

# EMPOWERING VETERANS

2022 ANNUAL REPORT





# STRONGER TOGETHER, **EMPOWERING VETERANS**





Bob McLaughlin

Mt. Carmel Supporters and Friends,

From April 2021 to March 2022, our world saw many changes – some heartening, others challenging. Even as new strains of COVID-19 spread across the globe, the pandemic impact began to wane, and life slowly returned to some semblance of normalcy. Even so, geo-political unrest, economic pressures, and realized global threats of invasion have caused turmoil among veterans and military. Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center remained a front-line bastion and purveyor of supportive services for all veteran and military communities.

As we transitioned away from virtual workplace practices and returned to in-person client offerings, our need for a larger community footprint was accentuated. Mt. Carmel has increased outreach to areas like Pueblo, Trinidad, and Fountain while bolstering our core program areas of transition and employment; health and wellness; military, veteran, and family services; and mission outreach.

Rather than taking a “one and done” approach, Mt. Carmel uplifted its clients with wraparound services like counseling, food, utilities assistance, housing, and job training, which impact the whole individual. We not only provided supportive services but also empowered veteran-owned businesses to ensure military entrepreneurs continue to have opportunities and a voice within the community.

By strengthening our partnerships with local and national organizations, we linked clients to a full array of resources to begin new chapters in their lives. Partner relationships are integral to continued social impact as we support veterans and their family members. **As quantified by a study conducted by the Colorado Institute for Social Impact, every \$1 donated to Mt. Carmel generates almost \$2 in services to enhance the community.**

In a year of transition, turmoil, and triumph, Mt. Carmel forged ahead with expanded services, new partnerships, and increased client capacity. We were able to touch more military, veterans and their families than ever before, and we could not do it without our faithful partners, ambassadors, and volunteers. Thank you for your continued commitment, generosity, and support.

Sincerely,

Robert F. McLaughlin  
COL, US Army (Ret.), Executive Director



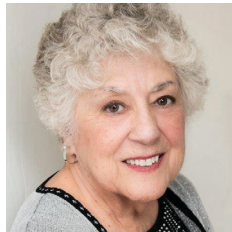
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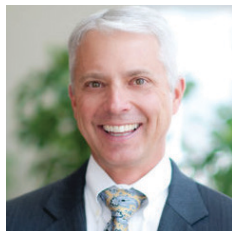


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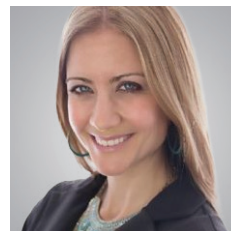
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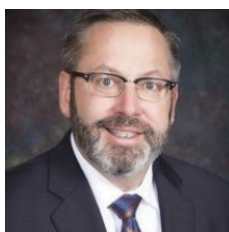
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Justin Verhulst, MCVSC – Pueblo Operations Manager

## Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center Expands to Better Serve Veterans

### COMMUNITY AND PARTNERS JOIN TOGETHER TO OFFER A HAND UP

It was a year of growth and expansion for Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center. We not only grew our physical footprint but expanded community outreach and partner alliances within Southern Colorado.

We have served over 80,000 clients through nearly 100,000 customer visits. Our Transition and Employment Program helped 3,400 veterans and military family members secure positions. The Health & Wellness Program assessed over 400 people and provided almost 3,000 counseling and therapy sessions. Mt. Carmel also assisted 2,500 veterans in crisis through our Military, Veteran, and Family Services Program. We invested heavily into program expenses, providing military-affiliated clients with no or low-cost services.

*“It was clear the southern areas ... had a growing population of underserved military.”*

**“As Mt. Carmel entered the new fiscal year, we reassessed our annual strategic plan and adjusted those priorities based upon our clients’ current needs. It was clear the southern areas of Colorado Springs and Pueblo had a growing population of underserved military, veterans, and their families.”**

**– Paul Price, Director of Operations, Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center**



Our expansion was facilitated through collaborations with critical public and private partners, including El Paso County, Pueblo County, Las Animas County, and the cities of Fountain and Pueblo. Additionally, several nonprofit agencies and area corporations stepped forward to join in this initiative. While teleservices increased our service delivery capability during Covid, we knew that a “boots on the ground” approach was critical in leveraging these new facilities and increasing reach.

Mt. Carmel initially established its Fountain location in the fall of 2021. The site currently houses an onsite case manager to process intakes, connect clients to resources, and provide financial assistance to patrons in need. Alongside the Salvation Army and several community partner agencies, Mt. Carmel will bring expanded options for veterans and military families in southeast Colorado Springs and Fountain.

Not only has Mt. Carmel added impactful connections within the community of Fountain, but we also continued to

grow our reach into Southern Colorado. Over 20 community ambassadors were integral in establishing our new Pueblo location, which opened in late 2021. Embedded support services are now being provided at the Pueblo location by some of our current Colorado partners, including Valiant Staffing, Medicare Mentors, and Care and Share, and joined by State Veteran Service Officers.

More than ever, we are poised to increase our footprint as we seek out new opportunities and partnerships, including our expansion into adjacent facilities, adding to our current Colorado Springs Mt. Carmel campus.



Patriot Day Give Back Food Distribution Event

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Since its inception, Mt. Carmel has grown to become a “beacon of support” within the community, delivering integrated programs and supporting creative partnerships that make a lasting difference in the lives of local military, veterans, and their families.

Our connection with the community continued throughout the year as we hosted multiple food distributions at our Pueblo and Colorado Springs locations. We also worked with Safeway to distribute Thanksgiving meals to over 1,200 local military and veteran families.

Mt. Carmel celebrated its 6th Patriot Day Give Back Event by giving away nearly 40,000 pounds of food to 324 local families in need and had a fantastic night at our 3rd Annual Hoedown for Heroes fundraiser. We also enjoyed



being the last stop for the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association Mission to Zero motorcycle ride with over 100 riders to bring attention to veteran suicide.

We also began our veteran-powered small business campaign to highlight these budding enterprises and uplift and empower entrepreneurs like Shari Morris, owner of a local food truck.

Mt. Carmel continues to be inspired and motivated by the military communities we live in and strives to make an even more significant impact in the future.

*“We are forever grateful for the opportunity to serve our veterans.”*

**“We are forever grateful for the opportunity to serve our veterans, military family members, and the entire military community. We could not do it without the support of our community partners and volunteers.”**

**– Bob McLaughlin, Executive Director,  
Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center**

## **PARTNERSHIP COLLABORATION**

Our robust community outreach called for renewed and expanded partner relationships. We have increased our partner base with recent national and local alliances, which affords our clients more impactful resources, support, and program opportunities.

Mt. Carmel’s partner, USAA, awarded Mt. Carmel a \$200,000 grant to support our Transition and Employment Program’s diversity equity and inclusion plan. Their funding helped 84 clients receive certification training, 149 clients receive financial coaching/counseling, and 1,081 receive mentorship for employment services.

Our Lift Zone partner, Comcast, provided free broadband Wi-Fi to veterans, the military, and their families at our offices. At the same time, associates Mark and Mary Shuster have tirelessly worked with Mt. Carmel to provide the Financial Peace Workshop series, which navigated our clients through a wide range of fiscal topics.

Employees from our partner Jacobs have volunteered with Mt. Carmel and coached transitioning military members; distributed hundreds of meals to those in need; assisted with veteran recognition events; and collaborated with a network of partners in mentoring veterans with traumatic brain injuries on job searches, resume writing, and interviewing skills.

As Mt. Carmel looks ahead toward the remainder of 2022, we remain committed to our mission of providing best practices in service to our military community. Our accessible programs, integrated resources, and collaborative partnerships empower lives and strengthen our community. One such initiative you will learn more about is Next Chapter, a veteran suicide prevention pilot program funded through the Colorado State Department of Human Services.



Sal Katz, MCVSC – Pueblo Community Coordinator

## Pueblo Office Expansion Enables Increased Reach and Services

As the vision for an increased presence in Southern Colorado took shape, Pueblo emerged as the best choice for an additional Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center due to its sizable, underserved veteran population.

In early 2021, Mt. Carmel decided to expand into Pueblo, and St. Mary-Corwin Hospital offered a suite of offices. Through grant applications and existing partner connections, Mt. Carmel was able to start up the new office and expand services. The City of Pueblo, joined by Pueblo County, Comcast, and 5-Star Bank, supplied start-up support. At the same time, current partners such as Medicare Mentors, Valiant Staffing, VSO, Care & Share, and Veterans Upward Bound began offering client services at the new location.

Mt. Carmel's initial team members have ties to Pueblo and the veteran community and included an Operations Manager, a Community Coordinator, a Peer Navigator, and a Case Manager. With over 200 guests in attendance, Mt. Carmel joined with the Center for American Values and hosted a community reception to announce the establishment of Pueblo's Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center in December 2021.

In spring of 2022, the inaugural Mt. Carmel Pueblo Ambassadors meeting convened, and 20 selected community leaders met with Jay Cimino and Bob McLaughlin in Pueblo to discuss Mt. Carmel's services and partners while also reviewing the growing schedule of outreach events. This diverse group of tireless military advocates encompasses all service and industry spectrums from education, healthcare, government, and small business, to corporate leadership and veteran agencies.

Mt. Carmel continues to increase services for the Pueblo office and has recently aligned with the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) as a recipient of the Career Navigation and Coaching Collaborative Staffing Grant to add a job coach position this summer.



## Military, Veteran, & Family Services

Our Military, Veteran, and Family Services team offers a hand-up to veterans, the military community, and their families experiencing challenges. Working with national and community partners, the mission is to assist people in stabilizing their lives and allowing them to access other wellness and career services they may need.

- Non-clinical Case Management
- Housing Support
- Financial Counseling
- Essential Financial Support
- Food Assistance
- Mission Outreach
- Justice-involved Veterans

## Transition & Employment

The Transition and Employment team assists veterans in gaining meaningful employment and emphasizes support for military spouses. The team collaborates with employers, military installations, and community partners to ensure success in providing resume and interview workshops, transition training, internships, career fairs, and networking events.

- Peer Navigator Counseling
- Resume & Interview Workshops
- Hiring Events & Industry Days
- Networking Events
- Education & Internships

## Health & Wellness

Our Health and Wellness services include individual, group and couples therapy, no-cost therapeutic retreats, and non-traditional therapies including trauma-focused yoga, PTS-focused art and music therapy, tai-chi, and spiritual wellness. Services are confidential and open to veterans, military, and their families regardless of discharge status.

- Individual, Couples & Family Counseling
- Support Groups
- Next Chapter
- Alternative Therapies
- Retreats
- Spiritual & Fitness Programs

**ANNUAL  
IMPACT  
NUMBERS**

**29,208**  
CLIENT  
VISITS

**3,285**  
CLIENTS  
ENROLLED



Amber Hansen, MCVSC – Colorado Springs Intern

## Gold Star Spouse Heals Through Service

### MILITARY WIDOW GIVES BACK THROUGH INTERNSHIP

Air Force Veteran and Gold Star Spouse Amber Hansen knew she wanted to work for an organization where she could make a difference within the military community. After six years serving in the Air Force, initially working with the Command Support Staff and then as a Personnel Specialist, she separated from the military as a Staff Sergeant to pursue other interests and raise a family.

*“Through grief, I gained clarity on what I wanted to do with my life.”*

Her life was turned upside down 10 years ago when her husband was killed on an Army patrol in Afghanistan. She knew she had to find a way to care for her three young sons but wanted a career, not just a job. Her experiences in the military and as a Gold Star Spouse inspired her to pursue the field of social work, and she found an opportunity to intern with Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center in the spring of 2022.

**“I missed being part of the military community and enjoy being able to give back. Through grief, I gained clarity on what I wanted to do**

**with my life. I needed to have a career that made a difference. If I was going to be away from my sons, I wanted to make an impact. The field of Social Work provided the opportunity to help individuals with all the problems life can throw at you and assists in a wide variety of areas.”**

**– Amber Hansen, Social Work Intern, Mt. Carmel**



Amber learned about Mt. Carmel through an Army veteran she worked with at a yoga studio. She was pursuing a Master of Social Work online at the University of Kentucky. She could utilize her Veterans Affairs (VA) work-study benefits through the internship program at Mt. Carmel.

Not only is Mt. Carmel an approved VA work-study site, but it is also a higher-education partner offering internships for non-clinical

social work degree requirements.

Interns provide information, assistance, and navigation relation activities to support veterans and their families, including resource referrals, financial

aid, housing navigation, follow-ups, case management, and advocacy to access and receive needed services.

Amber currently interns with Mt. Carmel's Military, Veteran, and Family Services (MVFS) Department, where she shadows case workers and processes intakes. She appreciates that Mt. Carmel goes above and beyond to work with veterans and family members regardless of their service record or personal circumstances.

***"Amber's relatability to clients has made her a welcome and valuable addition to our team."***

**– Shannon Olin, MVFS Director, Mt. Carmel**

In addition to pursuing her graduate degree, Amber continues to serve by volunteering with organizations including the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; Team Red, White and Blue; and Wear Blue: Run to Remember. She is honored to be part of the military community and is committed to using her life experiences to aid and mentor others.



**FINANCIAL  
PEACE**  
*University*

## FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

Mark and Mary Shuster have been partnering with Mt. Carmel for a number of years to provide the Financial Peace Workshop series to our clients.

The series covers a wide range of financial topics that clients should be familiar with, such as budgeting, paying off debt, insurance, real estate, college planning, and retirement planning.

With the help of other MCVSC partners and MCVSC's Financial Coach, Jonathan Helm, we are putting together a team of financial experts with a wide range of experience to help guide our clients.

Clients who register for the class can expect to not only receive the workshop curriculum, but a range of real world and personalized examples from this financial team.



Mark Smith, MCVSC – Colorado Springs Director of Transition and Employment

## Transitioning Veteran Finds a Familiar Ally

SSSG Dennis Kennedy began his military career in July 2003 when he was recruited into the Army's Infantry branch by, then, SSG Mark Smith in Charleston, IL. He never could have imagined that same recruiter would also help him transition out of the military 20 years later.

**"I do find it rather funny that the guy who helped get me into the Army is assisting in my transition out." – SSG Dennis Kennedy**

Dennis first learned about Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center while he was stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado serving as a Command Financial Non-Commissioned Officer (CFNCO). He had not only worked with Mt. Carmel on holiday food giveaways and other assistance programs, but had also referred veteran friends for budgeting, money assistance, resume-building classes, and job fairs.

**"I found an organization that cares about the military and genuinely wants to help." – SSG Kennedy**

When he decided to retire, he sought out resources to help him make the leap to a civilian career. Laura Marth, an acquaintance and Mt. Carmel's Partner Development Coordinator, spoke with his wife, Chelsea, at a women's church retreat and suggested that he get in touch with Mt. Carmel's Transition and Employment team to facilitate the job-hunting process. It just so happens that the Director of Transition and Employment, was none other than his former Army recruiter, Mark Smith.

*"...the guy who helped  
get me into the Army  
is assisting in my  
transition out."*



**"I was shocked and surprised, as I hadn't talked to him since he had shipped out to Basic Training. Coming from a town of 850 people, I wasn't expecting that at all!" – Mark Smith, Transition and Employment Director**

Though still on active duty and a year out from his retirement date, Mt. Carmel was able to initially assist SSG Kennedy with resume evaluation and employment recommendations. He is currently exploring an Army Community Service internship to build hours toward an Accredited Financial Counselor Certification.

**"I worked with Mt. Carmel when they first opened while I was stationed at Carson, so it's great to see how much they have expanded in veteran assistance." – SSG Kennedy**

The phrase "It's a small Army" takes on a whole new meaning when you have a connection with someone as they enter the military and again when they transition from service. That was certainly true for Mark and Dennis, whose paths crossed again at Mt. Carmel.



## USAA

Last fiscal year, USAA awarded Mt. Carmel a \$200,000 grant to support the Transition & Employment program's diversity equity and inclusion. Their funding helped 84 clients receive certification training, 149 clients received financial coaching/counseling, and 1,081 received mentorship for employment services.

USAA renewed that grant for another \$200,000 and we are currently halfway through that project. So far, through this second round of funding, 95 minority clients have been placed into employment, two minority clients have received scholarships for certification training AND completed that training, and 48 minority clients have received financial counseling.

# Financial Highlights

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF END OF FISCAL YEAR

### ASSETS

CASH	\$1,456,382
PLEDGES RECEIVABLE – CURRENT	\$125,000
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	\$103,270
PREPAID EXPENSES	\$32,609
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT	\$88,127
PLEDGES RECEIVABLE – LONG-TERM	\$35,000
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,840,388</b>

### LIABILITIES

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED EXPENSES	\$175,823
OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$700
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$176,523</b>

**NET ASSETS** **\$1,663,865**

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS** **\$1,840,388**



During the last fiscal year, Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center invested over **\$1.8 million** into program expenses, providing military-affiliated clients with **no cost/low cost** services in the Pikes Peak Region.





Every dollar invested in Mt. Carmel  
**doubles its value** in the community.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF END OF FISCAL YEAR

### REVENUES

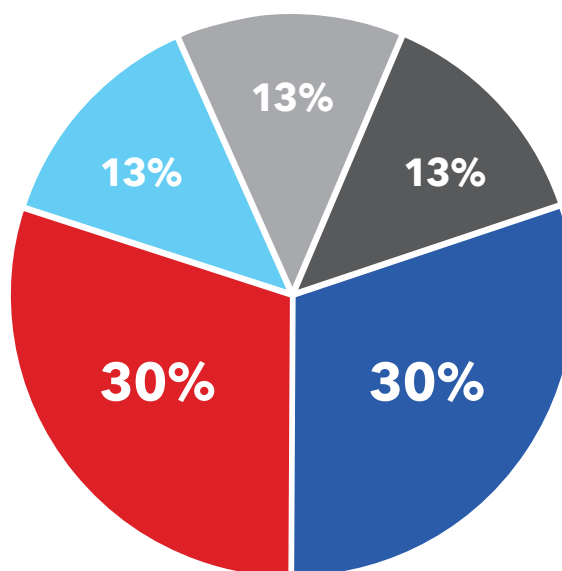
GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS	\$3,190,857
EVENT AND SPONSORSHIP INCOME	\$262,688
RENTAL INCOME FROM PARTNERS	\$68,560
OTHER INCOME	\$67,739
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$3,589,844</b>

### EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICES	\$2,200,789
FUNDRAISING	\$626,264
MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	\$326,403
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$3,153,456</b>

### INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM EXPENSES

- Military, Veteran, and Family Services
- Veteran Career and Employment
- Partner Space
- Greet and Connect
- Behavioral Health



**TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES** **\$2,200,789**



Paul Meehan – Coast Guard Veteran and Set Lighting Director

## Next Chapter Community Collaborative

A recent report by the El Paso County Coroner's Office revealed a troubling trend. While suicides went down countywide, numbers increased among the military population. Of the county's 176 deaths by suicide in 2021, 53 were identified as active duty and military veterans. That is a 10 percent increase from 2020. From a state perspective, Colorado continues to outpace the national average for veteran and military suicides as well.

Mt. Carmel was uniquely poised to step in and offer support, along with a collaborative partnership with UCHHealth and the Colorado Behavioral Health Administration, Next Chapter was born.

### WHAT IS NEXT CHAPTER?

Next Chapter is funded through Colorado Senate Bill 129 Veteran Suicide Prevention Pilot Program, an act that required the Colorado State Department of Human Services to establish a veteran suicide prevention pilot program to reduce the suicide rate and suicidal ideation among veterans by providing no-cost, stigma-free, confidential, and effective behavioral health treatment for veterans and their families in El Paso County.





## HOW DID THIS PROGRAM BEGIN?

Mt. Carmel has continually been recognized by the State of Colorado for our innovative approach to helping military, veterans, and their families, and adding Next Chapter to our existing services was a natural fit and we were poised to seamlessly step in when called upon to help. At Mt. Carmel, we understand that veterans often experience complex issues. That's why in addition to behavioral health services, we offer our same wraparound services to clients who contact us through Next Chapter. This includes referrals to our Transition and Employment and Military, Veteran, and Family Services departments.



Rodger Johnson, Next Chapter program manager

**uchealth**

## KEY PARTNERS

While we had a solid foundation from which to build Next Chapter, we knew that like the veterans we serve, we couldn't do it alone. Our partnership with UCHealth has been integral to shaping the program. Under the guidance of Damian McCabe, the Director of Behavioral Health and Military Affairs at UCHealth, we're certain that Next Chapter will save lives and shape the future of Colorado.

**To find out more, visit [www.nextchapterco.org](http://www.nextchapterco.org).**

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

As we look forward to expanded partnerships, Mt. Carmel would be remiss if we didn't take a moment to talk about our partnership with UCHealth. Through Next Chapter, a state-funded mental health and suicide prevention program, UCHealth is helping Mt. Carmel add more capacity to treat mental health than ever before. We've added a robust program to aid veterans and their families when they're struggling most, and we couldn't do it without UCHealth. The state-funded Next Chapter program allows UCHealth to bring clinicians and interns directly to our campus to aid us in our goal of reaching 700 veterans in El Paso County. Mt. Carmel is grateful to be working with an organization like UCHealth that understands and shares our vision and our mission of veteran wellness.



Julius McLeod, Veteran Actor



Einarr, Veteran Service Dog





Dana Rocha, Julie Kavanaugh, Nadira, Melody Neff, Amina, Bob McLaughlin

## Supporting Those Who Supported Us

As you walk up to Amina and Nadira, you'd never know just how much these sisters have experienced in their short lives. They're full of smiles and jokes with their friends Melody Neff and Julie Kavanaugh from Vectrus who've taken on the cause of helping this family of six refugees as they settle in Colorado Springs.

*“I cannot wait to experience this journey and the success each will achieve.”*

**“The entire Vectrus organization has wrapped their arms around Amina and the family from here in the US to our employees overseas and realized the sacrifices and challenges they are overcoming being away from their homeland. Amina and the entire family are strong, and I cannot wait to experience this journey and the success each will achieve.”**

**– Julie Kavanaugh, Executive Director of Administration and Philanthropy Board Chair, Vectrus**

Amina was a special forces Afghan FTP soldier (Female Tactical Platoon soldier; a classified team) who served alongside US troops fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan. When the borders were suddenly closed late last year, an organization named Sisters of Service helped Amina and her family escape to safety in the US. The Sisters of Service is a team of American female veterans with



the mission of uplifting and supporting the Afghan female veterans who fought by their side in Afghanistan. The sisterhood works to resettle and empower these Afghan women and their families. So far, over 40 veterans and their families have been aided and relocated to the States. Sisters of Service is constantly working to ensure their safety and well-being by helping provide more than

*“It was such a remarkable, humbling and warm experience.”*

just an escape; they’re helping with mentorship, legal aid, and an entire support network.

When Amina’s family landed, they were split up all over the East Coast. Some of her family landed in New Jersey, and some in Virginia. When Melody and Julie heard about Amina’s family through Sisters of Service, they knew what they had to do. Vectrus wanted to make sure the family had the household goods and essential things they needed to be happy and to navigate in their new surroundings.

Amina would like to serve in the US military, her sister Nadira loves to play guitar and aspires to be a doctor, sister Sediqa has the cooking skills to be a chef, her younger brother Sharif loves to play soccer, her youngest sister Nazi loves to draw and paint, and her mother Bilgias is an incredible seamstress. Mt. Carmel has pledged to help continue Vectrus’ efforts by assisting with language classes, job assistance, and transition support.

At Mt. Carmel, our expansion efforts mean more than just opening service centers. It means expanding our commitment to the community through partnerships that directly help those who need it most. Vectrus has been a partner with Mt. Carmel, and we’re so grateful that they’ve enlisted our help to find resources to help Amina and her family.



Nadira and Amina laugh with their friends from Vectrus





Shari Morris, Veteran-Powered Business Owner

## Supporting Veteran-Powered Businesses

### SHARI'S DELICIOUS DELIGHTFULS, LLC

Army veteran Shari Morris grew up in a family of amazing cooks, but she never imagined running her own mobile bakery.

After the birth of her twins and facing the possibility of simultaneous family separations, Shari made the difficult decision to leave the military in 2003 and remain in Germany to care for her three children while her husband deployed.



With a strong local network of friends, family, and military connections to support her, Shari began selling cakes and cupcakes. She continued to grow her business, serving baked goods and sweet treats within her community.

After relocating to Colorado Springs, she launched Shari's Delicious Delightfuls, LLC and was looking for a partner organization to introduce her company to the Pikes Peak region.



She found the opportunity to showcase her mouth-watering morsels at the Military Makers Valentine Bazaar, an event sponsored by Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center in partnership with the Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center, to bring local military-connected and veteran artists, artisans and crafters together to provide a unique shopping experience.

As a veteran and military spouse, Shari has a passion for the armed forces community. Colorado Springs has provided her the platform to serve and give back to that population while growing her own delectable veteran-powered business.

*“I grew up in a family of amazing cooks and food was always a big part of my life.”*



- Military families have leadership skills, resilience, and attention to detail that make them the perfect business owners.
- Veteran entrepreneurs represent 9.1% of all business owners, compared to their smaller overall (7.6%) population size in the U.S (SBA, 2021)
- Combined, veteran-owned businesses generate about \$1 trillion in receipts and employ nearly six million Americans (SBA, 2021)
- 93% of veteran entrepreneurs indicate that military skills helped them with their business (Maury et al., 2021)



Tyana and Daliyah

# Volunteer Spotlight

Jalisco Grantham is an active-duty Army soldier. She works as a paralegal at the Fort Carson Legal Assistance Office. Jalisco has donated over 600 hours to the Mt. Carmel Community Connections program. She recently volunteered her time to help move a large quantity of furniture. This furniture goes to support members of the local military community who are in need. Jalisco loves giving back to Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center and the Community Connections program in this way, since the same program provided furniture to her household when she moved to Fort Carson. Her entire family gives back and volunteers together, including her father. She also invested personal funds to buy a trailer to help Community Connections move even more furniture for military and veteran families.

Due to her dedication and generosity, Jalisco was chosen as the Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center Volunteer of the Year. Her gratitude and dedication shine through her interactions and volunteer service.

She has continued to be appreciative and still volunteers regularly with Mt. Carmel Community Connections. Jalisco sets a high bar in giving back! Mt. Carmel is proud to have her on our side.

## Looking Ahead

We remain steadfast in our resolve to serve veterans, military, and their families. Mt. Carmel is focused on expansion, so that we may offer a hand-up to veterans all over Colorado. As we continue to expand our footprint, we ensure that the community, potential partners, and donors are informed of our services, our

impact, and our mission. Our commitment to hiring the highest-quality staff and offering them the best training possible remains a top priority for Mt. Carmel. Mt. Carmel will be known as an industry leader through our integrity and passion for service.

As we continue to look ahead, Mt. Carmel will:

- Expand services and programs throughout Colorado with focus on veteran-serving best practices.
- Ensure we are an integral partner in providing housing needs with focus on homelessness prevention and housing options using our Operation Step Up program to garner resources.
- Meet the needs of our clients by expanding Community Connection and Veteran Connection programs ensuring those in need get immediate support while helping to build a stronger community.
- Grow partnerships across the region and the state to improve program integration and resource delivery for those who serve.
- Develop health and wellness offerings to ensure those affected by adversity get the timely support they need.





## CUMULATIVE STATS:

MT. CARMEL HAS SERVED  
OVER 10,000 UNIQUE CLIENTS  
IN NEARLY 100,000 CLIENT VISITS

56,353  
VETERANS  
IMPACTED

84,726  
VISITS

*“Veterans Optometry Partners of America (VOPA) and Mt. Carmel have collaborated for several years in supporting our veteran and military community. This year has been one of expansion of services and our joint commitment of serving clients remains steadfast.”*

— Keegan Meyer, President & CEO, VOPA

*“Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center has been instrumental in helping me achieve my career goals. I obtained my Cybersecurity Management Certificate with the center’s support and encouragement provided me the vital link I needed from academia to the real world.”*

— Lisa Filsell, Transition and Employment Client

*“When I come to Mt. Carmel it feels like I am at the right place at the right time. Just knowing there is a place that really gets stuff done and doesn’t just blow smoke is motivating. Semper Fi.”*

— Mark Keough, Mt. Carmel Volunteer



**PATRIOT DAY STATS:** MT. CARMEL  
HOSTED 150 VOLUNTEERS, FED  
NEARLY 700 PEOPLE AND OVER  
300 FAMILIES

Mt. Carmel hosted the Patriot Day Give Back event for veterans and their families on September 9th. This was a community event to provide free food, necessities, and gifts for military families and the larger Colorado Springs community.

**Visit [VeteransCenter.org](https://VeteransCenter.org)**

**719-772-7000**



530 Communication Circle, Colorado Springs, CO 80905