

THE PROJECT



Healing the Invisible Wounds of War

Fall/Winter 2017

The 22 Project treats veterans who suffer with PTS (Post Traumatic Stress), PCS (Post Concussion Syndrome) and TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury)

By Karina Galarsa

In 2012 The Department of Veterans Affairs Mental Health Services Suicide Prevention Program concluded that 22 veterans, (or 1 every 65 minutes) commits suicide each day in the United States. The psychological trauma and severe brain injuries that our vets are coming home with, are critically affecting their ability to lead a normal life after combat.

Most of the vets that suffer from these traumas have a challenging time readjusting to civilian life and integrating themselves into society again. With the help of the 3D Brain SPECT imaging machine and the highly trained board certified physicians, The 22 Project is helping lower these heartbreaking statistics.

Because of your support 24 veterans have been accepted into the program and many more are getting ready to start their treatment journey to a better life.



**U.S. Army RET. LTC.
Patrick McNamara**

After serving over 20 years in the United States Army, West Point Graduate Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Patrick McNamara found himself lost in the civilian community trying to cope with issues stemming from his deployment.

“I was heavily medicated, numb, isolated, and in a state of despair. The sense of meaning and purpose I once had while serving in uniform was gone” says Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Patrick McNamara.

For Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Patrick McNamara, meeting Alex Cruz from The 22 Project could not have come at a more favorable moment. He attended his first meeting shortly thereafter and immediately felt the fellowship he once had in uniform. “We understood each other

and were able to share and talk about our unique experiences. I sat there shoulder to shoulder with fellow veterans.” Patrick knew he wanted to undergo treatment. Since starting the treatment, he said he felt his mood and energy level have improved. “The therapy is non-invasive and can treat a wide range of conditions including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).”





He feels fortunate for the opportunity to benefit from this natural treatment method, which is allowing him to function at a much higher level. “The 22 Project covered the entire cost of treatment beginning with a SPECT Brain Scan and a recommended course of 40 hyperbaric oxygen chamber treatments.”



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US Army Soldier Trista Boyenga spent over 10 years working as a Counter-intelligence Officer in the US Army.



What was supposed to be a routine mission for Trista on May 13, 2009 (during her 2nd deployment) turned into an unforgettable tragedy in Baghdad, Iraq. While heading back to the Forward Operating Base her HMMWV was struck with an explosive (likely a RPG). In the explosion, Trista suffered torn ear canals, a traumatic brain injury, and an extremely severe neck injury. “I spent almost two years in physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and a work-hardening program” says Trista.

Finally, in 2011 after 2 years of intense treatment she was deployed once again, this time to Afghanistan to serve her 3rd deployment. During her time there she once again suffered the same neck injury as in Baghdad, Iraq. “Another year and a half of therapies and the doctors gave me the news: You are no longer deployable” say Trista Boyenga.

**RET. U.S. Army
Trista Boyenga**

**First Female Veteran
treated through 22
Project**

In the time that followed, Trista spent several years on multiple narcotic pain medications, compound pain creams, muscle relaxers, and Botox treatment for chronic migraines. “The most concerning to me was the narcotic pain medications and the long-term effects of taking them. I was on the strongest version of Percocet available- the same level given in the ER. I knew there had to be a better way to treat this and began doing research.”

It was during this time that Dr. Claudia Marcelo introduced Trista to Alex Cruz and The 22 Project, and it wasn’t long, before Trista started treatment. Under Dr. Marcelo, Trista began the hyperbaric oxygen therapy treatment which drastically improved her sleep patterns, memory, and chronic migraines. The Veterans Administration does not offer this treatment.



Because of The 22 Project, Trista could receive the treatment she needed and was able to accomplish her dreams. “I’m happy to announce that now I have a new business with Dr. Marcelo. Botanica Vita is an organic skincare company recently opened in October 2017 at the Galleria Mall, Fort Lauderdale. Without hyperbaric oxygen therapy I do not know if I would have been able to effectively start this business. I’m forever grateful to 22 Project for giving me this life changing treatment.”



2017 Highlights





5th Annual South Florida Charity Classic!

Bringing Together the Business Community To Benefit Our Local Veterans

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Friday, April 27, 2018

at The Woodlands Country Club

In our years of the Classic...

*Over 900 Golfers
Over 270 Sponsors
\$240,000 Raised*

MORE THAN 900 VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES TAKEN OFF THE STREETS!

**Many TBI Injured Veterans are receiving life-saving treatments!
*Lives are being saved and changed, all because of you!***

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Closest to Pin
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