

My friends,

With our 13th anniversary just around the corner, I thought you might be interested in reading a few of the incredible stories from lives that were changed because of your generosity.



Our mission is about extending your gratitude to America's heroes every day. So, remember that every hug we give to a grieving family of the fallen, every meal we serve to an exhausted first responder, and every home we build for a severely wounded hero—it is all thanks to you. You make it all possible.

Your pal,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary".

Remind our heroes that we never forget them.

DONATE TODAY



HEALING THE INVISIBLE WOUNDS

Police Officer Shares His Harrowing Journey From Guilt To Grace

Our nation's veterans and first responders often struggle under the crushing weight of trauma, something we call "the invisible wounds" of war and service. With a suicide rate of twice the civilian population, our frontline heroes often face their mental health struggles in shame and silence.

The Gary Sinise Foundation works alongside the Boulder Crest Foundation to change all that. Through evidence-based programs PATTH and Struggle Well that are designed to create lasting post-traumatic growth, we help move participants beyond their struggles so they can live a great, rewarding life.

A recent participant shared his powerful story with us.

Warning to Readers: This story contains graphic descriptions.

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While working as a Gang Detective in 2014, myself and a couple other detectives worked a large scale case against an extremely violent street gang. We got our final conviction of the case on one of our primary targets and he was sentenced to 34 years in prison.

Fast forward a couple months—early that morning I received a call that I never expected. My friend and fellow Police Officer Jair Cabrera had been murdered on a traffic stop. Not only had Jair been murdered, but he was murdered by members of the same gang I had just wrapped up my investigation on. I immediately went into a personal downward spiral. I LOST, the gang won. I may have put a bunch of their members in prison, but they killed my friend—they won. I felt as if it was my fault that my friend was murdered.

I didn't attend Jair's funeral, I couldn't. Later that decision to not attend his funeral would haunt me as it only brought on more shame and guilt. I testified as a gang expert at Jair's murderers trial, and in my head I thought once we got a conviction on the shooter I would feel better. What I didn't realize is that in this trial I was going to have to watch the video of Jair's murder over and over and over (the entire incident was captured on dash cam and store surveillance video). Ultimately, Jair's murderer was sentenced to life in prison after being found guilty.

I voluntarily left a prestigious task force position to go back to patrol. At 44 years old, I suffered a major heart attack on duty. My doctors couldn't say exactly why but it was most likely related to the stress I had been under for several years.

Fast forward to 2024. It was as I was sitting through the program Struggle Well that I realized I had never dealt with all of the shame and guilt I carried because of Jair's death. I thought I had done a good job of just stuffing it down and hiding it, but clearly it still affected me and my family greatly.

In March, I attended Warrior PATHH in Sonoita, AZ after a push from my Struggle Well Guides. I can honestly tell you that I left the shame and guilt that I had carried for years regarding Jair's death in the center of the labyrinth on that ranch in Sonoita.

Yesterday was the 10th anniversary of Jair's death, and it was the first anniversary of his death that I didn't go through the day overwhelmed by guilt and shame. PATHH and Struggle Well were true turning points and I absolutely know that I am now in a place where I am turning my struggles into strength.

I cannot express how grateful I am for Boulder Crest, the things you are doing for the Warrior community are absolutely amazing. Thanks to everyone involved in Boulder Crest in any capacity - you all are truly changing lives.

—Scott (last name withheld for privacy)

Thanks to your support of the Gary Sinise Foundation, we are able to fund this life-changing work. We're helping to heal heroes like Scott who are struggling with the invisible wounds of their service. Thank you for improving the lives of these heroes and giving them a chance to thrive.





GSF WALLS OF HONOR CEREMONY

Community Shows Gratitude For Their American Hero

On the night Joshua Hargis was injured in Afghanistan, he and his fellow Rangers were drawn into an area littered with explosive devices. The first explosions took the lives of four members of Josh's unit as well as his K9 partner, Jany.

As Josh ran into the minefield to render aid to a fellow Ranger, he stepped on a second hidden explosive, instantly amputating both his legs at the knees. His only thoughts were of making it home to his wife and their unborn child.

We are honored to build this hero and his family a mortgage-free home just outside our hometown of Nashville.

Last month, we invited the whole community to write messages of love and gratitude on the unfinished walls of Josh's future home. At the ceremony, the entire Hargis family was overwhelmed with emotion.

"We are so glad we picked this area," said Josh, "Because of how loving, how welcoming this community is and how selfless everyone has been. We are so looking forward to how much easier day-to-day life is going to be in this new home. I'm so incredibly appreciative to everyone that's been a part of this project."



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HEALING THEIR DEEP WOUNDS

Children of Fallen Vietnam War Heroes Finally Feel Appreciation

Upon returning home, Vietnam veterans were not met with cheers and warm welcomes. Instead, they returned home to a fractured nation. They faced hostility and hateful remarks from the American people who they had sworn to protect.

Watching from the wings were the innocent children of deployed Vietnam service members. As they witnessed first-hand the abuse being hurled at those returning from combat, the children waited for news about their own hero, hoping they would soon come home.

But with a knock on the door, hope was lost. Their hero would never return.

This past May, we were honored to bring together the Gold Star Children of the Vietnam War for a weekend of community and healing. After an exciting weekend showing them the best Nashville has to offer, we were honored to host them at the Foundation headquarters where Gary himself was waiting to wrap his arms around them and thank them for their sacrifice.

We do not forget the brave service members who lost their lives in service to our country, nor do we forget the families left behind.

