

Long-Range Strategic Plan for:  
***Knights of Heroes Foundation***

Developed by:

KOH Board of Directors

Website: <http://www.knightsofheroes.org>

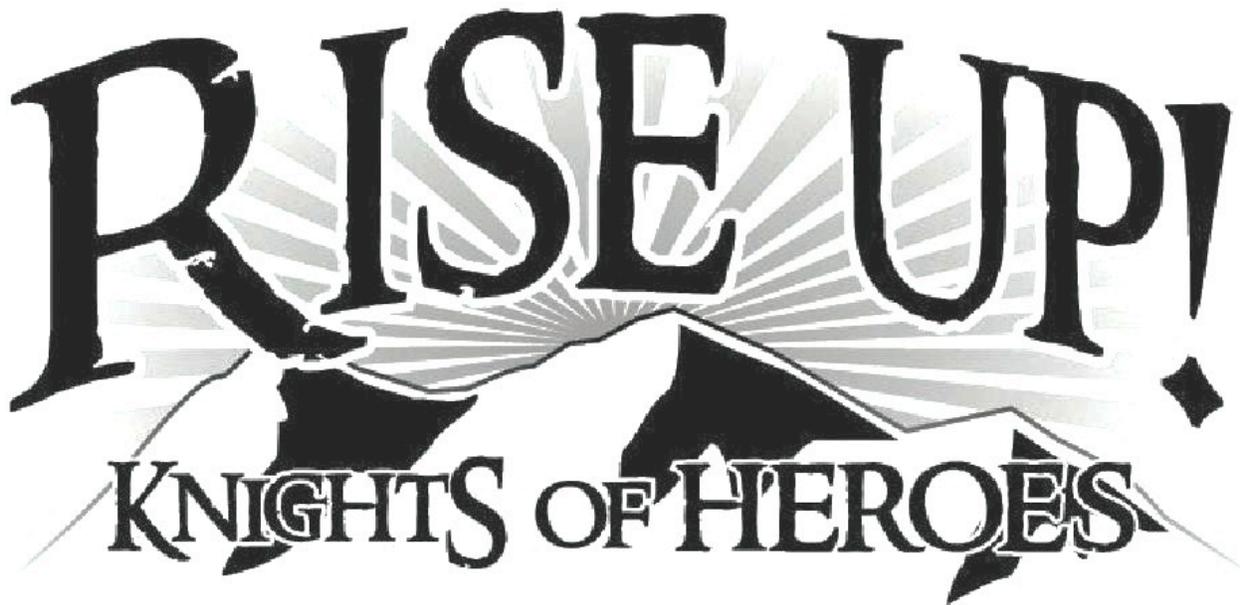
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# Knights of Heroes Foundation

**Strategic Plan for  
[2015-2025]**

**Developed on [1 January 2015]**

**Last Reviewed on:  
[1 January 2015]**



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## Introduction

The Board of Directors of Knights of Heroes (KOH) developed this strategic plan with a 10-year roadmap of organizational development and direction. The Board of Directors developed this plan with direct input from like-minded strategic partners based upon reviews of camp direction, land development and organizational planning.

## Executive Summary

The Knights of Heroes Foundation runs a one-week summer camp for children of our fallen military heroes. This ten-year strategic plan outlines the direction for the foundation, which includes the purchase of a permanent camp home and expansion of existing programs. This expansion will allow the foundation to serve a greater audience of families in need of the services provided by the Knights of Heroes.

## Background and History

Steve Harrold created the Knights of Heroes Foundation in January of 2007. He did so to commemorate the life of a friend and former pilot, Major Troy Lee "Trojan" Gilbert, who was killed during combat operations while flying his F-16 to protect ground troops being overrun by the enemy in the Al-Anbar Province, Iraq on November 27, 2006. At the time of his death, Major Gilbert was a husband and father of five children.

Each summer, families of fallen military from across the Nation are invited to attend the one-week camp at absolutely no cost. While the kids are at camp, the moms and younger siblings spend the week visiting sites in and around Colorado Springs. Lodging and travel arrangements are made for the families that attend from outside the local area. Campers are matched with adult mentors, and during the week of camp they take part in outdoor adventure activities such as rafting, horseback riding, shooting, fishing, mountain biking, hiking and much more.

The camp was founded on Christian faith but is not a Bible camp. Families of all beliefs and from every background are welcome.

The first camp was held in June of 2007 under the name "Modern Day Knights." Sixteen boys attended from Texas, Florida, Arizona and Colorado. The camp was so successful, "Knights of Heroes" was established as a non-profit (501(c)3) organization in November of 2007.

The program has continued to grow each year; and in 2011, the first girls program was held. In 2014 twenty-four girls spent the week at Peaceful Valley Ranch while fifty-two boys attended the boys camp at Tahosa Boy Scout Camp. Thirty-one moms and eleven younger siblings spent the week in Colorado Springs during the camp. God willing, the program will continue to grow and provide a place for the families of our heroes to gather for years to come.

The foundation is comprised of one part-time paid office administrator, a six-person volunteer Board of Directors and seventy-five seasonal volunteer mentors. Currently the foundation hosts a one-week camp each summer. Campers must be between the ages of 11 and 17 to attend.

## Direction

The direction and goals contained within this strategic plan have been developed following eight years of progressive camps. This plan addresses the need to grow an already well executed and much needed organization. The 10-year plan represents a strategic plan to expand the organization and offer an improved experience for all our campers. Additionally, KOH aims to offer additional opportunities for campers and families throughout the year.

## Goals

The following goals of Knights of Heroes have been developed in response to requests from the families to offer more opportunities to the participants of our program:

1. Purchase a permanent home for the Knights of Heroes Camp
2. Build out the facilities to host the first camp in the summer of 2016
3. Open the camp to more families who have lost their fathers
4. Expand the camp to offer a variety of retreats and camps throughout the year

## Organization of the Strategic Plan

As noted above, this strategic plan is intended to be an organizational guide for Knights of Heroes. This plan has two purposes. First, it presents the most comprehensive compilation of the plan and its component parts. It is a record of the strategic planning process and the decisions reached by the Board of Directors. Second, it is a reference guide for strategic planning. At the beginning of each section, a box includes a definition of the component part. In the future, Knights of Heroes may choose to produce a summary version of the plan for distribution.

## Vision

'Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world' – James 1:27.

The vision of the Knights of Heroes Foundation is to provide guidance and encouragement to children who have lost the most influential person in their lives, their father. Many of the challenges we face today can be tied to the absence of positive male mentorship in the lives of young men and women. Although the program is only one week out of the year, the values we instill in the campers stay with them and help to develop a foundation in their lives.

The Knights of Heroes Board of Directors, in order to create a better year-round experience, plans to build a permanent camp home that will be available to the KOH families. We envision a place where families can escape when they need a break. A permanent home will also allow Knights of Heroes to offer multiple programs throughout the year. The annual Knights of

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Heroes summer camp will remain the cornerstone of the foundation. What Knights of Heroes plans to add to the calendar is a fall retreat, winter survival training camp and spring retreat.

In addition to the Knights of Heroes events, the foundation can lease the property to other organizations as a source of income to be used for property maintenance and funding for Knights of Heroes events. A permanent property will serve as a steady source of income for the foundation.

Expanding the program beyond military families is a long-term goal of Knights of Heroes. We hope to one-day host children of every background that are in need of positive adult mentorship.

- Children who have lost their mother in military service
- Children of fallen firefighters and police officers
- Children from the civilian sector who have lost a parent

### Mission

The mission of Knights of Heroes is to empower children who have lost their fathers during military service by providing positive adult mentorship, character development, and lasting friendships, which are forged during an annual wilderness adventure camp.

### Core Values

The core values that provide the foundation for Knights of Heroes include the following:

- Be Bold
- Be a Leader
- Be Boundless
- Be Proactive
- Be Responsible

The charge to every camper is to “Rise Up”, to live above what this world teaches him or her and be noble. Each of these core values relates back to a desire to see each camper Rise Up and become the young man or woman that they are called to be.

These values are instrumental in developing character and are traditionally taught by fathers. Without a father to instill these values, children can wander aimlessly and find themselves lost in a world that teaches them to, “put themselves first and seek instant gratification.” The more children we can reach, the larger the impact we can have on our world.

The following is a detailed description of the Knights of Heroes core values that are instilled in every camper who participates in the camps:

**Be Bold:** The pathway that you choose as a Knight is the narrow road, be bold in following it where God leads. If you are to live as a Knight you are going to live in a way that others will not understand. You will have to be bold in all that you do in order to live the life God has created for you.

**Be a Leader:** No matter who you are, you are called by God to lead in some unique way. It is your responsibility to find your unique qualities as a leader. A Knight leads from the front and leads from back. A Knight blazes the trail for others to follow and walks beside them as they complete their own journey.

**Be Boundless:** Attach yourself to something greater than yourself and remember that our lives are bound in heaven, not here on earth. A Knight lives for something or someone other than themselves. This is a reminder that this world does not revolve around them and that there are always those out there who need help.

**Be Proactive:** You are responsible for your life, no one else, and you are responsible for making your life better, and living it out with full abandon. A Knight doesn't sit idly by to let others complete the task but steps up first to get the job completed, no matter how big or small.

**Be Responsible:** Act responsibly in all that you do. Accept the responsibility of acting like a son of nobility in not only who you are but also how you act. Your actions are your own and you're responsible for those actions whether they are positive or negative. A Knight always carries the responsibility for their own actions.

**Beyond our Core Values, Knights of Heroes is also committed to teaching and displaying the following traits:**

**Reject Passivity:** Sitting idle while the world goes on around you, leaves you reacting to circumstances as opposed to controlling your situation. Our world is full of people that will not take a stand and protect those around them. A Knight will stand for what is right and take action when necessary.

**Reject Immorality:** Our world is full of corruption and immorality. Television, movies and music often promote promiscuity, which leads to children believing premarital sex is normal. A Knight understands that this type of behavior is destructive and leads to countless problems throughout life.

**Reject Substance Abuse:** Today's culture teaches our children that alcohol and drugs are a normal way of life in America. With the legalization of marijuana in Colorado, drug use among children has dramatically increased. A Knight understands that nothing good comes from substance abuse.

**Reject a Sense of Entitlement:** Social welfare in America has eroded our Nation's work ethic. Our society has embraced a sense of entitlement which has led to a belief that free medical care, free education, and government subsistence is the right of every American. A Knight understands that you should work for what you have and you are not "owed" anything. We must re-invigorate the work ethic that made our country great.

**Reject Infidelity:** Infidelity is destroying families at an alarming rate. Surrendering to the sins of the flesh and abandoning our marital commitments leads to ruined marriages. A Knight understands that commitment to a spouse is the cornerstone to any marriage and thereby creates the foundation for our family unit.

## Championing the Cause

We can make a difference in our communities and our Nation. We have been at war for almost 14 years and the impact on our military families has been tremendous and heartbreaking. Although Knights of Heroes serves only a fraction of those in need, the impact the program has on those that attend is meaningful and lasting. Everyone can help in some way, whether donating resources or time as a mentor, we can all help those who have sacrificed so much to ensure our way of life.

The growth of KOH has been slow and deliberate. Maintaining our personal connection with every child and connecting with our families will always be our number one priority. As we grow, we will never forget our roots. After eight years, we have reached a point where we are ready to establish a permanent camp home. We need your help to make this dream a reality. Become a part of our mission and help to support our expansion.

## Objectives and Priorities for the Next Ten Years

In order to achieve the objective of establishing a permanent camp home and expand our opportunities to the campers and families, we have committed to certain priorities over the next 10 years. The details below are actionable plans that we are putting in place in order to make this dream a reality.

1. Continue to offer an annual summer camp uninterrupted by the growth and expansion of the foundation.
2. Purchase and develop property for a permanent KOH camp by December of 2015.
  - a. A priority of KOH is to avoid a mortgage that could bankrupt the foundation.
  - b. A successful capital campaign will allow KOH to pay off the property before the 2016 summer camp.
3. Host the 10th annual KOH boys summer camp on the new camp property (Summer of 2016) with girls being hosted nearby. Property requirements include:
  - a. Kitchen facility
  - b. Showers
  - c. Lodge renovations
  - d. Bathrooms throughout the property
4. Develop property by summer of 2018, to enable boys and girls camps to be hosted simultaneously on the new camp property. This includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Cabin renovations to accommodate girls
  - b. ROPES course
5. By 2020, have year-round programs on the camp property and rent the property during our off-season to cover our annual operating budget.
  - a. Weekend Family retreats

- b. Weekend Spiritual retreats
  - c. Soldiers with families back from deployment
  - d. Youth events/retreats
6. By 2021, open up the program to families outside of the military, including:
- a. Children who have lost their mother in military service
  - b. Children of fallen firefighters and police officers
  - c. Children from the civilian sector who have lost a parent

## Risks and Opportunities

Throughout Knights of Heroes' existence, we have constantly garnered feedback from campers, mothers, mentors and donors. This feedback has provided us an overall and detailed perspective of the many opportunities that are available to the organization as well as the risks associated with the current camp and future events.

## SWOT Analysis

The feedback that we have received over the years is displayed in the framework of the following SWOT analysis. **Strengths** are internal characteristics, qualities, and capacities that are doing well and are part of the reason for the organization's accomplishments. **Weaknesses** are internal qualities that need to be improved. **Opportunities** refer to external activities or trends that the organization may benefit from, connect with or take advantage of to grow or enhance its performance. **Threats** are external activities or trends that threaten the current and future success of the organization.

### Strengths

One of our greatest strengths is that we have an army of motivated, excited and exuberant volunteers. These volunteers, along with the commitment of the Board of Directors, provide the foundation a clear understanding of what the organization intends to accomplish and helps us remain focused on that mission.

Knights of Heroes also has a very broad donor base that represents individual donors, grants and organizations committed to help the organization grow. This wide donor base has allowed Knights of Heroes to remain focused on its mission and not get too distracted by fundraising efforts.

Over the past eight years, Knights of Heroes has also been able to refine and grow its processes into sound and proven methods. By utilizing the talented individuals who make up this organization, we have been able to create repeatable programs that are fully functioning and effective.

### Weaknesses

The controlled and measured growth of Knights of Heroes over the past eight years has created challenges and opportunities. One of those challenges is the limited corporate support. With the exception of Southwest Airlines, the foundation has not actively pursued large corporate sponsors. In the past, individual donors and small grants from other non-profit organizations like the ASBMA Star Foundation have covered the small budget. As the foundation grows and pursues property acquisition, it is evident that corporate sponsorship and large grant opportunities will be necessary. With limited grant writing experience, the organization has not been able to utilize this avenue of funds to its fullest capacity.

Over the past eight years in establishing our annual camp at different locations, the Board of Directors has realized the limitations that come along with not having permanent facilities. This has restricted us from providing more opportunities for our current campers and the inability to expand our program to other families in need.

## Opportunities

The opportunities considered most important to Knights of Heroes include:

- *Creating multiple programs throughout the year.* Every year we must make the heart-wrenching decision to turn away families in need of this program. Knights of Heroes is dedicated to constantly finding ways that we can expand the program to those who need assistance and create more opportunities to connect with our current campers.
- *Opening the program to non-military families.* Knights of Heroes has realized the needs of families of firefighters, policeman and civilian families to participate in our program. With the addition of a permanent facility, the organization has the opportunity to broaden the camp to a wider group that has specific needs we can meet.
- *Create a year-round “escape” for our families.* Knights of Heroes has created a strong bond with not just the campers but the entire family. Through this engagement, we have recognized the need to offer the families a place to “retreat” or simply get away for a few days.

## Threats

The threats considered most important to our organization include:

- *Loss of support from major donors.* The foundation has enjoyed the support of Southwest Airlines and Air Compassion for Veterans over the past seven years. These organizations cover the airfare for all of the families traveling to camp, which accounts for a quarter of the annual budget. With so many deserving organizations bidding for support, the possibility of losing this funding exists.
- *Inability to obtain property permits and licenses for camp property.* While Knights of Heroes has been blessed with individuals with extensive camp knowledge and experience, there remains the challenge of obtaining a special use permit and residential

camp license. These are required by the State and County before conducting our programs on a foundation-owned property.

- *Excessive maintenance costs.* Knights of Heroes has used all of its resources and conducted extensive research into the costs associated with running a permanent camp. The organization remains mindful of the unknown when it comes to owning and running a facility.

## Strategic Direction

The following is a representation of Knights of Heroes' strategic direction that has been defined by the Board of Directors based upon direct feedback from families: The next three to five years will be committed to addressing the challenges that are currently inhibiting Knights of Heroes from expanding and enhancing our services to those who need it the most.

## Success Measures

The success measures of Knights of Heroes are our key performance indicators that are direct feedback and testimonials from the families. The Board of Directors firmly believes that Knights of Heroes would not be successful nor sustainable without the direct feedback that we receive throughout the year. This success is measured through direct questionnaires and feedback from campers, mothers and mentors and direct unsolicited testimonials that we receive from the families. The feedback we receive from our families and mentors helps guide overall direction of the organization.

### Measures:

- KOH families returning year after year provides a measure of "customer" satisfaction
- Increased resiliency in our campers, measured through resiliency test scores from one year to the next

### Testimonials:

Nothing tells of the success KOH has experienced like testimonials from the families who attend.

“This is exactly the type of program I was looking for after my husband was killed. I felt powerless in trying to get my kids the knowledge of the outdoors and foster their confidence in doing physical challenges that I was not familiar with---knowing that if Dad were alive, he would be teaching them all of these things. My daughter has emerged from this camp, even stronger and more confident. She can try new things and push her body to go beyond her comfort level. Next year my son will be old enough to participate in the boy's program and I'm so excited for him. Knights of Heroes is giving my kids what I cannot. Our family is grateful for these wonderful people.”

“This was my son's first year and he loved everything about the camp. He returned more confident and self-assured. He felt like he had bonded with his mentors and the other kids in the program. He felt challenged to do his best and appreciated for his efforts. He and his mentor made a list of goals that he worked on at camp and that he was able to apply to our

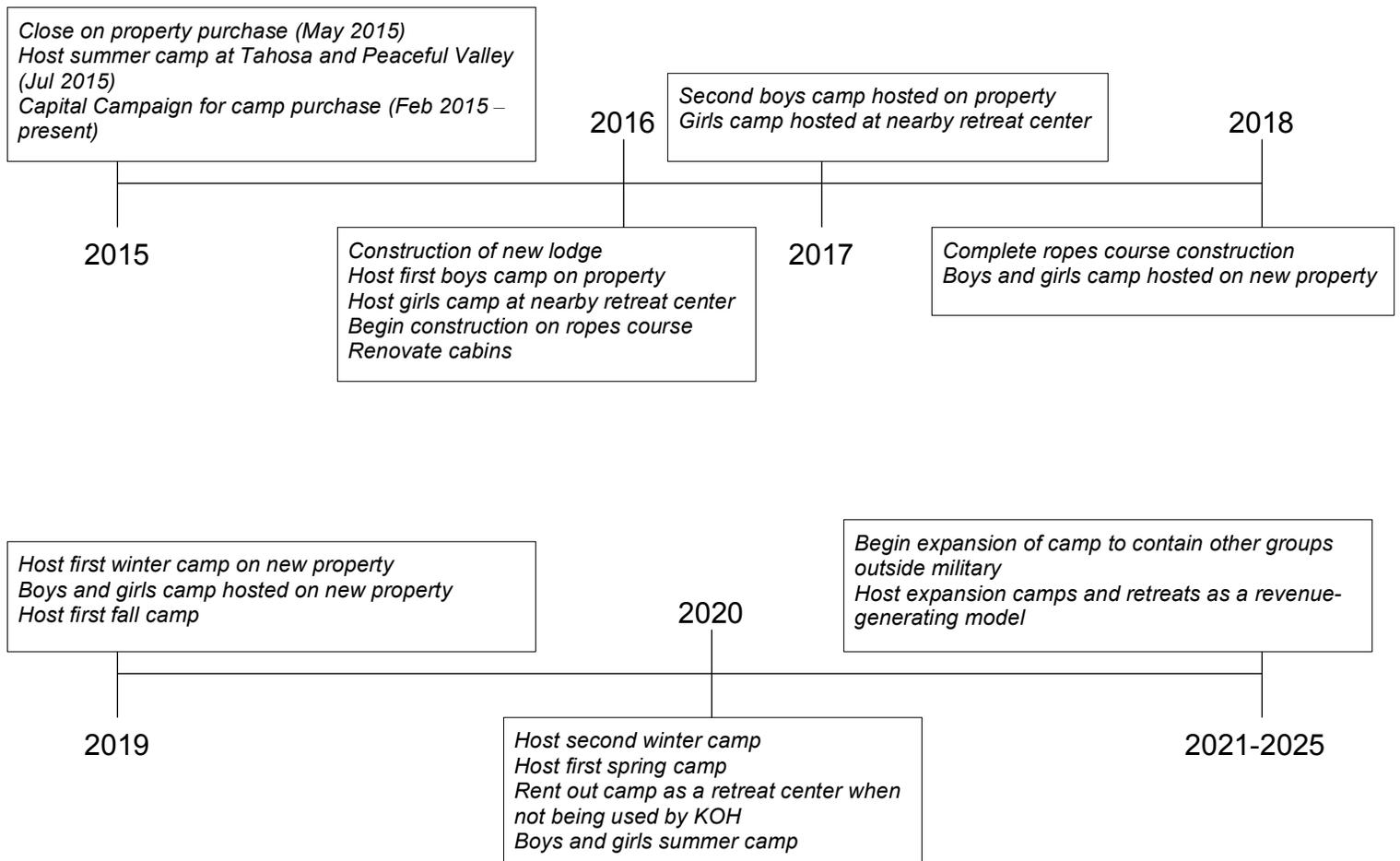
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home life. This was a great experience for him, and my son says he can't wait to go again next year.”

“This was my daughter's second year at camp and my son's first year. I cannot speak highly enough about this camp for children of the fallen. The week that they provide for the campers is amazing. The kids come back with huge smiles on their faces, nonstop stories of all of their adventures and best of all excitement about returning next year! While the kids have fun, what sets this camp apart is the values and confidence the kids learn through overcoming and also giving back.”

**Strategic Action Plan by Year:**

The following is a summary of significant goals set by the Knights of Heroes Board of Directors in each year of the strategic plan.



## Operating Budget

The Board of Directors of Knights of Heroes feels it is important to progress with a strategic plan which does not negatively impact the already-existing annual summer camp. The money raised to support the property expansion and development is above and beyond the annual operating budget for the program. The following chart represents, in detail, the operating cost for 2015.

### Estimated Operating Cost for 2015

Funding Code	2015 Budget
<b>100 Fundraising</b>	<b>\$12,500</b>
101 – Postage	\$500
102 - Printing & Duplicating	\$1,500
103 - Information Technology (Website)	\$500
104 - Donation Processing Fees	\$10,000
<b>200 Management</b>	<b>\$26,700</b>
201 – Accounting	\$500
202 - Bank Service Fees	\$10
203 – Insurance	\$4,000
204 - Office Supplies	\$500
205 – Postage	\$150
206 - Cell Phone	\$540
207 - Board Travel	\$1,000
208 - Office/General Administrative Expenses	\$20,000
209 - Legal Fees	\$1,000
210 - Office Rent	\$6,600
<b>300 Program General</b>	<b>\$92,600</b>
301 - Camper Snacks	\$2,500
302 – Postage	\$500
303 - Van Rentals (\$700/Each) (14 Vans)	\$11,800
304 - Gas For Rental Vans	\$2,300
305 - Camp Equipment	\$10,000
306 - Camper/Mentor T-Shirts, Hats, Sweatshirts	\$8,000
307 - Travel For Families*	\$50,000
308 - Lodging At CC/Mentors/Unaccompanied	\$7,500
<b>400 Boys Program</b>	<b>\$32,000</b>
401 - White Water Rafting	\$4,000
402 - Horseback Riding	\$0
403 - Mountain Biking	\$7,000
404 - Camper Gifts	\$3,000
405 - Boys Camp Fees	\$18,000
<b>500 Younger Siblings Program</b>	<b>\$500</b>

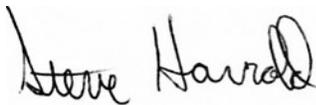
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Funding Code	2015 Budget
501 – Activities	\$500
<b>600 Girls Program</b>	<b>\$22,000</b>
601 - White Water Rafting	\$4,000
602 - Horseback Riding	\$1,500
603 - Mountain Biking	\$0
604 - Camper Gifts	\$500
605 - Girls Camp Fees	\$16,000
<b>700 Moms Program</b>	<b>\$12,750</b>
701 - Lodging	\$9,000
702 - White Water Rafting	\$2,000
703 - Horseback Riding	\$1,000
704 - Group Dinners	\$750
<b>Overage (5% Of Budget)</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$209,050</b>

*\*KOH has secured \$32,000 in airlines tickets from Southwest Airlines and \$8,000 in camper gifts from My Lineage for the 2015 camp. This brings the actual budget for 2015 down to \$169,000.*

## Conclusion

We are extremely excited about the future of the Knights of Heroes Foundation. With a solid donor base and an extremely motivated group of volunteers, our goals are well within reach. As we expand, we will never forget the fundamental principle that has guided our foundation from the beginning: to serve our families with love and compassion. Let us never forget the sacrifices that have been made to ensure our freedom as Americans.



Steven Harrold  
Founder, Knights of Heroes Foundation