

# COMBINED ARMS

Collaborative Service Delivery Model



Center For  
Nonprofits & Philanthropy  
THE BUSH SCHOOL • TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

COMBIN   
ARMS

In Collaboration with the Center for Nonprofits and  
Philanthropy, Texas A&M University

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## About the Center for Nonprofits & Philanthropy

The Center for Nonprofits & Philanthropy supports a vibrant nonprofit and philanthropic sector in Texas and beyond through high-quality research, professional outreach, and engaged learning.

Nonprofit and philanthropic organizations are the backbone of healthy and vibrant communities. Echoing President Bush's "thousand points of light," local communities are strengthened by a voluntary sector that facilitates community engagement, supports giving and volunteering, and fosters social innovation and entrepreneurship. The Center for Nonprofits & Philanthropy works to build capacity, disseminate knowledge, and prepare students to work in nonprofit and philanthropic organizations and the collaborative systems in which they operate.

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## Executive Summary

Utilizing a unique collaboration model, they “unite the community to accelerate the impact of veterans on Texas” (Combined Arms, About Us, 2020). Combined Arms manages, coordinates, and supports a network of member organizations to achieve its mission of accelerating the transition of veterans. They expedite the process of veteran engagement by identifying veterans and providing referrals to and between organizations. This referral process is facilitated by technology and peer-to-peer networking among member organizations, just as accountability measures and shared resources facilitate member organizations’ engagement with veterans. Once veterans engage with the service provider, member organizations provide services that have an impact on veterans’ lives. One of the central assumptions of the Combined Arms’ model is that quicker connections to high-quality services and the accountability built into the process will accelerate veterans’ transition processes.

This case summary is based on a year-long Bush School student capstone project that was conducted between August 2019 and April 2020. The research involved extensive interviews and surveys with Combined Arms staff and partner organizations, as well as review of internal documents and materials. This summary provides an overview of the service delivery model and perceptions of partner organizations.

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# *Accelerating the transition of veterans.*

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This report found that: Combined Arms fosters collaboration while maintaining member organizations' autonomy; member organizations appreciate the ease of referring veterans to other organizations within the network; an emphasis on organizational accountability is a unique aspect of the model; and the "no wrong door approach" is a critical feature of the veteran service model.

## Background on Veteran Needs and Fragmented Service System

***Veterans often need help transitioning to civilian life and often require a complex array of programs and services, which cut across public, nonprofit, and private service providers.***

Veterans often need help transitioning to civilian life and often require a complex array of programs and services, which cut across public, nonprofit, and private service providers. Accessing these programs can be difficult and frustrating. The transition from the military to civilian life is often complicated and involves more than a simple change of jobs. Almost every aspect of a veteran's life is changed, including location, financial status, and support systems.

Although some service members make the transition with relative ease, a report by the Pew Research Center found that nearly 44% of surveyed veterans experienced difficulty adjusting to civilian life (Pew Research Center, 2011). For veterans with specialized military skills, the readjustment is complicated, with many veterans feeling that the military "failed to adequately provide them with the skills they needed to transition into civilian life" (Pew Research Center, 2011). Challenges for transitioning veterans may include finding employment, needing relocation assistance, finding adequate housing, needing mental health

care, educational assistance, and navigating the Veterans Affairs system to acquire the benefits earned from service. A survey by Zogas showed that the top need for Post 9/11 veterans was help finding a job, followed by the need for access to education (Zogas, 2017). An additional 56% needed physical healthcare, and 47% needed mental health care (Zogas, 2017). Although the government can provide some services through Veteran Affairs, nonprofits fulfill an important role to address gaps in services and educate veterans on government services (Pew Research Center, 2011).

One of the challenges veterans confront is a broad range of independent service providers that can be difficult to navigate. This fragmentation of services results in an inefficient allocation of resources that negatively affects the quality and cost of the services being provided (Ethoven, 2009; Gellad 2015).



***One of the challenges veterans confront is a broad range of independent service providers that can be difficult to navigate.***

In Texas alone, there are 2,364 veteran service providers registered with the IRS (GuideStar, 2015). Inevitably there are gaps and redundancies that may cause customers to slip through the cracks (Bunger, 2010). Organizations working in isolation may attempt to meet every veteran's need, which reduces the quality of their services. Organizations usually have a primary function that they do exceptionally well, whether it be employment, housing, or mental health. However, social issues, including veteran transitions, are complex and require a variety of services that no one organization can accommodate. Therefore, when an organization branches out in an attempt to meet a broader range of needs, the service provider runs the risk of unintentionally weakening the impact of their core functions and creating subpar programs (personal communication, Combined Arms Staff, Feb. 10, 2020). With fragmentation, accountability for aggregate effects is almost impossible to determine because each service provider evaluates their initiative without reference to whether their activities inhibit other service providers working on the same issue (O'Looney, 1993). Fragmentation, coupled with a lack of standardized performance indicators, makes it difficult for organizations to accurately assess performance because universally agreed-upon measures of performance do not yet exist (Gronbjerg, 2001).

## **A Collaborative Solution to Veteran Needs**

Combined Arms is a nonprofit organization, based in Houston that connects public and nonprofit organizations to accelerate veterans' transition to civilian life. They do this by uniting and coordinating a network of organizations that provide resources, services, advocacy, and funds for veterans. Combined Arms' primary client is the transitioning veteran, whose positive outcomes fulfill the organization's purpose. Their secondary client is the member organizations that provide services to veterans and comprise their network of public and nonprofit organizations.







Combined Arms (CAX) is a product of three Houston-area veterans conversing about how the veteran service providers in Houston could improve their efficiency through collaboration so that veterans would have less difficulty transitioning out of the military. These three friends already understood the local veteran service providers because of their involvement, either by using the provider's services or working with them. Additionally, each had their own transitioning experience and understood much of the chaos and confusion experienced by service members transitioning to civilian life. Subsequently, the three friends created Combined Arms to bring veteran service providers together so that veterans would no longer have to approach multiple service providers to receive assistance. Instead, veterans could contact Combined Arms, who would then coordinate with member organizations to ensure that the veterans received assistance. In doing so, transitioning veterans receive much-needed assistance, and the providers partnered with Combined Arms to become better equipped to focus on their mission while collaborating.

Combined Arms utilizes a unique collaboration model that is tailored for their goals and mission. It emerged to alleviate difficult transitions for veterans by uniting veteran service organizations and providing support services. This is reflected in their current mission statement: “To unite the community to accelerate the impact of veterans on Houston” (Combined Arms, 2020). Overall, the model acts as a blueprint that captures what Combined Arms does to bring about the intended outcome of quicker transitions for veterans. The case summary will describe the model and explain how Combined Arms supports veterans to engage in their community (see Table 1).

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***The model acts as a blueprint that captures what Combined Arms does to bring about the intended outcome of quicker transitions for veterans.***

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Table 1, Combined Arms Collaborative Service Delivery Model as of 2019



## **VETERANS**

Veterans need help transitioning to civilian life and require a range of services and resources. Combined Arms works to identify veterans and connects them with organizations that address their needs.



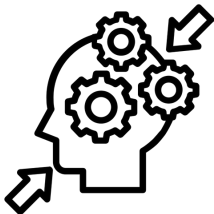
## **PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Combined Arms coordinates over 70 member organizations, composed of government agencies and nonprofit organizations, which provide over 400 services.



## **VETERAN OUTREACH**

Combined Arms engages Veterans through various efforts including outreach to military partners, public information strategies, and networking with veteran serving organizations.



## **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

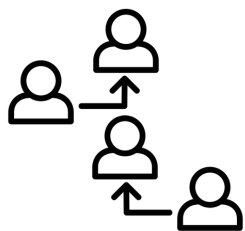
Combined Arms built an information management system that gathers information from veterans seeking services, maintains information on member organization services, provides referral to service providers, links agencies to facilitate peer referrals, and tracks the responsiveness of agency providers.



## **CLIENT INTAKE**

Veterans enter through a web-based portal that gathers background information about the veteran and their interests. Higher risk or high need clients are contacted by social work staff of Combined Arms. The system has an assessment protocol to qualify and classify veterans.

Table 1, Combined Arms Collaborative Service Delivery Model as of 2019 (contin.)



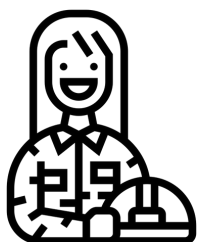
## **REFERRAL**

The system provides referral to one or more of the partner agencies based upon veteran needs and preferences. Partner agencies can also refer clients to other service providers.



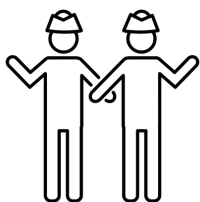
## **TRACKING SERVICES**

Combined Arms facilitates the member organization's engagement with the veteran, and tracks responsiveness of partner agencies to veteran needs.



## **PROGRAM SERVICES**

Member organizations respond to referrals and provide a range of services to veterans and their families. As noted, they can also refer to other agencies within the system.



## **COMMUNITY OF VETERANS**

Combined Arms has incorporated a veterans association, which brings together like-minded veterans to form social groups. These groups offer programs to build the network of veterans.



## **PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Combined Arms engages in public relations and advocacy to improve veteran outcomes. Combined Arms wants to change how the U.S. deals with veteran transitions. They want to shift from a fragmented, decentralized approach to a centralized community-based approach.

## Partner Organizations



At the time of this review, Combined Arms coordinates upwards of 70 member organizations that provide over 400 services. The network of member organizations, composed of government agencies and nonprofit

organizations, is continually growing as Combined Arms seeks out additional resources to expand their impact on veterans. Combined Arms works to build a strong network of member organizations and member organizations report a strong attachment with the mission of Combined Arms. The member organization survey showed that 96% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed there was an alignment between their mission statement and Combined Arms' mission statement.

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### *Vetting Process for Member Organizations*

Organizations must pass the vetting process that Combined Arms created with KPMG International to become an official member organization in the Combined Arms network. This vetting process is integral to the success and survival of the organization. Veterans are counting on receiving high-quality services, and the system is contingent on every member organization providing high-quality, reliable, and responsive services. This has implications for client acquisition, funders, and potential organizations that Combined Arms may want to recruit for the network. The vetting process increases organizational legitimacy, which may lead to increased funding and referrals (Proulx, Hager, & Klein, 2014).

The vetting process evaluates a nonprofit organization's financials, governance, programmatic outcomes, and fit within the network based on veteran client demand for services. The process also conducts searches

for any pending litigation filed or adverse social media claims that have been made against the nonprofit organization. The vetting tool provides a weighted total score based on the collection of this data and this information is provided to the Board of Directors, which provides final approval of new member organizations.

## *Mechanisms for Collaboration*

Combined Arms promotes collaboration between member organizations through several mechanisms including committee structures, networking, professional development, shared workspace, and other resources. This supports increased understanding of services in the network, provides opportunities for collaboration, encourages the transfer of knowledge, and builds trust among member organizations.

## *Collaboration Committees*

Combined Arms has seven collaboration committees composed of representatives from member organizations, based on the services they provide: Professional Growth, Essential Services, Wellness, Social Impact, Education, Caregiver, and Special Immigrant Visa committees. The committees are tasked with meeting quarterly to create new, innovative strategies and solutions through collective problem solving.

One example of the impact that these committees have on the veteran community is evident through the work of the Professional Growth Collaboration Committee. This committee discovered that veterans reintegrating in the Houston area must be placed in a job that pays at least \$16.50 per hour with benefits (based on the cost of living in Houston). Through the efforts



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***Over 1,034 veterans have been placed in new careers, with a median salary of \$60,050, as a result of the Combined Arms Professional Growth collaboration committees.***

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of this committee, Combined Arms now requires member organizations to place veterans into careers that pay at least \$16.50 per hour with benefits. Otherwise, they will not receive referrals from Combined Arms (personal communication, Feb. 10, 2020; Combined Arms 2019 report). This has resulted in the placement of over 1,034 veterans in new careers, with a median starting salary of \$60,050 (Combined Arms, 2020).

### *Professional Networking*

Combined Arms provides many opportunities for professional networking between member organizations through their socials, committees, and annual meeting. These events allow member organizations to learn about other organizations' services and processes. Member organizations mentioned collaboration with Combined Arms' leadership and staff, and more significantly they discussed connections between member organizations that were very beneficial. One member organization mentioned the mentorship they had received from Combined Arms leadership, and a few others mentioned the importance of leadership conferences hosted by Combined Arms.

### *Professional Development*

Combined Arms provides funding for employees within their member network to attend professional development classes applicable to serving the veteran community.



## *Shared Workspace (Regional Coordinating Center)*

Around 16 nonprofits and government agencies are housed at the Regional Coordinating Center. Additionally, there are meeting spaces for organizations that are not housed within the Regional Coordinating Center to meet and interact as needed. This allows for intentional, collaborative interactions among service providers.

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government  
agencies are  
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Center.***

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## *Shared Resources*

Combined Arms provides shared resources that cut costs for member organizations and allow them to direct more resources towards their programming and mission:

- **Storage Facility** — Combined Arms provides space for partnering organizations to store supplies and equipment free of charge, which assists member organizations while eliminating some overhead costs associated with daily operations.
- **Computer and Printing Services** — Combined Arms offers computer and printing services free of charge to all member organizations at their headquarters building, which assists member organizations with eliminating overhead costs.
- **Gym Access** — Located inside Combined Arms headquarters is a fitness facility that offers veterans a variety of fitness classes, including CrossFit, Boxing, Yoga, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, strength training, and several other fitness programs free of charge.



## Veterans Outreach



Combined Arms conducted various marketing and outreach activities to identify veterans who seek services and increase awareness of the network. This includes social media marketing, Google ads, direct mail, and geo-targeted ads as well as more traditional methods such as site visits to military bases to provide informational sessions on services available through the network.

Several of the membership organizations interviewed mentioned the marketing and connection that Combined Arms brings to their organization. If Combined Arms were not around, several organizations would lose “a significant outlet or a way to reach veterans in the area.” Several individuals mentioned that before partnering with Combined Arms, they reached veterans through word of mouth or small marketing campaigns. Combined Arms allows for a more thorough “systematic approach” to effectively reach veterans. Combined Arms allowed for “another voice, another amplifying voice to get the word out” about member organizations and the services they offer. Additionally, Combined Arms’ partnerships with larger, nationally recognized organizations, which allows smaller organizations to



***Combined Arms reached veterans through word of mouth or small marketing campaigns for a thorough systematic approach to effectively reach veterans.***

get their name out to a larger veteran audience. Overall, Combined Arms uses their name recognition to “amplify the outreach” of smaller local membership organizations to the broader veteran community (comments from member organization representatives).



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***Technology creates a pathway for [veterans] to access resources based on exactly what vets ask for, leaving the outdated model of 'services in silos' behind.***

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## **Information Management System**

One of the primary goals of Combined Arms is to be a one-stop-shop for veterans seeking resources, and this can be accomplished through the technology platforms that are being used to connect veterans to organizations in the system. The technology creates “pathways for [veterans] to access resources based on exactly what vets asked for, leaving the outdated model of ‘services in silos’ behind” (Combined Arms, About Us, 2020). Veterans access services through a web-based information management portal that collects information from the veteran and conducts a simplified diagnostic to determine needs and eligibility. This system is basically a sophisticated customer relations database that facilitates connection between veterans and the most appropriate service provider. With over 70 partners providing nearly 400 services, veterans immediately have access to some of the best organizations in the region. The system facilitates the link between veterans and the organizations through tracking systems that agencies access to field referrals and report status of the request. The system ensures response from agencies and facilities making appropriate connections. Agencies can modify and adjust the number and type of clients that they can serve on an ongoing basis. The information referral system is built on Salesforce database technology and is maintained and managed by Combined Arms. It reflects a unique data management system that is refined and upgraded over time.

## Client Intake

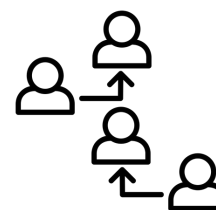


To become a part of the Combined Arms system, veterans create a secure profile in a web-based portal with their contact information. Veterans complete assessments and receive immediate referrals to member organizations based upon their needs and interests in particular services.

Alternatively, Combined Arms provides veterans with an Intake Team, composed of Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) and social work student interns that conduct assessments with high-need clients or those without access to technology via phone or in person. The Intake Team also follows up with clients who have scored less than 13 points on the World Health Organization's Well-Being Index, are homeless, or request the assistance of the Intake Team. The Intake Team manages about 20% of the cases that go through Combined Arms' assessments.



## Referral



Combined Arms primarily uses a web-based client-relationship management tool to refer clients to member organizations and member organizations use Echolink, a mobile app,

to refer clients to other organizations in the Combined Arms network or back to Combined Arms. The use of technology allows Combined Arms to manage member organizations' interactions with potential veteran clients. Member organizations have spoken of the ease of referring veterans to other organizations within Combined Arms. This technology allows veteran service providers to "truly focus on [their] mission, and if someone knocks on [their] door in error or needs another service or support beyond [their] scope, [they] have a place to send them" according to an interviewed organization.

Some organizations mentioned how the technology provided by Combined Arms (i.e., Echolink mobile app) allowed for the immediate connection of a veteran to the services they needed. Through the Echolink App, “[we] have immediate access to info... if we have a referral, we are made aware of that referral today.” A simple search using the mobile app enables member organizations to find necessary services they do not offer and promote those organizations to veterans who need those services. Furthermore, veteran service providers can connect veterans to other services wherever they are. One member organization said, “if I am out in the field and meet with a veteran...I can refer on my phone to the Combined Arms mobile app and connect the veteran” via Echolink.

After member organizations receive referrals from Combined Arms or other organizations in the Combined Arms network, member organizations have the responsibility of reaching out to veterans. Not only does Combined Arms refer veterans to member organizations, but member organizations also refer veterans to other member organizations or back to Combined Arms for other services. As one member organization characterized in an interview, the relationship with Combined Arms is “not only a one-way street in terms of referrals but a back and forth.”

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***Technology (i.e., Echolink mobile app) provided by Combined Arms allowed for the immediate connection of a veteran to the services they needed. Veteran service providers can connect veterans to other services wherever they are.***

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## Tracking Services

Combined Arms has designed a system that encourages quick response times and accountability. This accountability makes Combined Arms different from a resource library, such as 211, that gives out organizations' contact information to clients, expecting the client to reach out to the agency. Combined

Arms facilitates prompt responses to veterans by tracking response time and case outcomes. To partner with Combined Arms, member organizations must be committed to the utilization of Combined Arms' technology and, by extension, to being held accountable for response times and outcomes. These accountability measures ensure that veterans are provided services, or if necessary, reassigned to another provider.

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## *Response Time*

Member organizations receive the veteran's name and contact information to reach out to them within 96 hours. Combined Arms tracks response time of organizations to encourage faster response times so veterans. Member organizations can compare their response time to other member organizations' response time. The average response time for member organizations is around 50 hours.

Veteran outcomes are also tracked with a dynamic menu that changes based on the services provided by each member organization.

For example, an outcome for an organization that provides career services may be “started a new job.” Member organizations update the status of their cases with levels of action:

**(1) Initiated** — Veteran initiated contact with a member organization.

**(2) In Process** — Member organization reached out to veteran (veteran engagement).

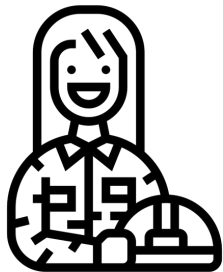
**(3) Established** — Organization received a response from the veteran.

**(4) Closed** — Which includes (a) Successful connection with the veteran, (b) No response from the veteran, (c) The veteran was referred to another service, or (d) The member organization was unable to provide services.



Combined Arms has referred 17,313 cases to over 400 resources since 2017 (Combined Arms work plan, pg. 45).

## Program Services



Combined Arms' mission statement focuses on accelerating the transition period for veterans, but they offer more than that by assisting all veterans regardless of when they exited the military. Additionally, many of the member organizations within the Combined Arms network are not exclusively for transitioning veterans

Core services as the services that veterans typically need upon their return to civilian life. Member organizations provide the following primary service categories:

- Essential:** Homeless services, financial resources, and veterans benefits.
- Professional:** Career services such as job placement, LinkedIn coaching, career mentoring, professional networking, resume writing, professional attire, and interview coaching. This category also includes educational resources and growth and success classes.
- Entrepreneurship:** With over 2.2 million veteran-owned businesses in Texas and 25% of transitioning service members wanting to start a business, Combined Arms has garnered a diverse and experienced group of startup service providers and small business supporters. These organizations rally behind veteran entrepreneurship and give veterans the tools they need to start their own business.





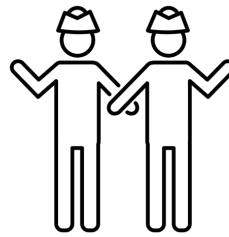
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***1 in 3 veterans request some type of professional or career service. Combined Arms has referred over 6,800 veterans since 2019 to career service member organizations.***

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According to Combined Arms, one in three veterans request some type of professional or career service. Combined Arms has referred over 6,800 veterans since 2019 to career service member organizations (Combined Arms, 2020). Essential services, such as housing and financial assistance, are critical, but there are significantly fewer requests for these services.

## **Community of Veterans**



After basic needs are met, veterans can focus on social interactions and community.

Combined Arms works to bring together veterans as it can be challenging for veterans to meet new, like-minded people whenever they have moved to a new city, have little free time, or have been deployed away from home for an extended period. Combined Arms' second-most referred resource is social connections. As of 2019, Combined Arms has referred over 1,600 veterans to member organizations that have connected them to community-centered events.

To help veterans socialize and become part of the community, member organizations provide the following resource category:

- **Community:** Connecting veterans to volunteer organizations and social events. Examples of social events provided to veterans by member organizations include sporting events, concerts, family movie nights, sober events, faith-based groups, happy hours, LGBTQ+ groups, and military spouse groups, among many others.



Combined Arms advertises events put on by or in collaboration with member organizations. Veterans are invited to create a profile to join the Combined Arms network of services when they RSVP to events. In 2019, Combined Arms received 2,428 RSVPs to events. Veteran engagement with Combined Arms through RSVPs emphasizes the “no wrong door approach” in which veterans can approach either Combined Arms or member organizations to gain access to the Combined Arms network of services.

# Combined Arms Collaborative Service Delivery Model

Additionally, Combined Arms manages various personal and professionally based community groups of veterans that have transitioned to civilian life. Examples of such groups include:



- **Veterans in Energy:** A group focused on providing professional and networking opportunities for those in the industry, and those looking to enter the industry.
- **LGBTQ+ Veterans:** A group that provides support and connectivity to the LGBTQ+ community, as well as recognize their contributions.
- **Veteran Christians:** A group allowing veterans and civilians the opportunity to experience their journey of faith together by connecting members of the Christian community with prayer groups, lunches, and support.
- **Combined Arms Women Veterans Group:** A group that identifies and engages with women veterans, recognizing their unique experiences, and providing an opportunity for support and connection.



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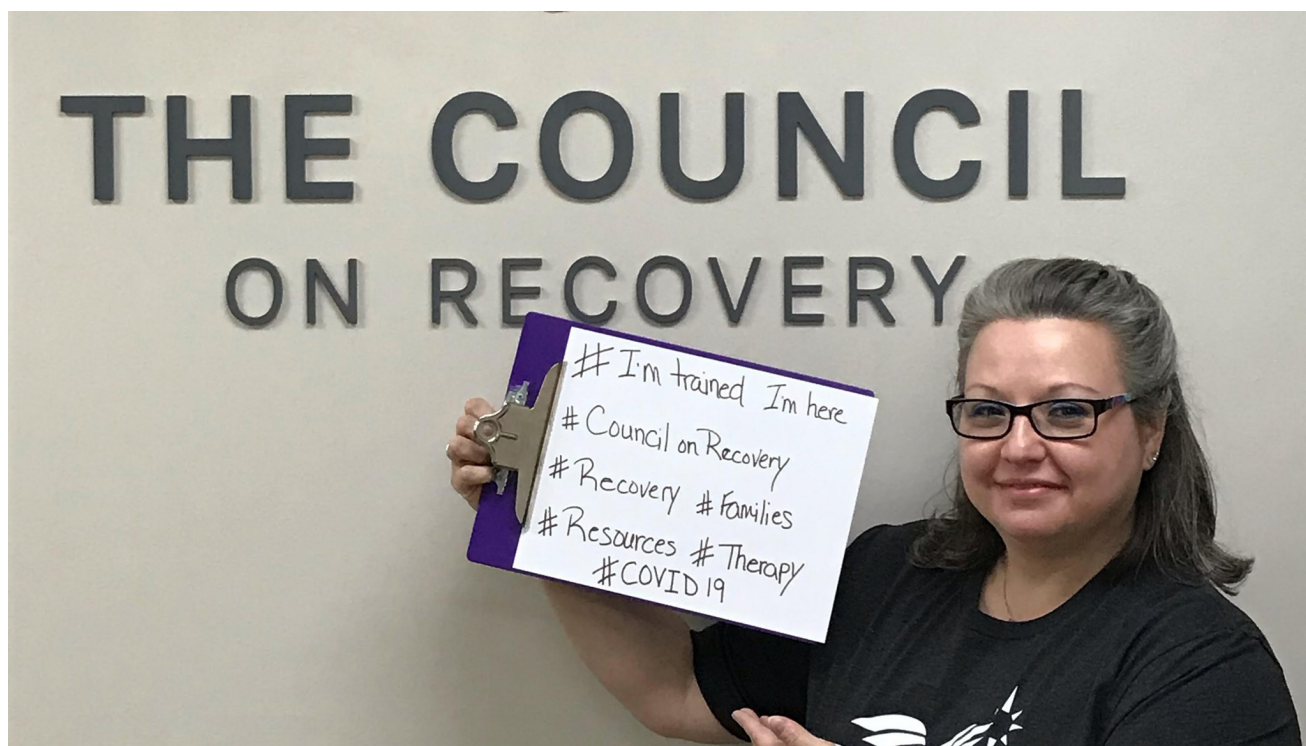
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## Ongoing Support

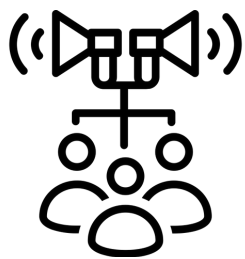
Combined Arms provides ongoing support for veterans regardless of where they are in post military lives. Veterans can still access the Combined Arms portal to receive services from member organizations. Member organizations provide ongoing support with the service category:

- Wellness: Physical fitness classes, mental health programs, and alternative therapies.

This ongoing support function would include all preceding categories of services for existing clients who are no longer transitioning or veterans who are accessing Combined Arms' services for the first time.



## Public and Community Relations



Combined Arms engages in public relations and advocacy to improve veteran outcomes. Combined Arms wants to change how the United States approaches veteran transitions. They want to shift from a fragmented, decentralized approach to a centralized, community-based approach. This approach requires connecting with veterans early in their transition experience through federal agencies, such as the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Department of Labor, to make veterans aware of Combined Arms.



## Financials and Outputs

In 2019, Combined Arms' budgeted expenditures, during the year of study, totaled \$1,751,926. This includes spending across broad categories such as marketing, events, operations, personnel, and travel. The budget contained data for the entire year, January to December 2019. Approximately 60% of expenditures were allocated to personnel (\$1,029,916) and another 27% were allocated to operations (\$469,486). It is difficult to attain precise program-level expenditures, but the following estimates provide a reasonable approximation of the cost for selected program areas.

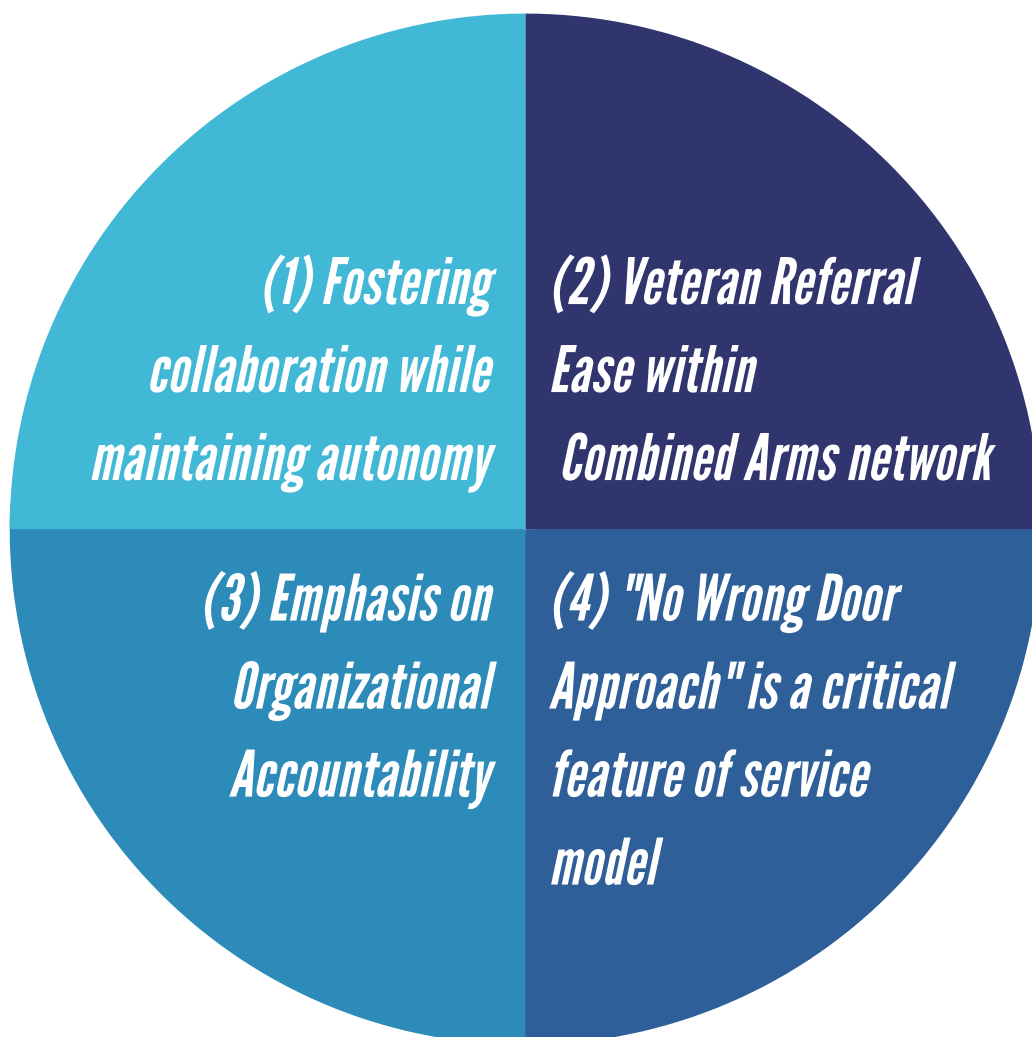
Program Area	Estimated Spending in 2019
Technology Support (Referral System)	\$123,441
Shared Workspace	\$429,309
Advertising & Marketing	\$191,024
Partner Agencies' Professional Development & Networking	\$217,125
Events	\$115,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,076,099</b>

## *Program Referrals and Veteran Activations*

Combined Arms activated 7,094 veterans into their network, measured by summing veteran profile creations, event RSVPs, and Echolink referrals. Combined Arms reported that in 2019 they had 6,786 individual cases referred to member organizations through their veteran profiles and Echolink platforms. It should be noted that some veterans had several case referrals; for instance, one veteran can get referred to a community service organization and a wellness organization.

## **Conclusion**

Combined Arms utilizes a unique collaboration model that is tailored to their environment and mission. Some key findings from this study include:



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## *(1) Combined Arms fosters collaboration while maintaining member organizations' autonomy.*

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(1) Combined Arms fosters collaboration while maintaining member organizations' autonomy. A potential drawback of collaboration is the loss of autonomy for participating organizations. By allowing member organizations to pursue the functions tailored to their unique mission, Combined Arms supports the diversity of services that are needed to support the "whole veteran." This strengthens the entire network of member organizations by allowing them to focus on their mission and by providing many options for referrals to other organizations in the network. Combined Arms has found a way to foster collaboration while still maintaining member organization autonomy.







(2) Member organizations have spoken of the ease of referring veterans to other organizations within the Combined Arms network. According to an interviewed organization, the ease of referring veterans to other organizations “allows [member organizations] not to get bogged down in every mission [or] service that could be needed and support our defined population.” Another organization said, “The Combined Arms portal has been absolutely valuable.” They saw this “as an asset to the organization because it allows us to provide immediate access to a wide range of resources for families.” Combined Arms’ diverse network of organizations allows service providers to “sleep better at night, knowing Combined Arms is around” to provide options for any unmet needs that a veteran may have.

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***(2) Member organizations have spoken of the ease of referring veterans to other organizations within the Combined Arms network.***

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(3) One truly unique aspect of the veteran service model is Combined Arms' emphasis on organizational accountability. Although Combined Arms gives organizations the autonomy to reach out to the veteran on their own timeline, they encourage and incentivize quicker responses by tracking and displaying organizations' response times to the network of member organizations. This approach to organizational accountability aligns with their long-term goal of changing the way communities deal with transitioning veterans. Combined Arms wants to shift some of the burdens of transitioning from the veteran to the community. Instead of relying solely on the veteran, community-based organizations would share accountability for the integration of veterans because of the social and economic benefits that veterans bring to the community.



***(3) One truly unique aspect of the veteran service model is Combined Arms' emphasis on organizational accountability.***

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***(4) The "No Wrong Door Approach" is a critical feature of the veteran service model.***

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(4) The “no wrong door approach” is a critical feature of the veteran service model. Not only can veterans gain access to the Combined Arms system through the portal or intake team, but veterans can also enter the system through any member organization in the network. Some member organizations referred to it as a “two-way relationship.” This relationship allows for all the member organizations to benefit from the marketing and veteran influx of any individual veteran service providers partnering with Combined Arms.



Overall, the functions of Combined Arms, through their **veteran service model**, **increase the capacity of member organizations to focus on their mission and achieve positive outcomes for veterans**. Additionally, academic literature suggests that the utilization of the model results in greater efficiency, resource acquisition, and innovation for member organizations.



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