



Higher Ground

Healing America's wounded veterans through sports

A program of Sun Valley Adaptive Sports

FACT SHEET

- Higher Ground offers more weeklong, small group therapeutic sport camps for wounded veterans than any other adaptive sports organization in the nation. We serve veterans who were severely wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. Injury specialties: traumatic brain injuries (TBI), blindness, visual impairment, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as amputations, spinal cord injuries, burns, and hearing impairment.
- Serve 100 wounded veterans and their spouses a year. Over the next two years, Higher Ground will hold 16 weeklong therapeutic sport camps, plus a handful of camps offering customized instruction for veterans with extreme disabilities. Higher Ground began serving wounded veterans in 2004. Sun Valley Adaptive Sports was founded in 1999.
- One of the industry's early leaders to include spouses at sports camps. A veteran's injury can be a traumatic experience for a spouse. We find spouses benefit from our therapeutic camps as much or more than the wounded veterans.
- Pay 100 percent of the camp expenses for a warrior *and* spouse. Higher Ground even pays for childcare back in the veteran's hometown while the couple attends camp. Many camps do not pay for spouses or childcare.
- Have the industry's longest follow-up care plan. Higher Ground provides a three-year follow-up care plan for every warrior and spouse attending a camp. We have a comprehensive strategy to connect veterans to recreational activities in their hometowns. We even budget funds to buy veterans specialized sports equipment.
- Nationally recognized as the "gold standard" adaptive sports organization by the Pentagon, military hospitals, VA hospitals, military care units, veterans service programs, and wounded veterans. Higher Ground camps are not "assisted vacations." Rather, its camps center on "therapy" with an emphasis on impact and sustainability.
- Work with Brigham Young University and San Jose State University to conduct research—through Higher Ground programming—to measure the efficacy of sports and recreation on long-term veteran care as it relates to confidence, relationships, stress, fitness, independence, and community involvement. We will share the results and best practices documents with military centers, universities, and organizations working to improve the industries serving veterans.
- Offered free consulting services to more than a dozen organizations last year to help launch new programs or improve existing programming to advance the quality of adaptive sports services provided to wounded veterans.
- Over the last five years, Higher Ground programming and fundraising is up ten-fold. Fiscal year fundraising goal for Sun Valley Adaptive Sports: \$1.75 million. Budget: \$950,000. The percentage of funding that goes to programs: 88%. SVAS complies with the Better Business Bureau's best practices standards for charities.
- Higher Ground is the industry leader in media outreach to show the benefits of sports therapy that transforms wounded veterans into healing heroes. We also create awareness for some of the poignant issues facing wounded veterans: relationships, isolation, long-term recovery, community reintegration, combat-related stress, and the vast number of those with traumatic brain injuries (350,000). We have produced dozens of powerful videos and articles with well known media giants such as the Annenberg Foundation, CNN, Nightline, Newsweek, Associated Press, National Public Radio, American Legion Magazine, the editor of Warren Miller films, and many others.
- Beginning to work with legislators to secure a \$1.0 billion appropriation for sports therapy and fitness as part of the long-term recovery and care of hundreds of thousands of wounded veterans.