



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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# We serve our nation

by honoring our defenders, veterans, first responders, their families and those in need.

We do this by creating and supporting unique programs designed to entertain, educate, inspire, strengthen and build communities.



My Friend,

Ten years ago, I had a decision to make. I would either ramp up this mission of service to veterans, first responders and their families, or I would pull back. For over 25 years, I had been supporting many initiatives and nonprofits and knew the need was great. I thought about the sacrifices of so many who keep our country free and safe. I thought about our veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress, our most severely wounded service members who feel lost and incomplete, and those still serving who continue to face dangerous situations around the world. I thought about the grieving families and children of our fallen, and all the moments they would feel the loss and heartbreak alone. I thought of the first responders who run towards danger for their fellow citizens, and the toll it takes on them. Not all of us are called to serve and sacrifice in such selfless and extraordinary ways, but as Americans we can take up the charge to help those who do. That's why I founded the Gary Sinise Foundation.

My book, **Grateful American: A Journey from Self to Service**, is a story of discovering a calling to a greater purpose and the extraordinary men and women met along the way. You are such an important part of this journey. There are so many friends just like you who are grateful for our freedom and security. Together, we are expressing our sincere gratitude to our defenders by addressing their critical challenges in meaningful ways. Veterans, wounded heroes, first responders, frontline emergency medical teams – the brave men and women who put their lives on the line every single day to keep our country safe and our communities strong.

It is upon us to give back to our heroes to ensure they have the tools and resources to deal with their physical and invisible wounds. It's up to us to give them comfort. To give them support.

To give them hope.

I believe while we can never do enough for our nation's defenders and the families who sacrifice alongside them, we can always do a little more.

Your Grateful American pal,

FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
MIKE THIRTLE



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Since joining the Gary Sinise Foundation in July 2021, I am consistently asked two questions on a regular basis: (1) Is the organization making a difference in the lives of our veterans, first responders and their families, and (2) is Gary Sinise really as genuine as he seems?

The answer to both questions is an emphatic *yes*.

With your support, we continue to show our gratitude and thank our heroes for putting our nation first, even above their own safety. Many are volunteers, embodying true service and sacrifice. The feedback and testimonials from our defenders, the emails, calls, letters are daily confirmations that together, we are providing necessary support to those who have so faithfully served. The impact we are making is truly changing lives.

And Gary, what I've come to see and respect is that he's far more in this mission than what you see on TV, the news, and social media. He is tireless in his passion and commitment, and he is dedicated to making sure our nation's defenders know their sacrifices are appreciated and not forgotten.

Stepping into this role as CEO is personal to me. Having served our country as a military officer in the U.S. Air Force for 22 years, and now serving my brothers and sisters in arms, it is truly an honor and a responsibility I take very seriously. I have served alongside these brave men and women and watched them sacrifice so much so that we can have our way of life, our freedoms, and our safe communities. I want to assure you that we are faithful stewards of your gratitude to those we serve.

We are so grateful for your generosity and continued support.

Mike



GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

R★I★S★E



## *R.I.S.E.* is helping our nation's wounded heroes reclaim their dignity and independence.

As citizens, we must honor the sacrifices of our wounded service members by ensuring their care. The Gary Sinise Foundation established *R.I.S.E.*, a program dedicated to *Restoring Independence & Supporting Empowerment* for these heroes and their families as they adjust to life after injury.

It's hard for most of us to imagine being unable to perform the everyday chores of life. But living in total reliance on caregivers for even the most mundane, sometimes very personal tasks is a reality for many of our severely wounded veterans.



Atop the emotional and physical stresses are the financial burdens. Most military families lack the means to update their homes and equipment to fit their individual needs. Through *R.I.S.E.*, we are providing adapted vehicles, mobility devices, and home modifications to injured, wounded, ill and/or aging heroes from all military conflicts.

All across the country, *R.I.S.E.* is building local support for these heroes. By raising awareness in their communities and enlisting the grassroots efforts of local government and businesses, we're helping to establish a sustainable network of long-term support for each hero and their family.





R.I.S.E.

# SPECIALLY ADAPTED SMART HOMES

Home is more than a house.

*Home.* It's where loved ones gather. It's where we take refuge from the world. It's the center around which our lives revolve. For our nation's severely wounded heroes, however, life at home can be a constant battle. Without features designed for their needs, small tasks can present insurmountable

challenges. *R.I.S.E.* builds mortgage-free, specially adapted smart homes all across the country. Our team provides hands-on management and real estate expertise from land purchase to construction. With a place to truly call home, these heroes and their families can move forward with their lives.



**Wounded Heroes Moved Into Specially Adapted Smart Homes**



## HOME MODIFICATIONS

Existing homes can be retrofitted to accommodate the needs of a wounded hero. Adding ramps or refurbishing a bathroom can improve life for the entire family.

**12** Home Modifications Completed



## ADAPTED VEHICLES

Ensuring our heroes have the resources they need beyond the home is an important aspect of *R.I.S.E.* Modified trucks and vans alleviate reliance on caregivers, helping our defenders become more self-sufficient.

**8** Adapted Vehicles Provided



## MOBILITY DEVICES

Beyond basic transportation, *R.I.S.E.* provides everything from wheelchairs to track chairs, narrow chairs, ally chairs, and hand cycles. Reclaiming personal mobility is key to restoring a healthy mindset of autonomy and freedom.

**7** Mobility Devices Provided



“Everything was tailored around me in a way that gave me the opportunity to not only independently achieve the things that I could never really do again but also, forging a greater bond with my family.”

— U.S. ARMY MAJ. (RET.) JEREMY HAYNES  
SPECIALLY ADAPTED SMART HOME RECIPIENT



GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

RELIEF +  
RESILIENCY





## Life can change in an instant, especially for our nation's defenders and their families.

The Gary Sinise Foundation's *Relief & Resiliency Outreach* provides complete support to those recovering from trauma, injury or loss in times of urgent need. We host exciting events and group activities to help heal the emotional wounds of those enduring similar

struggles. By building a community of strong friendships and forming joyful, lasting memories, our families can find new hopes for the future together. Lending a helping hand during difficult times can become the pivotal moment that changes a life's direction.



“Support and empathy mean so much more when they come from someone who deeply understands what you’re going through.”

— MIKKI FRISON  
SPOUSE OF FALLEN HERO & SNOWBALL EXPRESS ATENDEE

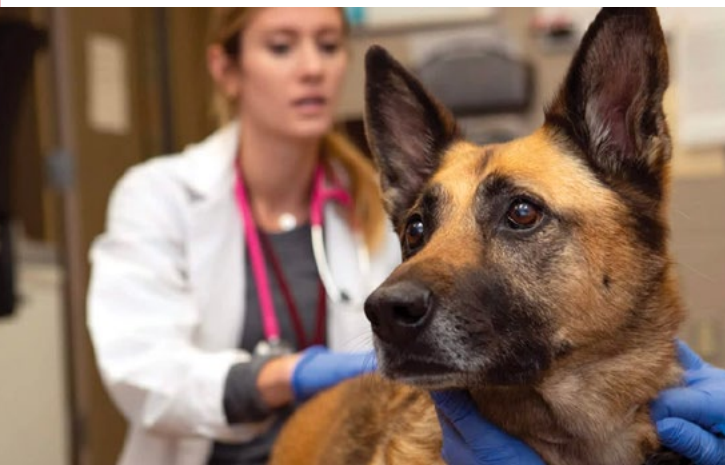
# H.O.P.E.

Heal, Overcome, Persevere & Excel

Our *H.O.P.E.* initiative provides complete support to those who have experienced trauma, illness, injury, or loss during their times of urgent need, sometimes with assistance as simple as help paying bills or buying groceries.



**Veterans, First Responders, and Their Families Provided with Financial Assistance During Tough Times**



Through strategic partnerships, we're addressing the *Mental Wellness* needs of our nation's service members, first responders, and veterans through innovative and empowering treatment methods.

9

**Retreats with 73 Participants**

29

**Service Animals assisted through Vets for Valor**

36

**Veterans/First Responders Supported through *Warriors Heart* for Substance Abuse**



## GARY SINISE & THE LT DAN BAND

*Honor. Gratitude. Rock & Roll.* That's the mission of every Lt. Dan Band concert. There's something for everyone as the twelve-member group covers hits from every genre. Whether boosting morale on

military bases at home and abroad, raising awareness at benefit concerts across the country or headlining our own Invincible Spirit Festivals, the band entertains and inspires everywhere they go.



### Live & Virtual LTDB Concerts

“I like to believe that one show kept me from doing the unthinkable. Thank you for all you do.”

— ANONYMOUS MARINE (WITHHELD FOR PRIVACY)





We serve the children and surviving spouses of fallen military heroes through our Snowball Express Program. No matter where these families are in the grieving process, we hope to inspire them to believe anything is possible. We're creating a community to learn, grow, and make lasting memories with new friends in an emotionally safe, inclusive environment.

The holidays can be especially hard for grieving families. This December, due to COVID-19, we hosted a virtual Snowball Express for over 1,800 attendees, our honored children and surviving spouses of our fallen heroes. By honoring their loved ones with a blend of fun entertainment and inspiring programs, these families can lean on their peers for support.





GARY SINISE FOUNDATION  
COMMUNITY &  
EDUCATION







COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION

# SERVING HEROES

Nothing offers an opportunity to bond and give thanks quite like breaking bread together. We're showing gratitude to our defenders by serving them hearty, classic American meals nationwide and at outposts across Europe and Asia.

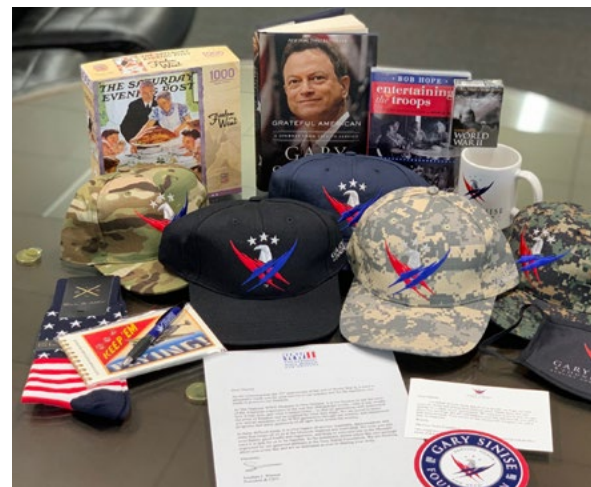
155,538

**Meals Served to our Nation's Military & First Responders Across the Country**

44,024+

**Meals Served to our Nation's Healthcare Workers Across the Country**





### Care Packages Sent to Our Nation's Veterans Across the Country

Each year, the Gary Sinise Foundation hosts up to 5 trips to the National WWII Museum in New Orleans. Through our *Soaring Valor* initiative, we send WWII veterans, their guardians, and high school students each year to recount their unforgettable stories and experiences, providing veterans the opportunity to pass them along to younger generations.

With the cancellation of these trips due to COVID-19, the Foundation sent more than 200 care packages to WWII veterans across the country. Each veteran received a Gary Sinise Foundation hat, eight WWII-themed postcards, U.S.A. themed socks, and much more.



GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

## AMBASSADORS COUNCIL

Our *Ambassadors Council* represents the Gary Sinise Foundation and its mission through speaking engagements, public appearances and leadership opportunities. Each member is individually selected by our founder for their exceptional character and patriotism.

As spokespersons, they proudly share our accomplishments and aspirations as well as their own stories of service. Located throughout the nation, the *Ambassador Council* inspires, educates, and reminds communities to remember the sacrifices made by all American defenders.

## Gary Sinise Foundation Ambassadors



U.S. ARMY (RET.) SERGEANT  
**Bryan Anderson**  
*Illinois*



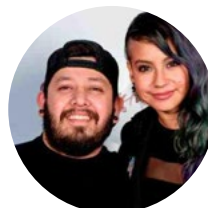
MILITARY SPOUSE  
**Carol Brooks**  
*Texas*



U.S. ARMY (RET.) STAFF SGT.  
**Sammy L. Davis**  
*Indiana*



U.S. ARMY (RET.) AND MEDAL  
OF HONOR RECIPIENT  
**Drew Dix**  
*New Mexico*



USMC (RET.) CORPORAL  
**Juan Dominguez**  
*California*



COMEDIAN  
**Tom Dreesen**  
*California*



CEO, PEOPLE TO PEOPLE  
INTERNATIONAL  
**Mary Jean Eisenhower**  
*Missouri*



U.S. ARMY (RET.) COLONEL  
**Gregory D. Gadson**  
*Virginia*



U.S. ARMY (RET.) MAJOR  
**Jeremy Haynes**  
*Virginia*



U.S. ARMY (RET.)  
MAJOR GENERAL  
**Clayton M. Hutmacher**  
*Florida*



CELEBRITY CHEF  
**Robert Irvine**  
*California*



USMC (RET.) CORPORAL  
**Garrett Jones**  
*Virginia*



U.S. ARMY (RET.)  
MASTER SGT.  
**Cedric King**  
*South Carolina*



U.S. ARMY (RET.)  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL  
**Lt. Gen Rick Lynch**  
*Texas*



MILITARY SPOUSE  
**Sarah Lynch**  
*Texas*



ACTOR  
**Joe Mantegna**  
*California*



U.S. ARMY (RET.)  
MASTER SGT.  
**John Masson**  
*North Carolina*



U.S. ARMY (RET.) STAFF SGT.  
**SSG Travis Mills**  
*Maine*



FDNY (RET.)  
**Danny Prince**  
*Brooklyn*



SINGER-SONGWRITER  
**John Ondrasik**  
*California*



AUTHOR & MILITARY WIFE  
**Ginger Gilbert Ravella**  
*Tennessee*



U.S. NAVY S.E.A.L. (RET.)  
LIEUTENANT  
**Jason C. Redman**  
*Virginia*



U.S. ARMY (RET.) SFC  
**Michael Schlitz**  
*Georgia*



U.S. ARMY (RET.) CAPTAIN  
**Leslie Nicole Smith**  
*Virginia*



ACTOR  
**DB Sweeney**  
*Illinois*



USMC (RET.) COLONEL  
**Jay R. Vargas**  
*California*



U.S. NAVY S.E.A.L. (RET.)  
CHIEF  
**William Wagasy**  
*California*



USMC (RET.) MAJOR  
**Gary Weaver**  
*Kentucky*



FIRE CAPTAIN (RET.)  
**John Woodall**  
*North Carolina*



GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

FIRST     
RESPONDERS





GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

FIRST     
RESPONDERS

The Gary Sinise Foundation recognizes and supports America's firefighters, police, and EMTs through its *First Responders Outreach*. These men and women are indispensable to maintaining the safety of our communities. By providing funds for equipment and training, we are ensuring these heroes perform to the best of their abilities.

“Until the Gary Sinise Foundation, Almira Township fire personnel would have to travel 25 minutes to have their gear washed properly.

With this award, not only do we have the opportunity to wash our gear immediately after a fire, I have offered the use of the washer to our neighboring fire departments. Thank you again for your generosity.”

— CHIEF BRAD DRURY





**Grants Awarded to First Responder  
Departments Across the Nation**



**Pieces of Equipment Provided to Emergency  
Relief & Training**





GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

## EMERGENCY COVID-19 SERVICE

With the continued spread of COVID-19 across the nation, the Gary Sinise Foundation launched its Emergency COVID-19 Combat Service to address the needs of our nation's healthcare professionals battling the virus.

We provided personal protective equipment, meals of gratitude, and grants to first responders. Financial assistance was also provided to healthcare professionals, service members, veterans, first responders, and their families.

“Northwest Fire District cannot express enough gratitude to the Gary Sinise Foundation for providing life-saving equipment to our organization during these unprecedented times.”

— MIKE DUNCAN

NORTHWEST FIRE DISTRICT ASSISTANT CHEF-OPERATIONAL SERVICES





GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

## CENTRAL FLORIDA CHAPTER

Launched in August 2020, the *Gary Sinise Foundation Central Florida Chapter* was the first of many chapters that will extend the philanthropy of our Founder and Chairman, Gary Sinise, and the footprint of the Gary Sinise Foundation.

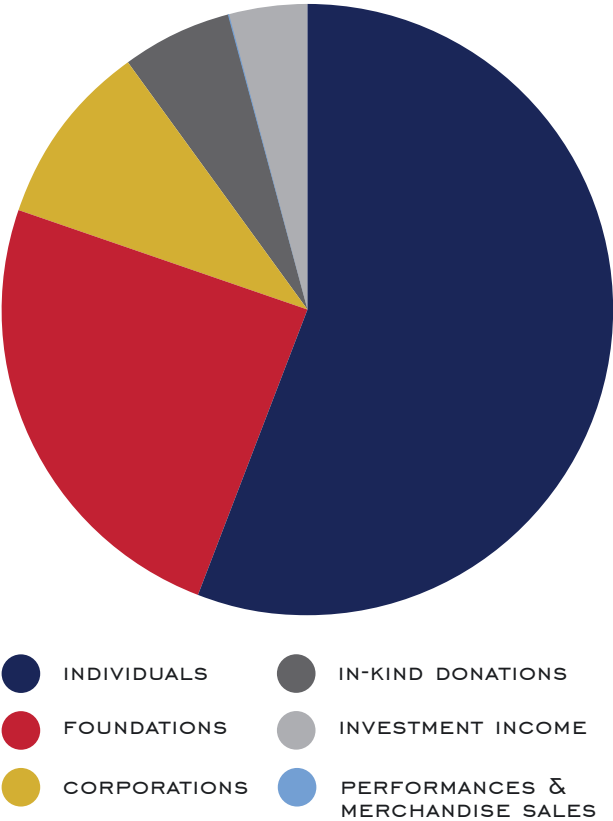
The *Central Florida Chapter*, like those to come in other regions across the country, complements the efforts of the Gary Sinise Foundation, catalyzing a greater impact in the lives of our nation's heroes and their families.



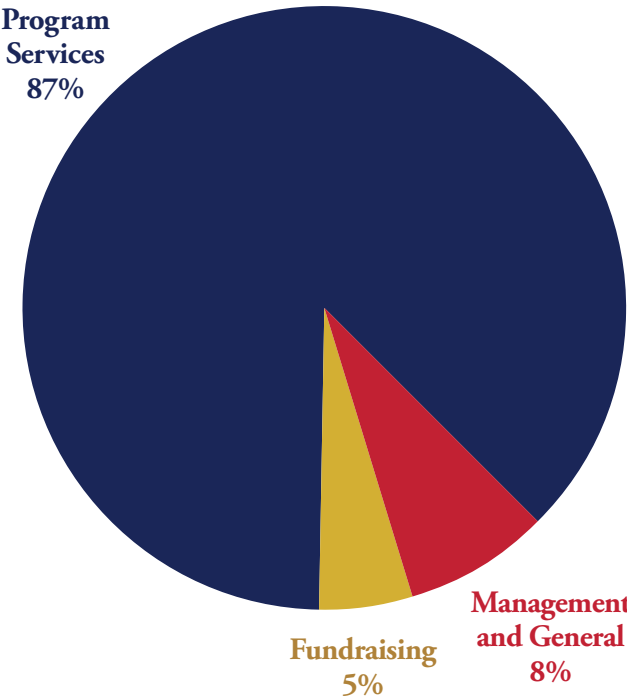
“With our very first chapter in Orlando, we are excited to extend our impact at a regional level. By enlisting the support of communities across the country, particularly where future regional chapters may be located, we’ll be able to expand our outreach even further.”

— GARY SINISE

SOURCES OF SUPPORT



EXPENSES



87¢

OF EVERY DOLLAR RECEIVED FUNDED  
DIRECT PROGRAM SERVICES



## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020  
(IN THOUSANDS)

### REVENUE

• Individuals	\$28,927
• Foundations	\$12,618
• Corporations	\$4,919
• In-kind Donations	\$3,163
• Performances and Merchandise Sales	\$163
• Investment Income	\$1,713
• Other Income	\$2

<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$51,505</b>
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### EXPENSES

#### PROGRAM SERVICES

• R.I.S.E	\$16,774
• Relief and Resiliency	\$12,254
• Community Outreach and Education	\$3,478
• First Responders	\$1,725
• Military Support Concerts	\$883

<b>Total for Program Services</b>	<b>\$35,114</b>
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Management and General	\$3,108
Fundraising	\$2,013

<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$40,234</b>
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<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$11,271</b>
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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gary Sinise (Chairman)

General Vincent K. Brooks, U.S. Army (Ret.)

John D. Heubusch

James Shubert

Moiria Sinise

Pastor (Pat) Velasco

Barbara Titus

Gregory D. Gadson, U.S. Army Colonel (Ret.)

Patricia D. Horoho, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. (Ret.)

Robert Pence, U.S. Ambassador (Ret.)

## ADVISORY COUNCIL

Steven B. Hantler

Clayton M. Hutmacher, U.S. Army Major General (Ret.)

Rick Lynch, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. (Ret.)

Sarah Lynch

David J. McIntyre, Jr.

Suzy Pence

Sean Perseo

Anthony J. Saliba

Pam Swan

Mike Swift

Linda Velasco

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE  
**GARY SINISE FOUNDATION**



TO MAKE A DONATION  
OR FOR MORE INFORMATION

Gary Sinise Foundation  
PO Box 368  
Woodland Hills, CA • 91365

EMAIL

[donor@garysinisefoundation.org](mailto:donor@garysinisefoundation.org)

WEBSITE

[GarySiniseFoundation.org](http://GarySiniseFoundation.org)

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