

We Build Relationships with Service Members — *That Last a Lifetime...*

“

When I went to that first event it really opened my eyes, it opened my heart and it gave me that spirit back to be able to get my life back on track. If it wasn't for you, that would've never happened, so I'm really thankful and appreciative that you are contributing to this amazing organization that has changed lives like mine.

—*Captain Sarah Bettencourt, USMC*



SEMPER FI & AMERICA'S
FUND

For Our Combat Wounded, Ill, and Injured

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joseph F. Dunford, Jr.
General, USMC (Retired)
Chairman of the Board
19th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
36th Commandant of the Marine Corps

Annette Conway
Vice-Chairman of the Board

Edward (Kim) Foley III
Treasurer of the Board
Chairman of Foley, Inc
U.S. Marine (1967–1971)

Wendy Letbin
Secretary of the Board
Vice President, Community Outreach

Robert M. (Bob) Bowlin
Former Chairman, Sony Music International
CPA (Retired)

C. Forrest Faison, III
Vice Admiral, USN (Retired)
38th Surgeon General of the Navy

Karen Guentber
President, Chief Executive Officer, Founder

Carlton W. Kent
Sergeant Major, USMC (Retired)
16th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps

Laura Mitchell
Executive Director, The Bob & Renee Parsons
Foundation

John M. (Jay) Paxton, Jr.
General, USMC (Retired)

John F. Sattler
Lieutenant General, USMC (Retired)

James D. Weiskopf
Colonel, USA (Retired)

Chairman, Emeritus
Alfred M. Gray
General, USMC (Retired)
29th Commandant of the Marine Corps

Dear Fund Family and Friends,

I HOPE THIS NEWSLETTER finds you doing well. Over the last few months, our Nation has been challenged by COVID, the economy, and the death of George Floyd. In many cases, these events have directly impacted you and your families. During such times, it would be easy to dwell on the negative and be pessimistic about the future. There is no doubt, these are tough times.

Like all of you, I've had a few bad days in 2020. But throughout this difficult period, I've had more good days than bad days and I've been able to remain optimistic about the future. There are a couple of reasons for my hope and optimism. First, I continue to have faith in the American people and their unique ability to adapt and overcome. I've seen our country go through challenging times before and emerge stronger. I'm confident we will do that again.

But closer to home, my optimism comes from watching how our Fund Family has responded over the last few months. I've been inspired by continued commitment of the Fund's leadership team and staff, the creativity and passion of the case managers, and the compassion of our visiting nurses. The Fund promises to be there when we're needed, and our team has been undeterred in delivering on that promise.

I've also been uplifted by our donors. They have reminded me of the generous spirit of the American people. Many who have been severely impacted

by the economic downturn have continued to unselfishly contribute to the Fund. Some, recognizing the increased need, have actually increased their contributions. And we have also seen new donors emerge to help. Last but not least, it's hard not to be optimistic and inspired when I see so many of our wounded, ill, injured and their families remind us that they have overcome more difficult challenges.

As you will read in Karen's letter, no one knows what the future may hold. But we do know that whatever the future may hold, we'll deal with it together. Knowing that is enough for me to say — we've got this. On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for remaining always faithful to the Fund and to each other.



Semper Fidelis
Joe Dunford



CORPSMAN AND MEDIC REUNION

They've Given So Much — Now It's Our Turn

The basic ideal that drives our efforts is simple: As much as these American heroes have sacrificed, they deserve the best care and support available in their hour of need. Injuries are often severe, and the road to recovery or rehabilitation can be long and costly.



Who We Are

The Semper Fi & America's Fund directly supports Combat Wounded, Critically Ill, and Catastrophically Injured Service Members...*for life*.

We put our arms around Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard Service Members and their Families. Our Mission is Critical. Our Duty is Clear.

Our streamlined structure keeps overhead very low because we realize every dollar saved can be used for programs and services for our Service Members.





Semper Fi & America's Fund Skip's Kids Program

The life of a military child is never easy. The constant moves, changing of schools, making new friends, and handling deployment takes a toll on the youngest members of our military communities. A child of a wounded, ill, or injured veteran endures much more, watching their parent and family turned upside-down due to the effects of war. Semper Fi & America's Fund strives to support our military kids through counseling, back to school events, and family resiliency events. But when a child has an illness or injury, it puts additional stress on the already challenging military lifestyle. The extraordinary hardship military families face when caring for a child with a serious illness or injury can include being far away from family support in addition to trouble accessing a specialized children's hospital. With a grant given in memory of Skip Viragh, we are excited to announce the Skip's Kids Program for children of military families.





Since inception, The Fund has helped children with terminal cancer, catastrophic injuries, and other diseases. Our aid started with gas cards for the long trips to and from hospitals from their military base, and then transitioned to more specialized grants through our Family Support Program. Our vision has always been to grow our unique family support, and now with this grant honoring Skip Viragh, we can achieve an expanded program. The new addition to Semper Fi & America's Fund includes events and counseling, expanding illness and injury support, and providing outreach and much needed assistance to ensure the children in every branch of our nation's military are well taken care of. Please join us in providing critical support to our military children!



More Powerful Together

Although we found ourselves in uncharted waters, we have navigated the coronavirus situation — together! We have been on the ground, taking action, and ensuring our service members and their families know that they are not alone. We have already sent out food baskets, gift cards, and financial grants to those who are home bound. We are also assisting those with cancer and our Vietnam veterans, who are both at increased risk.

Grounded by our commitment to service members and their families, The Fund's operations will continue in the midst of the COVID-19 situation. Regardless of time or place, we are dedicated to the mission before us and we need your help in the days and months ahead.

From Those We Serve:

"Hello everyone at the Semper Fi & America's Fund. Thank you so much for the wonderful box of soup. We are so grateful especially currently due to the coronavirus. We are staying at home as required. I only leave the house for essentials. We pray you all stay well and thank you very much." —*SgtMaj, Marine Corps*

"I want to thank you for the Spoonful of Comfort box that we received today. We had just heard on the news today that our county has the first confirmed coronavirus case. Our state is up to 63 cases but today when the news came out that there is one in our city...it was very scary. Because of the risks with so many people in and out of our home each week, I have canceled all but one aide that helps to care for my son. Many thanks to you and all the generous donors at the Semper Fi & America's Fund for all you do for our Veterans and caregivers!" —*Mother of SPC, Army*

"Just want to say thank you for all you guys do. You didn't give up on us just because we moved out of the hospital. You didn't give up on us when we moved into this new house. You are continuously checking on us and we just want to say thank you." —*MSG, Army*

"It's so amazing how in the midst of this pandemic and taking care your own families, that you go beyond to give such a humbling gesture stating and reaffirming every time that you are here to serve and that we are not forgotten. Thank you so much and I pray blessings over you and all the wonderful donors that make this stuff happen. May God bless you and may he see us through this pandemic." —*SSgt, Marine Corps*



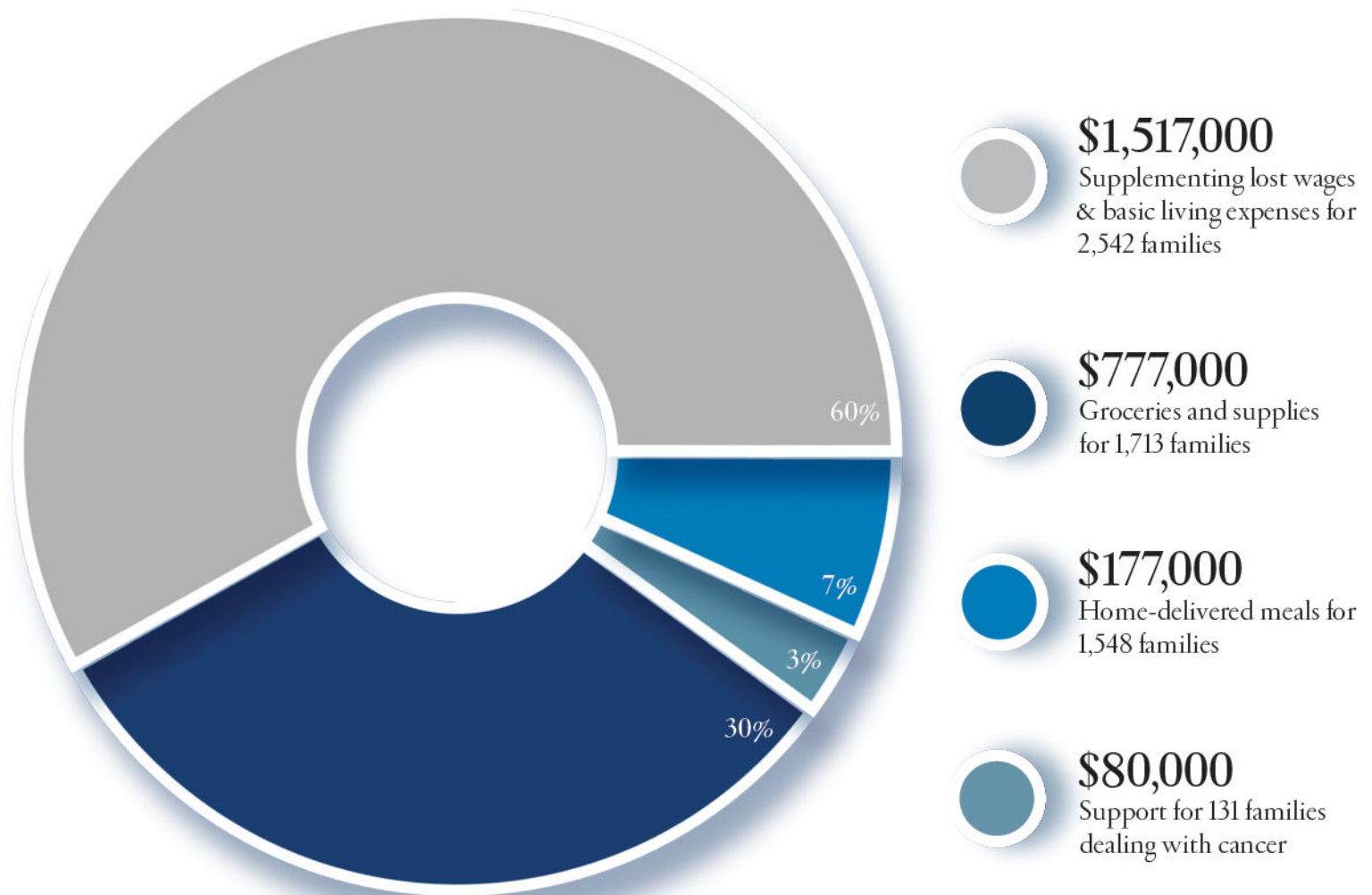
Types of Support Provided in Response to COVID-19 March–June 2020

\$2,551,000

Direct Financial
Assistance Provided

3,585

Service Members, Veterans
and Families Assisted



A very special **THANK YOU** to our corporate COVID-19 partners —
Verisign, The USAA Foundation, and The Home Depot Foundation!



“The Semper Fi & America’s Fund’s actions definitely speak louder than words.”

MSgt Joe Deslauriers was inspired to join the Air Force in 1998 by his grandfather who served in WWII and three Vietnam Veteran uncles. After completing EOD technical training school, he was stationed in Germany when he deployed to Italy for the Kosovo campaign. After serving in Kuwait and a tour in the Republic of Korea, the Air Force sent Deslauriers to Florida where he deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He served three tours in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

On September 23, 2011, while conducting a post-blast investigation of three IEDs, MSgt Deslauriers was walking through an area that had been swept over, an area he himself had gone over previously, and stepped on a pressure plate as he was returning to his vehicle. He describes the moment after the blast went off, “My ears were ringing, and the wind was knocked out of me.” He later found out he had a ruptured lung in addition to severe injuries to his legs. Deslauriers attributes his survival to his swift acting teammates and the British service members who cared for him aboard a medevac.

Joe was eventually transferred to Bethesda, MD where his wife met him. She was eight months pregnant. “At that time, the severity of my injuries finally set in, along with the immense pain. It really felt like I had elephants either sitting on my thighs or hanging from them.” He always knew he would be in the best of care between the hospital staff and the support of his family but, “Soon I would find out that I had more family I didn’t know I had.”





Joe first encountered the Semper Fi & America's Fund in the hospital as he began to adjust to life as a triple amputee. "They came in not only bringing gifts and donations, but a much-needed reassurance that we were going to be just fine. It was the first time we were going through this, but unfortunately, they had seen it too many times." In addition to assistance throughout his recovery in the hospital, Joe and his family have received accessible vans, funding for accessible housing, and now transition assistance with the Apprenticeship Program.

"From the time I was injured all the way up till today, about nine years now, they have been with me and my family, supporting us all the way."

The Semper Fi & America's Fund Apprenticeship Program has introduced Joe to opportunities he did not think possible post-injury. He has been able to start his own laser engraving business. "I really don't know where I would be without the program — probably still on the couch watching TV and doing mindless things to keep me busy. With their help, I have gotten off the couch and filled my days with meaningful work and becoming a productive part of my community. I get out and network with other businesses and really enjoy trying to generate more clients and business." For many of our service members, getting out into the community is a necessary step in the healing process. "I really feel that this was the final piece in my post-injury recovery that I was in severe need of finding."

Joe is hopeful for this new decade! With the improvement of Osseointegration surgery, he is looking forward to walking again after being in a wheelchair the past few years, and he continues to be excited about the future as a "husband, father, and provider."

SARAH HAS A RARE neurological disorder she developed in 2008 while training to fly helicopters.

“One month from my wings, my hands stopped working during a boat flight,” she recalls. “I refused to put my helicopter crew at risk and pulled myself out of the training until the doctors could figure out what was wrong.”

Medically retired in June 2012, Sarah explains that, “My current working diagnosis is cerebral inflammatory disorder. Essentially, I have lesions of inflammation in my brain — the part of my body, which that part of my brain controls, stops working properly.”

When Sarah was going through the medical retirement process, she asked her case manager how she could get involved with sports. “I had no idea about adaptive sports or adaptive equipment. My case manager told me about the The Fund. They purchased me a recumbent bicycle that I’m able to use when my legs are operational and I have the coordination to cycle. This bike was my first step to regaining independence and activity.”

Sarah also got involved with Team Semper Fi — “Going skiing with Team Semper Fi in January 2013 was my first adaptive sports experience” — and soon discovered sled hockey, which she says is her greatest passion.

“They provide you with opportunities to heal on so many different levels. Yes they give you a sport to go and participate with other wounded warriors and yes that is a physical process, a physical healing, but being out there with other wounded warriors when you’re being pushed to your limits, that reminds us why we signed up for the military in the first place. We wanted to be pushed, we wanted to be trained, we wanted to be pushed to our limits and made to be uncomfortable and then overcome those challenges and continue to succeed.”



WE PLEDGE TO CONTINUE OUR MISSION OF...



SEMPER FI & AMERICA'S
FUND
For Our Combat Wounded, Ill, and Injured

Dear Semper Fi & America's Fund Family and Friends,

In these unique and uncertain times, we hope this finds you and your loved ones safe and healthy. Everyone has had to undergo stressful moments these past few months, and we at the SF&AF have found inspiration among our faithful supporters and military veterans and their families. Our wounded, ill, and injured Service Members and their Families exemplify strength, perseverance, and post-traumatic growth from which we all can take as a precedent to look to the future with hope.

We are extremely lucky to have the valuable guidance of our new Chairman of the Board, General Joe Dunford. His leadership and experience will continue to help guide us through the pandemic and the years ahead. We have been able to respond swiftly to the changing terrain we have found ourselves in during the COVID-19 situation, finding new ways to help those we serve.

No one knows what the future may hold. However, we know one thing is certain. As long as our faithful supporters and donors like you believe in our vital mission, the Semper Fi & America's Fund has a role, as we have had for the past 16 years, in aiding our military members and their families. God bless those we serve and our supporters!



*With our deepest appreciation and well wishes,
Karen Guenther*

Karen Guenther

Serving Those Who Preserve Our Freedom

*Always Faithful
Since 2004*



DONATIONS MAY BE MADE ONLINE:
TheFund.org

PLEASE SEND CHECK DONATIONS TO:
Semper Fi & America's Fund
825 College Blvd Suite 102,
PMB 609, Oceanside, CA 92057

For any additional information, please email:
info@TheFund.org

JOINING THE CAUSE



SEMPER FI & AMERICA'S
FUND

24,500

SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS AND
THEIR FAMILIES HAVE BEEN HELPED



A+ from CharityWatch,
one of only two Veteran
nonprofits to receive this
rating in recent years



"4-star" rating from
Charity Navigator for nine
consecutive years, only 3%
of rated nonprofits achieve
this level



Awarded the GuideStar
Platinum Seal of
Transparency



SERVING THOSE WHO PRESERVE OUR FREEDOM