

2022

ANNUAL  
★  
REPORT



VETERANS  
  
OUTREACH CENTER Inc.  
★ Serving Those Who Serve U.S. ★

# A MESSAGE FROM THE

## *Executive Director*



### **ABOUT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:**

Laura Heltz is an Army veteran who spent eight years on active duty. Just before leaving the service, Laura earned her Master of Science in Business Administration from Baker College. Laura has worked with veterans for more than a decade, and in 2015, she was inducted into the NYS Senate Veterans Hall of Fame. Laura has co-authored two books – *The Pocket Idiot's Guide to the ASVAB* and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the ASVAB*. Laura has served as VOC's Executive Director for six years. In 2019, she won the RBJ Woman of Excellence award. Laura has been a Girl Scout Troop Leader for 10 years and lives in Victor with her husband, George, and twins, Thomas and Sarah.



Hope is a powerful thing. It inspires us to do the impossible and helps us carry on during difficult times. At Veterans Outreach Center, we have woven the concepts of hope and compassion into our culture and into the hearts of our veterans since 1973. And 2022 was no exception! In fact, it was a year marked by anticipation, aspiration, and accomplishments regarding our strategic advancements as well as the personal goals achieved by the veterans we serve.

This year, 559 veterans visited us for the first time filled with hope that they had found a place to begin their healing process. More than 1,400 returning veterans continued their journey toward self-sustainability, and 352 veterans from around the country found us online, contacted us, and were counseled on how to access services closer to home. Our dedicated staff made 9,446 personal connections with local veterans. This is VOC giving hope to our vets that they will be able to provide for themselves and their families once again.

Through our Morale Center, VOC provided a space where veterans could get their hair cut by licensed professionals, take a cooking class, do their laundry, utilize our fitness center, manage chronic pain through hydromassage, meet socially with peers, engage in therapeutic groups led by licensed mental health professionals, and so much more. These life-giving and hope-inspiring efforts are delivered at no cost to our vets **ALL YEAR LONG**. In addition to all of this, we provided shelter to more than 50 veterans while simultaneously undergoing a multi-million-dollar renovation to enhance and expand our Richards House facility. We helped hundreds of veterans find and keep meaningful employment; we offered legal services, financial coaching, emergency funds, bus passes, food, and clothing to those who served.

Giving hope has a ripple effect, extending far beyond the initial act of kindness. By creating an environment of hope, we contribute to a collective sense of optimism, resilience, and unity. It empowers individuals to become agents of change, working together to create a brighter future for themselves and others. We'd like to recognize everyone who generously gave their time, talent, or treasure during 2022 to help those who need it most.

From all of us at Veterans Outreach Center, thank you for your support of our organization and for helping us provide hope to the brave men and women who served our country.

Sincerely,

Laura A. Heltz  
Executive Director  
Veterans Outreach Center  
U.S. Army Veteran

*"By creating an environment of hope, we contribute to a collective sense of optimism, resilience, and unity."*

# SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE US

## VETERANS SERVED

559 New Vets

1,431 Returning Vets

172 Female Vets

352 National/Regional Vets

9,446 Services provided

## SERVICES UTILIZED

2,335 Quartermaster uses<sup>1</sup>

36 vets served in Veterans Treatment Court<sup>2</sup>

178 veteran job placements

5,176 Morale Center uses<sup>3</sup>

124 veterans served in transitional or supportive housing

1) Our Quartermaster provides free food, clothing, hygiene kits and more to local veterans.

2) This program is available to eligible Veterans with non-violent criminal charges who have either a substance abuse or mental health diagnosis. The goal of VTC is to treat the underlying issues that are at the root of the criminal behavior. With intensive case management, the Veteran is given all the tools they need to return to being a productive member of society.

3) Our Morale Center gives veterans a safe space to relax, decompress, and practice self-care. Services include haircuts/barber, laundry, hydro massage, and more. All Morale Center services are free for veterans.

## 2022 VOC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Chair

Ellen Adams\* - Red Hot Dish

### Vice Chair

Don Reeve\* - Retired, Wegmans

### Treasurer

Bernard Schroeder - Lake Beverage Corporation

### Secretary

Joseph Catone, USA Payroll Agency

### Corporate Counsel

Jessie Gregorio, Underberg & Kessler LLP

Jeffrey S. Bartkoski\* - Mercy Flight Central

John L. DeMarco, Esq. - The DeMarco Law Group

Matthew Legere\* - L3Harris Communications

Marvin Patterson Jr.\* - Monroe County Sheriff's Department

Dylan Potter\* - Howe & Rusling

Chief Fabian Rivera\* - Rochester Police Department

Joseph Robach - Former State Senator and Veterans Advocate

Kristie Robertson-Coyne - McQuaid Jesuit High School

## TOP BRASS

Laura Heltz\* - Executive Director

Alec Andrest\* - Director of Program Operations

Joan Brandenburg, CFRE - Director of Advancement

Allison Tursi - Director of Human Resources

\*Veteran

## REVENUE

Government Grants	\$3,136,621
Capital Project Fundraising	\$721,284
Contributions & Private Grants	\$1,083,817
Fundraising Events, Net	\$268,232
Flag Store, Net	\$32,578
United Way	\$53,631
Other	\$1,250
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$5,297,413</b>

## EXPENSES

Program	\$2,518,313
Administrative	\$712,416
Fundraising	\$535,843
Investment Loss, Net	\$226,990
Other	\$275,498
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,269,060</b>

**NET** **\$1,028,353**

**Note:** Funds committed to the ongoing capital campaign, projected for expenditure in 2023: **\$632,046**

Net Operational funds remaining 12/31/2022: **\$396,046**

Audit completed by Heveron & Company CPAs

## COUNTIES WE SERVE



# FROM HOMELESSNESS TO HEALING:

U.S. ARMY VETERAN FINDS REDEMPTION AND PURPOSE AT VOC

Curly, a U.S. Army veteran and former infantryman, knows firsthand the challenges that many veterans face when transitioning back to civilian life. After serving his country in deployments to Iraq, North and South Korea, and various other locations, Curly returned home to a harsh reality. The job market in Rochester offered few opportunities for someone with his specialized military qualifications, and he found himself on the brink of homelessness.

However, a glimmer of hope appeared in the form of the Veterans Outreach Center (VOC), a haven for veterans seeking support and guidance. Curly decided to take a leap of faith and turned to the VOC for help.

Upon arriving at Richards House, a supportive housing facility operated by the VOC, Curly discovered a wealth of programs and services tailored to his unique needs. With their unwavering dedication, VOC staff educated him about the available options and instilled a renewed sense of possibility within him.

"The programs and services [VOC] had available showed me what I could do and what options I had. Because at that point, I didn't feel like I had options," Curly said. The realization that he had a support system motivated him to persevere.

Driven by his passion for physical training and the belief that a strong mind and heart are essential for personal growth, Curly embraced the opportunity to pursue a degree in physical education and exercise science. With the support of the VOC's programming, he enrolled in college and dedicated himself to his studies.

Today, Curly stands as a shining example of resilience and achievement. With the help of VOC, he has successfully rebuilt his life, finding stability and purpose in helping his fellow veterans who have experienced similar hardships. By training and guiding others, he pays forward the assistance and inspiration he received during his own journey of healing.

"It's fulfilling because, especially with the physical training, I'm a big advocate of you can't build a strong body with a weak mind and heart," Curly said. "The same attributes you apply in here can be applied outside of here."



Curly's story serves as a testament to the transformative power of personal responsibility and the importance of seeking out available resources. He urges his fellow veterans to educate themselves and take advantage of the programs offered by organizations like VOC. With newfound hope and determination, veterans can overcome adversity and reclaim their lives.

As Curly's journey continues, his dedication to supporting and uplifting his comrades remains unwavering. His story stands as a beacon of hope, proving that with the right support and mindset, any challenge can be overcome.



The generosity of our supporters ensures we are able to continue our important work.  
To see a complete list of donors, please visit [vocroc.org/donor-list](https://vocroc.org/donor-list).

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

### OUR SERVICES:

#### Employment Placement & Training

- Vocational assessments
- Interview skills training
- Career counseling
- Resume preparation
- OSHA certifications

#### Health & Wellness Services

- Hydromassage
- Laundry
- Crisis intervention
- Reiki
- Art therapy
- Suicide prevention
- Peer-to-peer veteran groups
- Fitness center

#### Residential Program

- 33 units of permanent affordable housing
- 30-bed emergency housing
- 8-bed transitional housing

#### Veteran & Family Supportive Services

- Case management
- Peer support groups
- Female veteran programming
- Senior veteran services

#### Veterans Treatment Court

#### Quartermaster

- Food pantry with fresh meat and dairy products
- Clothing (including professional attire)
- Essential Items
- Pet food
- Baby Formula

#### On-Site Community Partners

- Legal counseling
- Financial coaching
- Accredited VA benefits counseling
- Free bus passes
- RIT's Veterans Upward Bound Staff



447 SOUTH AVE., ROCHESTER, NY 14620  
585.546.1081 | VOCROC.ORG



### MISSION:

To serve veterans with compassion and advocate for all who have worn our nation's uniform so they can **RISE** and live life to the fullest.

### ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES:

**Respect:** We treat everyone with dignity and compassion, and we show appreciation for strengths as well as vulnerabilities.

**Integrity:** We are trust-worthy, honorable and professional. Taking ownership of our actions and communication is a top priority; we do this by conveying honesty and respect through tone, verbal and non-verbal interactions. We demonstrate fiscal responsibility with all resources.

**Service:** We recognize the great sacrifices that are made by all who have worn our nation's uniform. We are committed to serving our veterans and their families with passion and deep appreciation.

**Excellence:** We are hard-working, innovative and creative; we strive for continuous improvement. Our goal is to consistently grow the quality and scope of our services, in order to better meet the needs of our veterans.

