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Funds Distribution Report

Recipient Organization:

Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors

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Organization's General Goals:

Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors provides some emergency assistance, therapeutic services, support groups, and morale-building programs for wounded service members and their families in Washington state.

Date of Award:

2018 Q4

Level:

\$7,501 to \$10,000

Specific Use for This Award:

For more information, please read the attached report from Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors.

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December 8, 2019

FINAL REPORT FOR HEARTBEAT SERVING WOUNDED WARRIORS

Q4 2018

www.heartbeatforwarriors.org

1) A description of the completed project: K9 Healing Warriors and Back in the Saddle Warriors and number of warriors served.

K9 Healing Warriors:

K9 Healing Warriors is a service dog program that is ongoing. It was initiated in October 2016. By October 2017 the goal of enrolling 10 Wounded Warriors/Dog teams was achieved. Heartbeat continues to add warriors to the program. In the last 12 months, 6 new teams have been added and 5 teams have passed their State Certification Test. K9 Healing Warriors' primary purpose is to help warriors navigate through their injuries, physical and psychological, to help them reintegrate into the community and their families. Isolation is the byproduct of their disabilities. The service dog gives the warrior the confidence to go out into the community. He has his own buddy, who has his back.

The service dogs are specifically trained to one warrior and to the specific needs of that warrior. Some of these specific needs may be: turning off and on lights, waking warriors from nightmares, accompanying the warrior in public places, assisting with balance, assisting with prosthetic devices and performing calming behaviors to facilitate reorientation. In short, service dogs can transform lives by building bridges to independence. With the increasing numbers of warriors returning with PTSD, TBI and physical disabilities, service dogs are a unique way to help.

Dogs are able to help even the most isolated warrior. Offering praise to the animal and teaching service commands helps the warrior overcome his emotional numbness and increases his ability to communicate. The hypervigilance that most wounded warriors feel is reduced with the service dog. And since the service dog is now standing watch, restorative sleep is finally attained.

Back in the Saddle Warriors and BITS: Kids:

Heartbeat's Equine Assisted Therapy Program, BITS, is used to capture those warriors who do not fit in the "normal box" for treatment. For many warriors, sitting in a room with a therapist does not bring the desired results. Using the horse in Equine Therapy allows the warrior to "be outside the box," to enlarge the healing process. This therapy is presently being used for warriors with traumatic brain injury (TBI),

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post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), spinal cord injuries, traumatic amputations and other injuries due to shrapnel damage.

Horses and humans have something in common: a pelvis that works and moves in the same way. Both have identical hip movements when walking. Sitting on a moving horse allows the warrior's body to move naturally. It strengthens muscle groups. Staying upright on a horse requires balance, coordination and muscle strength. Injuries from war may have affected those abilities, and these can be improved with this type of therapy. In addition to the increase in strength, balance and coordination, being outdoors, learning new skills and forming a bond with an amazing animal are an added bonus.

There is also a grooming component to the therapy. The care and closeness given to the horse is beneficial to the warrior. The grooming can be calming and help even the most isolated warrior. Grooming and communicating with the horse helps the warrior overcome his emotional numbness and increases his ability to communicate.

Every Tuesday, Heartbeat offers Equine Therapeutic Riding for Wounded Warriors. Heartbeat is fortunate to have a PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) certified instructor for the horse, who also is competent to design therapies for the warrior. The therapies are individual to each warrior, depending on the need. Up to three warriors can be accommodated each week in this therapy. In 2018 86 Wounded Warriors were serviced by this therapy. Every Wednesday, Hippotherapy is offered to the warriors. This therapy involves the use of an occupational therapist to design the therapy and the PATH instructor as the equine specialist. Many of the warriors state that they cannot replicate the benefits of the therapy by performing the same maneuvers in a gym. Up to three warriors can be accommodated each week in this therapy. This therapy was initiated in April, 2018. For the year so far (November, 2019) between the two therapies for warriors, a total of 184 warriors were served.

Beginning in October of 2017, Heartbeat instituted BITS: Kids. This program is specifically for disabled or special needs children of Wounded Warriors. The therapy is for children age 3 to 13 and can improve joint mobility, balance and coordination, relaxation of spasticity, increased muscle tone, self-confidence and improved learning. Goals are discussed with the child, parent and our PATH instructor to determine the individual plan. Each child has a 1 hour session every Tuesday. In 2019, 42 Kid Therapies were performed.

Wounded warriors and their families represent all races, ethnicities, genders, and ages. Many are Junior Enlisted Soldiers (E6 and below) with very young families and are the lowest paid military service members. Heartbeat serves them all at no expense to the warrior.



2) An assessment of its benefit to the community.

Oftentimes, average citizens and their communities are not aware of the struggles of our wounded warriors when they return home and that is precisely when they need us the most. The military teaches our brave men and women to take care of themselves and others...they are givers, not takers...and rarely ask for help. When their community voluntarily steps up and helps them, it creates a powerful impact on the wounded service member's well-being and his/her ability to heal. Furthermore, when a community is embracing the plight of these warriors and is participating in their recovery, it is a remarkable achievement that echoes the compassionate American spirit which is at the core of our great country. For every warrior injured, it impacts an average of 10 people that are close to him; family members, friends, co-workers, etc. Their injuries can produce a negative trickle-down effect on the community. Thus when a warrior experiences healing, the community is strengthened. Many of these warriors are able to return to their families and communities and be a participating member.



THERAPY PROGRAMS

Let the Healing Begin



A Back in the Saddle Warrior with her horse getting ready for the grooming process. This not only benefits the horse but also helps connect the Warrior with her emotions. It is a very calming and enjoyable experience.



A Wounded Warrior spends time with his horse after the therapy session. The close bond these Warriors develop with the animals is part of the therapy.



Hippotherapy and Equine Therapeutic Riding both involve muscle strengthening and stretching while on the horse.



Hippotherapy utilizes the horse as a therapy tool. Each Warrior has an individual plan of therapy that involves time on the horse and time grooming. Grooming allows the Warrior to develop close bonds with the animal, which can help heal the emotional scars inside.



During Hippotherapy the Warrior works with the occupational therapist on exercises while keeping balanced on the horse. Many of the Warriors state that they cannot duplicate on their own what they can accomplish on the horse.



Female soldier lying back on the horse. This soldier is so comfortable with this horse that she has used for several weeks. She is able to lie back and hold this position while the horse is moving. This requires a significant amount of trust between the horse and the rider.



Male soldier doing a back stretch while on the horse. The horse is not moving.



Male soldier doing front stretch while on the horse. The horse is stationary.



During Hippotherapy the Warrior works with the occupational therapist on exercises while keeping balanced on the horse. Many of the Warriors state that they cannot duplicate on their own what they can accomplish on the horse.



Male soldier riding without hands for balance. This is very difficult to do and also involves a significant amount of trust between horse and rider. Many times the exercises not only help physiologically but also psychologically. Here, core strength, balance and trust are worked on all at the same time.



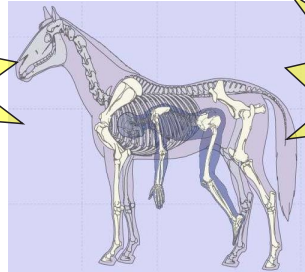
Hippotherapy

(hippo – “horse”, therapy – “treatment”)



Visual – Sight
Auditory – Hearing
Gustatory – Taste
Tactile – Touch
Olfactory – Smell
Vestibular – Balance
Proprioceptive – Awareness of the position of one's body/body parts

We have 7 senses, not just 5



We have very similar structure



Horses help Warriors build trust

Sensory – Offering a sensory rich environment. Sensory stimulation has been shown to aid in the therapy process. The more senses the better!

Physical – Facilitates natural and functional movement. Strengthens muscle groups. Improves range of motion, balance and coordination.

Psychological – Gain leadership and collaboration skills (roles). Builds trust and confidence.



Horses mirror human



Cognition can often be improved

Cognitive (Mental Processing) – Facilitates motor planning (praxis). Improves timing and sequencing of self. Builds problem-solving skills.

Social/Emotional – Engage with horses and people. Learn to better recognize and modify feelings (emotional regulation).

All sessions are led by licensed therapy practitioners (Occupational, Physical, Speech) and PATH certified personnel.

The goals revolve around treatment vs. leisure / recreation.

Hippotherapy sessions are one-on-one and tailored to the individual receiving treatment.

Hippotherapy vs. Therapeutic Riding



Roxie during Equine Therapeutic Riding.



Roxie walking a rescued pony. Part of the emotional healing occurs when the warrior is able to relate and care for the animal. Here, this pony is a rescue and Roxie was overwhelmed with joy to help him. The grooming and the walking all help form a connection.



Equine Therapeutic Riding.



Heartbeat's first Back in the Saddle: Kids, BITS: Kids, candidate. This program is open to disabled or special needs children of Wounded Warriors. The emotional attachment by the child to the horse can be overwhelming at times and is incorporated into the therapy.



Jilly is our newest disabled child to participate in BITS: Kids. She has always kept her head down whether walking or riding. Her mom now states that since she has been in our program, she is getting much better at holding her head upright. She has also improved both the strength and the function of the muscles in all her extremities.

The Effectiveness of Heartbeat's Hippotherapy and Equine Therapeutic Riding Validated Statistically

by Janet Raulerson

Definition and background of statistical analysis:

Statistical Analysis is defined as the science of collecting and presenting large amounts of data to discover underlying patterns. Heartbeat utilized statistical analysis to compare the effectiveness of our Equine Therapeutic Riding Program and our Hippotherapy Program. We utilized 6 aspects to evaluate: pain level, mood, flexibility, anxiety, physical tension and ability to focus. Heartbeat wanted to see if there was a significant difference between the before rating and the after rating of the therapies; and if there was a difference, was that difference only due to chance or results of the therapy. The use of the *p value* in statistical analysis helps decide this. The *p value* represents the probability that the results of the therapy are caused by chance alone. The smaller the *p value*, the less likelihood that the results are due to chance. Most analysis use a *p value* of 0.05 to determine that the results are not by chance but are due to the therapy. In our analysis, the *p value* was calculated to be 0.0001. This means that the difference between the before and after results was attributed to chance only 1 time out of 10,000. This level of difference is very significant. Bottom line, the therapies are making a substantial difference in the Wounded Warriors' lives.

Defining Hippotherapy and Equine Therapeutic Riding:

In 2010, Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors initiated a clinical, cutting edge Hippotherapy program, appropriately named Back in the Saddle Warriors. The American Hippotherapy Association (AHA), founded in 1992, defines Hippotherapy as "the movement of the horse as a strategy by physical therapists (PT), occupational therapists (OT), and speech-language pathologist (SLP) to address impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities in patients with neuromusculoskeletal dysfunction.

Essentially, warriors perform different physical therapy maneuvers while on the horse. This requires them to perform a number of maneuvers and respond to the horse's movements at the same time. The net effect is improved muscle tone, balance, posture, coordination, strength and flexibility. Balance is particularly important for warriors with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Horses and humans have something in common, a pelvis that works and moves the same way. Both have identical hip movements when walking. Sitting on a moving horse allows the warrior's body to move naturally. It strengthens muscle groups. Staying upright on a horse requires balance, coordination and muscle strength. Injuries from war may have affected those abilities and these can be helped by this therapy.

Although the horse is utilized as a physical therapy tool, the animal can offer much more. The warriors respond emotionally as well as physically to the horse. These animals are gentle and sensitive, and have a unique ability to sense human emotions. Horses are also able to mirror the warrior's emotions so that he has a better understanding of where he is emotionally. This special bond helps warriors work through difficult issues. This can build confidence and change their outlook on life. In short, it can help bring healing.

In 2018, Heartbeat added a second therapy program to Back in the Saddle Warriors: Equine Therapeutic Riding. This therapy teaches the warrior to ride while working on posture, balance and confidence. As stated earlier, balance is very important for those warriors with TBI. Riding on the horse also has a positive impact, and affects the body brain connection in a positive way.

Design and set up of the therapy programs:

Data was collected in the form of pre therapy and post therapy evaluations for 6 different aspects: pain, anxiety, flexibility, physical tension, mood and ability to focus. Each warrior would rate each aspect on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being no pain, no anxiety, very flexible, relaxed, good mood and good ability to focus. A rating of 10 represented maximum pain, high anxiety, tight, tense, negative mood, and poor ability to focus. Data was collected for Hippotherapy from December 18th, 2012 to November 2nd, 2014 (173 therapy sessions); January 13th, 2015 to December 13, 2016 (86 therapy sessions); and January 7, 2019 to July 17, 2019 (51 therapy sessions). Equine Therapeutic Riding utilized that same 6 aspects and same evaluation forms for the months of January 2, 2018 to July 17, 2019 (125 therapy sessions).

The Hippotherapy data and the Equine Therapeutic Riding data were analyzed separately. After comparing all of the before and after data in a paired t-test, the results showed an extremely significant difference with a *p value* of .0001. Therefore, the warriors showed extremely significant improvement in terms of pain level, anxiety, flexibility, physical tension, mood and ability to focus for both Hippotherapy and Equine Therapeutic Riding. Heartbeat also noted that several of the warriors were able to come off many of their medications and one warrior that needed a cane for walking was able walk independently after weeks of Equine Therapeutic Riding.

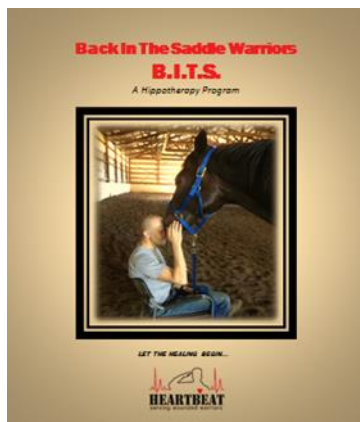
Heartbeat is continuing to keep evaluations on all of the warriors involved in each of the two programs for further analysis. We are extremely excited that both of these therapies can now be validated both qualitatively as well as quantitatively.



How BITS has changed my life....Let me count the ways.....

1. Tuesday is my new Friday.
2. I love Mondays because Tuesday is coming.
3. At 12:30pm every Tuesday I restart my countdown to 8:55am the following Tuesday. (That is when I leave my house to come to BITS. Don't want to be late).
4. I "you tube" horse videos and I signed up for a horse riding newsletter.
5. Riding, being around, smelling, hearing and watching horses has given me the strength to keep pushing. I think horses 24/7 now as opposed to being in a black hole. I have something positive to look forward to on Tuesdays. Thank you for giving me my fight back.

A Back in the Saddle Warrior





Heartbeat's K9 Warriors with their dogs just before training class. Two of the Warriors (Zack and Kal, and Luis and Tina) had their own dogs that were evaluated and proven to be acceptable for the program. The third Warrior (Mike and Turner) did not have his own dog but Heartbeat was able to purchase a beautiful German Shepherd for him from a local breeder and trainer.



Mike and Turner. Turner was obtained by Heartbeat from a local breeder as Mike did not have a dog of his own. The team is doing very well in the program.



Wounded Warrior Mike and his family right after her received his new service dog, Turner. Since this time, the team has completed the course and recently passed the Service Dog Test. Another success story.



Zack is comforted by Kal, his service dog. These dogs are trained to anticipate the anxious states of their owners. They are also able to wake the Warrior just prior to a nightmare. This enables the Warrior to obtain the restful sleep he so desperately needs. These are only a few of the duties the service dog performs.



Luis and Tina practice at the grocery store. Each training is different depending on the Warrior's needs. Many have difficulty going into public places and their K9 partner can help with this and alleviate the anxiety that the Warrior feels.



Margarita and Wolfgang beginning the program



Mike and Leia were the first graduates from our K9 Healing Warriors Program. Both are doing very well and living in California.



Zack and Kal during a training session at the store. The training for this program can be up to a year. It is a big commitment by the Warrior as training classes are several times each week. Heartbeat pays for all the costs of the class, supplies and emergency veterinarian costs.



Irma and Mattis. Mattis is just a puppy so is just working on puppy training at this point. Shortly he will begin training to help Irma with her needs.



Irma and Mattis: Mattis is just a puppy and has been working on basic puppy training. Here Mattis is learning how to comfort Irma.



Rochelle and Thor at an event.



Tyler and Ivy learning to walk on a new surface.



Steve practicing with Luna.



Lacy and Abby at Home Depot. This team is making good progress and is now starting to do more community training. Lacy is learning to be attentive to Abby's alerts when he is anxious and Abby is consistently reminding Lacey to take his medication.



**A heartfelt letter from a Wounded Warrior Spouse regarding
Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors K9 Healing Warriors Program**

Dear Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors

I am a spouse of a wounded warrior. I just wanted to reach out and explain how much this program has changed not only my husband's life but mine as well. When I first met my husband he was a high functioning person and now he's the complete opposite. While my husband was serving in the military he did acquire many different disabilities. My Husband shouldn't be left alone. He is a danger to himself and others. He's not mentally all their anymore.

He has no short term memory, no sense of day or time. He can't make rash decisions. All of those things on top of his mental disabilities make it impossible for him to work. He tries really hard to work but he keeps getting fired due to his inability to perform.

We lost everything when he got out of the military. Heartbeat took us from being homeless living out of the car, to living in an apartment. Life isn't easy being the sole provider. On top of working 2 jobs i have to take care of my husband and make sure he doesn't do anything crazy. I love my husband so much, but it's not easy. Some days we can't even get to the front door without him freaking out. He can't go anywhere or do anything unless I am with him. HBSWW recommended that we have our puppy become a service dog through K9 Healing Warriors. My husband thought that was a great idea but wasn't sure about it. He went and decided yes he could handle doing this training.

Here we are 3-4 months later and my husband can go places by himself. He is able to be more independent with his service dog. His service dog calms him down before he can start to have a freak out. The dog reminds him to take his medicine. When he is having a freak out the dog is trained to attack him with kisses and hugs... yes hugs! When going out in public his service dog is trained to block people from getting to close to my husband and to monitor him and ensure that he is safe and secure. He is so well trained in fact that he is able to sense when my husband is about to start having issues and can remove him from those situations and breaks his attention. The dog is literally trained to find the door in a store and take my husband through it to get him away from whatever it is that is triggering him.

Life is hard but Heartbeat has made life a little less stressful. I have never been so thankful. I can't explain how much this program has helped us. Thank you so much for everything.

Sincerely,

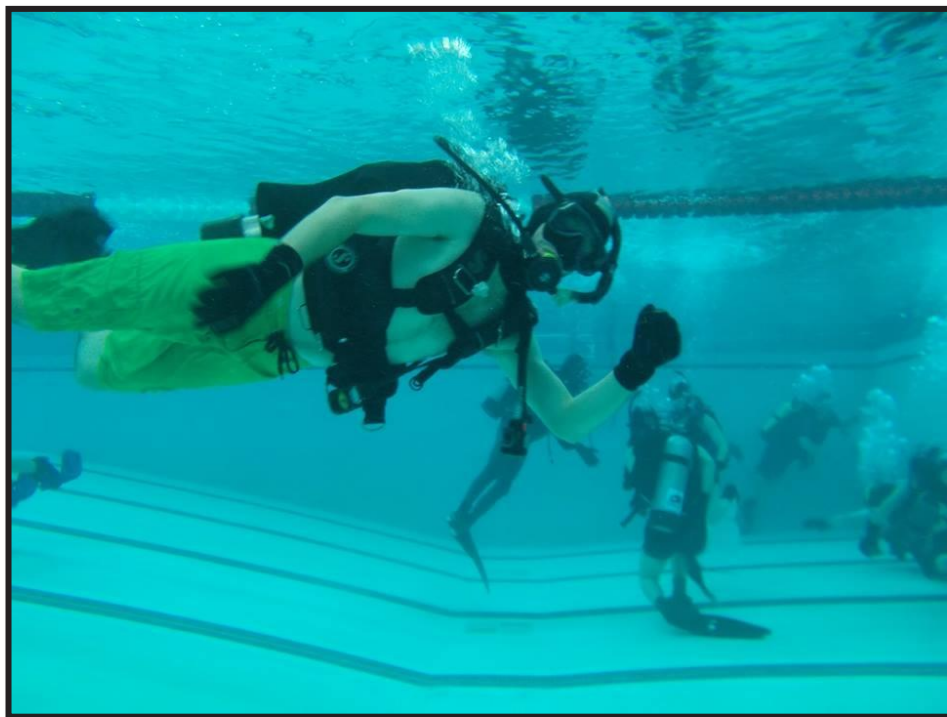
A grateful spouse



Hey there Janice,

I wanted to let you know that Kal is doing amazing. Sharon has been so helpful getting me and Kal to where we are at and I want you to know I will be forever grateful to you for giving me this gift. Kal is a life saver and he's given me back some of my independence that I never thought I'd have again. So thank you. I will always love you and Sharon more that I'll be able to express. You are amazing people and I don't know where I would be without you.

A grateful K9 Warrior



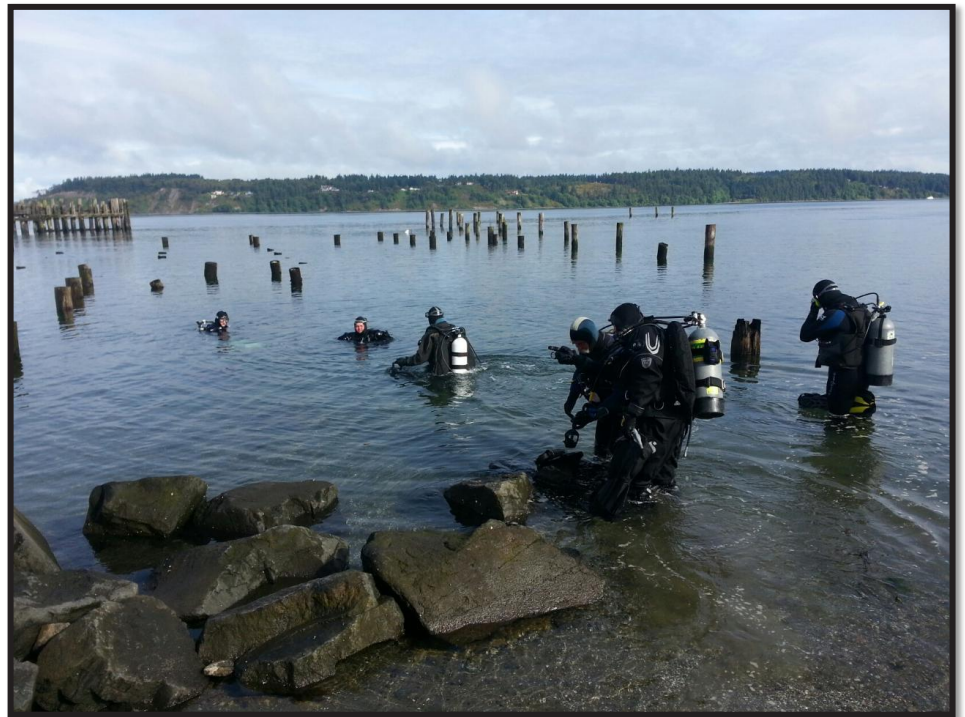
The warriors have fun even while learning and practicing a new sport.



Scuba warriors pair up to check equipment and in preparation for their dives.



Two warriors get ready to practice in the pool.



Warriors getting ready to practice in the open water. Scuba certification takes place on the second day of open water diving.



Warriors practice breathing techniques during pool time.



The warriors practice hand signals which help with communication under water. Practices are always about working as a team, just like when the warriors were overseas.



Scuba Warrior Class of August 2019 preparing for their open water certification test.



Scuba warriors class with the instructor and safety divers.



Meet Seth...

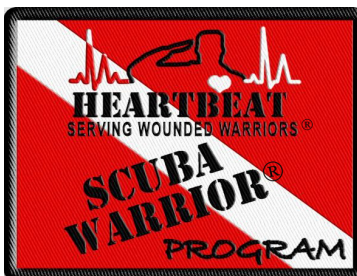
Our President, Janice Buckley, started to communicate with Vanessa, the wife of wounded warrior Seth. Vanessa had learned of our Scuba Warrior Program, and believed that Seth could benefit from it. Seth suffered from TBI and PTSD after several tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Vanessa saw to it that all of the paperwork was completed so that Seth would be properly enrolled. At the time, she was pregnant and cared for their two children, a two year old and a four year old. Vanessa shared with Janice some of the difficulties of caring for a family while also caring for the needs of Seth.

In April, Janice learned that Vanessa had suffered a stroke and had tragically died. The baby, however, survived. Can you imagine the situation that Seth was presented with? Being a wounded warrior, having just lost his spouse, a newborn baby and two young children to care for...incomprehensible. Fortunately, his mother was able to fly out to help with the children.

Since all of Seth's benefits had not been processed yet, his finances were unstable. Heartbeat immediately stepped in to help. We provided emergency financial assistance to help with the airfare for Seth's mother, to help with funeral arrangements, and their mortgage payment. Heartbeat also helped with food gift cards. Seth indicated to us that our assistance was lifesaving.

We are happy to report that Seth stayed enrolled in the Scuba Warrior Program, and has completed his open water certification. He is now participating with the Scuba Warrior Alumni Team (SWAT) where graduates of the program get together on their own to continue diving, and build strong life-long bonds with the team.

Because of the generous support of our funding partners, we are able to be a life-line for many warriors like Seth who would otherwise be faced with unsurmountable difficulties while adjusting to civilian life after their injuries.



LETTER FROM A GRATEFUL SPOUSE

This Special Forces family enrolled in our Scuba Warrior Course as a family. In the pictures, the wife, Karin, is shown diving in an open water format. Then there are several pictures with her son Camden practicing with his father Chris and the instructor Mike. The entire family received their diving certificate and has been able to continue diving as a family. Heartbeat paid for several extra dives once the certification had been obtained. The rehabilitation of the diving and the comradery of the other warriors and spouses have been extremely healing for this family. Because this meant so much to her, she wrote a letter to Heartbeat expressing her feelings about Scuba Warriors:

Hi Janice,

I wanted to thank you for the fabulous lunch. What a great day for lunch outside on that deck. My family is enjoying Scuba so much more than I could ever imagine. It has been rough for us since Chris's injury. He has a lot of memory loss in addition to some physical issues. There has been a big disconnect between Chris and our son Camden. Chris has had to re-learn a lot of things he used to know and he gets frustrated. So learning Scuba together and then working as a team is incredible. It also gives them something to talk about. The added plus is how proud Chris is of Camden doing so well so far.

Of course I love it as well. I love the water, and I didn't realize how good it would make me feel. We also look forward to being with everyone. For quite some time we have really been alone. You have most likely heard it before, but families have a hard time understanding injuries. Mike, another Wounded Warrior in Scuba Warriors, shared with Chris about his own parents and it helped a lot.

I just wanted to thank you and let you know we will all be diving next week Tuesday and Wednesday to finish. You expressed that you didn't have a lot of time to travel. I would love to volunteer and help out however I can. Just let me know if I can help out.

Thank you so much for the Scuba experience!!! Best gift of the year!

Karin



Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors would like to thank all of our donors for making these therapies possible. Each therapy is different and making amazing improvements in the lives of the warriors and their entire family. We are so grateful for your support. Your donations help pay for the places where the therapy takes place, the equipment needed and the therapists themselves.