



STATE COMMANDER'S SPECIAL PROJECT

Helmets to Hives & Headstrong



Background: This year State Commander Jack Sanford has chosen to support our veterans and their families through two recognized organizations that meets the needs of veterans and their families – Helmets to Hives the Headstrong Project.

Why Beekeeping?

Beekeeping is a unique way to reconnect with nature and spend time outdoors. When practiced in a safe and supportive learning environment, the hobby has been shown to:

- aid in PTSD recovery
- increase self-sufficiency
- improve social connections among veterans
- relieve anxiety
- foster emotional well-being

While anyone can struggle with mental health issues, isolation, or difficulty engaging with others, these issues are often more prevalent in the veteran community. Helmets to Hives was created by veterans who have found the hobby of beekeeping to be therapeutic. Sensitivity to the unique experiences that a veteran brings to the program is at the heart of everything the program offers. From working together to care for a colony, to spending time re-engaging with the natural world, learning the hobby of beekeeping in a therapeutic environment can provide myriad opportunities to lessen the weight many veterans carry with them.

The Program



Through classroom instruction and hands-on learning with mentors, participants will learn Safe and effective beekeeping practices from Local experts



Small groups are assigned to a honeybee colony and are responsible for its care during bi-weekly mentored sessions throughout the season.



All necessary beekeeping equipment and safety gear is provided to veterans enrolled in the the program, reducing the expense and the guesswork

Headstrong Project:

The Headstrong Project is a non-profit mental health organization providing confidential, barrier-free, and stigma-free PTSD treatment to our veterans, service members, and family connected to their care. Their goal is to help their clients “Triumph Over Trauma.” by providing them with effective mental health treatment. Headstrong’s network of trauma-informed clinical partners provide individualized, evidence-based outpatient care to their clients. Their three-tier method of treatment is:

Connect

Connect to care with a Headstrong intake specialist who completes a phone intake and schedules an initial evaluation. The client is matched with a therapist for treatment.

Collaborate

Collaborate with a Headstrong therapist through individually tailored, effective interventions deployed to help the client identify problem areas and implement change. Close treatment, moving forward with new tools and skills.

Close

Close treatment, moving forward with new tools and skills.

Monetary Donation Support:

- All monetary donations to the Special Project will be divided amongst the two designated organizations to assist veterans and their families.

Department Special Project Chairman:
Gene Ratigliano, PSC, NCM

Your generous donation should be made out to: Department of NY VFW

Mailed to: Department of NY VFW
Attn: Commander’s Special Project
69 Sand Creek Road
Albany, NY 12205