in the beginning I did not know what to expect. Not only did it exceed every expectation as far as an "experience," but it also helped educate me on the very real struggles of our vets and how much more support they need.

The Operation Surf team is professional, fun, kind, compassionate, and PASSIONATE. It is this passion that drives them to make sure they can continue to offer this life-changing service to such a deserving community.

In the years that have followed, I continue to volunteer for Operation Surf not only in my own community, but others as well. I have been lucky enough to meet incredible people, and feel blessed to be a part of such a great organization and family. Operation Surf is all that and more! These many heroes sincerely appreciate and need our support!!

– Linda Olds, Co-Founder Jamba Juice



11 GET INVOLVED

"BE THE CHANGE YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD."

With your help, we can help so many more. There are many ways to contribute to our mission.

SPONSOR

Without support from our generous sponsors, Amazing Surf Adventures wouldn't be able to provide these life-changing experiences to our military heroes who have given so much for our country.

VOLUNTEER

So much time and energy is required to accomplish our mission and work towards realizing our vision. Without the help of our dedicated volunteers, our events wouldn't be possible.

PARTICIPATE

We are very proud of, and grateful to, our military personnel, and it's our honor to be able to make our programs available to them at no cost. All housing and event expenses are fully paid for by our generous donors and sponsors.

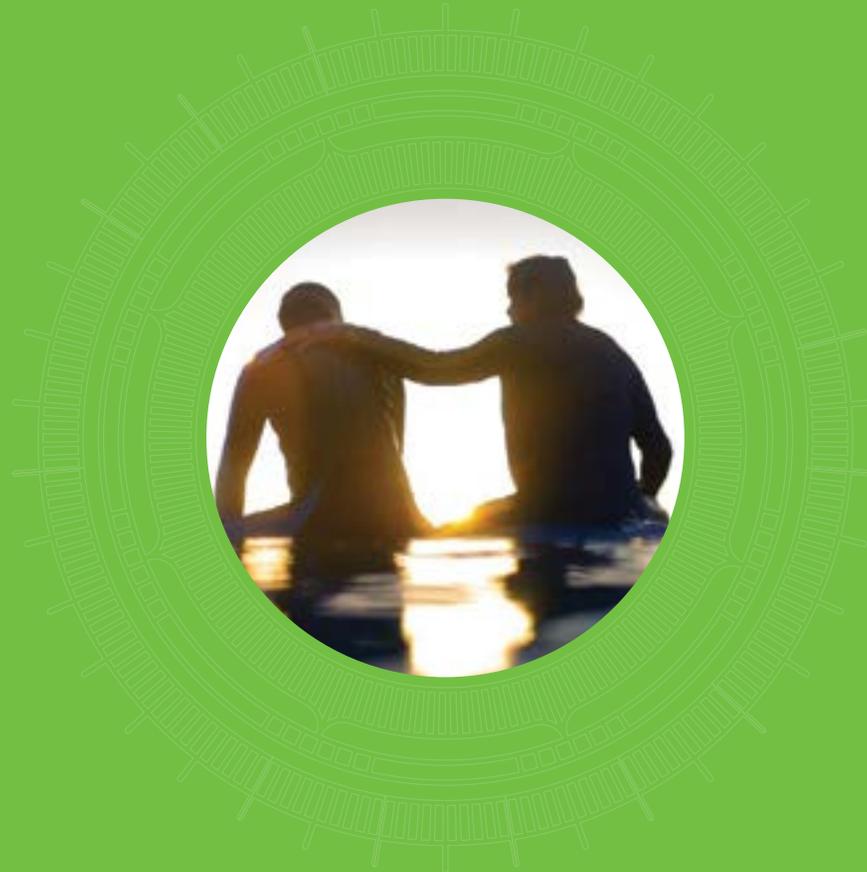
DONATE

The life-changing programs of Amazing Surf Adventures are made possible by contributions from people just like you.

Find out more at amazingsurfadventures.org/get-involved



This Annual Report was proudly created by Backe Marketing in support of Operation Surf.



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