



Charitable Service Trust



Theory
of change



Our mission

The DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust is dedicated to a single purpose: **empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.**

To carry out this responsibility, the Trust supports physical and psychological rehabilitation programs; enhances mobility for veterans with amputations and spinal cord injuries; benefits aging veterans; aids and shelters veterans experiencing homelessness; and evaluates and addresses the needs of veterans, and their caregivers, forever changed by their service.

Our assumptions

For more than three decades, the Charitable Service Trust has carried out our mission of empowerment. This experience has fortified some fundamental assumptions under which we operate.

We know that many veterans face significant challenges when transitioning from military to civilian life, including physical and psychological injuries, homelessness, limited access to health care, unemployment, and insufficient support for their families and caregivers.

No one organization can adequately address every challenge, so many organizations exist in the veterans sphere across the country, and each is limited in its scope. Some of these nonprofit programs are proven to be effective and capable but lack sufficient funding and resources to reach those in need.

Our long-term goal

Our long-term goal is that veterans across all eras experience improved quality of life, dignity and respect, fulfilling the nation's promise to honor their service and sacrifices.



Our outcomes and supporting activities

To achieve our long-term goal, the Charitable Service Trust has laid out a strategy of short-, medium- and long-term outcomes that are supported by activities. We operate on the theory that the more we are able to fund strong nonprofits, the more veterans will receive the care and support they have earned. By amplifying these organizations' missions and leveraging our credibility and resources, more veterans will learn—and access—the help available to them. Lastly, through evaluation and feedback, the entire veterans service community can adapt and improve programs and services to meet veterans' needs.

Achieving our long-term goal requires a committed network of organizations and the acknowledgment that we're a part of a bigger, similarly focused community. Our outcomes are measurable and realistic, but they must complement and build off the efforts of others who serve in this space.

Our short-term outcomes and activities

We must start with ensuring funds are being sent to organizations that support veterans, caregivers and their families and that veterans know these services are available to them. This includes unserved and underserved communities.

We'll get there by seeking grant applications from nonprofit organizations providing veteran-specific programming in the United States. Each grant application and grant proposal will be evaluated based on potential impact, sustainability and alignment with our mission. Those on our board with decision-making authority to award these grants will use their own experience and judgment, coupled with the historical institutional knowledge the Charitable Service Trust has cultivated over its existence.

We must be a vocal advocate for the nonprofits we support by leveraging the various channels of communication and the broad member network of veterans service organizations we have access to so we can reach as many veterans as possible. This must be communication that is open to receiving feedback and input as well, especially as it relates to unserved and underserved veteran populations.

Our medium-term outcomes and activities

Next, we must strengthen collaboration among nonprofit organizations addressing veterans' needs.

We'll achieve this outcome primarily through providing grants to selected nonprofit organizations that:

- Offer physical and psychological rehabilitation programs for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injuries, military sexual trauma, substance use disorders, and related or co-occurring conditions
- Enhance mobility for veterans with amputations, spinal cord injuries, blindness or vision loss, deafness or hearing loss, and other physical disabilities
- Support aging veterans
- Aid and shelter veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Provide evidence-based therapeutic or recreational activities
- Deliver education, training and career-readiness programs
- Address the needs of veterans wounded in conflicts.
- Support caregivers and families of ill and injured veterans

Our two-way communication efforts will aid in achieving this outcome. By supporting the free flow of information among like-minded organizations, the Charitable Service Trust will help foster a supportive, transparent network that shares best practices, emerging trends and ways to help veterans.

Our long-term outcomes and activities

Through awarding grants to vetted organizations, championing these organizations, receiving feedback and fostering collaboration, the Charitable Service Trust will:

- Enhance mobility and independence for disabled veterans
- Reduce homelessness and unemployment among veterans
- Strengthen support systems for caregivers and families
- Expand community integration and social connectedness

We will achieve this by monitoring and assessing the impact of funded initiatives.

Our measurements

The Charitable Service Trust will measure our outcomes multiple ways. For both the short- and medium-term outcomes, we will evaluate several inputs and outputs.

Inputs include financial resources that come from individual donors, corporations, workplace giving campaigns and matching gift programs; partnerships with nonprofit organizations that have established programs for serving ill and injured veterans and their families; and internal expertise in veterans' needs and program evaluation.

Outputs include the number of grant applications we receive, the number of grants we award each year, the total number of veterans served by these grants, the total amount of money distributed to nonprofits, the amount of that money that funded targeted programs that support the long-term goal, and a measurable increase in availability of specialized care and support services.

The long-term outcomes will be measured two ways. First, through periodic accountability reports submitted by grant recipients. Second, through a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of funded programs. In this evaluation, we will compare a granted organization's narrative of how the funds were used to its quantitative results of their work during a grant period. We will then qualitatively assess the evidence they present for progress toward our long-term outcomes.





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