



#NOTAVACATION
HEROES AND HORSES
2020 Annual Report



As always, I am excited to share the annual progress report for Heroes and Horses. 2020 was not without challenges, obstacles, and opportunities. A year to evolve, think different, and improve. Canceling our season was not something that we took lightly. After much deliberation, we had no choice. Like so many, we were navigating the unknown but understanding that infinite possibilities are present with every obstacle. So rather than ask for favors or pray for wishes, we made the sacrifice necessary to grow.

At the start of 2020, I said it would be the year of growth. I continued to believe that regardless of what was happening extrinsically, we would grow in the face of daily mounting odds. I have always understood that purpose makes room for one in life, and if one is fulfilling that purpose, then there are always tests and challenges that refine and strengthen us, preparing the way for more growth.

As our nation and all of humanity faces a vast spectrum of issues, the significance of the impact on Veterans of war cannot be understated. How is it that suicide rates are on the rise, with reporting reaching 24 a day? Since the year 2012, we have spent \$92 Billion on over 50,000 nonprofits spanning programs that enlist nerve blocking agents, poisonous drugs, take-home courses, online meetings, fishing, hunting, sailing, skydiving, etc., all designed specifically to help Veterans.

The needle seems to be going in the opposite direction. Why are two in six on mind-altering drugs that distort their relationship to the world, blurring perceptions and further separating them from what will provide healing? With all the efforts, only 4.5% of returning Veterans are even attempting to start businesses. Clearly, nothing is working, but we continue to add more resources, new inpatient programs, fueling old ideas and funding technologies that become the enemy of the human experience. While we appreciate and acknowledge efforts, we are not and never will participate in this pattern of failure.

On December 16th, after a seven-year search, we quietly closed on the Heroes and Horses home base located west of Nevada City, Montana. Here we will build a first-of-its-kind and best in class, center for human development. Not a home of myths and ideas of what we think will fix one underlying problem, but something much different. A place that is not governed by simple words and laws or contrived outcomes defined by others, but rather a gateway to the Hero's journey.

Each one of you has made this journey possible for us, and it is only the beginning. After seven very hard years of operating through the generosity of our benefactors who let us use their ranches, pastured horses, and each individual, foundation, and family who has supported us in so many incredible ways, we now have a home to run our program. Day in and day out we work on this program always evolving, changing, and refining the process but it's not us alone but this community all working towards a common goal. All of you are participants in the change that happens in each and every life that passes through our gates.

To accomplish our overall mission and develop this center to its' full potential, we now have \$2.5 Million left to raise for infrastructure and program equipment.

The ranch we purchased is an operating cattle ranch and consists of two pivots, a small homestead cabin, and a shop/garage. Our goal is to create a center for human development and sustainable ranching, breaking ground in July of 2021.

The building of the infrastructure will allow us to scale the program and have more than one toilet... which I am sure our volunteers will greatly appreciate. Come and place your hands in the dirt, build a fence, help us build a bunkhouse, greenhouse, or ride some of the rough off of these colts!

The uniqueness of this project will leave a profound mark on how we as a people evolve, grow, and find meaning in the face of adversity, discovering the inner secrets of living a good life and the power of creating a new life by living only forward with gratitude and acceptance for all our blessings.

I want to humbly say thank you to each one of you who makes this program possible and gives time, energy, and investment to help us create the space and opportunity so that change can happen. In this space, individuals can reorient their thinking, create something new, and in turn impact the world around them. Man's significance is realized by those who enlarge their vision by turning inward not outward in their search for meaning and purpose in life. We appreciate everything you do for us and thanks in advance for any support towards the final \$2.5m to complete the vision of the new Heroes and Horses ranch.

- MICAH FINK, CEO & FOUNDER

“ I have always understood that purpose makes room for you in life, and if you're fulfilling that purpose, then there are always tests and challenges that refine and strengthen us, preparing the way for more growth”

- MICAH FINK, CEO & FOUNDER



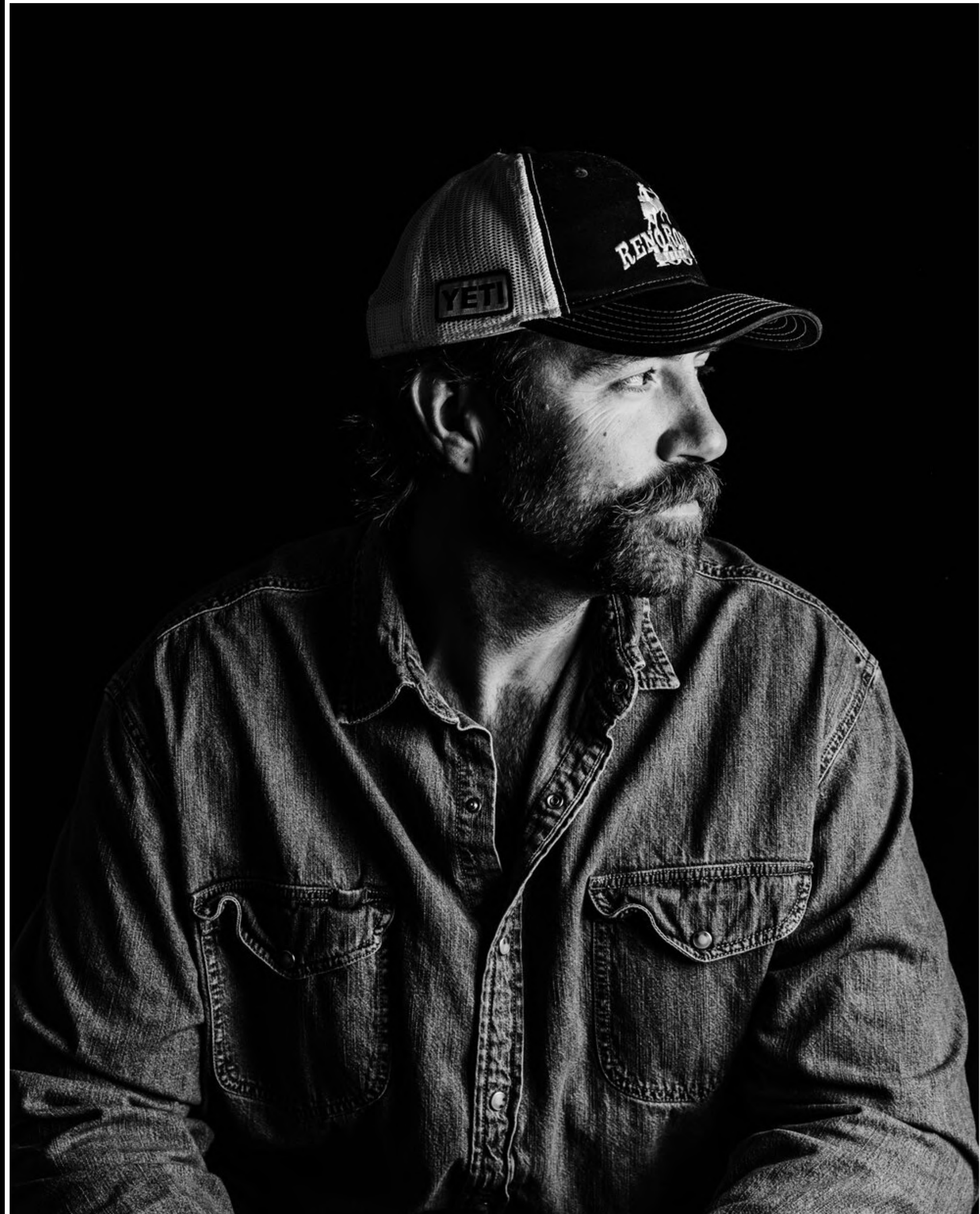
OUR MISSION

Our mission at Heroes and Horses is to un-program the programmed. To offer combat veterans an alternative solution for defining and approaching their physical and mental scars—a solution that does not include prescription medications, or traditional psychotherapy, but rather the opportunity to use tools to redefine their purpose, rediscover their inner strength, and maximize their potential by taking ownership of their lives for the first time since leaving service.

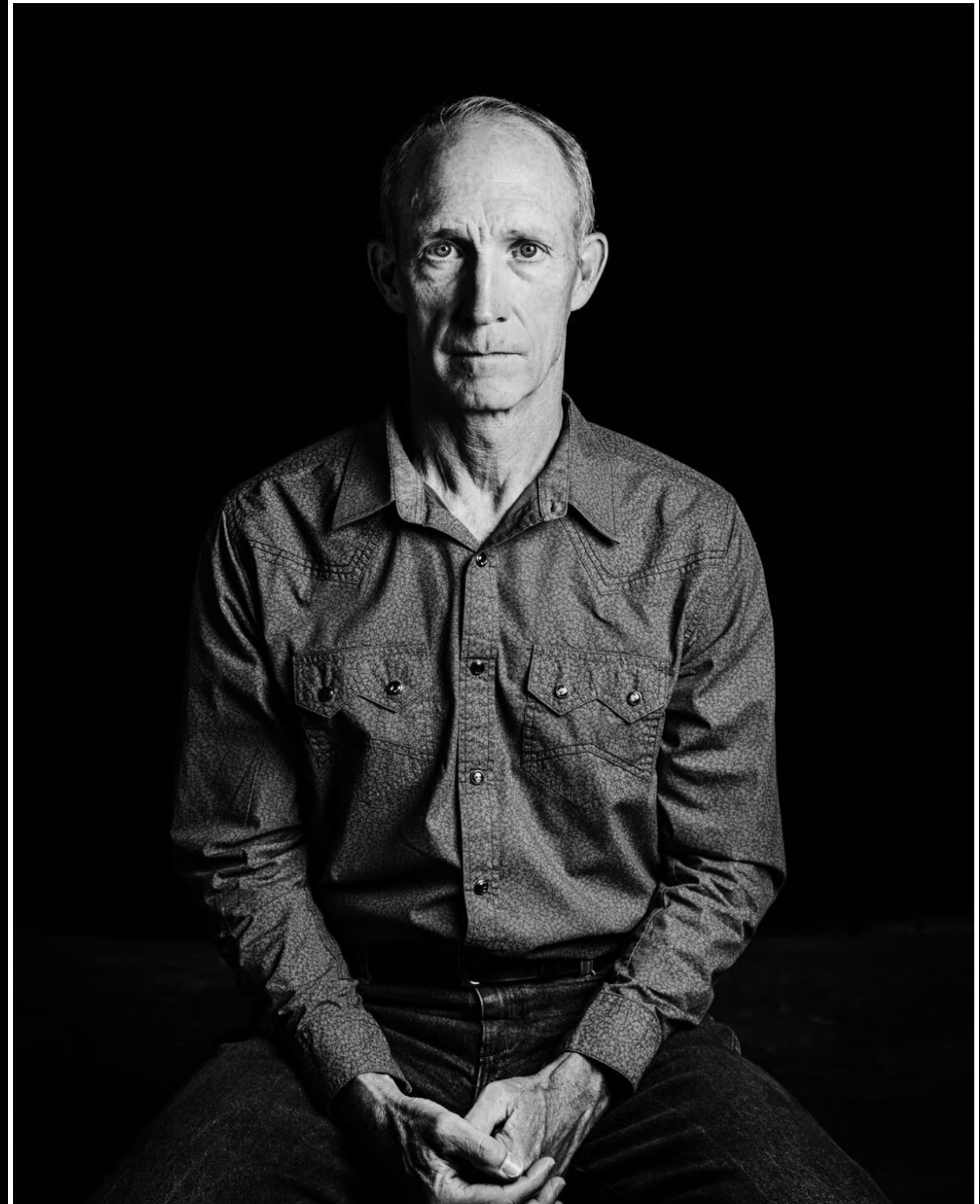
OUR VISION

Our vision is to provide veterans the tools to discover what they already have. To thrive, find purpose, and live a life full of meaning. Over 41- days we use a 360-degree whole human approach that combines whole-food eating, mindset, breathing techniques, meditation, remote wilderness, and wild horses. Our goal is to break the addiction cycle of looking out for answers and outsourcing the decisions that impact their lives to others. You place a person at a disadvantage treating only a singular aspect of who they are. The symbiotic relationship between the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of a human must be considered if a person is to move forward in their life. Our vision looks at how everything works together creating the space so a person can heal.

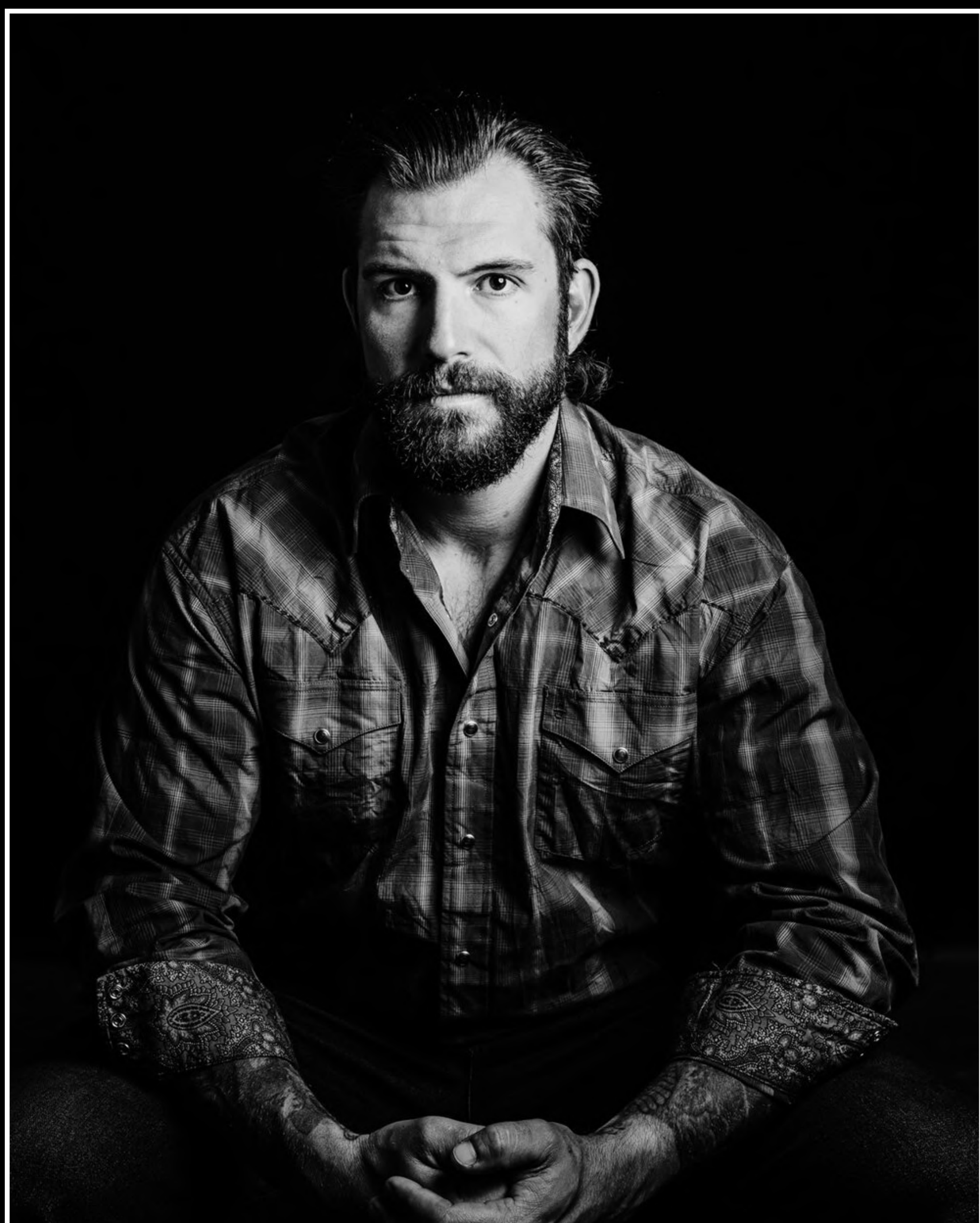
Our Team



MICAH FINK
CEO & FOUNDER



MARK DAVIS
COO



CHRIS BOVA
PROGRAM MANAGER




KARYNNE ANDERSON
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Board of Directors



MICAH FINK - SAMUEL J. FREDERICK - DAN BROCHU - CLINT LARUE - JOEL LEADBETTER - T. BAXTER STEPHENSON - RICK VAN ARNAM



“How is it that suicide rates are on the rise, with reporting reaching 24 a day? Since the year 2012, we have spent \$92 Billion on over 50,000 nonprofits spanning nerve blocking agents, poisonous drugs, take-home courses, online meetings, fishing, hunting, sailing, skydiving, etc., all specifically to help veterans. The needle goes in the opposite direction. Why are two in six veterans on mind-altering drugs that alter their relationship to the world, blurring perceptions? With all the efforts, only 4.5% are even attempting to start businesses. Clearly, nothing is working, but we still continue adding more resources, new inpatient programs, and continue fueling old ideas and funding technologies that become the enemy of the human experience.

We are not and will never participate in this failure.”

-Micah Fink, CEO & Founder

[Watch our new short film here](#)

A black and white silhouette of a cowboy wearing a wide-brimmed hat, sitting on a horse. The cowboy is looking towards the right. The background is a bright, hazy sky. The cowboy is holding the reins of the horse, which is also silhouetted.

2020

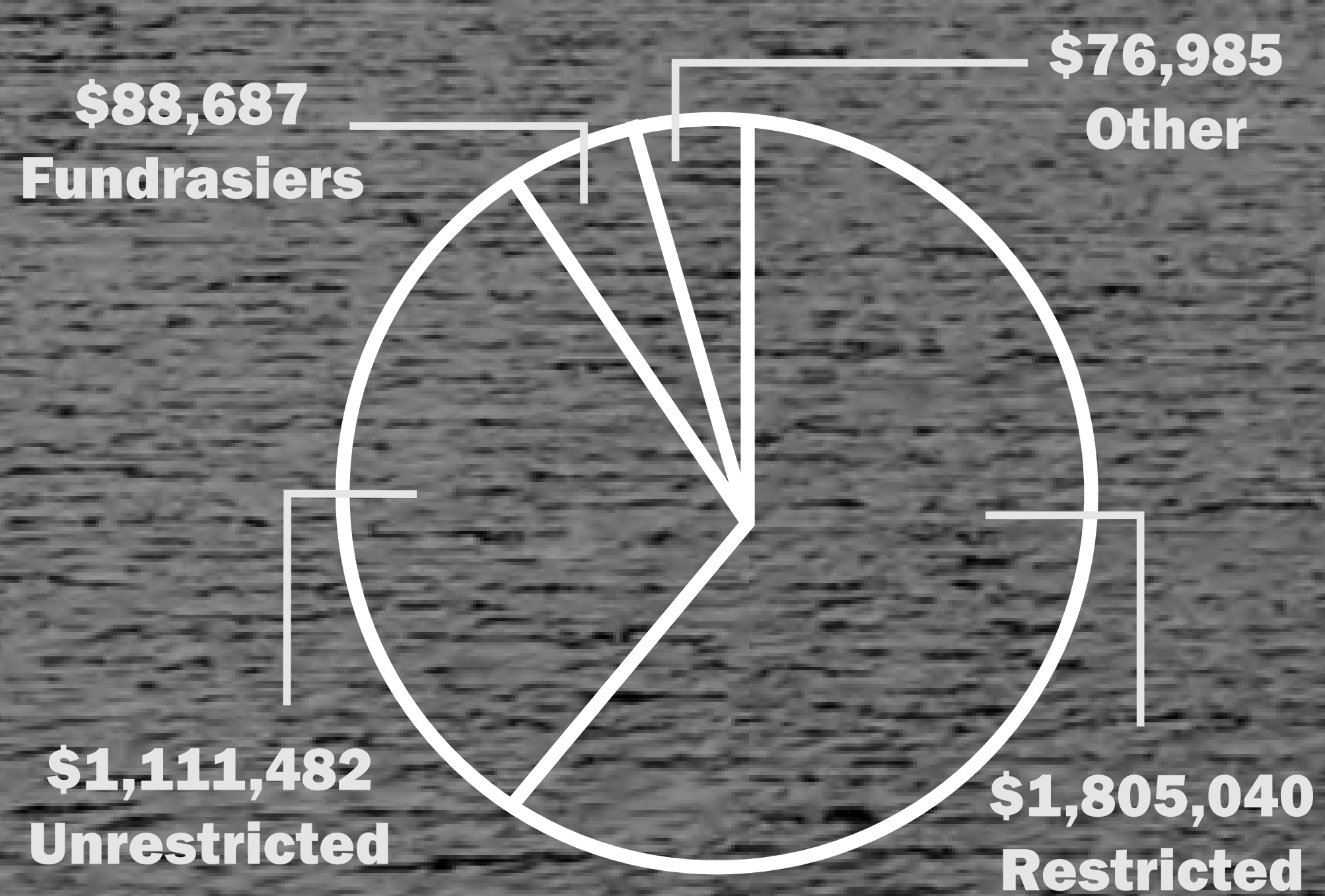
By The Numbers

In 2020 Heroes and Horses launched the silent phase of a capital campaign to purchase a home for our program in Virginia City, Montana. 2020 was our biggest fundraising year to date. Expenses dropped below recent levels as a result of the forced cancellation of our program due to the global pandemic. The program cancellation, along with the launch of our campaign, resulted in a drop in program expenses as a percentage of the total, along with a corresponding rise in administrative and fundraising expenses.

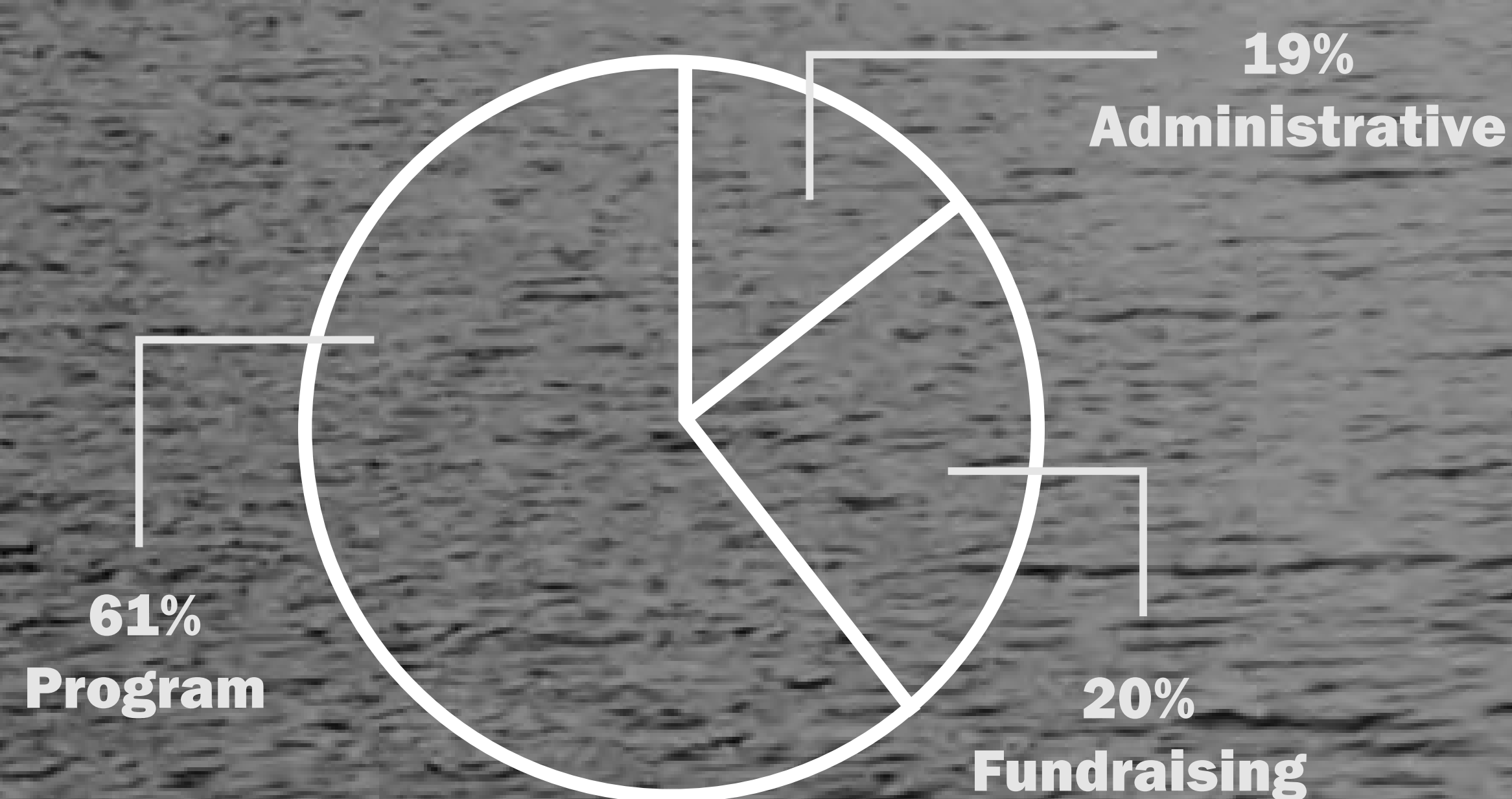
OVERVIEW

REVENUE:	\$3,082,194
<small>INCLUDES CAPITAL CAMPAIGN</small>	
EXPENSES:	\$811,582
NET INCOME:	\$2,270,612
NET ASSETS:	\$3,386,900

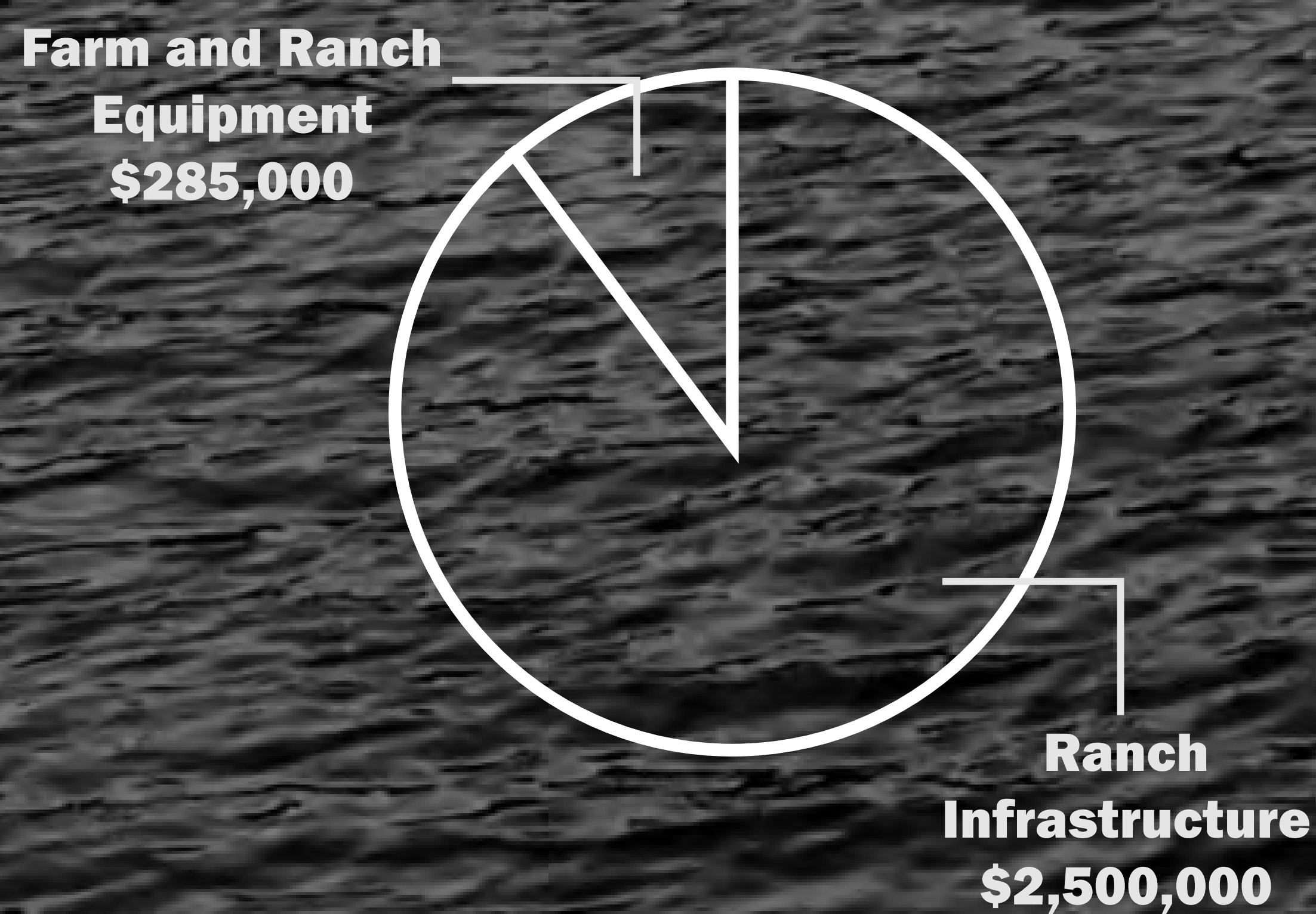
Revenue Highlights



Expense Summary



2021 Capital Campaign Goals



FINANCIALS

Our Donors

Erika & Jason Armistead

Audere Partners [!\[\]\(919a2cb85b99741a73c0c31a427236a8_img.jpg\)](#)

Brighton, CO

Donors since 2017

Jason and I currently live in Brighton Colorado with our son Jake. I am originally from Bozeman, Montana and Jason is from Virginia. We met in Arizona at Graduate School and have lived and worked in many places, both in the US and internationally. I am currently working as a Marketing Instructor at Front Range Community College and Jason is a Managing Partner at his company, Audere Partners. In our free time we love to golf, travel, and learn about the world.

I think one of the great things about Heroes and Horses, is that no matter your ability, there is a way you can help the Team, the Program, and the Participants. We appreciate that no matter the form of donation – in kind, monetary, materials – you can trust that a participant, who gave so much of themselves protecting our country, will benefit directly.



Inspiration

We have been involved in many charitable organizations over the years, most recently, supporting my students at my Alma Mater, Montana State University and the March of Dimes. We are always looking for new opportunities to make a specific, lasting difference. I first heard about Heroes and Horses when my sister shared a post on Facebook. We both have veterans in our family, some of whom struggled to adapt after their service. Even though neither of us have served, and we can't ride a horse, we felt drawn to Heroes and Horses and their philosophies on struggle, personal growth, and leadership.

Motivation

There are really three things that motivate us to continue supporting Heroes and Horses every year. First, is that the veteran suicide rate is astronomical and if we can help even one person who is considering suicide, we must try. The second factor is the ability to see that our donation is having a direct impact in someone's life. Our donation does not go into the black hole of a big, corporate non-profit. Finally, we believe in the Heroes and Horses team, their dedication and devotion to providing tools and alternative solutions for the challenges that each participant faces.

Impact

We are humbled to have the opportunity to support people who are offering purpose and peace to those who have given so much for our country. We love that Heroes and Horses is working with veterans to reframe their experiences and approach to life, and that they teach leadership, so that the graduates can teach and lead the next person who needs help.



Jessica Riley

Phoenix, AZ

Adopt-A-Horse Monthly Donor

I was homeschooled through high school with my sister and four brothers. I have an old soul and a stubborn streak that I inherited from my father. I love Reformed Theology (Spurgeon is my favorite), and I avoid social media like the plague. Montana is home, CrossFit is my therapy, and my grandma is my best friend. I love you Oma!

Inspiration

When I discovered Heroes & Horses, I had been reading through one of my favorite books, Wild At Heart by John Eldredge. It struck me that elements of the program such as the wilderness, horses, danger, etc., were exactly what Eldredge believed necessary in order for wounded men to reclaim their masculine souls. I knew that I had to contribute somehow. The Adopt-A-Horse program felt like the area I could make the most impact at the time.

Motivation

On an old podcast that I recently listened to, hosted by The Rich Outdoors, Micah Fink shared his story, beginning with 9/11 and the decision to join the Navy. During his talk the theme of hardship and courage and the idea that life requires something of you was revealed. Being able to answer that call is what shapes the kind of men the world need more of.

Impact

Episode #3 of Uninterrupted Data solidified what I value the most about Heroes & Horses and has served as a constant reminder in my own story. Your life must have a purpose - it must have a “why” at its core. Having a fundamental knowledge of who you are, why you were created, and what you were created for is crucial to making the choices necessary for living with meaning. Without knowing these things, you allow yourself to become a victim. Life happens “to” you instead of “for” you. Life is meant to be lived with intention, even in the little things, one dignified choice at a time.



Daniel Hartnett

Dallas, TX

Donor since 2019

I currently live in Dallas, TX, and work as the Managing Director for Greysteel. I have been an active donor with Heroes and Horses since 2019. I enjoy spending time golfing, shooting sporting clays, and spending time with my wife and two golden retrievers.



Inspiration

When I first heard of the program it sounded like a fresh approach to a systematic failure that has plagued our Country. When you look at the veteran suicide statistics, it should make all of us want to do anything we can to help break the cycle. The program was different than anything that is out there and it inspired me to help where I could.

Motivation

After getting to meet the H&H team and learning more about the program's impact I wanted to support in any way I could. I believe that we should do all we can to help reintegrate veterans and facilitate their next mission. They have sacrificed so we can live in an environment where we don't have to worry and I think that we should all do more to help.

Impact

What excites me the most about the mission is the universalness of the ethos that is at the core of the program. The struggles many veterans go through are universal to humans. I think the program can potentially have a larger impact on society than just the veteran community. The more the program grows, the more our society benefits. Veterans have always been a large contributor to our economic & social output, so the more we can help find passion and purpose the more all of society benefits.

[DONATE NOW](#)

A Veteran's Point of View

To the current donors who support the multifaceted aspects of the Heroes and Horses (H&H) program, prospective donors, the men “on the fence about the application”, and undoubtedly anyone else who reads this document. Below is a written explanation of my life as it relates to the H&H program. I chose to use the phrase “explanation of my life”, as the program changed my life. I wanted to take a moment to share what my time in the H&H program meant to me. Going into the program, I did not know what to expect. I understood the basic parameters outlined in the curriculum advertised; little did I know, I would walk away with the will to proceed in life accompanied by a different outlook and purpose.

The H&H program is uniquely rare in and of itself. I believe that the level of accountability and honesty that is required of you within this program is unparalleled in respect to other “treatment” modalities that exist. It is my personal and professional opinion that if this program was adopted and provided funding by our federal government that the overall well-being of each and every returning service member would drastically improve and we would start to see a rapid decline of suicide statistics - which in the medical paradigm is the encumbrance of the problem. If you are reading this, and you share feelings of “depression”, “being unsettled”, or “frustration” and “past emotional upset” that you correlate with your combat experiences...if you believe what you did in service to our country has made your every day existence a complete shit show - then stop what you're doing and get involved with this program. IT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE.

A Veteran's Point of View

I ended up challenging the duality of my traumatic beliefs through physical experiences that I know had everlasting effects on my spirit and soul. From being accepted to the program, to leaving the program, you will be welcomed home by a community of people that by their actions (not just words) are positive, realistic, and extremely optimistic. It would be impossible to ignore the professionalism and quality of the staff, and the attitude of gratitude that is reflected through hard work and “eye to eye” communication. It’s the kind of communication that you wish to reflect in the world - it is 110% intentional.

Please take a moment to close your eyes after reading this statement and try to imagine what it means. We all know interacting with horses on the ground can be dangerous enough, let alone on horseback, for eight to sixteen hours a day, for four to twelve days on end - sometimes alone; it is ridiculously exhausting, but in the most rewarding way possible. I was given every opportunity to grow as a man, I was fostered and loved by my family, however, war, the act of taking other humans lives, changed my perspective of myself. It wasn't until I attended the Heroes and Horses program that I felt I could return to our society in the United States of America as a Veteran.

- Kristopher Keith Ritterhouse, U.S Army

To read the rest of Kristopher's story, visit our website at heroesandhorses.org

Capital Campaign Donors

Thank you to the following donors for making this first step possible, and to Rod Fraser for kicking off phase 2 of this campaign with a pledge to match \$250,000 to complete this best-in-class center for human development. At a time when no one thought it was possible, you made the impossible possible.

Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation	Mark and Robyn Jones
Dale Clift	Mike Driscoll
Dan Brochu	Neal and Jamie Hawks
Daniel Hartnett	Richard King Brown
George and Gayle Dew	Rick Van Arnam
Gregory Marich	Rod Fraser
James L Neal	Steve Burke
Joe Drake	Sulentic Family Foundation
Joel Leadbetter	The Rumsfeld Foundation
John Hogan	Thomas Corr
	Tony James

A special thank you to the selfless people who are helping us make this project a reality. Their input of time and energy helping to transform our vision is invaluable.

To the team at Hall & Hall, we appreciate all of your efforts towards this project.

Dan Corbielle of Velocity Team
Jerry Locati of Locati Architects
Charlie Kees of Field Studio Land Architects
Justin Houser of Houser Engineering
Jeff Thorsen of Bridger View Inspections, Inc.
Deborah Stephenson of DMS Natural Resources LLC
Moen Excavation, Virginia City, Montana

[LEARN MORE](#)



“Fear
is
the
greatest
tool
used against
mankind.”

Stay tuned for our new short film “Fear” for a new perspective from our founder and CEO, Micah Fink.



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HEROES AND HORSES

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