FOREWORD

The military prepared us to fight on the battlefield, but recent events in Afghanistan have taught us that you can win the battles and still lose the war. There’s also a war on the homefront that we’re losing. In 2020, the casualties of this war at home came in a wave. Three of my Marines died by suicide in rapid succession; I needed to find out why. Scouring through the annual VA Suicide Reports, I discovered the leading proximal causes of veteran suicide were feelings of disconnectedness and isolation. Tellingly, non-combat veterans are 80% more likely to die by suicide than combat veterans. With a deeper understanding of the problem, I shifted my focus and searched for organizations fostering connectedness among veterans.

The good news is that for those who’ve sacrificed the most - our wounded and special forces veterans - there are incredible resources at their disposal. There are also terrific clinical programs for veterans suffering from severe PTSD and addiction. It made me proud that our Nation has rallied around these individuals. But many of these programs were intentionally exclusive and required certain boxes to be checked, or a crisis to manifest before veterans could “qualify” for services. Disability or disorder defined the “broken veteran” narrative, and I wanted to change that narrative.

I struggled to understand why, if there’s no correlation between combat and veteran suicide, available resources were so restrictive. Why weren’t we taking a more inclusive and proactive approach that would keep us left of bang? I called my old squad leader, a Gold Star Sister, and a Marine sniper who served with Sgt Matt Abbate. We launched Patrol Base Abbate with the intent to create a space where every person who has served or is actively serving could connect, form a community, and find purpose. We secured a 350-acre ranch in the mountains of Montana to serve as our Patrol Base, where members of Patrol Base Abbate are afforded a free-of-cost opportunity to return to base (RTB). It was important to have a physical space where every man and woman who has served can claim and feel like they belong. The Patrol Base does not belong to one individual; rather, it is a communal space to rest and refit.

This year we brought over 100 veterans to the Patrol Base and executed five retreats, which allow veterans who share a common interest to connect and form a tribe. The diverse members of our interest-based clubs experienced the healing power of the outdoors and formed lasting bonds around a campfire. Our Hunting Club was first out of the chute, followed by our Book Club, Fight Club, Strength Club, and Music Club. The pillars of our retreats include the healing effect from time spent outdoors in nature; improving the Patrol Base through a local service project; and connecting around the campfire. The culminating event occurs when each member fills a sandbag dedicated to someone or something as a way of showing that they are committed to honoring the fallen by living a life of service back in their homes and local communities.

We launched 43 local chapters in our first year. We have leadership from every branch of service walking point in locations from San Diego to New York. These local chapters provide a pathway of community and purpose through continued service.

In 2022, we will reprise our annual Abbate WOD fundraiser to honor and share the story of our namesake, Sgt Matt Abbate. Over 200 veterans and service members will experience the restorative hard work and healing of the Patrol Base in Montana. We will continue to elevate the veteran narrative through service in our communities and we plan to launch our “Warrior’s Night” community engagements around the country.

Thousands of veterans joined us in our first year, and we are just getting started. Every month, in communities around the country, Patrol Base Abbate connects veterans and builds strong tribes. At Patrol Base Abbate, anyone who raised their right hand and swore an oath to something greater than themselves has a seat at our table. To all those who’ve supported our financial needs as we built this organization, thank you…we would not be here without you. We’re so thankful for everyone willing to fill a sandbag and walk point...just as Sgt Abbate did.

Return to Base,

Major Thomas Schueman, USMC
Patrol Base Abbate
MISSION

To honor the legacy of Sergeant Matthew Abbate by providing warriors a space to recalibrate inside the wire and community to thrive outside the wire.

"YOU ARE NOW-entering friendly lines"
HIGHLIGHTS

6 Retreats
Serving over 60 different Veterans from all across the country

43 Chapters
To foster connectedness through a mutually beneficial network

1500+ Veterans
Members consist of men and women from every branch of the Military
As one of the three components of PB Abbate, the RTB Program is an opportunity for our members to come together as a community to refit and connect in Thompson Falls, Montana. Typically, these programs are built around one or our interest-based clubs (e.g., Book, Strength, or Fight Club). The programming is led by the club captain and supported by PB Abbate staff.
We currently have over 43 active local chapters and are growing rapidly. By establishing chapters that act as rally points of PB Abbate, we build a sense of community and share skills that carry us outside the wire. We are establishing chapters in major cities across the country to help our members serve their communities and foster connectedness through a mutually beneficial network.
When our members can’t attend a retreat or chapter event together, we have built an online platform to keep lines of communication open 24/7. These forums are structured similarly to our clubs and chapters, and allow our members to reach one another at any point in time. To date, we have reached over 25,000 individual veterans.
**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

**Fiscal Year 2021**
*In Thousands of Dollars*

**Revenue** | **Expense** | **Net Income**
---|---|---
Q1 | $100K | $50K | $50K
Q2 | $200K | $100K | $100K
Q3 | $300K | $150K | $150K
Q4 | $500K | $250K | $250K

**TOTAL FUNDS RAISED**

**$600K**

**2000+ VETERANS CONNECTED THROUGH PB ABBATE PROGRAMMING**
2021 KEY VOLUNTEERS

Executive Director - Tom Schueman
Chief of Staff - Dave Williams
General Counsel - Ted Massey
VP Finance - Joe Alexander
Director, Accounting - Sandra Spencer
Director, Fundraising - Mick Denner
Donor Relations - Kate Fox
Director, Marketing - Michaela White
Secretary - Trey Humphrey
Director, Member Experience - Emma Thompson
Regional Director - Kolbe Grell
Club Coordinator - Jason Gaver
Director, IT - Kallman Perry
Camp Commandant - John Torres
**2020-2021 DONORS**

*Patrol Base Abbate is grateful for all the generous support from those who believed enough in our mission to help us complete our first full, very successful year...thank you for helping us build a space where every veteran who has ever served can return to base.*

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The Michelle Lemay Philanthropy Fund

$20,000 +  
The Beth C. and Henry E. Adams Family Foundation  
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August & Nancy Olivo  
Jonathan Parker

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