

Strengthening America's Military Families Through Communities

# We make military life awesome.



## Blue Star Families

Annual Impact Report | 2023

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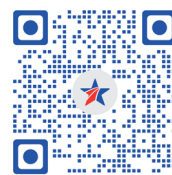


“ Getting the emails about community happenings and free things to do in my area has really opened up our family to more fun stuff. Moving here was really expensive and financially we’re struggling (especially since the holidays are here) but it’s an instant relief when something like that is sent my way. ”

— Military Spouse, Chapter Event Attendee

# A Message from the CEO

Scan here to learn more about Blue Star Families



**When I co-founded Blue Star Families in 2009, I did not envision it becoming what it is today.** But we unlocked tremendous demand by focusing on the whole family and have had to grow to meet the demands of our members and our nation. Today we have over 275,000 members, reach 1.5 million family members every year, and are the largest and fastest-growing nonprofit dedicated to supporting military- and Veteran-connected families. And the number one thing our members tell us they want is ... more.

There are 40,000+ military and Veteran-serving nonprofits in this country, and many are doing tremendous direct service work, but **Blue Star Families is the only one of our size systematically working towards upstream, evidence-based solutions to these big problems in a collaborative, cross-sector way**, with a proven national response capability.

## Kathy Roth-Douquet

CEO and Board President, Blue Star Families

### Welcome Campaign



**Blue Star Welcome Week** is an annual initiative to inspire and engage our nation to come together in a spirit of welcome for the **600,000 active-duty military and transitioning-out-of-service families** who move to new communities each year.

### Digital Environment



**The Blue Star Neighborhood** is an online platform created exclusively for our members, located around the world, where they can gather in a virtual setting to enjoy all that we have to offer.

### Chapter Sustainability



**Transition to Executive Director model** to more closely align with core functions needed to make Chapters **viable as independent, revenue-generating business units** not reliant on financial support from the national organization.

# Impact Areas 2023



## Expansion of Blue Star Welcome Week

Create a movement to bridge the civilian-military divide and empower more military and Veteran families to feel a sense of belonging in the communities where they live and serve.



## Chapter Business Model Evolution

Grow our Chapter organization through a revamped strategy, including Outposts and sub-granting.



## Engagement through Digital Transformation

Improve the human experience with Blue Star Families by redesigning our external digital experience and internal digital systems.



## Campaign for Inclusion

Implement findings of our groundbreaking research through cross-sector, collective action to improve the service experiences of military families of color.

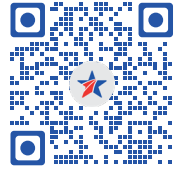


## Make Military Life Awesome

Add new elements of fun and entertainment throughout the experience with Blue Star Families, from events to communications, the website, and more – to make Blue Star Families the “zero-entry pool” that allows us access to the largest number of members as possible.

# Eye Toward the Future

Scan here  
to view our 2023  
Military Family Lifestyle  
Survey Results



Blue Star Families envisions a world where every military and Veteran family feels welcome and thrives by connecting to a vibrant network of support in communities where they live and serve to strengthen our nation. All indicators suggest that Blue Star Families is uniquely positioned to solve some of the most pressing challenges facing our All-Volunteer Force, but in order to do so, we must scale our Chapter and digital footprints while also maintaining our brand integrity, better articulating our value, and innovative “over the horizon” research and program delivery capabilities.

## This is the role the American military has served for more than a century. But today, 50 years into the All-Volunteer Force, the military component is facing serious strains.



**Recruiting shortfalls** pose one of the greatest threats to the All-Volunteer Force since its inception in 1973 and the military services are lowering their end strength numbers in order to meet their goals.

Our most recent Military Lifestyle Survey results finds that the **proportion of active-duty family respondents willing to recommend military service to a young person has dropped** more than 20 points, from 55% to 32% since 2016. And the percentage of those willing to go out of their way to not recommend it has more than doubled (15% to 31%).

The modern military lifestyle is increasingly distinct from the lifestyle existing support systems were designed to address. **Many military life challenges cannot be solved by the military services or Congressional action, but require more sophisticated community-level understanding and support.**

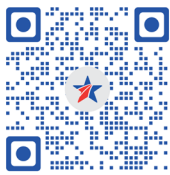
While trust in the military as an institution remains high, it has fallen from the #1 spot (which it has held since 1990) and has been replaced by “small business.”

Leading political scientists have found civilian support for the military to be “high, but hollow, and the high confidence in the aggregate masks important patterns of variation.”

**This crisis didn't emerge overnight.** This is the result of not addressing ecosystem-level, interlocking challenges, which require sustained whole nation, cross-sector, upstream solutions, often tailored to address local community dynamics and needs.

# Meeting the Moment

Scan here to learn more about **Do Your Part**



## Setting a path forward as a nation requires system change, achieving two complementary and upstream objectives:

**Restoring military families' willingness to recommend service by solving the quality-of-life issues that make military life more difficult than it needs to be.**

Our 2023 MFLS results demonstrate that military families are by far the most critical untapped potential to solve the national recruiting crisis. While Veterans are often lauded for their recruiting capability, our research demonstrates that military family members are also powerful and effective influencers: more than one-third of active-duty family respondents (38%) had encouraged an acquaintance to join the military in the past five years. Of those who did encourage an acquaintance to join, one-third (34%) report that person did enter military service.

**Refamiliarizing the American public with its military in order to inspire and equip everyday Americans to better support military- and Veteran-connected families.**



Do Your Part is a multi-sector coalition of change-makers seeking to spark a movement and fulfill the Constitution's promise of providing for the common defense by focusing on three areas:

### Community & Connectedness | Jobs & Economic Security | Military & Youth Well-Being



Planting the Blue Star Families flag in communities across the globe to expand our programmatic reach and deepen impact.



Paving the way for employers to voluntarily commit to improving military spouse employment outcomes.



Building a greater sense of belonging through schools, libraries, and community engagement.

# Current Posture

**Blue Star Families is unique in that we achieve impact by offering a portfolio of evidence-based programs and initiatives that collectively achieve the outcomes we want to see.**

This approach offers our team the ability to:

Customize programming to meet the specific needs of local populations in our Chapter locations. Needs are informed through conversations with local community leaders and military families, and by our Military Family Lifestyle Survey data, which we cut and provide to each Chapter.

Identify supplemental and high-impact programming to make available in non-Chapter locations through volunteer activations, virtual toolkits, or through our online community (The Neighborhood).



**Blue Star Families has provided so much local support and has helped my family through some very tough times. I feel like I have developed more resilience during trying times because of the mental health support. I'm more connected with my kids and my husband because of the support and education I've received from BSF.**

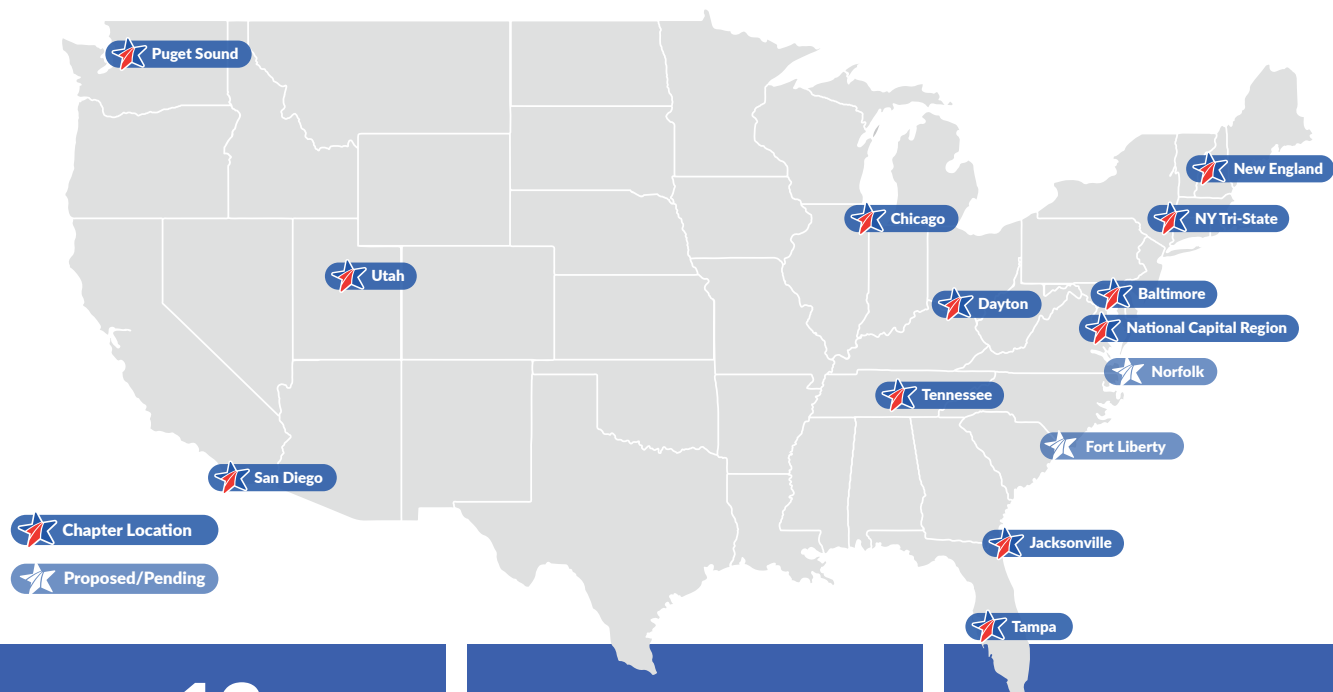
— Army Spouse (Outdoor Program Participant)

# Blue Star Chapters

Scan here  
to learn more about  
Blue Star Chapters



Chapters evolved from an unstable volunteer-model to a Chapter Director model (with one staff member on-site to deliver programs), and we are now transitioning fully to an Executive Director model (with an Executive Director focused on Chapter sustainability and a Program Manager delivering programs).



**13**  
Chapters covering 20 states

Four chapters have converted to the Executive Director model: New York Tri-State, National Capital Region, Puget Sound, and New England.

**95,268**

**Chapter Members**  
at the end of 2023

**36%**  
of Blue Star Families'

**276,296**  
members reside in Chapters

**1,461**

**Chapter Events**  
in 2023

With each iteration we have deepened our impact and continued to strengthen the data-backed case for Blue Star Families Chapters. **The data is clear: Members who belong to Blue Star Chapters feel a better sense of belonging to their communities and they also feel more valued compared to those residing in non-Chapter locations.**

**177,576**

**Event Attendees**  
in 2023



# Blue Star Neighborhood

Scan here  
to learn more about  
**Blue Star  
Neighborhood**



The Blue Star Neighborhood is a seamless, smart, mobile, and integrated community for military families, Veterans, and supporters to engage with us, each other, and their communities in a meaningful way. This ever-evolving community serves as a platform to better serve and meet the needs of the military community.

2023 included a soft launch and beta testing, resulting in 1 in 10 (9%) of BSF Members being onboarded to The Neighborhood. It is now the nation's largest online community solely for military families and we secured a \$1M renewal from the Patrick McGovern Foundation. As part of this digital transformation Blue Star Families is advised by Velocity Growth and hosts a best in class digital advisory committee with senior executives from Google, Cloud, and Galileo, among others.



**Rapid growth**  
In just four months, we gained

**27,536**  
members



**64%** of our members do not  
reside in a Chapter\*

\*But still have access to a wide range of giveaways, programs, information, and resources delivered through volunteer activations, self-paced toolkits, and The Neighborhood.

## What can you find in The Neighborhood?

- ★ Exclusive member discounts and perks
- ★ Giveaways and events
- ★ Career opportunities and resume help
- ★ Volunteer opportunities

# Making military life awesome

Scan here to learn more about Blue Star Families Programs



## Welcoming Partners



Expanded network to include Sony, Target, Schlotzsky's, and Masterclass



Cultivated a shared sense of appreciation and special memories



## Expanding Programs



Blue Star Summer held 187 events in 139 communities worldwide



Outdoor Explorers for All reached 100 families in 26 states via recreational fishing with the National Park Service



Gas Card Giveaway generated 1,700+ members in 48 hours



## Unlocking Potential



Blue Star Careers grew bilingual spouse pipeline by 600% in 18 months



Policy: Improved BAH calculation, increased diversity in the officer corps, and promoted equity for diverse military families



# Top Donors

## CEO Circle

(\$1M+)

craig newmark philanthropies  
CSX  
The Patrick J. McGovern Foundation

## Homefront Heroes

(\$500,000–\$999,999)

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

## Leaders of Liberty

(\$250,000–\$499,999)

National Park Service  
USAA Corporate Responsibility  
TriWest Healthcare Alliance  
Starbucks Corporation  
Lockheed Martin Corporation

## Community Champions

(\$100,000–\$249,999)

T-Mobile  
Disney Worldwide Services, Inc  
Express Scripts  
AARP  
Booz Allen  
May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust  
Navy Federal Credit Union  
CJM Foundation  
JP Morgan Chase & Co.  
KBR

## Friends of The Flag

(\$50,000–\$99,999)

Blue Cross Blue Shield Association  
Pentagon Federal Credit Union  
CareSource  
Peter Bloom  
Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors  
Discovery Communications  
Humana Military  
Aura

Target  
Jennifer & Jonathan Soros Fund  
Northrop Grumman Corporation  
BAE Systems  
AT&T Service, Inc  
Bob Woodruff Foundation  
Macy's Inc  
Novavax, Inc  
PGA  
Morgan Stanley  
Salesforce  
Veterans United Foundation  
Delta Dental  
Major League Baseball  
First Book  
Arconic Foundation  
CGI Federal  
Seattle Kraken Foundation

## Gold Supporters

(\$25,000–\$49,999)

Meany Giving Fund  
REI Co-Op  
Sharon & Peter Grossman Foundation  
Leonardo DRS  
Barnes & Thornburg  
Homes for Heroes Foundation  
Bank of America Charitable  
Foundation  
Paul Hastings, LLC  
Tee It Up For The Troops  
Ulta Beauty

## Silver Supporters

(\$24,999–\$10,000)

Estate of Ronald Sowers  
Guardian Life Insurance Company of  
America  
American Red Cross  
Barrett Family Foundation

Mary & Stephen Birch Foundation  
Walter Reed Society  
Leidos, Inc.  
Land O'Lakes  
Shannyn Hall  
CACI International  
City of Fairborn  
Fisher House Foundation  
iCivics  
Jewish Communal Fund  
Staten Island PPS  
Square  
First Nation Group  
Atchinson Foundation  
Textron  
American Armed Forces Mutual Aid  
Association (AAFMAA)  
Armed Force YMCA  
Bessemer Trust  
Maximus Foundation  
American Tower Foundation  
Boeing  
Quality Carriers  
Cafe Milano  
Consolidated Edison Company of  
New York  
St, Louis Community Foundation  
Hiring Our Heroes  
ICM Falk Foundation  
Richmond Wholesale  
Staff Sergeant Michael Ollis  
Foundation  
Tramiel Charitable Trust  
RallyPoint

# Board of Directors

## Board of Directors

**LTG Gwendolyn Bingham, USA (Ret.)** | Chair  
Retired U.S. Army Lieutenant General

**LTG Chris Bogdan, USAF (Ret.)** | Vice Chair  
Executive Vice President, Booz Allen Hamilton

**Whit Cobb** | Director  
Senior Vice President & General Counsel, Pacific Architects & Engineers (PAE)

**SSG Charles Eggleston, USA (Ret.)** | Director  
President & CEO, Three Seven Consulting

**Nada Stirratt** | Director  
CEO, CRO, Global Tech Exec

**Todd Finger** | Director  
Partner, McDermott Will & Emery

**Jennifer M. O'Connor** | Director  
Vice President, General Counsel, Northrop Grumman Corporation

**Bryan Tucker** | Director  
Vice President, Corporate Relations, CSX

**Brianna Keilar** | Director  
CNN Anchor

**Val Nicholas** | Director  
Senior Vice President Creative Director, Summit MediaCorp

**Ellyn Dunford** | Director  
Spouse of General Joseph Dunford Jr., USMC (Ret.), Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Recipient of the Blue Star Families Lifetime Achievement Award

**The Honorable John G. Vonglis** | Director  
Senior Advisor to GAMCO Investors, Inc.

**Wilson Wang** | Director  
Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, MITRE

## Emeritus Board Members

**Sheila Casey**

**Steve Hilton**

**Constance B. Milstein**

**Craig Newmark**

## Executive Leadership Team

**Kathy Roth-Douquet**  
Chief Executive Officer and Board President

**Noeleen Tillman**  
Chief Operating Officer and Board Secretary

**Brian Whiting**  
Chief Transformation Officer

**Jennifer Akin**  
Chief of Staff

**Ryan Callahan**  
Executive Vice President, Digital Experience, Marketing & Growth

**Megan Carthen Jackson**  
Vice President, Operations & HR

**Margaret Davis**  
Executive Vice President, Development

**Michael Kang**  
Vice President of Finance & Technology

**Lindsay Knight**  
Executive Vice President, Social Impact

**Tom Porter**  
Vice President, Government Affairs

# Financials

## Fiscal Year 2023 Unaudited Financials

### Assets

#### Current Assets

Cash and Investments	\$21,427,099
Accounts Receivable	\$9,520,061
Prepaid Expenses and Deposits	\$290,804
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$31,237,964</b>
Property and Equipment, Net	\$40,642
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$31,278,606</b>

### Liabilities and Net Assets

#### Current Liabilities

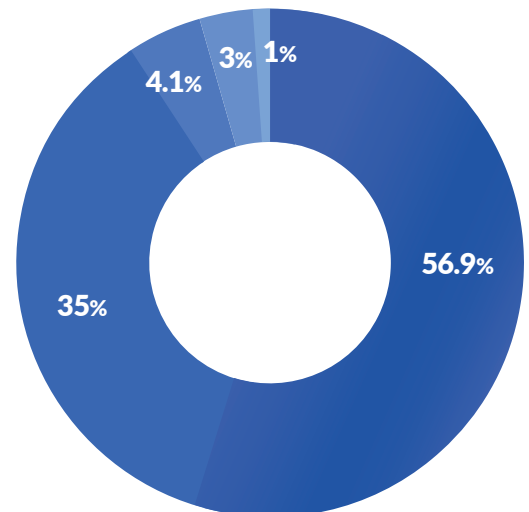
Accounts Payable, Accrued Expenses & Other	\$1,183,642
<b>Total Liabilities (All Current)</b>	<b>\$1,183,642</b>

#### Net Assets

Without Donor Restrictions	\$20,851,929
With Donor Restrictions	\$9,243,035
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$30,094,964</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$31,278,606</b>

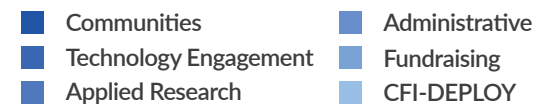
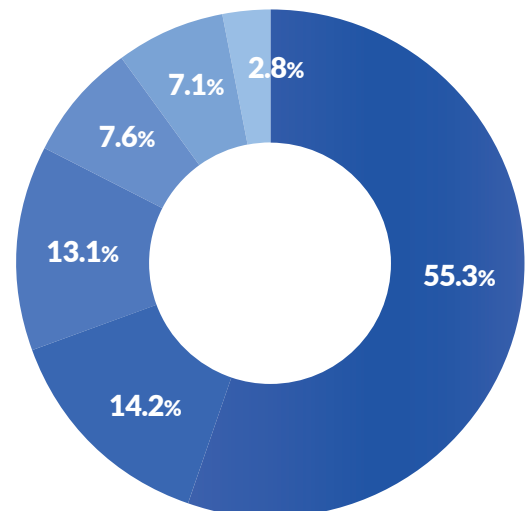
## 2023 Revenue

Total Revenue: \$30,947,864



## 2023 Expenses

Total Expenses: \$17,507,491



## Mission

Blue Star Families seeks to transform how America supports its military families, to better support our military and improve our communities.

BSF uses an evidence-based approach to build communities of support and belonging for military and Veteran families while fostering relationships in neighborhoods that create essential connections (by bridging military, Veteran, and local experiences).

## Vision

Blue Star Families envisions a world where every military and Veteran family feels welcome and thrives by connecting to a vibrant network of support in communities where they live and serve to strengthen our nation.



**Blue Star Families**

[bluestarfam.org](http://bluestarfam.org)