

RIVER DEEP FOUNDATION 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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Special thanks to Josh Kuehl and the photographers of Task Force: ISO for the cover image and many of the photographs throughout this report. Other photos by Bob Adwar and Jesus Guerra.

INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 started out positive with a full roster of outings and events to serve our military veteran clients who struggle with PTSD, TBI and other injuries, as well as other individuals with disabilities. As the COVID-19 virus began to spread in late February, by early March our outings were canceled due to statewide lock downs and other restrictions.

The main goal of River Deep is to provide an outlet for our clients to re-engage in life and find a path toward healing, rather than staying isolated indoors and succumbing to despair. The circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic and lock down of 2020 created an extra challenging situation—the very environment we aim to pull our clients out of, became a necessary way-of-life. After 3 months of canceled events, the weather improved and we were able to safely restart outdoor activities like fishing, equine assisted learning and indoor

art classes with a limited number of attendees allowed. As the year progressed, we worked closely with our outfitters to provide safe outings. While the risk of contracting COVID-19 is not to be taken lightly, nor is the risk to our clients who can easily slip into a state of despair without the chance to stay engaged and connect with others. The risks of death by suicide remains great as well, so we felt it was important to balance the need for connection with the need for COVID-19 safety in order to keep our clients well on all levels.



Patients actively being treated at Craig Hospital are in a particularly vulnerable medical condition so the therapeutic recreation patients were unable to join us for any events once the pandemic took hold. We did, however, have a few former patients join us on outings. We look forward seeing the Craig Hospital patients again in 2021 once conditions allow. Additionally, we were not able to move forward with developing adaptive equipment with the Colorado School of Mines and Quality of Life Plus. These projects will resume as soon as possible.



Even though our schedule was disrupted, this did not pause our efforts and commitment to the mission of River Deep Foundation. If anything, it highlighted the importance of community and camaraderie in times of struggle, and recommitted our efforts to keep our clients on the path to healing. We enter 2021 with a renewed sense of purpose and hope.

MISSION

The River Deep Foundation is dedicated to helping military veterans and other individuals who have experienced physical, emotional or psychological trauma—and those who assist them—to heal and re-engage in life through adventure, recreation and a network of support.

PROGRAMS

- **1. Recreational Group Outings.** These outings facilitate healing through active re-engagement in life. Activities include fishing, hunting, archery, art classes, cooking classes and more.
- **2.** Collaboration with an alliance. Our alliance of complimentary 501c3 not-for-profit organizations share resources, knowledge and ideas with the goal of providing more efficient and effective programming and outreach.

OUR STORY

The journey to the formation of the River Deep Foundation began over twenty years ago when small business owner and outdoorsman, Bob Adwar, in his role as Humanitarian Outreach Chairman for the Denver Chapter of Safari Club International (SCI), began organizing hunting and fishing outings for patients of Craig Hospital, the nation's premier spinal cord injury rehabilitation hospital. The goal was to provide a relaxing day in the outdoors and show patients what they could accomplish, despite their new limitations. As injured and traumatized soldiers began to return from war zones in need of physical, psychological and emotional healing, the program expanded and started reaching out to veteran groups. As the number of outings, participants and partner non-profits increased, it became vital to solidify our mission and brand the organization for easier communication and outreach. Thus, the River Deep Foundation was born.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We understand that if an individual is in crisis, the family is in crisis. We incorporate participation of families in our programs wherever possible.

We believe in consistency. We provide diverse, year-around opportunities for participants so they can avoid returning to a state of crisis and despair.

We believe in providing an instructional foundation. Our goal is to enable clients to explore new interests, start a new hobby and have the confidence to build on their experiences.

We believe in the power of cooperation. The collaboration within our alliance allows us to offer more resources to our mutual client base and provide a sense of community.

We believe in positive and inclusive experiences. Each individual is treated with dignity and encouraged to enjoy each experience without pressure.

OUTINGS PROGRAM

Daily life for individuals with a debilitating injury or trauma can be stressful and isolating, leading to depression, anxiety, hopelessness, despair and, in too many cases, suicide. River Deep organizes and implements recreational outings—often in the outdoors—that provide a priceless day of peace, relaxation, camaraderie and fun in a safe, supportive environment. These outings are shown to have a therapeutic effect and facilitate the healing process, greatly



improving one's outlook and willingness to reengage in life. The River Deep Foundation funds the logistics of these group outings.

Outings include activities like fishing, hunting, archery, fencing, art classes and cooking classes. Many are instructional in nature and can be enjoyed equally by novices and experienced individuals alike. Based on the logistics and location of the activity some outings are exclusive to our veteran clients or Craig Hospital patients, while others open to both, and provide meaningful interactions between the groups. Much of the outreach to potential participants is done through case managers at our alliance organizations and through our partnership with the Soldier Recovery Unit (SRU) at Ft. Carson (formerly known as the Warrior Transition Battalion). We invite families and caregivers to attend when possible to create a shared experience and connection in a environment free of daily stressors.





Alliance Program

The Alliance program of River Deep is an innovative and exciting collaboration between seven distinct not-for-profit organizations who each work, in their own way, to re-acclimate, re-enable and re-engage veterans or other disabled individuals and facilitate healing through an improved outlook and quality of life. While each organization provides different programs, their client bases often overlap. River Deep provides an easy referral channel for clients who may feel overwhelmed, to connect to other alliance services. We also support newer organizations, on an as-needed basis, to their bolster programs as they grow towards self-sustainment. The members share knowledge, ideas and resources to avoid "reinventing the wheel" as challenges come up. Additionally, the groups and their clients come together for the outings and activities planned by River Deep.

The alliance committee members meet quarterly to discuss issues, ideas, challenges and needs. The groups operate under a shared understanding and commitment to collaborate for the health of their organizations and ultimately the good of their clients.



Alliance Members

Anglers of Honor

Anglers of Honor (AoH) is dedicated to sharing world class, therapeutic fly fishing experiences with military service personnel and individuals with physical disabilities. The partnership with Kast King has provided fly rods to participants as well as other fundraising support. AoH has provided crucial organizational and operational support for River Deep.

Craig Hospital

As a large, established organization focused on spinal cord and brain injuries, Craig Hospital is able to provide outreach, operational guidance, contacts and credibility to our programs. They have benefited by offering their recreational therapy clients expanded opportunities to participate in our diverse outings and activities.



Operation TBI Freedom

As the military program of Craig Hospital, Operation TBI Freedom (OTF) helps River Deep outreach to veterans suffering from traumatic brain injuries.

Participation helps with the depression, isolation and anxiety that can result from a TBI. River Deep provides the majority of OTF's recreational outing programs as a complement their other support services.

SCI Humanitarian Outreach Program

SCI Humanitarian Outreach Program (SCI HOP) was the initiator of the outings program. They bring expertise in organizing the outings, contacts and resources. River Deep has allowed their program and outreach to expand.



Task Force: ISO

Task Force: ISO (TFISO) empowers veterans to see the world through a different lens using positive imagery and the art of photography. Their veteran photographers take professional images of the River Deep outings that are later used as content for outing summaries and other marketing materials. Our participants benefit by seeing positive imagery of themselves engaged in activities, boosting confidence and self esteem. TFISO benefits by providing in-the-field photographic training to their veteran clients.

Victory Service Dogs

Victory Service Dogs (VSD) helps local veterans affected with PTSD or other disabilities gain improved quality of life through partnership with a service or support dog. They have been able use our shared expertise, consulting and contacts to help them grow into a new facility. River Deep has sponsored a couple of veteran/dog teams which funds the two-year training program.

Quality of Life Plus (QL+)

Quality of Life Plus' (QL+) mission is to foster and generate innovations that aid and improve the quality of life for those who have served our country. To accomplish this they work with engineering students at top universities on specific adaptive challenges, improving on current designs or creating new ones. The close consultation with RDF helps identify more real world possibilities for adaptive equipment and the ability to further collaborate directly with the end-users. Our disabled participants benefit from the ability to test and use the equipment allowing them to more easily participate in activities.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Despite the challenges of 2020 we were able to launch new outings!

Blacksmithing

We are now working with Kilroy's workshop in Colorado Springs to offer Blacksmithing classes. Each session includes a bit of the history of blacksmithing, safety procedures and a review of skills and techniques. Each participants makes their own blade during class. Due to the popularity of this class we have added it to our monthly roster.





Try SCUBA

Through a new partnership with Denver Adaptive Divers and their amazing staff we now offer a chance to learn SCUBA diving. In the Try SCUBA program, instructors take participants one-on-one through every step in a relaxed and peaceful environment. SCUBA is not only fun it is also a wonderful way to facilitate the healing process. For participants

who would like to continue learning Scuba after the introductory class, Denver Adapter Divers will take them through the certification process and provide the opportunity to go on an open water dive trip!

Camping & Fishing by Horseback

John Howe with Capitol Peak Outfitters was kind enough to donate and lead a 2-day guided camping & fishing trip by horseback! In August of 2020, four veterans were treated to a weekend of fishing, camping and horseback riding near Snowmass, Colorado. The group enjoyed a fun trip catching trout at a mountain lake, hanging out at the camp and enjoying great meals. We are grateful to our hosts for giving these guys the chance to get away for a weekend of healing in the outdoors.





OUTINGS



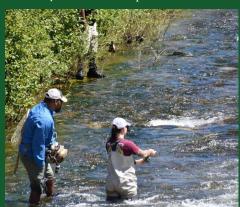
ARCHERY INSTRUCTION

RMS Gear in Lakewood Colorado hosts our participants and families for archery instruction.



EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING

The U.S. Air Force Academy Equestrian Center Remount Foundation, hosts Equine Assisted Learning sessions. They help veterans a day of relaxation with families. The days learn and practice coping skills for symptoms of anxiety, PTSD, and depression.



FISHING OUTINGS

Anglers of Honor and Lincoln Hills Fly Fishing Club provides access to premier waters for fly fishing and instruction. The facility has been restored to allow access for individuals with disabilities so it is perfect for our groups



ART CLASSES

The Art Students League of Denver and Cottonwood Art Center in Colorado Springs host art classes in drawing, painting, book arts, ceramics and more!



FAMILY FISHING & FUN DAYS

The Swift Ponds facility at Colorado Youth Outdoors Facility is the perfect setting for includes fishing, boating, archery, lunch and community building.



CAMPING/BALLOONING WEEKEND

The Pikes Peak Ballooning Society hosts a yearly Celebration-of-Honor Balloon Fly for veterans at Eleven-Mile State Park in Colorado. Our clients camp, fish and boat with their families the day before then wake up early to take flight!



COOKING CLASS

Cookbook Author Leslie Fangman holds classes on cooking wild game at the Specialty Appliance showroom in Greenwood Village.



HUNTING/TRAP SHOOTING

A variety of outfitters host us for hunts including pheasants, doves, turkeys, elk and wild hogs.



FENCING INSTRUCTION

Denver Fencing Center provides fencing instruction to both veterans and Craig Hospital patient participant.

2020 PROGRAMMING REPORT

Programs

Archery Instruction: 2 Fly Fishing: 5
Art Classes: 11 Horseback Trip: 1
Blacksmithing: 1 Hunting: 5
Cooking Class: 2 Try SCUBA: 1

Equine Assisted Learning: 6 Family Fishing and Fun Days: 1

Total Programs: 35

Programs Canceled Due to COVID-19

Camping/Ballooning Fly Weekend

Holiday Party

Colorado River float and fly fishing trip

Montana float and fly fishing trip
All sessions of fencing instruction

Selected sessions of archery instruction

All trap shoot/pheasant hunts

Most art classes at Art Students League of Denver

We generate outing reports after each program with a written detailed summary and photographs that are posted to our website, social media and sent to stakeholders.

Program Participants

Programs: 35

Craig Hospital Participants: 18

Veteran Participants: 243

Family Member Participants: 175

Volunteers: 116

Staff: 43

Total Over All Participants: 598

Programming Hours

Program Hours: 215
Participant Hours: 3557

Due to COVID-10 lock down and cancellations we had a substantial decrease in the total number of programs and participants compared to 2019.

2020 GROWTH

In the initial three years since the River Deep Foundation was founded our programs and participant numbers had increased substantially from year to year. The challenges brought on by the pandemic did not allow for this kind of growth, however we continued to add fresh activities to our roster that we will be able to launch with more consistency in the new year. We also maintained relationships with our partners and fostered new ones. The slow down in programs did not translate into a slow down of fundraising, communication and commitment to the our mission.



PROGRAM EVALUATION

River Deep is dedicated to providing the highest quality experience possible for our program participants. We work diligently to tailor and design events that specifically target the physical, social and emotional needs of our participants. In an effort to make the River Deep experience effective and positive, we are continually evaluating and measuring our impact through informal check-ins with participants and family members/caregivers, as well as through a formal follow-up evaluation tool. We use the feedback to help us refine and enhance the experiences in order to make the greatest impact.

Given the substantial decrease in our programming this year, we did not collect enough feedback to quantify our impact. We did continue to rely on anecdotal evidence that our programs were a helpful respite from a particularly challenging time, especially for individuals who were already struggling with isolation issues due to their condition. The following quotes are taken from videos made at outings in past years. Our postitive feedback and sentiments from participants has remained consistant.

If it wasn't for River deep and the other organizations who sponsor this event this I would still be at my house and just in closed doors, so I'm very grateful to be here, thank you!

- Participant, 2019 Camping and Ballooning Event

"I ended up in Colorado because I was in the Army I suffered some TBI's and this is what the event was about.. bringing out disabled veterans. And honestly it feels kind of empowering to be able to enjoy something for once after overcoming something so life-changing."

- Melissa, Participant, Anglers of Honor Fly Fishing

I served in the U.S Army for about four years before I was medically retired from from Fort Carson, Colorado. I'm here with my sister and my spouse. My spouse is a veteran also and she's the one who's a part of the Operation TBI program that allow us to do this event.. We did archery, it was my first time and it was an amazing experience. It, to me was very therapeutic..."

-Participant, Archery Instruction at RMS Gear

I haven't been this happy, in months, if years so I want to thank the people here a lot and my guide. I feel like I was maybe born to do this."

-Participant, Anglers of Honor Fly Fishing

I enjoyed myself immensely along with everybody else here. I think it opened up a new realm of what you can do because there's no wrong or right and the way I paint, it turned out to be a lot of fun.

-Participant, Art Class hosted by Denver's Art Student's League.

"Everybody that I know that's gotten out [of the service] is kind of looking for that tribe again. They're looking for their tribe and uh now that I have this group, with you know, camaraderie I'm back in a tribe. People are holding me accountable. I can't just, you know, slide down a path to doom. It's it saved my life and you know, I've heard that so many times doing these events with these guys. I mean, it's amazing!"

- Justin Napoletano, Participant, Wild Game Cooking Class

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

With the ever-changing COVID-19 restrictions and overall uncertainty, it was hard to know how to move forward with fundraising events. We were lucky that our two main yearly events are held outdoors and that our hosts were able to help us pull them together with some simple adjustments for safety.

3rd Annual Sporting Clays Fundraiser

By July of 2020 folks were ready to get out and about in the nice weather! As a result we had fantastic attendance at the 3rd Annual Sporting Clays Fundraiser on July 25th at Kiowa Creek Sporting Club. We had 21 teams of shooters, some experts and some beginners, competing for prizes and helping to support our cause. The competition seemed secondary to the smiles, laughter and sense that it was a much-needed break for everyone. The lunch gathering occurred in an open-air pavilion where everyone enjoyed individual lunch boxes while we shared the mission and successes of RDF and presented prizes. We owe this day to the all volunteers and supporters, Kiowa Creek Sporting Club, and to our generous sponsors, Jim & Sonya Bonanno & Family, Alan Battaglia with Equipment Locators and James Goza with Mercedes-Benz of Denver. The event raised a total of \$11,000 for River Deep Foundation.





Golf Tournament

In lieu of planning our own golf tournament this year, we intended to partner with Rocky Mountain Harley-Davidson and be the beneficiary of their annual tournament. When the pandemic led it being canceled, we quickly pulled together our own event with the help of Meridian Golf Course. We welcomed over 100 participants for a beautiful day of golf and fun. Rather than hosting a formal lunch as in years past, we met up at the end for thank yous. The day raised a total of \$12,400. Thank you to our generous sponsors White Cap, Audrey Will Luxury Real Estate, Aurora Residential Alternatives, CRS Insurance Brokerage, BBC Custom Hardwood and to our In-Kind Sponsors Patrón Tequila and Tito's Handmade Vodka. We look forward to partnering with Rocky Mountain Harley-Davidson in 2021.



NKBA Silent Auction Fundraiser and Holiday Party

River Deep was honored to be chosen as the beneficiary of the NKBA (National Kitchen and Bath Association) Rocky Mountain Chapter's holiday silent auction and fundraiser. This event featured an online auction in December of 2020 with a fun, interactive virtual holiday party! We would like to thank the NKBA members and executive committee for their hard work and participation that resulted in a donation of \$5,200 to River Deep Foundation!



Santa Deliveries

In November of 2020 Operation TBI Freedom (OTF) identified some families that needed a boost to help make their holidays special. Since our annual party was canceled, we shifted gears and let our donors know that we were seeking cash donations to help these families. Due to the generosity of our supporters we were able to purchase and deliver Christmas gifts as well as nearly 200 pounds of wild game meat to 18 veteran families, including 46 kids. Thanks to Chuck and Susan Williamson for handling all the deliveries and making the day special for everyone!





MARKETING/ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Donor Database

For the last three years we have been managing the River Deep Foundation donor database and other contacts through Blackbaud's E-tapestry platform. While it is a very robust system, it was not as user-friendly as we would like for a small organization such as ours and add-on capabilities were an extra cost. During 2020 we transferred to the Flipcause platform for a comparable cost. In addition to all the functions of a donor database, it includes peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns and other tools that will allows us to create a wider variety of new fundraising campaigns and manage our existing ones more efficiently.

Website

In 2020 we also refreshed the River Deep Foundation website. This new design was included as a service with the new Flipcause platform. The new site is easier to navigate and includes more videos and information, including a page dedicated to resources for veterans. Visit www.riverdeepfoundation.org.

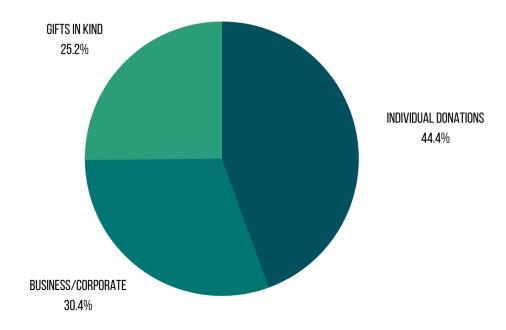








2020 FINANCIAL SUPPORT



A very special thank you to Mr. Robert F. Smith for his personal commitment in providing opportunities for deserving individuals. Mr. Smith's generosity makes an immediate difference in the lives of our participants. We greatly appreciate his kindness.

VOLUNTEERS

Reid Atkins Rob Krisner

Mark Bassagani Stephanie MacLennan

Shannon Boyles Colin Mulligan

DevronCodday Al Noraker

Patrick Duane Corrina Peters

Amy Duncan Scott Polak

Chris Dundas Randy Pruitt

Alan Dunlap Lori Raymond

Ethan Emery Alan Robinson

Leslie Fangman Allen Strong

Conner Flansburg Tyler Trouillot

Matthew Graeve Chuck Williamson
Joe Hubbard Angling University

Justin Hudson The Flyer Guide Service

Travis Jones The Staff at Belleview Spine and Wellness

John and Natasha Jugl



PARTNERS/OUTFITTERS

Our partners and outfitters are a vital part of our programming and we would like to acknowledge their assistance in making our outings successful.

Allen Strong-Holyoke, CO

Art Students League of Denver

Blue Quill Angler-Evergreen, CO

Bear Basin Ranch-Westcliff, CO

The Bluffs-Byers, CO

Camp Bullwheel-Madison River, MT

Capitol Peak Outfitters-Snowmass, CO

Cottonwood Art Denver-Colorado Springs, CO

Colorado Youth Outdoors-Windsor, CO

Denver Adaptive Divers-Denver, CO

Denver Fencing Center-Denver, CO

Eleven Mile State Park-Colorado

Kilroy's Workshop-Colorado Springs, CO

Lincoln Hills Fly Fishing Club-Black Hawk, CO

RMS Gear-Lakewood, CO

Air Force Academy Remount Foundation-Colorado Springs, CO

Specialty Appliance–Greenwood Village, CO

Ballooning Clubs-Pikes Peak (BSOPP), Colorado Balloon Club, AAAA from ABQ New Mexico

Valhalla-Bijou Hunt Club–Bennett, CO

Wittington Center-New Mexico



Bob Russel Chris Eddy Aaron Hughes Aaron LePedis Bonanno Family Chris Ravotti **Aaron Sexton** Brekhus Tile and Stone Chris Wood Al Duran Brent Taylor Cody Brooks Al Noraker **Brenton Scott** Corinna Peters Brian Pleumer Craig Hospital **Amy Dorsey** Brian Rolfson Craig Moelis Andrea Mikulec Broomfield VFW Aux 9565 Dave Platzer Andy Calerich **Building Operators of** David Barnard Anna King ARC Flash Gear Colorado (BOAC) David Loucks Carl Barna David Pettit Audry Will Chad Habegger Deborah Donner Bavaria Inn Debra Hicks BBC Custom Hardwood, Inc. Charlie Putman





Deren Williams

Devron Coday

Eagle Six Gear

Freda Moore

Gary Hegstad

Glen Cooper

Harold Fahrenbrook

Henry Snape

Hollis Booker

J.R. Lapierre

James Goza

Jan Mueller

Jared Caruso

Jason Bowman

Jason Miller

Jason Mundy

Jason Pastuch

Jeanette Sudan

Jeff Koepke

Jeff Ruckman

Jesus Guerra

Jesus Valerio

Joe Hicks

Joey Goetting

John Pirkopf

John Sullivan

, _

Joshua Murphy

Kathy Makowski

Keal Vigil

Ken Lopata

Kevin Turecek

Kroger(King Soopers)

Larry Beck

Lincoln Hills Cares Foundation

Louise Hadad

Luke Barden

Lynn Shelton

Mac Plymale, Jr

Marcie Rhodes



Marian Robinson

Mark Alan Eldridge

Mark Kvidera

Mark Yevoli

Martin Concannon

Martin Marietta

Martin W Buys

Mary Predovich

Matt Barna

Matthew Wenstrom

Michael Landry

Mike Larkin

Nate Howard

Neil Maday

Pat Mckune, E

Patrick Gorham

Peggy Claar

Peter J Taylor

Phillip and Susan Holmes

Predovich and Co.

Randall Castro

Rhize Above

Richard Duran

Richard Huey

Richard Steiner

Roadside Supplies

Ron Drey

Ryan Falliaux

Santiago Garcia III

Serge Hansen

Sherry McGann

Silas Rosales

Stephen Oertle

Steve Houy

Tammy Scott

TDC Marble Corp

Terry Reinke

The Ranch at West 40

Tim Schield

Tyler Mintz

Valhalla Bijou Hunt Club

Warner Andrews











SUMMARY

We are looking forward an improved public health situation so that we can host a fuller roster of outings in 2021! It is important that we help keep our clients on the road to mental, physical and emotional healing. River Deep Foundation expresses their deepest gratitude to our supporters and wishes everyone health and comfort in the coming year.



Healing Lives One Adventure at a Time

www.RiverDeepFoundation.org



@riverdeepfoundation

O.

@riverdeepfoundation

BOB ADWAR

President 303.881.0400 bob@scihop.org

Russel MacLennan

Vice President

J.R. LAPIERRE

Managing Director 720.504.9754 jr@anglersofhonors.org

Susan Williamson

Treasurer/Secretary

Chris Dundas

Board Member

Allen Smith

Board Member

Chuck Williamson

Board Member

Amy Norton

Marketing Director



Report Writing, Design and Layout by Amy Norton, The Creative Angle, Marketing & Communications

