

Long-Range Strategic Plan for:
Knights of Heroes Foundation

Developed by:

KOH Board of Directors

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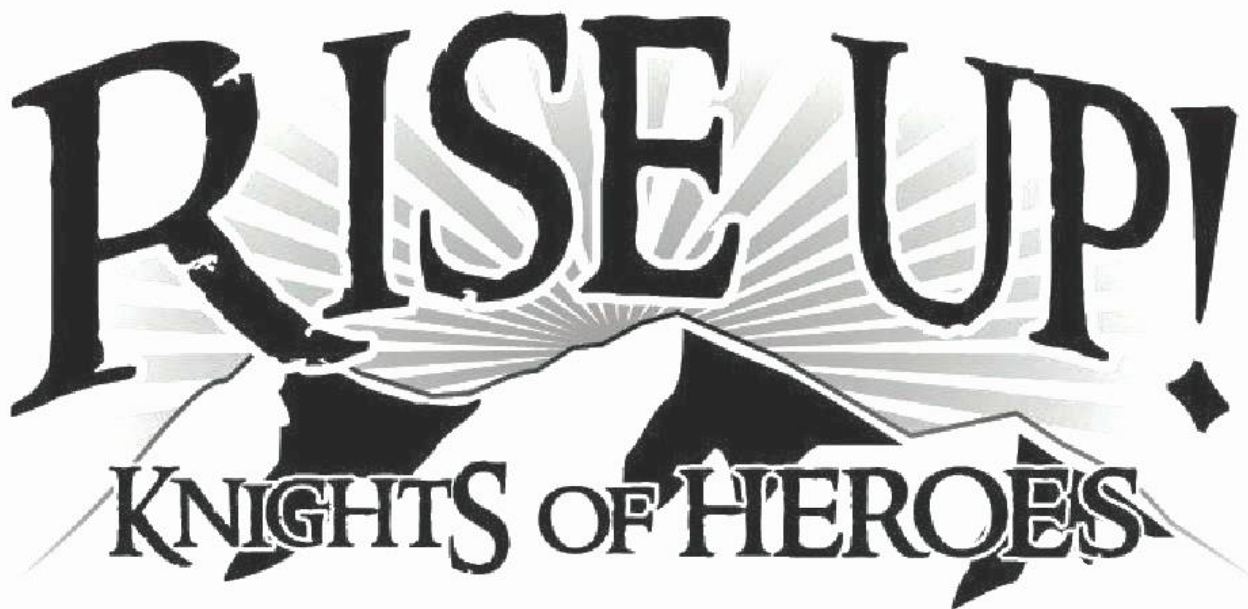
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Knights of Heroes Foundation

**Strategic Plan for
[2015-2025]**

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Introduction

The Board of Directors of Knights of Heroes (KOH) developed this strategic plan with a 10-year roadmap of organizational development and direction. The Board of Directors developed this plan with direct input from like-minded strategic partners based upon reviews of camp direction, land development and organizational planning.

Executive Summary

The Knights of Heroes Foundation runs year-round outdoor programs for children of our fallen military heroes and foster children. The original 10-year plan developed in 2015 outlined a path for the growth of KOH that included the acquisition of a camp facility and expansion to year-round programs. We believe we have achieved the goals set forth in that plan. This plan will provide guidance for the sustainment of the Foundation over the next ten years.

Background and History

Steve Harrold created the Knights of Heroes Foundation in January of 2007. He did so to commemorate the life of a friend and former pilot, Major Troy Lee "Trojan" Gilbert, who was killed during combat operations while flying his F-16 to protect ground troops being overrun by the enemy in the Al-Anbar Province, Iraq on November 27, 2006. At the time of his death, Major Gilbert was a husband and father of five children.

Each summer, families of fallen military from across the Nation are invited to attend the one-week camp at absolutely no cost. While the kids are at camp, the moms and younger siblings spend the week visiting sites in and around Colorado Springs. Lodging and travel arrangements are made for the families that attend from outside the local area. Campers are matched with adult mentors, and during the week of camp they take part in outdoor adventure activities such as rafting, horseback riding, shooting, fishing, mountain biking, hiking and much more.

The camp was founded on Christian faith but is not a Bible camp. Families of all beliefs and from every background are welcome.

The first camp was held in June of 2007 under the name "Modern Day Knights." Sixteen boys attended from Texas, Florida, Arizona and Colorado. The camp was so successful, "Knights of Heroes" was established as a non-profit (501(c)3) organization in November of 2007.

The program has continued to grow each year; and in 2011, the first girls program was held. In 2015, the Foundation purchased a 120-acre camp and began to expand programs beyond the summer camp. By 2020, the Foundation was hosting as many as 100 boys and girls at the camp property for the annual summer camp. Additionally, Winter, Spring and Fall retreats have been added, along with an annual Graduate retreat.

The foundation is comprised of a part-time, paid operations director, a part-time, paid development director, a seven-person volunteer Board of Directors and one-hundred seasonal volunteer mentors. Campers must be between the ages of 10 and 17 to attend.

Direction

The direction and goals contained within this strategic plan have been developed following fourteen years of camps. This plan addresses the manner in which the organization will sustain its current operations with limited growth.

Goals

The following goals of Knights of Heroes have been developed to ensure the programs currently offered will continue to provide a world-class, life-changing experience for all of our families:

1. Continue to employ an operations director
2. Continue to employ a development development
3. Continue to host the following programs
 - a. Winter retreat
 - b. Spring retreat
 - c. Mini-camp for foster children
 - d. Annual, week-long summer camp
 - e. Graduate retreat
 - f. Fall retreat
 - g. Five to seven day-camps for foster children
4. Continue to employ KOH graduates as summer interns
5. Maintain the camp facility through regular maintenance and facility upgrades
6. Sustain fundraising to support the aforementioned goals

Organization of the Strategic Plan

As noted above, this strategic plan is intended to be an organizational guide for Knights of Heroes. This plan has two purposes. First, it presents the most comprehensive compilation of the plan and its component parts. It is a record of the strategic planning process and the decisions reached by the Board of Directors. Second, it is a reference guide for strategic planning. At the beginning of each section, a box includes a definition of the component part. In the future, Knights of Heroes may choose to produce a summary version of the plan for distribution.

Vision

'Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world' – James 1:27.

The vision of the Knights of Heroes Foundation is to provide guidance and encouragement to children who have lost a parent in service to our Nation.

Mission

The mission of Knights of Heroes is to empower children who have lost a parent in service to our Nation by providing positive adult mentorship, character development, and lasting friendships, which are forged during an annual wilderness adventure camp.

Core Values

The core values that provide the foundation for Knights of Heroes include the following:

- Be Bold
- Be a Leader
- Be Boundless
- Be Proactive
- Be Responsible

The charge to every camper is to "Rise Up", to live above what this world teaches him or her and be noble. Each of these core values relates back to a desire to see each camper Rise Up and become the young man or woman that they are called to be.

These values are instrumental in developing character. Without these values, children can wander aimlessly and find themselves lost in a world that teaches them to, "put themselves first and seek instant gratification." The more children we can reach, the larger the impact we can have on our world.

The following is a detailed description of the Knights of Heroes core values that are instilled in every camper who participates in the camps:

Be Bold: The pathway that you choose as a Knight is the narrow road, be bold in following it where God leads. If you are to live as a Knight you are going to live in a way that others will not understand. You will have to be bold in all that you do in order to live the life God has created for you.

Be a Leader: No matter who you are, you are called by God to lead in some unique way. It is your responsibility to find your unique qualities as a leader. A Knight leads from the front and leads from back. A Knight blazes the trail for others to follow and walks beside them as they complete their own journey.

Be Boundless: Attach yourself to something greater than yourself and remember that our lives are bound in heaven, not here on earth. A Knight lives for something or someone other than themselves. This is a reminder that this world does not revolve around them and that there are always those out there who need help.

Be Proactive: You are responsible for your life, no one else, and you are responsible for making your life better, and living it out with full abandon. A Knight doesn't sit idly by to let others complete the task but steps up first to get the job completed, no matter how big or small.

Be Responsible: Act responsibly in all that you do. Accept the responsibility of acting like a son of nobility in not only who you are but also how you act. Your actions are your own and you're responsible for those actions whether they are positive or negative. A Knight always carries the responsibility for their own actions.

Beyond our Core Values, Knights of Heroes is also committed to teaching and displaying the following traits:

Reject Passivity: Sitting idle while the world goes on around you, leaves you reacting to circumstances as opposed to controlling your situation. Our world is full of people that will not take a stand and protect those around them. A Knight will stand for what is right and take action when necessary.

Reject Immorality: Our world is full of corruption and immorality. Television, movies and music often promote promiscuity, which leads to children believing premarital sex is normal. A Knight understands that this type of behavior is destructive and leads to countless problems throughout life.

Reject Substance Abuse: Today's culture teaches our children that alcohol and drugs are a normal way of life in America. With the legalization of marijuana in Colorado, drug use among children has dramatically increased. A Knight understands that nothing good comes from substance abuse.

Reject a Sense of Entitlement: Social welfare in America has eroded our Nation's work ethic. Our society has embraced a sense of entitlement which has led to a belief that free medical care, free education, and government subsistence is the right of every American. A Knight understands that you should work for what you have and you are not "owed" anything. We must re-invigorate the work ethic that made our country great.

Reject Infidelity: Infidelity is destroying families at an alarming rate. Surrendering to the sins of the flesh and abandoning our marital commitments leads to ruined marriages. A Knight understands that commitment to a spouse is the cornerstone to any marriage and thereby creates the foundation for our family unit.

Championing the Cause

We can make a difference in our communities and our Nation. We have been at war for almost 20 years and the impact on our military families has been tremendous and heartbreaking. Although Knights of Heroes serves only a fraction of those in need, the impact the program has on those that attend is meaningful and lasting. Everyone can help in some way, whether donating resources or time as a mentor, we can all help those who have sacrificed so much to ensure our way of life.

The growth of KOH has been slow and deliberate. Maintaining our personal connection with every child and connecting with our families will always be our number one priority. Throughout our growth, we never forgot our roots. After fourteen years, we have reached a point where we are providing our families numerous opportunities to attend a variety of programs throughout the year. We also believe our camp facility has been developed to support all of our programs and we are now at a point where there is no longer a need for development and we simply need to sustain the current facilities.

Objectives and Priorities for the Next Ten Years

In order to sustain or current programs and maintain our camp facility, the following priorities have been established.

1. Sustain fundraising to support an annual budget of approximately \$250,000
2. Employ an operations director who can ensure programs are executed throughout the year and ensure the property is maintained
3. Employ a development director who can ensure our fundraising goals are met
4. Maintain a board of directors who support the operations and development coordinators. Support is provided in the form of fundraising and a long term vision for the future of the organization.

Risks and Opportunities

Throughout Knights of Heroes' existence, we have constantly garnered feedback from campers, mothers, mentors and donors. This feedback has provided us an overall and detailed perspective of the many opportunities that are available to the organization as well as the risks associated with the current camp and future events.

SWOT Analysis

The feedback that we have received over the years is displayed in the framework of the following SWOT analysis. **Strengths** are internal characteristics, qualities, and capacities that are doing well and are part of the reason for the organization's accomplishments. **Weaknesses** are internal qualities that need to be improved. **Opportunities** refer to external activities or trends that the organization may benefit from, connect with or take advantage of to grow or enhance its performance. **Threats** are external activities or trends that threaten the current and future success of the organization.

Strengths

One of our greatest strengths is that we have an army of motivated, excited and exuberant volunteers. These volunteers, along with the commitment of the Board of Directors, provide the foundation a clear understanding of what the organization intends to accomplish and helps us remain focused on that mission.

Knights of Heroes also has a very broad donor base that represents individual donors, grants and organizations committed to help the organization grow. This wide donor base has allowed Knights of Heroes to remain focused on its mission and not get too distracted by fundraising efforts.

Over the past fourteen years, Knights of Heroes has also been able to refine and grow its processes into sound and proven methods. By utilizing the talented individuals who make up this organization, we have been able to create repeatable programs that are fully functioning and effective.

Weaknesses

The controlled and measured growth of Knights of Heroes over the past fourteen years has created challenges and opportunities. One of those challenges is the limited corporate support. The burden of fundraising can be greatly reduced through corporate support and larger grants.

Opportunities

The opportunities considered most important to Knights of Heroes include:

- *Continue to hand over the operation of the programs to our graduates.* Over the past fourteen years, we have served hundreds of children. We currently have close to 100 graduates who are still connected in some way to KOH. Many of these graduates have returned to help with programs. It is our hope that the operation of the foundation will someday be run by our graduates.
- *Create a year-round “escape” for our families.* Knights of Heroes has created a strong bond with not just the campers but the entire family. Through this engagement, we have recognized the need to offer the families a place to “retreat” or simply get away for a few days.

Threats

The threats considered most important to our organization include:

- *Loss of support from major donors.* The foundation has enjoyed the support of Southwest Airlines over the past ten years. Southwest covers the airfare for all of the families traveling to camp, which accounts for a quarter of the annual budget. With so many deserving organizations bidding for support, the possibility of losing this funding exists.

Strategic Direction

The following is a representation of Knights of Heroes' strategic direction that has been defined by the Board of Directors based upon direct feedback from families:

Success Measures

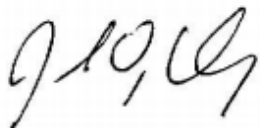
The success measures of Knights of Heroes are our key performance indicators that are direct feedback and testimonials from the families. The Board of Directors firmly believes that Knights of Heroes would not be successful nor sustainable without the direct feedback that we receive throughout the year. This success is measured through direct questionnaires and feedback from campers, mothers and mentors and direct unsolicited testimonials that we receive from the families. The feedback we receive from our families and mentors helps guide overall direction of the organization.

Measures:

- KOH families returning year after year provides a measure of "customer" satisfaction
- Feedback from our graduates in the form of graduate surveys.

Conclusion

We are extremely excited about the future of the Knights of Heroes Foundation. With a solid donor base and an extremely motivated group of volunteers, we hope to sustain our programs indefinitely. Let us never forget the sacrifices that have been made to ensure our freedom as Americans.



John Oglesby
Chairman, Knights of Heroes Foundation