



VETERANS ARE OUR MISSION. GAMING IS OUR PASSION. | ANNUAL REPORT 2017

ABOUT US

OUR VISION:

To eliminate extreme symptoms of trauma, stress and isolation of military service members past and present.

OUR MISSION:

To fight the effects of depression, combat injuries and post traumatic stress by bringing veterans and civilians together through the "shared language" of gaming.



Founded in 2015 by a combat veteran who personally experienced the positive impact gaming can have — emotionally and psychologically — on veterans, **Stack Up** is the only charity directly supporting the military and bringing together veterans and civilian supporters through the shared love of video gaming. Stack Up programs provide support and gaming benefits to US, NATO, Australian, and New Zealand veterans.

A "stack" is a slang term for a formation used in military or law enforcement, when an assault team forms up single file along the entrance or doorway to a room where they believe a threat is located. For Stack Up, the stack represents a strong community of friends, family, brothers and sisters in arms, and supporters – all coming together for the common mission of supporting veterans through video gaming.

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER/CEO



In 2010, Marine Corporal Tyler Southern was assaulting a suspected insurgent position in Afghanistan when he triggered an improvised explosive device, leaving him with injuries requiring the amputation of both legs and one arm.

The road to recovery was not an easy one, but Tyler immersed himself in comic books and video games to help during his transition from the military and his recovery from these horrific injuries.

We were able to take Tyler to the San Diego Comic-Con this year, where we treated him like the VIP that he is. It's simply remarkable to see how far he has come in his recovery and in his return to a normal life—thanks to supporters like you.

Since Stack Up's inception in 2015, we have had the good fortune to impact the lives of thousands of veterans like Tyler through our gaming-focused programs, as well as the men and women of our armed forces who are serving in harm's way across the globe.

It is easy to get caught up in the numbers that you'll find in this report. I thought it was important to take a moment to remind everyone—myself included—what each number actually represents.

The numbers personify the tangible support Stack Up provides to Tyler—and deserving veterans like him—through our programs. As we come out of our first year, we will continue to expand our current services to veterans—helping more, doing more.

Know that your financial contribution is helping to create once-in-a-lifetime experiences for these heroes, whether they are deployed into the thick of combat overseas or stateside recovering from their physical and psychological wounds.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Machuga'.

Stephen Machuga
Chief Executive Officer, Stack Up
Former Captain, US Army (98-06)



WHY VIDEO GAMES?

Stack Up Founder/CEO, Stephen "Shanghai Six" Machuga, is a former Army Infantry/Military Intelligence officer and Airborne Ranger. In 2003, he was deployed to Iraq where he spent 13 months with the 2nd Infantry Division. During that time, it was video gaming that helped keep him sane. And upon returning home, gaming played a significant role in his successful reintegration back into civilian life. Wanting the same for his brothers and sisters in arms, he founded Stack Up on Veterans Day, November 11, 2015.

In 2017, Stack Up helped more than 10,000 service men and women to experience the benefits of video gaming—providing relief and assistance during their deployment overseas and while they recover back home. Stack Up programs are designed to create a sense of community and a continuum of support through

the common ground of gaming where veterans can connect with family, friends, fellow veterans, caring members of the gaming community, military and civilian volunteers—and themselves.

Each day, we see and hear, first-hand, how gaming is helping our brothers and sisters in arms to regain mental health and make successful transitions. We look forward to advancing our Stack Up mission by growing the reach and impact of our programs, and by partnering with the military, video gaming, and research communities in the continued exploration of the therapeutic effects of gaming – effects that can make a real difference in the lives of veterans, their families, and the community-at-large.

The positive impact of video gaming is substantiated by research that shows gaming's ability to alleviate anxiety and depression, and provide a sense of connection. Emerging research suggests that virtual reality experiences can serve as exposure therapy, providing a safe environment in which patients can experience controlled response to traumatic stimulation and triggers, and develop recognition and coping skills.



“ After 40 months in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan as a Scout Sniper, I was medically retired for PTSD. Gaming helps me in that when I feel an uncontrollable anxiousness... I can get out of it simply by loading up a game. Gaming has given me a common ground to get to know people who don't have my sorts of experiences.”

~ SSG Elliot Alcantara, US Army



Video Games vs. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):

- Researchers are corroborating that trauma sufferers have a significantly reduced number of flashbacks while focusing on a “highly engaging visual-spatial task” (i.e. video games).
- Profound therapeutic effect on soldiers in a war zone or those attempting to readjust back into society following a deployment.

Video Games vs. Soldier Suicide Epidemic:

- Suicides are at an all-time high: in 2013, suicides actually outnumbered the number of combat fatalities in Afghanistan (185 active duty Army suicides to 176 killed in action).
- Trauma has a way of isolating veterans; video games provide soldiers a friendly competitive social environment after duty hours.
- Veterans who leave the service generally have trouble connecting with their civilian counterparts; gaming acts as a shared language to help form relationships.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Stack Up programs provide a continuum of valuable support and gaming benefits to US, UK, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand veterans and active duty military personnel wherever they are in their journey – overseas, at home, during deployment, in recovery, and upon return to civilian life. Through the core outreach and community-building programs delivered by Stack Up's veteran and civilian staff and volunteers, our brothers and sisters in arms experience the therapeutic benefits of connection and gaming as well as a warm welcome into a supportive environment. This combination assists with trauma recovery, mental health maintenance, healthy transitioning, and revitalization.

Outreach



Connection



Community



Revitalization



SUPPLY CRATES

Video game care packages for deployed troops across the nation and around the world



The Supply Crates program puts the joy and benefits of gaming directly into the hands of service men and women across the nation and around the world. Stack Up Supply Crates are filled with video gaming and nerd gear and sent to veterans deployed to combat zones, serving in humanitarian missions, recovering in military hospitals, or stationed on stateside bases. The program provides therapeutic respite to help reduce the impact of mental and physical trauma.

AIR ASSAULTS

V.I.P. adventures for disabled or deserving veterans at home



Air Assaults are expense-paid adventures arranged by Stack Up to give disabled or deserving veterans the life-changing opportunity to attend major video game and geek culture events in VIP style! In 2017, Stack Up's seven Air Assaults flew 21 veterans to San Diego Comic-Con, E3, PAX East, PAX South, PAX West, TwitchCon, and GuardianCon. Air Assaults reinforce appreciation and support for veterans while providing revitalization through connection, community, and fun.

THE STACKS

Volunteer teams building supportive, game-loving communities for veterans



The living extension of the passion behind Stack Up, The Stacks are volunteers who help bring comfort and friendship to veterans coping with PTSD or transitioning back to civilian life—local communities on a mission to support veterans through the shared love of gaming. There are currently 210 active Stack volunteers representing 43 Stacks around the world. Stacks host events that support veterans, participate with veterans groups, and help raise funds for and awareness of Stack Up.

"HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS"

Downloadable video game drive for deployed veterans



The Home for the Holidays program engages the generosity of the gaming industry to provide donations of downloadable game codes for veterans during the holiday season. The program aims to deliver some holiday cheer to our brothers and sisters in arms and can be particularly valuable in connecting them with their loved ones back home. In 2017, 10,000+ veterans and active duty service members were given this opportunity via \$1.65 million in game code donations.

RED SHIRT RAIDERS

Volunteers providing online support and community



Red Shirt Raider volunteers provide online support. They share social media posts, support "Call-To-Arms" fundraising streams, host community game nights, welcome new people on Discord, and support Stack Up streamers on Twitch.

Outreach | Connection | Community | Revitalization

2017 HIGHLIGHTS

Whether on active duty in a combat zone, recovering in a military hospital, serving on a mission, or back home from overseas, **Stack Up programs offer veterans a way to de-stress and feel a sense of connection and community.**

1,164 active duty service members helped across **53** unique military units

10,000+ veterans and active duty service members provided with **\$1,655,115** in downloadable game codes through Home for the Holidays game drive

\$98,000 in games and gear donated to veterans via **162** supply crates

21 disabled or deserving veterans flown to gaming events via **7** Air Assaults to San Diego Comic-Con, E3, PAX East, PAX South, PAX West, TwitchCon, and GuardianCon

43 Stacks located around the world

210 Active STACK Volunteers and **123** volunteer events conducted

6 Stack Hardpoints: Austin, Boston, Jacksonville, Orlando, Queens, and Sonoma County



VOLUNTEER REACH



UNITED STATES

Arizona

Tuscon

Arkansas

Fort Smith

California

Los Angeles, San Diego, Sonoma

Colorado

Denver-Colorado Springs

Florida

Gainesville, Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa

Georgia

Atlanta

Hawaii

Oahu

Illinois

Schaumburg

Massachusetts

Boston

Michigan

Algonac

Missouri

St. Louis

Nebraska

Bellevue

New Jersey

Hazlet

New York

Queens

North Carolina

Fayetteville, Raleigh

Pennsylvania

Lehigh Valley, Pittsburgh

South Carolina

Columbia

Tennessee

Chattanooga, Memphis

Texas

Austin, Dallas - Fort Worth, Houston, Lubbock, San Antonio

Virginia

Hampton Roads

Washington D.C.

Seattle

Washington

Huntington

West Virginia

Huntington

INTERNATIONAL:

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide, Canberra, North Ipswich

IRELAND

Dublin

NEW ZEALAND

Waipu

PUERTO RICO

SCOTLAND

Dundee

SOUTH KOREA

Camp Humphreys

Map and legend as of Dec. 31, 2017



“This is one way I can relax and not worry about having an anxiety attack while having fun. I greatly appreciate everything y'all do and a major thank you for taking care of our currently deployed service members. Rock on guys and again thank you for everything!!!” - Dan P., US Army



“As I started my transition out of the military I became involved with Stack Up. Doing so has allowed me to link up with other veterans! Because of Stack Up I have met some awesome people and get to spend time with them gaming and decompressing from the day to day stress.”
- Jdfulmer, volunteer (greatnonprofits.org review)

“Thank you again, this supply crate has truly improved our living conditions and gives us a much-needed form of relaxation. You may not realize it but this will keep our sanity intact.” - Dan D., US Army

“Your Supply Crate made my year; this has really turned things around for me. Stack Up is truly a thoughtful organization, designed to bring happiness to us vets who have an extremely hard time finding happiness anywhere in their lives.” - Dane M., US Army Disabled Veteran

“Stack Up puts their money where their mouth is. These folks are helping our vets through gaming, overcoming PTSD issues, re-integrating and reconnecting with civilians and having a great time doing it.”
- Falconi (greatnonprofits.org review)

“ [The] kids are doing awesome and in all seriousness they have already adjusted my son Gavin’s Tourettes meds lower. The games slow his Tourettes by working his brain and motor functions so they lowered his meds because they would rather him get a half hour of game time instead of a pill that’s not good for his body.” - Dave W., US Marines



“All in all it was definitely a morale boost to the soldiers and some of them really needed it since this is their first time being deployed. I just want to say thank you again to Dave, the members of Stack Up and anyone else who helped make this happen! You guys are the real heroes!” - Michael S., US Army

“After I got hurt, gaming gave me a way to focus on something to lessen the pain which is what i use it for today. Gaming is really pain management for me.” - Steve S., US Army

“I have built so many friendships in Stack Up and I can’t wait to make more. We’re a family.” - Sean L., US Air Force

“Being part of Stack Up enables me to reach out and interact with Veterans like me instantly with Discord, in-game chat, etc. They are constantly active (gaming & in the community) and always welcome a helping body. They create opportunities and give purpose to some of us who have lost our way.” Krazy_Kowboy (greatnonprofits.org review)

2017 FINANCIALS

As the numbers show, 2017 was extraordinarily successful with regard to service and fundraising. We attribute this to a few key factors. First, the valuable, powerful and critical nature of our mission is a driving force behind the exceptional generosity and enthusiasm shown to Stack Up by our military and civilian volunteer community and the gaming community. The connection and community created through the Stack Up mission have quickly taken root in the hearts of veterans, volunteers and gamers all over the world. As the bond continues to strengthen, our mission builds momentum and reaches more veterans with life-changing programs, services and opportunities for recovery, support and revitalization.

Revenue

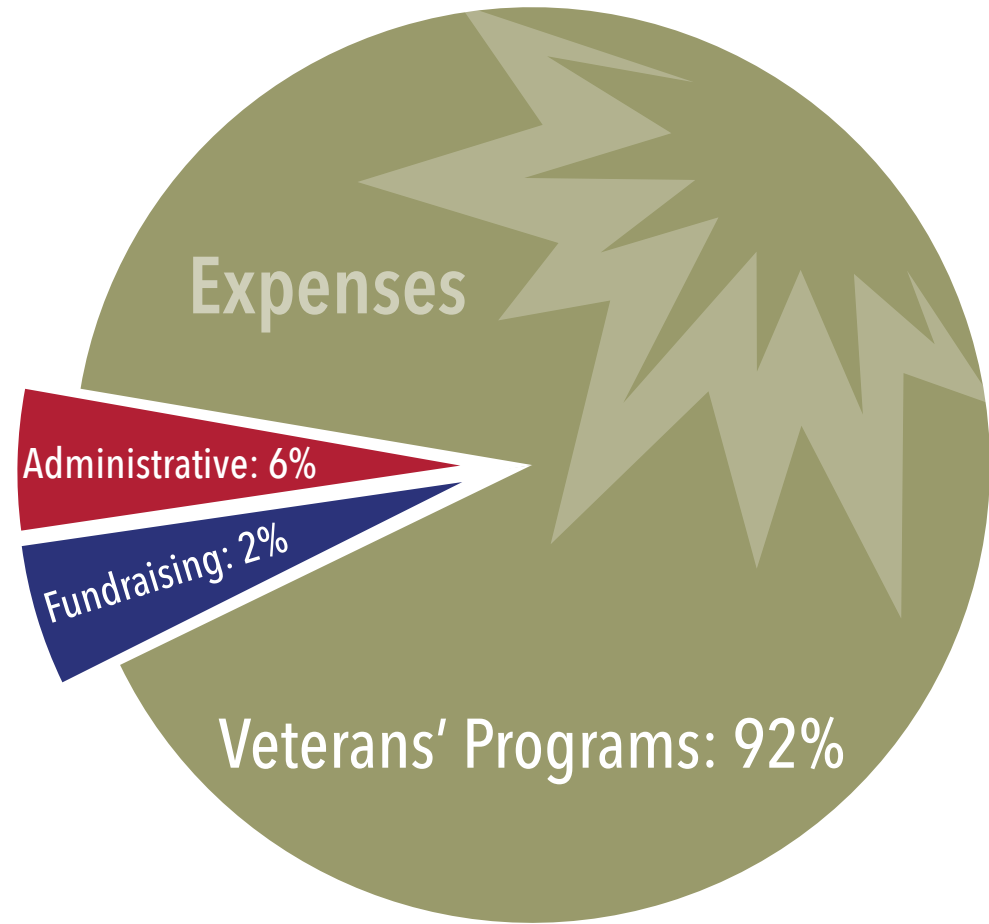
\$2,996,391

- Cash Contributions: \$664,196
- In-kind Contributions: \$2,332,195

Expenses

\$2,964,663

- Veterans' Programs: \$2,734,522
- Administrative: \$168,662
- Fundraising: \$61,480



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Ready to stack up for the cause?

Whether or not you are into video games, you can play a role in the Stack Up mission! Listed below are a number of ways you can help.

DONATE NOW

- **Make a monetary, tax-deductible donation** to help get Supply Crates to deployed military personnel and to execute Air Assault missions for disabled and deserving veterans here at home.
- **Make an in-kind donation of games or downloadable game codes** to fulfill supply crate requests and to help deliver the "Home For The Holidays" program.
- **Participate in our "Call To Arms" game streaming program** to raise funds for and awareness of Stack Up programs.
- **Designate Stack Up as your charity of choice** when you shop at the Humble Bundle store.

VOLUNTEER

- **Start or join a Stack** to help create welcoming and supportive communities for local veterans.
- **Become a Red Shirt Raider** to help support Stack Up's online community.
- **Lend your talents to help advance the Stack Up mission.**
- **Help spread the word.**
@StackUpDotOrg



Visit StackUp.org to learn more.

LEADERSHIP

STAFF



Stephen Machuga
Founder/CEO



Chris Case
Livestream Manager



Dave Crouse
Director of Veteran Services



Stephanie Owens
Stacks Program Director



Bryan Snyder
Director of Media

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Video game developer
and veteran



Palmer Luckey
Founder of Oculus

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2017

PLATINUM \$10,000+



Holospark



Palmer Luckey

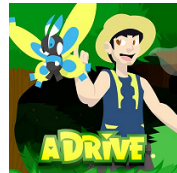


Robot Entertainment

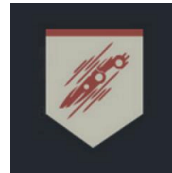


Slapstick Logic
(Warframe Community Events)

GOLD \$5,001-\$10,000



aDrive Army



Holtzmann



Lady Aderissa

SILVER \$1,000-\$5,000



Casper



Dammit Rooster



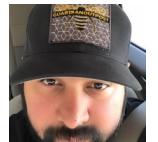
Desmo Locke



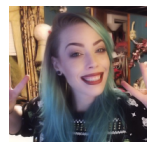
DraconisRed



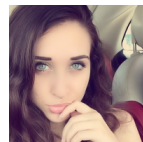
GryphonAMX



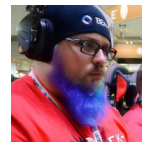
Guardian
Outpost



Heyshadylady



Khaljiit



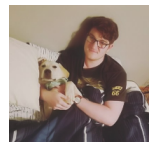
KW-Erion



MeatOozy



Misfits Enterprises
Stream Team



Partially Royal



SgtSandSquid



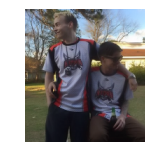
shoolie



StampedePixie



TheLoyalPatriot



TheRakelsReal



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