



OUTWARD BOUND
VETERANS

The Journey Home



CONNECTING VETERANS TO POSITIVE FUTURES

“IF YOU ARE BACK FROM A DEPLOYMENT LOOKING TO RECHARGE YOUR LIFE, GO ON A COURSE AND FEEL THE EXPERIENCE OF LIVING WITH OTHER VETS IN A SAFE FRIENDLY, CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT. YOU WILL NOT HAVE ANY REGRETS.”

*Navy, 1979-2000 Retired,
Deployed in the Mediterranean
during the Iranian Hostage Crisis
and the bombing of the barracks
in Lebanon*



MY JOURNEY



My journey toward Outward Bound began in 1962 at the age of 17. I had just graduated from high school and was searching for adventures that would help me gain more confidence and a feeling of self-dependence. Drawn to Outward Bound, the Vietnam War intervened.

Thirty years after my first interest in Outward Bound, after the U.S. Naval Academy, the Marine Corps and a career in the aerospace industry, I finally went on-course. I was so moved by that experience, I attended two more mountaineering courses and was asked if I would consider becoming an Outward Bound Instructor.

Veterans on Outward Bound expeditions take away several significant messages. They discover that they share a spiritual bond with other veterans; that they are not alone in their feelings and concerns; that they and the values they learned in the military are very much needed in our society today; and that the wilderness inheritance that we Americans enjoy needs to be protected and nurtured.

Every Veteran struggles on their journey home. They don't have to do it alone. At Outward Bound, we are honored to help each military man and woman we work with, make the often difficult journey, from life in the military to life at home.

Bob O'Rourke

U.S. Naval Academy

U.S. Marine Corps, Retired


Aerospace Industry Executive, Retired

Outward Bound Instructor, Outward Bound Veterans Instructor

"The values we teach our students at Outward Bound reawaken in me the values that I learned early in life at the U.S. Naval Academy, as a Marine Corps officer and that stood by me as a rifle platoon leader in combat in Vietnam."

- BOB O'ROURKE



A man in a blue helmet and sunglasses is climbing a rock face. He is wearing a tan t-shirt and camouflage pants. A rope is attached to his harness. In the background, other people are also climbing or observing. The scene is outdoors on a rocky terrain.

“THIS IS A NEW BEGINNING FOR ME. THIS PROGRAM HAS LIFTED ME OUT OF MY DEPRESSED STATE OF MIND AND HAS GIVEN ME A REASON TO START LIVING AND NOT WANT TO DIE. THANK YOU!”

Army, OIF

RETURNING HOME



For many Veterans returning home can be as disorienting and stressful as shipping out.

Although they are safely removed from the dangers of war, they are also removed from the routine, the sense of purpose and camaraderie that their years in the service provided. Experiences in conflict zones can cause Veterans to lose touch with their skills, to lose confidence in themselves and to disengage from the very families, communities and businesses that welcome them home.

For those Veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress, psychological injuries and debilitating depression, the return home may be the greatest challenge of all.

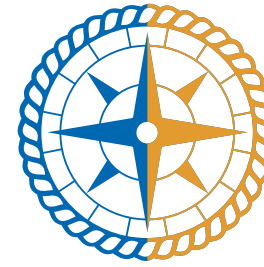
These men and women care deeply about causes important to them, possess a wealth of highly valued leadership, teamwork and problem solving skills coupled with a strong sense of service and community.

"On an Outward Bound course you are surrounded by people who understand. Not just the other vets, but the instructors too. They are always there for you, to actually listen to you and sometimes that's all we need."

– AIR FORCE, SPECIAL OPERATIONS MEDIC,
MULTIPLE DEPLOYMENTS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANITAN

OUR MISSION AND HISTORY

MISSION
TO CHANGE LIVES THROUGH CHALLENGE AND DISCOVERY.



VISION
RESILIENT VETERANS COMMITTED TO CONTINUED SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP IN THEIR FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, AND COUNTRY.

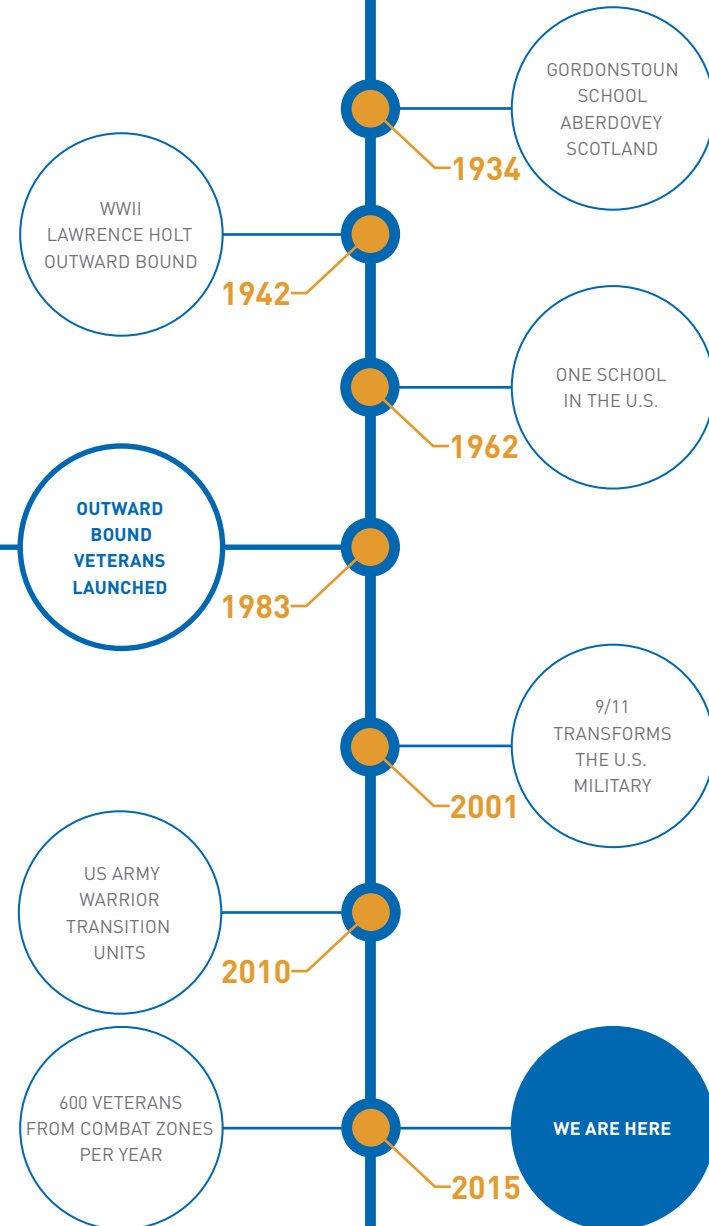
We help Veterans...


Re-experience many of the strengths and positive aspects of military service through physical and emotional challenges shared among their expedition team.

Validate their experience as veterans and feel less isolated while bonding with fellow veterans in a team and mission driven expedition environment.

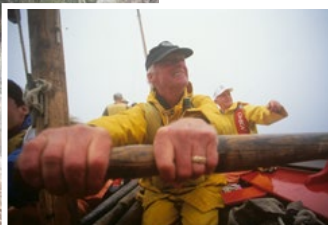
Translate military values and commitment to service to life outside of the military with a focus on continuing to serve as leaders in their families, communities, and the nation.

Through powerful wilderness expeditions that draw on the healing benefits of teamwork and challenge, Outward Bound reminds veterans that the skills needed to make a successful transition are already in their possession in the form of their military values and training and their care for others in need.






Outward Bound has been serving Veterans since 1983.



In 1983 Col. Bob Rheault, Commander of the 5th Special Forces Group in Vietnam founded an Outward Bound Program for Vietnam Veterans.



Since then, Outward Bound Veterans has provided more than 6,000 Veterans returning home from conflict zones the ability to participate in fully funded Outward Bound expeditions representing funding of over \$10 million from program sponsors.

Outward Bound Veterans expeditions provide the sense of purpose, trust in one another, and physical challenge that our service men and women experienced in the military.

As Veterans work as a group to overcome shared obstacles and achieve shared goals in a non-combat wilderness setting, many Outward Bound Veterans participants say they feel more “at home” than they have in all their time back on U.S. soil.



LEARN MORE | 866.467.7651 www.outwardbound.org

COURSE ACTIVITIES AND LOCATIONS

Outward Bound reconnects Veterans with skills, abilities and values they already possess.

Outward Bound's expeditionary learning approach has been tailored to meet the needs and skills of Veterans.

Every stage of the expedition is designed as a progression of learning that results in the students emerging with a strong sense of their abilities, responsibility to others and personal and group potential.



PROGRAM OPTIONS

Offered year-round, Veterans can choose from a number of expeditions.

In rugged wilderness areas throughout the United States, Veterans have options ranging from backcountry mountaineering to whitewater rafting to kayaking or sailing.

All expeditions are six days in length and are led by a team of Outward Bound Instructors. Instructors possess deep technical skills, years of training and experience and deliver positive outcomes for students through Outward Bound's expeditionary learning approach.

"...WHAT SURPRISED ME WAS... THE INSTRUCTORS. SOMETIMES PEOPLE ARE JUST DOING THEIR JOB BUT ALL OF OUR INSTRUCTORS WERE OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALS. NOT ONLY WERE THEY ABLE TO TEACH ME STUFF ABOUT THE ACTUAL EXPEDITION BUT THEY TAUGHT ME HOW TO RELAX, SLOW DOWN, ENJOY AND BE GRATEFUL"

*Air Force, Special Operations Medic,
Multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan*

"I FEEL ALIVE. I FEEL LIKE I CAN FINISH SCHOOL,
THAT MY JOB HAS MORE PURPOSE BACK HOME,
AND THAT I CAN WORK THROUGH MY RELATIONSHIPS
WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY."

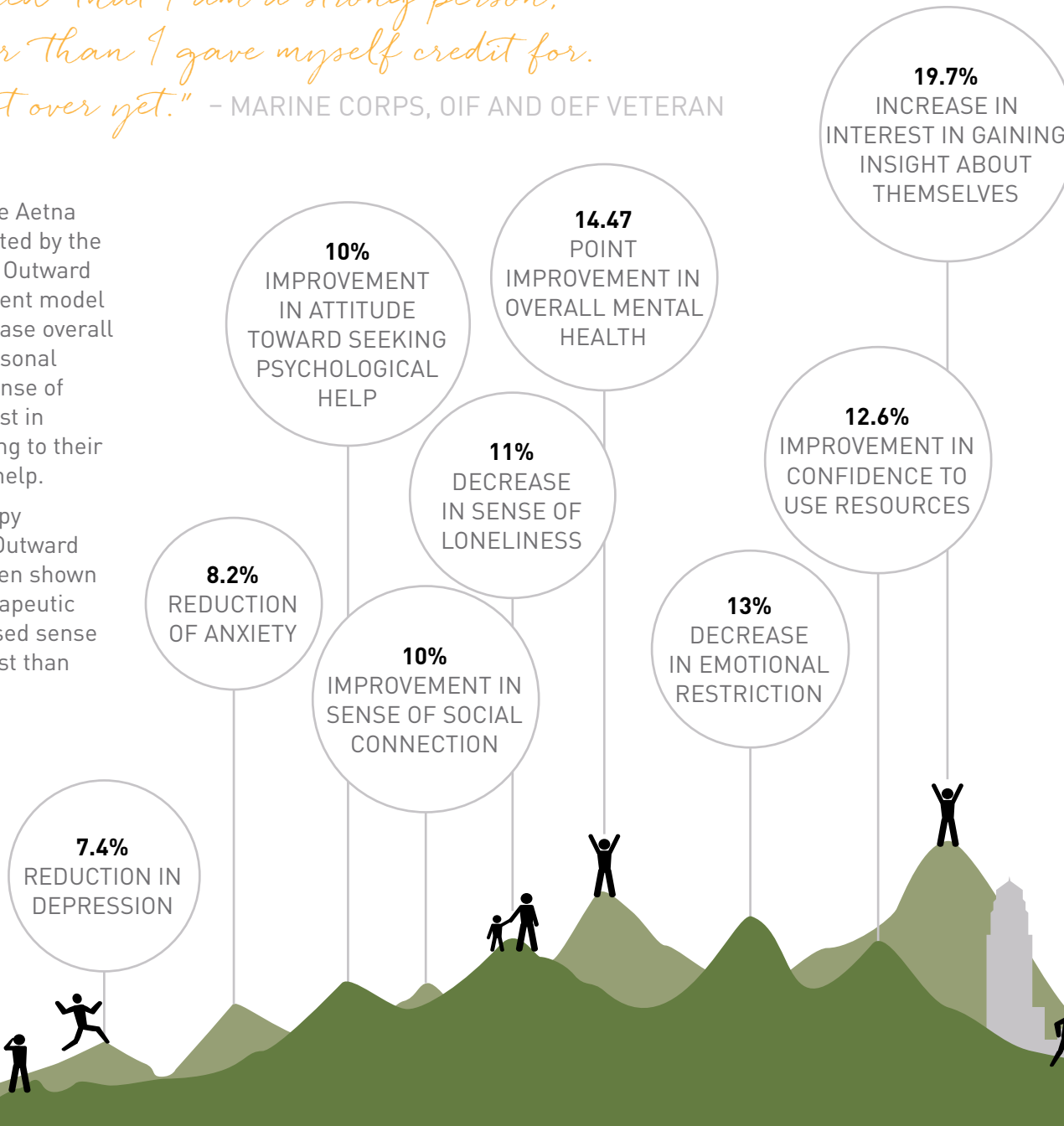
*Marine Corps, Infantry,
Two Deployments to Iraq*


PROGRAM OUTCOMES

"...I rediscovered that I am a strong person, much stronger than I gave myself credit for. My life is not over yet." – MARINE CORPS, OIF AND OEF VETERAN

In a study funded by The Aetna Foundation and conducted by the University of Texas, the Outward Bound Veterans treatment model was found to help increase overall mental health, interpersonal relations, resilience, sense of purpose, greater interest in personal growth, relating to their emotions and seeking help.

Adventure-based therapy programs such as the Outward Bound Veterans has been shown to result in deeper therapeutic processing and increased sense of camaraderie and trust than traditional therapy.



A photograph of three women sitting on a rocky trail, smiling for the camera. They are wearing climbing helmets (one white, two blue) and safety harnesses. The woman on the left is wearing a white helmet, sunglasses, and a grey t-shirt. The woman in the middle is wearing a blue helmet and a yellow t-shirt. The woman on the right is wearing a blue helmet and a pink t-shirt. They are surrounded by rocks and some greenery. In the background, there are more rocks and a backpack.

“THANK YOU... FOR GIVING VETERANS LIKE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT WITH OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN SUCH A UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT. THE EXPERIENCE IS UNFORGETTABLE... THERE IS NOWAY I WOULD HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF MY FAMILY AND PEOPLE LIKE YOU. THANK YOU.”

*Army National Guard, Active Duty,
Deployed to Iraq 2010 - 2011*



PROGRAM FUNDING

Every dollar donated to the Outward Bound Veterans directly benefits a Veteran.

With the generous gifts of donors, there is no cost to Veterans who want to enroll in an Outward Bound expedition. Scholarship funds cover all costs for Veterans including equipment and travel. All Veterans need to do is choose the expedition of their liking.

Veterans experience the benefits of an Outward Bound expedition with no out-of-pocket expenses. They simply arrive at the course start with the clothes on their back – and the rest is meticulously planned for them. Scholarship funds cover tuition and administrative overhead for a 6-day wilderness course that includes the following:

- Instructors
- Food and permits
- Camping gear, packs and equipment
- Local transportation
- Basecamp facilities, management and logistics
- Instructor training and development
- Airfare to and from course location
- Hotel stays the evenings before and after course

LEARN MORE | 866.467.7651 www.outwardbound.org

MILITARY VETERANS AND OUTWARD BOUND



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VETERANS
CONNECTED TO
FAMILIES,
BUSINESSES,
COMMUNITIES

MILITARY VETERANS

Duty
Honor
Country

OUTWARD BOUND EXPEDITIONS

Service
Character
Leadership

TRANSFERABLE LIFE SKILLS

Trust
Resilience
Compassion

Expedition Design Principles:

Expeditions center on teamwork and challenge. Instructors present sequential activities that gradually increase in both physical and emotional challenge while transferring leadership over to the Veteran participants. They emphasize camaraderie and shared life experiences through facilitated conversations about challenges Veterans face transitioning to civilian life.



PLEASE JOIN US IN GIVING BACK TO OUR VETERANS.

For more information, or to
arrange a gift or partnership,
please contact:

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JOIN OUR JOURNEY

For many Veterans on an Outward Bound expedition, the mind shifts from what they 'can't do' to what they 'can do'.

In that moment, they reconnect with those around them and with the potential their future holds. With proven outcomes, a history of serving veterans and some of the most qualified, skilled, and passionate instructors in the industry, Outward Bound is uniquely positioned to make a tremendous impact on the lives of Veterans.

But we need your help. Outward Bound is a lean organization. Our administrative and overhead costs are kept low so that as much of the donated dollars as possible go to the program. There is no cost to Veterans to attend an expedition. Their equipment, travel and instructor fees are all covered by funding from generous partners.



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VETERANS



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FOLLOW US for more photos, videos, and stories.



PLEASE RECYCLE

**“I REALIZED THAT THESE VETERANS COULD
HAVE SPENT TWO YEARS IN WEEKLY
INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY AND NOT
REAPED THE THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF
BEING ON THE OCEAN FOR 6 DAYS AS PART OF
A TEAM WITH A COMMON OBJECTIVE.**

*Dr. Sharon Wills,
Veterans Administration Clinician*

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Outward Bound is a nonprofit, tax-exempt, educational organization and is approved as a 501(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions are tax-deductible. Outward Bound considers applications on an equal opportunity basis without regard to an applicant's race, color, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or any other status protected by federal, state or local law. Outward Bound actively seeks to serve diverse students through recruiting, affiliations, dedicated scholarships and community programs. For additional information on land use and policies, please visit our website at: www.outwardbound.org/about-outward-bound/land-use.