



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

WORK VESSELS FOR VETS Mission: To equip America's injured veterans with awards of equipment to start a business or pursue career education.

Work Vessels for Vets, Inc., is a 501-c-3 national public charity whose mission is to equip America's veterans returning from the theaters of war with the "vessel" that can start a career or enhance a life of our returning service men and women. Since incorporation as a nonprofit in 2008, **more than 2200 veterans in all 50 states have received "vessels" valued at over \$3.2 million** to begin their transition to civilian life. By matching corporate and individual donations with veterans who demonstrate a viable business plan, Work Vessels for Veterans, Inc. has provided a "Hand Up" with fishing vessels, vans, vehicles, laptops, trucks, tool sets, tractors, trailers, farmland, fencing, furniture and more.

2020 By the Numbers:

- **\$275,342 in Income via Donations, Grants and Fund-Raising**
 - **\$48,219 in INKIND Donations of Equipment**
 - **\$ 79,724 Individual Contributions**
 - **\$ 43,603 Grants and Foundation Donations**
 - **\$ 91,671 Fundraising Income**
 - **\$ 11,602 Direct Corporate Contributions**
 - **\$ 400 Memorial Gifts**
 - **\$ 125 Veteran Organizations**
- **\$212,879 in Equipment and Mentoring Services were awarded**
- **\$ 1,167 in Management Costs (Less than 1% at 0.004%)**

2020 AWARDS TO VETERANS - 325 Veterans served

including \$20,000 in Emergency COVID Relief Grants

- **\$ 7,800 in 19 Laptops to vets and 1 nonprofit (incl one MacBook)**
- **\$57,924 in Equipment awarded to 7 veteran-serving nonprofits for 280 veterans**
- **\$17,584 in tools & machinery to 7 veteran-entrepreneurs (includes COVID grants)**
- **\$37,159 in car, van, UTV and 2 trucks awarded to 5 veterans**
- **\$ 1,900 in adaptive equipment awarded to 1 Korea & 1 Vietnam veteran (local)**
- **\$18,851 in Farm Equipment + 3 Tractors to 15 Veterans (includes COVID grants)**
ALSO \$85,439 in Direct Veteran Support Services

2020 GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT

1. GOAL: Be the *GO TO* charity for veterans seeking equipment to set up their own businesses across America.

In 2020, Work Vessels for Vets, Inc. made direct equipment awards to 49 veteran applicants for their businesses and 7 Veteran-serving nonprofits received equipment valued at \$141,218 to serve an estimated 325 veterans. In addition, WVFV's mentors served more than 200 veteran applicants through business counseling, application assistance and mentorships at an estimated value of \$85,439.

2. GOAL: Be recognized by national funding organizations as a partner in serving the transition needs of OEF/OIF veterans.

IN 2020 - Several new partnerships were developed in 2020 including US Veterans Chamber of Commerce, Lyme VFW, and Last Man Standing Club. Partnerships continue with Semper Fi Fund, Agrability, Farmer Veteran Coalition, and others.



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- WVFV partnered with funders to match grants for equipment for three veterans: \$7500 from FVC matched \$7500 from WVFV to purchase tractor for Florida Equine Therapy Program.
- \$10,000 from US Veterans Chamber of Commerce matched \$6000 from WVFV to purchase farm truck for the Colorado farm for injured USAF Rescue Pilot credited with saving 279 lives in Afghanistan.
- \$7500 in technology grant funds from Dominion Energy Foundation were matched providing drones, virtual reality technology, and hi-end MacBook to vet businesses adapting to COVID restrictions.

3. GOAL: Be recognized by corporate funders as a strong partner in furthering their philanthropic purposes.

IN 2020 - WVFV increased the number of donors who use their company-matching programs. Currently, employee-matching corporations include: Pfizer, Dominion Energy, ABBVIE, Liberty Mutual Bank, Citizens Bank, EB Employees, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, GE Support, and UBS Brokerage. In 2020 we added Synchronicity, Network for Good, PayPal Giving Fund, CIRTEC Medical, Blackbaud Giving Fund and Benevity Fund.

WVFV increased the number of retirees who included WVFV in their charitable distributions from IRAs.

Corporate INKIND donations totaled \$18,593 including Pfizer \$10,000 for 25 laptops valued at \$400 each, and CIRTEC Medical of Enfield, CT \$4500 for 15 laptops @ \$300 each. There were discounts totaling \$4093.

More small businesses & local breweries and restaurants held promotions to benefit WVFV in 2020.

Enterprise Builders Co of Newington, CT committed all the proceeds of their annual golf event resulting in over \$52,000 for WVFV in the fund-raising category.

4. GOAL: Be a Stand Out Leader in donor integrity.

In 2020, WVFV once again earned the TOP RATED NONPROFIT AWARD from Great Nonprofits, with 5 star ratings from our veterans, volunteers and donors.

GUIDE STAR, the international charity rating agency, renewed WVFV's PLATINUM Rating, their highest accolade for nonprofit integrity.

In 2020, Work Vessels passed the 20 rigorous Standards of Charity Accountability and became an Internationally Accredited Nonprofit under the Better Business Bureau, Veterans and Military Charities.



- Remarkably, WVFV **INCREASED** donations from individuals in 2020, even with the challenges of the COVID pandemic. **Donors responded with a 31% INCREASE over 2019!**
- \$48,219 of INKIND donations came to the organization from corporations and individuals.
- In 2020, WVFV maintained its reputation for extremely low overhead (under 1%)

5. GOAL: Be the connection between donors & veteran start-ups.

IN 2020 WVFV continued its relationship with the US Veterans Chamber of Commerce, founded by UCONN's LtCol. Michael Zacchea. Following several planning meetings, WVFV hopes to participate in the development of chapters of the USVCC and engage in some of their activities across the country.

Our relationship with the Farmer Veteran Coalition grows, and in 2020 WVFV was a partner presenter at the FVC Virtual Annual Convention in November. And we continue our reciprocal work with AgrAbility chapters around the country and with Semper Fi Foundation regional representatives.

US Department of Veterans Affairs regional Vet Centers continue to refer vets to us.

Best of all, previous veteran awardees recommend their battle buddies to us for “vessels for success.”

WVFV Executive Assistant Carey Beralderi has been active in establishing better communications with our past awardees. She has developed a peer-to-peer chat room and has surveyed our awardees to learn more about their budding businesses. [See her 2020 report.]

6. GOAL: Maintain low administrative overhead and high participation by volunteers.

IN 2020 WVFV maintained the lowest possible administrative overhead by engaging volunteers to provide services to our applicants by keeping management expenses under 1%.

Col. Ted Larson coordinates volunteers for events when needed, as well as offering his expertise in military jargon, interpretation of military benefits, and general mentoring of veteran applicants. Veteran awardees volunteered to help with the Lake of Isles Golf Event. Many other awardees donated hand-crafted items to the Online Auction which netted over \$8500!

Our Military Advisory Council has volunteer members from across the nation. They are “on call” when a mentor is needed for an applicant, or to connect WVFV with grant applications.

The WVFV Board Members have continued to answer the call for any number of opportunities to assist veterans or promote public awareness of WVFV. Cathy Cook and Marc Harrell conducted several television interviews for several television stations.

WVFV honored Enterprise Builders, and CEO Keith Czarnecki with our Patriot Star Award in 2020.

Bob Fiore is our Pfizer connection and has been instrumental in the donation of much needed refurbished laptops. Due to COVID restrictions, SkyDive for Veterans of Branford, CT was unable to hold their 5th annual parachuting event but still presented WVFV with a check for \$1500. The Avon UNICO Club sends the proceeds of their annual golf outing to WVFV, resulting in a check in 2020 for \$6000. And other organizations and businesses continue their loyal support of our mission.



7. GOAL: Foster new peer-to-peer mentorships among veteran awardees.

IN 2020 WVFV organized a closed page on Facebook for our veteran awardees and applicants to engage with one another – they buy and sell products with each other, and offer mentoring advice. It has grown each month. Carey has done a great job and increased the number of veteran awardees sharing and helping one another through our social media. Veteran awardee Mickey Clayton Willenbring of Oregon recently received a WVFV gift card for expenses related to rescuing heritage sheep following the West Coast fires. Our social media efforts have alerted fellow veterans and supporters to her struggle.

8. GOAL: Promote public awareness of the continuing needs of injured veterans in transition to civilian life.

IN 2020 Public relations continued to be a high priority for WVFV with several remarkable events promoting WVFV and our mission:

Magazines like WindCheck and Our Neighbors featured stories about WVFV in 2020.

WVFV published quarterly newsletters to spread the word about our accomplishments on a regular basis to donors, awardees, vendors, advisors and the media.

Press releases were released throughout the year, with many picked up by local media in several states, and by Military.com and other online media. We miss our coverage by Alexis Ann of The Resident which ceased operations in 2020.

The VA Magazine will be featuring WVFV in an upcoming edition that was postponed due to COVID.

2020 is behind us – Forward to 2021!

There are many organizations good and bad, who want to help America's returning veterans. As we enter our 13th year, Work Vessels for Vets, Inc. still has found no other organization solely dedicated to awarding a real "hand up" in the form of physical equipment needed to start a business. WVFV has no long VA forms, no red tape. WVFV specializes in awards adapted to suit injuries, partnering with business mentors, offering assistance without judgment. With the cheerful hearts of our volunteers, the generosity of donors and grateful veterans, the success of this amazing nonprofit continues to meet the challenges ahead. It is the best way we know to say "thank you for your service" to our Post 9/11 military veterans.

Work Vessels for Vets, Inc.
P.O. Box 215
West Mystic, CT 06388
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