

*Honor Our Nation's Heroes*



**WHO ARE YOU CARRYING?** <sup>®</sup>



**2017 IMPACT REPORT**

MILITARY, LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIREFIGHTERS, RESCUE PERSONNEL AND THEIR FAMILIES.

# Our Story

Carry The Load is a non-profit organization that provides an active way to connect Americans to the sacrifices made daily by our military, law enforcement, firefighters, rescue personnel and their families.

Founded in 2011 by two Veteran Navy SEALs, Carry The Load began as a 20-hour and 11-minute Memorial March in Dallas, TX. In 2012, it expanded to include an East Coast relay, walking from West Point, NY to Dallas, TX. The relay leg captains walk in 5 mile increments carrying the American flag to bring awareness to the sacrifices of our nation's heroes. In 2016, the relay expanded by adding a West Coast route from Seattle, WA to Dallas, TX.

In 2017, Carry The Load walked the bi-coastal relay through more than 19 states, hosted more than 50 city rallies and events throughout the year and started the Carry The Flag educational program to inspire patriotism in students K-12.

The following pages of the 2017 Impact Report describe how Carry The Load expanded its mission in 2017 to honor our nation's heroes 365 days a year.

## MISSION 365

Carry The Load's **Mission 365** encourages the public to engage in any of our three program:

*Awareness, Continuum of Care and Education.*





# 2017 AWARENESS



## Awareness Programs

Throughout the month of May, Carry The Load's Awareness program highlights its mission through the **Memorial May campaign** to restore the true meaning of Memorial Day. The program offers meaningful opportunities for Americans to participate in the **National Relay, Dallas Memorial March, City Rallies,** and **Carry It Anywhere** events.

Carry The Load provides monthly programs that offer volunteer opportunities to serve our Nation's Heroes. We host public events on Flag Day, Independence Day, Patriot Day, Veterans Day, and more. Carry The Load also organizes virtual events, including the Heroes Challenge and 100K Meter Challenge.





# 2017 RELAY & RALLY MAP



**MAP LEGEND**

- East National Relay (May 1 - May 28, 2017)**  
West Point, NY to Dallas, TX
- West National Relay (April 28 - May 28, 2017)**  
Seattle, WA to Dallas, TX
- Dallas Memorial March**
- City Rallies**

# National Relay

The National Relay is a bi-coastal awareness event that operates 24 hours a day, handing off the American flag every 5 miles of walking/cycling. In 2017, the 31-day, 6,200-mile National Relay comprised of a 2,100-mile East Coast route from West Point, NY to Dallas, TX and a 4,100-mile West Coast route from Seattle, WA to Dallas, TX.



# Dallas Memorial March

The Dallas Memorial March is held on Memorial Day weekend at Reverchon Park in Dallas, TX. It is a city-wide event with a growing attendance of more than 26,000 in 2017. Carry The Load's flagship event is a two-day embodiment of the values Carry The Load hopes to further — a celebration of heroes, remembrance of the fallen, and education of respectful observance.



## City Rallies

Organizers throughout the country host city rallies to honor our nation's heroes during Memorial May. Rallies along the Relay routes include stops by the National Relay team. Whether dozens of people or thousands of people, all rallies bring together community members to honor and celebrate local heroes while sharing the stories of their sacrifices.

New in 2018 is the addition of more Rally cities across the nation. Visit [www.CarryTheLoad.org](http://www.CarryTheLoad.org) to find or create a Rally in a city near you.

## Carry It Anywhere

*Honor our Nation's Heroes* by hosting your own event.  
It's a great way to turn a fun social event into a moving cause.

Supporters of Carry The Load honored our nation's heroes by turning their personal Memorial Day social event into a moving cause. Across the nation, countless outdoor barbecues and parties were organized to honor those who sacrificed for our country and freedom. Most events participated in the National Moment of Remembrance on Memorial Day at 3 PM local time. Hosts incorporated fundraisers for Carry The Load – from a silent auction to a bike-a-thon – and posted photos on social media, using #CarryTheLoad.

In 2018, we look forward to our first international Carry It Anywhere event, as one athlete and military veteran walks across Israel. Sign up for our newsletter and watch for updates on social media to follow this journey, starting in late-February.





# 2017 CONTINUUM OF CARE



22KILL

A Soldier's Child

Adaptive Training Foundation

Attitudes & Attire

Austin Street

Building Homes For Heroes

Center For BrainHealth

DPA's Assist The

Officer Foundation

Equest

FARM

Heroes On The Water

Higher Ground

Lt. Todd Krodle

Memorial Foundation

Marine Corps Law

Enforcement Foundation

National Fallen

Firefighters Foundation

Patriot PAWS Service Dogs

REBOOT Combat Recovery

Recovery Resource Council

Sheep Dog

Impact Assistance

Snowball Express

Sons Of The Flag

The Gratitude Initiative

Tip Of The Spear

Travis Manion

Trinity Oaks

Wind River Ranch

## Non-Profit Partners

### SUPPORTING NON-PROFIT PARTNERS

As part of Carry The Load's mission, we honor and support our nation's heroes by raising much-needed awareness and funds to provide a Continuum of Care for:

*Military, Law Enforcement,  
Fire Fighters, Rescue Personnel  
and their Families.*

Each year, Carry The Load selects non-profit partners that provide healing services for the mind, body and soul of our warriors. To allow these partners to focus on direct service programs, Carry The Load works as a force multiplier by establishing an environment of collaboration and financial support to make a greater impact across the nation.

For a complete list of Carry The Load's current non-profit partners, please visit

[www.CarryTheLoad.org](http://www.CarryTheLoad.org)





# 2017 EDUCATION



## Education

*Carry The Flag Educational Program* inspires patriotism in America's youth by connecting them to the sacrifices made by our nation's heroes and educating them on respecting the American flag.

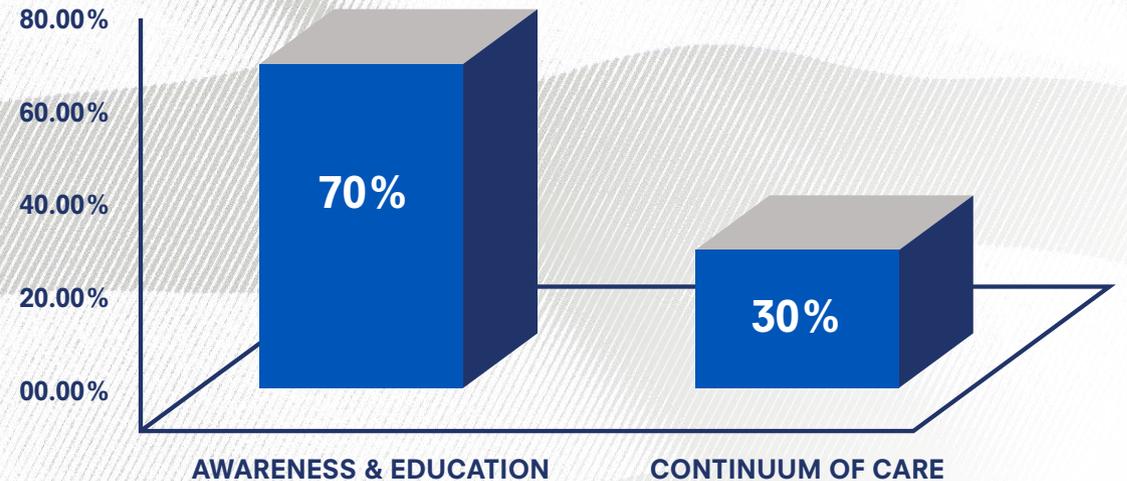
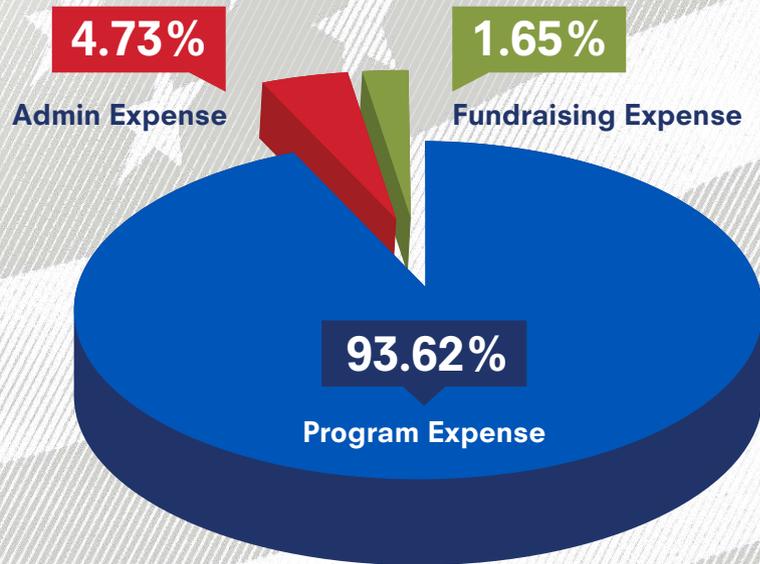
Grounded in a modern-day curriculum, school officials and community leaders can facilitate an active way for children from kindergarten through 12th grade to learn about the American Flag.

Carry The Flag connects generations to the meaning of patriotism. It highlights what the Flag represents, why it should be respected and who our Nation's Heroes are that make sacrifices daily for our freedom.



# Total Funds Raised: \$17.7 Million

Since 2011, Carry The Load has raised \$17.7 million,  
**93.62%** goes towards our three programs:  
Awareness, Continuum of Care and Education.



## OUR SPONSORS

- Academy Mortgage
- American Airlines
- AMN Healthcare
- Andrews Distributing
- AT&T
- Bandera Ventures
- Bank of America Plaza
- Baylor Scott & White
- Bell Helicopter Fort Worth Alliance Air Show
- Byrd Adatto
- Cinemark
- City Electric Supply
- Conduent
- Cyrus One
- Dr. Pepper Snapple Group
- E&J Gallo Winery
- Frito Lay/PepsiCo
- George & Fay Young Foundation
- GMC
- Gold's Gym
- Grainger
- HCA Far West Division
- Hill-Wilkinson
- Hillwood
- Holland & Knight LLP
- JCPenney
- JPMorgan Chase & Co.
- Kens 5
- LaQuinta Inns & Suites
- Lennox International
- Liberty Creek
- Military.com/Monster.com
- Naval Academy Alumni Foundation
- Pioneer Natural Resources
- PlainsCapital Bank
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Samuel J. Fox, Esq.
- Santander Consumer
- Service King
- Sidley Austin LLP
- Sunnyland Outdoor Furniture
- Starbucks
- TacPro Gear
- TAC Energy
- Texas 811
- Texas Roadhouse
- Thompson & Knight
- Veterans United
- WFAA
- Zaxby's

## FOUNDERS BRIGADE

- Jack Furst
- Dill Driscoll
- Craig Couch
- Pryor Blackwell
- Brent Owens
- Sean Magee
- Steve Holley
- Dr. Terry Gemas

The Founders Brigade is an exclusive group of individuals and families who pledge \$5,000 per year for 2 years to provide the working capital to advance Carry The Load's mission. Our goal is to secure 100 members, resulting in a \$1,000,000 combined commitment. The funds enable Carry The Load to support its three programs of Awareness, Continuum of Care, and Education.

As a member of the Founders Brigade, you will receive a commemorative lapel pin, challenge coin, recognition on Carry The Load's website and annual Impact report and an All Access Pass to year-round events.



2017 SUPPORTERS



# A STORY OF CONNECTION - Justin Ellis

We have the privilege of sharing inspiring stories of how Carry The Load has become a force multiplier. Below is an example of one of these incredible stories – a story that reminds us why we do what we do.

"When I was 12, my brother and I were held up at gunpoint after a local shopping trip. Following that terrifying encounter, I knew I wanted to go into law enforcement. I didn't want that to happen to others.

24 years later, I was pursuing my dream of becoming a detective. After several years as a motorcycle officer for the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police Department (DART), I passed my Detectives Entrance Test, and was planning to move into the Criminal Investigative Division (CID).

On October 10, 2016, with one week left to finish my duty assignment and move into CID, my life changed forever. I was seriously injured after a driver failed to yield right of way while turning into my path and hit my motorcycle. One of my partners in my district arrived on the scene and held my hand telling me everything would be ok. Then the rest is a blank for about 30 days when I came to in ICU in the hospital. The doctors said that I was hit so hard, I shouldn't have lived to make it onto the ambulance.

With a wife of 12 years and two young children at home, I was suddenly facing the possibility of a life without the ability to walk. I returned home to face new challenges of physical therapy, insurance, adaptive housing, cars, etc. It was overwhelming. A few months later, I was introduced to **Carry The Load** by one of their rally coordinators. I'll admit, I was struggling with my challenges. I was not open to receiving help. But when Carry The Load called, they began telling me about ways their partners could help. Eventually, I swallowed my pride and started to listen.

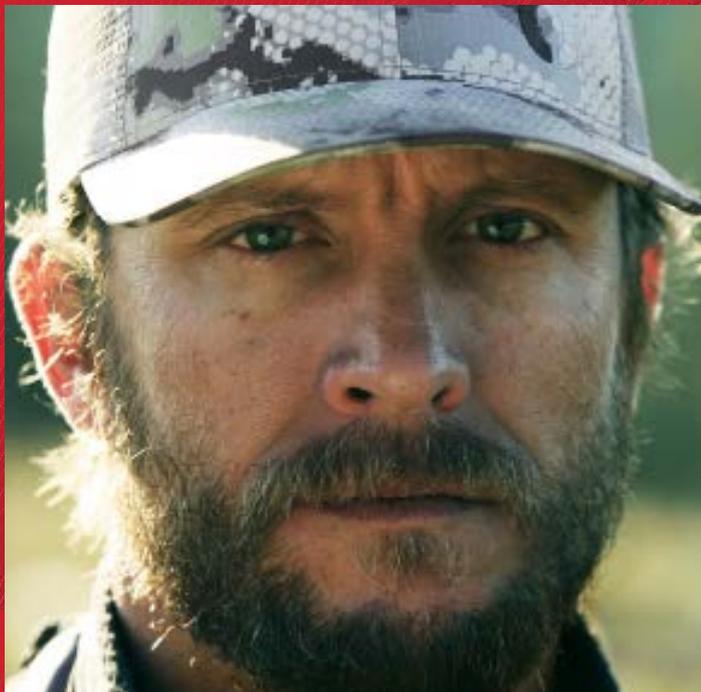
Soon, my wheels to recovery started turning and valuable Connections were made through Carry The Load's Continuum of Care program. I learned that their long-standing media sponsor was WFAA, the Dallas television station that previously aired my story. After watching my story, a woman reached out to Carry The Load about donating an unoccupied motorized chair, which she had originally held back to give to an injured military veteran. Later, Assist The Officer Foundation, a Carry The Load partner, provided funds for me to obtain an adaptive vehicle that helped me regain some of the freedoms I lost with the crash.

On September 11, 2017, against all odds, I returned to work – now as a detective. Less than two weeks later, Carry The Load along with its partner Trinity Oaks surprised me with a track chair. The track chair helps with my road to recovery and achieving my ultimate goal, to walk again. It allows me to feed my horses and go out on my property. One of the biggest challenges as a dad is to think about not taking my son hunting. This chair and the assistance of Trinity Oaks allows me to take my son out and teach him to hunt.

I remain in physical therapy and work hard every day to regain my ability to walk. What has changed is now I realize the power those Connections have given me. The freedom to continue my dream, support my family, and see what life's journey will bring.

In 2018, I will join Carry The Load to support our nation's heroes. If it wasn't for their support, plus countless family, friends and partners on the force, I wouldn't be in the position that I'm in today – to succeed."





## *Dear Supporters and Friends*

2017 was a year of growth and we couldn't have done it without you. Your participation in the national relay, volunteering at local events and simply engaging on social media all year helps us with our mission – to connect Americans to the sacrifices made daily by our military, law enforcement, firefighters, rescue personnel and their families.

What started in 2011 as a mission to Restore the True Meaning of Memorial Day has grown into honoring our Nation's Heroes 365 days a year. Our goals for Mission 365 is to bring forth direct services to our nation's heroes and their families by raising awareness and funds for non-profit partners who provide services for the mind, body and soul of our warriors, and to inspire our youth to be patriotic by educating them about the history of the American flag and the sacrifices made to honor it.

We would not be here without the love, support and participation of everyone who has made us thrive and grow. It's been an amazing year, and we cannot wait to make an even greater impact in 2018.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

Stephen Holley, Co-Founder and Veteran Navy SEAL