2020 has been a hard road for all of us. We’ve all had to grapple with new mental health challenges and unforeseen roadblocks in our daily lives. This reality was no different for Heroic Hearts Project and for the lives of our volunteers. Increased travel restrictions and the inability to gather in groups slowed our operations down dramatically. We were still able to help many veterans in 2020 but far fewer than we had hoped.

As the psychedelic journey teaches us, in the struggle there is always a silver lining. All of our wonderful volunteers have stepped up during this pandemic and devoted their time and energy towards helping veterans in need. The Heroic Hearts community is growing and thriving in a beautiful way.

We took advantage of the slow down to strengthen the organization and make our operations much more efficient. We are ready for 2021, and with the help of this wonderful community, we are set to hit the ground running in our mission to save veteran lives.

Thank you to everyone for your support!
2020 was a bittersweet year for the organization. We were restricted from helping as many veterans as originally planned, but we were able to grow significantly as an organization due to the slow down. 2020 is finally in the past, and we are ready and excited for the future.

Major events of 2020

- Provided grants to 20 veterans, which fell short of our 50 start-of-the-year goal.
- Our waitlist swelled to well over 500 veterans requesting our services.
- Started HHP UK led by Keith Abraham as CEO.
- Created HHP Canada exploratory committee led by David Fascinato.
- Featured in the *New York Times* and the *Rolling Stone Magazine*.
- Our Founder, Jesse Gould, was featured in Dr. Bronner’s Blog.
- Dr. Kate Pate and Jesse Gould co-authored a piece for the *MAPS Winter Bulletin* along with Dr. Chris Lowry of the University of Colorado, Boulder.
- Our ambassador program grew to more than 50 active volunteers led by Jenny Hansen.
- Added Jenny Hansen, Hannah Kimyon, Tammy Le, Zach Riggle, and Kasey Pipitt to our core operating team.
- Added Courtney Barnes to our board of advisors.
- Initiated a psilocybin study, led by Dr. Grace Blest-Hopley in conjunction with HHP UK which focuses on traumatic brain injuries in veterans.
03. Accomplishments

We were featured in The New York Times and Rolling Stone Magazine.

We received $100k grant from Dr. Bronner’s and became beneficiaries of their Heal Soul campaign.

We established HHP counterparts in both the UK and Canada.

Despite COVID, we were still able to help 20 veterans connect with psychedelic therapies.

We received funding for a study testing the effects of psilocybin on traumatic brain injury.
Although 2020 was a tough year in many ways, it didn't keep the Heroic Hearts Project research team down. We worked diligently behind the scenes to keep pushing our research initiatives forward.

Our team was able to analyze data from previous retreats with our partners at the University of Colorado and the University of Georgia. Those findings will be shared later this year at Mind Medicine Australia.

Our UGA partners were also able to publish in Nature Scientific Reports. Additionally, we partnered with HAVN Life Sciences, HHP-UK, and Imperial College London for a new observational study investigating outcomes associated with veterans voluntarily consuming psilocybin in retreat-based settings.

Finally, we have expanded our outcome measures in our initial project - understanding the effects of ayahuasca on psychological, behavioral, and physiological outcomes in veterans - to include biometric data.

We look forward to the continued evolution of all of these projects and making contributions to the scientific community by sharing our results, hopefully helping to positively impact the narrative around the use of plant medicines for veteran mental health. We're excited to see what the next year has in store for us.

Dr. Kate Pate
Director of Research
In the summer of 2021, we will restart our Institutional Review Board-approved ayahuasca study in conjunction with the University of Georgia and the University of Colorado, Boulder. This observational study will track the psychological and physical effects of ayahuasca on veteran participants. We are particularly excited to see the data that will emerge from the series of biological samples collected during the study. Led by Dr. Kate Pate.

In coordination with our UK counterpart, Heroic Hearts Project is developing a protocol to deliver a retreat program using psilocybin for traumatic brain injury in military veterans. This unique program will be one of the first that is looking at the potential effects psilocybin has on the physical causes of mental health issues. The retreats are set to initiate in the summer of 2021. Led by Dr. Grace Blest-Hopley, these retreats will be complemented by an observational study in collaboration with Imperial College London.

In partnership with the Ketamine Research Foundation, we will be conducting a study around the effects of ketamine-assisted therapy on veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder. We hope this study shows the effectiveness of this type of therapy, as Ketamine-assisted therapy is much more accessible to veterans located in the US than other psychedelic therapies. We also hope this study will be an example of the collective power of different organizations coming together to collaborate on worthwhile research.
We are all ready to heal and move forward after the tumultuous year that challenged us all. Although we did not meet our veteran grant goals, we have been working hard to strengthen the infrastructure of the organization. We are confident that we will come into 2021 better prepared to tackle the challenges in front of us.

Executive and Athlete Retreats

We had to postpone the majority of our Athlete/Veteran retreat events. When international travel restrictions are lifted, we will once again start bringing together communities of athletes, professionals, and military veterans in experiences of healing. We will be promoting these as "Warrior Retreats" to those interested in having a once-in-a-lifetime healing experience surrounded by other warriors from different walks of life. We believe this adaptation to our business model will allow HHP to enhance our ability to help veterans in a manner that still promotes our core mission and values.

Ambassador Program

Under the leadership of Jenny Hansen, the HHP Ambassador program has grown to over 50 ambassadors who are actively volunteering to help us achieve our mission. We will continue to develop this unique volunteer program in order to find new ways to empower and utilize those who are graciously volunteering their time to help others.

Decriminalization Movement in Oregon

With the passing of measure 109 last November, Oregon will be a place where veterans may be able to use psychedelic-assisted therapies safely in the US. Heroic Hearts Project is actively working with local practitioners and facilitators to explore the routes that will be available to veterans. We will develop our presence in the state with the help of local veterans in hopes that this will provide a robust model for other states to follow.
In coordination with the Peruvian center, La Medicina, HHP will be contributing to a monthly pension to help support indigenous elders in Peru. These elders have been working to heal their communities since they were children and are preservers of important knowledge about the healing properties of nature.

For more information please visit https://la-medicina.org/elders
Our work depends on a large group of people who contribute their time, knowledge, and hearts to our cause. Without them, none of what we do would be possible. To all of you, THANK YOU!

Aimee Cruz
Alfredo Lopez
Amanda Decker-Bode
Amanda Perez
Anna Osborne
Ariane Hjelle
Barbara Schmitt
Brenna Gebauer
Brett Wessler
Brian Winston
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Elliott Sina
Greg Brook
Hannah Kimyon
Jamie Ziegler
Jamie Davila
Jason McNamara
Jeff Trappe

Joaquin Orozco
Jordan Birch
Juan Jose Egas
Juliana Mercer
Justin Telles
Kasey Pipitt
Kelli Dickerson
Kieran Kuddihy
Lydia Abood
Michael Wise
Michelle Martin
Nathan Pohl
Ramon Espinoza
Ron Millward
Rudy Gonsior
Ryan Micheletti
Shannon Werner
Tammy Le
Taylor Taylor
Tristan Wimmer
A Letter from Heroic Hearts Project UK

Our primary focus as an organisation is to get veterans the healing they need. Therefore, facilitating our first ayahuasca retreat at the magnificent La Medicina retreat centre in Peru is our main objective for the first half of 2021. We already have six participants booked on the fully funded retreat as we await the easing of international lockdowns. We were aiming to start operations in April/May but the recent developments here in the UK may delay that further. This retreat was scheduled for April 2020, so the participants have been very patiently waiting for nearly a year now.

We are currently planning a psilocybin retreat with the wonderful team at Psychedelic Insights in The Netherlands later this year. This retreat will also be an opportunity for us to conduct our first observational research study on the effects of psilocybin on Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs).

Last year, members of the HHP UK team were the focus of two separate documentaries, both of which will be premiering in Spring, 2021. One film, Breaking Through, focuses primarily on the healing journey of Guy Murray, our Integration Coach, and Research Assistant. The other, Soma, discusses psychedelic therapy and UK drug policy in general and, more specifically, the work we are doing here at HHP UK. Premieres and other screening dates will be released in the coming weeks. We’ll be sure to update you in the next newsletter.

We are very excited to announce that Keith, Jo, and Charlotte have all been invited to speak at the upcoming Manchester University TEDx!

For those of our followers wishing to volunteer their time and energy, we are thrilled to announce that we’re in discussion with members of the faculty at Manchester University about providing an exclusive and purposefully designed Psychedelic Integration Coaching programme. While it will not be an accredited course, it will provide valuable training on how to integrate the psychedelic experience and help others through their healing process. Once completed, we would offer those volunteers the opportunity to become HHP UK Ambassadors in much the same way as our US brothers and sisters.

HHP UK team members will be appearing in numerous podcasts and conferences in the coming months and we have just published our first blog and newsletter, too. We are incredibly excited by our progress to date and by what our future holds, both as a driving force for good in the UK and as part of a wider international cause.

Keith J Abraham
CEO Heroic Hearts Project UK
As we see the awareness of psychedelic medicines in veteran community expands, I hope that a year from now double the amount of veterans will be on the road to healing.

- Kasey Pipitt

Heroic Hearts Project aims to help struggling veterans move Inward to heal with plant medicines and other psychedelic therapies so that they can move onward in a healthy way in their mental, emotional and physical lives. We exist to support them in their Hero’s Journey back to their Hearts.

- Tammy Le

Heroic Hearts Project gave me access to a medicine that didn't just save my life, it gifted me a better one. I know that it can do the same for others, and I am dedicated to helping those who were struggling as I was to find their way down this healing path.

- Zach Riggle

I envision HHP becoming a household name that is widely recognized for saving the lives of veterans with mental traumas by connecting them to psychedelic plant medicine retreats and supporting their healing journey via integrative counseling both prior to and after their psychedelic experience.

- Jenny Hansen

Together we are shifting the paradigm of effective healing treatment, and leading the way forward to peace in the veteran community.

-Jared Rinehart
HHP is helping veterans take ownership of their own wellness by providing access to experiences that illuminate our ability to heal the relationships we have with ourselves and the world we find ourselves in. I'm hopeful for a future that affords anyone brave to “go there” the opportunity to do so.

- Hannah Kimyon

We look forward to the continued evolution of all of our research projects and making contributions to the scientific community by sharing our results, hopefully helping to positively impact the narrative around the use of plant medicines for veteran mental health. We're excited to see what the next year has in store for us.

- Kate Pate

At the beginning of 2021, our Communications Director, Krista Potter, left to spend more time with her growing family. We would like to thank Krista for her amazing work! Krista, you will be missed!

It has been an incredible honor to assist in the growth and awareness of the Heroic Hearts Project. I am so proud of how far HHP has come in such a short time and how many lives it has already touched. Wishing this foundation and its team members all the success as I depart, and to all the veterans, may you find the peace and healing you seek. Many blessings!

- Krista Potter
GIGANTE, Costa Rica — There was a ghostlike quality to Rudy Gonsior, an American former Special Forces sniper, on the morning he arrived at a jungle retreat to see if a vomit-inducing psychedelic brew could undo the damage years of combat had done to his mind.

Glassy-eyed and withdrawn, he barely spoke above a whisper and was much quieter than the six other veterans who had come to dredge up painful memories of comrades fallen in battle, thoughts of suicide and the scar that taking a life leaves on the psyche.

“I have traveled across continents to come to the jungle to do psychedelics,” marveled Mr. Gonsior, who had steered clear from drugs his whole life. “I guess this is what might be considered a Hail Mary.”

They had come to western Costa Rica to try ayahuasca, a substance people in the Amazon rainforest have imbibed for centuries. Some Indigenous communities regard the brew, which contains the hallucinogen DMT, as a powerful medicine that keeps them spiritually resilient and in harmony with the natural world.

Like many service members of his generation, Mr. Gonsior said he enlisted in the Marine Corps to avenge the attacks of Sept. 11, which happened when he was in high school.

In 2006, he said he deployed to western Iraq for the first of multiple combat tours. He and his men were constantly ambushed with powerful roadside bombs and shot at by snipers, he said, and 17 service members he deployed with returned home in body bags. The experience, Mr. Gonsior said, turned him into a ruthless warrior.

“My sole goal was to survive,” he said. “I did a lot of things that I am not particularly proud of.” Instead of relief for surviving, he felt a crushing sense of shame.

“It was just by dumb luck that I wasn’t shot and wasn’t blown up,” he said. “Like to the point where, statistically, I should be dead by now or at least seriously injured.”

In 2007, Mr. Gonsior said he joined the Army Special Forces, where he served as a sniper. It left him feeling that he had joined a “cult of death,” he said.

‘A Hail Mary’: Psychedelic Therapy Draws Veterans to Jungle Retreats
excerpt from the New York Times
A special thank you to all of our generous donors as well as the following organizations!

We couldn't have done it without you!

The Gould Law Firm, Inc.

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