

LA
JOLLA
PLAY
HOUSE

2023/24 MILITARY IMPACT REPORT

MILITARY AND
VETERAN PROGRAMS
The MVP Initiative



LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE MISSION & VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT

La Jolla Playhouse advances theatre as an art form, telling stories that inspire empathy and create a dialogue toward a more just future. With our intrepid spirit and eclectic, artist-driven approach we will continue to cultivate a local, national and global following with an insatiable appetite for audacious work. We provide unfettered creative opportunities for a community of artists of all backgrounds and abilities. We are committed to being a permanent safe harbor for unsafe and surprising work, offering a glimpse of the new and the next in American theatre.

VALUES STATEMENT

At La Jolla Playhouse, we believe that stories enhance the human experience, instill **empathy** and help us see the world in new ways. We **respect** all races, ethnicities, cultures, physical/cognitive abilities, ages, genders and identities, and endeavor to be an anti-racist and **accessible** organization that removes barriers to engagement. As a community of life-long learners who celebrate the spirit of **play**, we **innovate** and **collaborate** to bring theatre to life.

We practice **empathy** by listening, challenging our assumptions and staying open to all perspectives.

We **respect** and recognize the complexities of all lived experiences, identities and cultural backgrounds. We honor the Kumeyaay Nation, the original caretakers of the land on which our theaters sit. We will fight against anti-blackness, the many forms of racism directed at BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and all types of discrimination and harassment, to be a more inclusive space where everyone feels welcome onstage and off.

We work with our community to identify, understand and address ways to make our theatre more equitable and **accessible**.

We infuse the spirit of **play** into everything we do, sparking creativity, fun and life-long learning.

We **innovate** and take risks to propel theatre as an art form and as a pathway toward fostering belonging and enhancing human connection.

We **collaborate** by prioritizing inclusive practices from which diverse voices, talents and ideas can strengthen engagement and creative thinking.

We vow to grow and embrace these values. When we falter, we will hold ourselves accountable through transparent communication, measurable outcomes, self-reflection and humility. With great joy and a strong sense of responsibility, we commit to these values in every aspect of our work.

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Cover: (Top) *The Untitled Unauthorized Hunter S. Thompson Musical* Military Night Out; (Middle) Gary Sinise Foundation and caterer Mastiff Kitchen; (Bottom) *SUMO* Military Night Out

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF ARTS ENGAGEMENT



La Jolla Playhouse is dedicated to supporting our local active-duty servicemembers, veterans, and their families through our MVP Initiative. We are grateful to all of our partners who have joined us in this mission.

As the daughter of a Purple Heart recipient and combat veteran of the Vietnam War, I am particularly honored to lead the Playhouse's efforts to give back to the military community of San Diego through creative enrichment and therapeutic opportunities. Our Military and Veteran Programs, including Military Nights Out, Military Families at WOW, Veterans Playwriting Workshop (VPW), and our POP Tour for Young Audiences and Military Families, have made a profound and lasting impact on the community and at the Playhouse.

Thanks to your generosity, we were able to continue and expand these programs this season, providing opportunities for military families to bond and reconnect over their shared love of the theatre. In November 2023, La Jolla Playhouse hosted an MVP Open House for Veterans Day—bringing together a vibrant gathering of military community members and their loved ones. Among the attendees was Randy Tidmore, a 102-year-old World War II Marine Veteran, who was recently honored in August 2023 at Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial for her service and accomplishments, including her role as a pioneering woman in the Marine Corps.

For the 2024/2025 season, we are excited to be able to expand our Veterans Playwriting Workshop to include a Level 3: Development Phase in which two talented veterans have their one act plays developed and professionally presented in front of an invited audience.

We are deeply grateful for your shared passion for establishing theatre as a creative and restorative place for the military. Thank you for your support.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacole Kitchen'.

Jacole Kitchen
Director of Arts Engagement



MILITARY AND VETERAN PROGRAMS (THE MVP INITIATIVE) OVERVIEW

The military community holds significant importance in San Diego as well as at La Jolla Playhouse. The Playhouse is dedicated to improving the lives of local servicemembers, veterans, and their families by providing specialized, cost-free programs. The Playhouse connects, inspires, and entertains through programs including the Veterans Playwriting Workshop (VPW), Military Nights Out, Military Families at WOW, arts learning programs targeted to children in military families, and military-themed artistic programming. Through the MVP Initiative, the Playhouse is providing members of the military community meaningful channels for self-expression and opportunities to spend quality time with loved ones, all without the barrier of cost.

SAN DIEGO MILITARY PRESENCE

On a per capita basis, San Diego County has the most active-duty and veteran military personnel in the country. There are more than 142,000 active-duty military servicemembers (2020 USO San Diego), more than 23,000 national guard/reserves members (2020 USO San Diego), and about 250,000 veterans residing in San Diego (SDMAC Military Impact Study). This region's active-duty servicemembers serve at the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Marine Corps Base & Air Station Camp Pendleton, and the Naval Bases at Point Loma, Coronado, and San Diego.

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE'S COMMITMENT TO THE MVP INITIATIVE



Ray Flores and Judy Leonardi of CA American Legion
at the Playhouse

In 2022, the Playhouse updated its Bylaws to add an ex-officio board seat to represent the military community. Ray Flores joined the Board of Trustees during the 2023/24 season. With 21 years of military service, Ray Flores currently serves as the County of San Diego's Military & Veterans Affairs Officer. In this role he also serves as the Executive Director of the San Diego Veterans Coalition, where he has built alliances with more than 160 unique organizations, businesses, and agencies that collaborate to better address the wide variety of needs of more than one million military servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

As a Playhouse Trustee, Ray has been invaluable in making connections with other military and veteran-serving organizations to expand the Playhouse's reach and resources to support our MVP Initiative. Additionally, Ray has participated in our Veterans Playwriting Workshop to experience the programs firsthand and is a regular attendee at MVP events.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023/24 SUPPORTERS

Your generosity enabled us to subsidize the expenses associated with tickets, workshops, arts learning, and engagement programs specifically designed for military personnel, veterans, and their families. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who support this cause. Your unwavering generosity and commitment to preserving the arts is truly cherished and deeply appreciated.

Teresa and Byron Pollitt Ellen Browning Scripps Foundation



AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM:

Rich and Mary Lou Amen

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William Pitts and Mary Sophos

Russ and Marty Ries

Linda Small

Suzi Sterner

If you are interested in supporting our Military and Veterans Programs, please contact Kayla Alperson, Donor Relations Coordinator, at kalperson@ljp.org or (858) 228-3089.

YOUR IMPACT

Throughout the 2023/2024 Season, the dedicated Playhouse donors and sponsors who generously contributed to our Military and Veteran Programs helped us serve **more than 2,000 servicemembers and family members.**

"It was great connecting with other members of the military community. [The Playhouse] was welcoming and provided the opportunity to not only enjoy a really good play, but also the food was good and the camaraderie was great."

**US Army veteran
attending Military Night Out**



"Our wise instructor, Gill, was patient, persistent, positive, and very informative with us. It was an enlightening experience as I witnessed my fellow cohorts and me being whipped into better shape."

VPW participant



"It was challenging to keep up with assignments, but once I started writing/editing I was engaged — losing track of time."

VPW participant

"This was a wonderful event. I was made to feel very special for both my late husband's service as well as my own. The support staff from the Gary Sinise organization were generous with their graciousness. It was a very lovely night."

**US Navy veteran's spouse
attending Military Night Out**

VETERANS PLAYWRITING WORKSHOP

Veterans Playwriting Workshop (VPW) offers a transformative experience for participants, as they collaborate with teaching artists (who are veterans themselves) over eight weeks to shape and share their stories, fostering a sense of community and healing throughout the process. The program consists of three distinct levels: Beginner, Intermediate, and Development. Participants are welcome to take each level as many times as desired.

VPW is an inclusive program provided free of charge to participants, including veterans, active-duty military personnel, spouses, and national interpreters. We recruit participants through our partnerships with military organizations, Military Nights Out, and local VA referrals. We offer a hybrid workshop model, allowing participants to attend both in-person and online via Zoom, in order to enable the involvement of individuals from various locations and with differing needs.

25 individuals participated in Veterans Playwriting Workshop during the 2023/24 season.

- 8/16/23 – 10/4/23 Veterans Playwriting Workshop – Beginner Level
- 2/7/24 – 3/27/24 Veterans Playwriting Workshop – Beginner Level
 - Professional actors read each participant’s work during a final presentation of this cohort’s work in March.

VPW Spotlight: Alexander Ameen



Alexander Ameen is pursuing an MA in Theatre Arts at San Diego State University, where he also earned a BS in TV, Film, and New Media Production. He is a Navy veteran, having deployed as a journalist and mass communication specialist. Additionally, he studied acting at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City. Alexander is currently enrolled in the Veterans Playwriting Workshop at La Jolla Playhouse and the Celebrating Community Voices workshop at the Old Globe in San Diego.

“The Veterans Playwriting Workshop at La Jolla Playhouse has changed the direction of my life. When I first signed up for the Beginner Workshop, my expectation was to hopefully make a new friend or two and ultimately write a humble 10-minute play. More than a year later, I’m a plank owner in the first-ever Development Workshop, honored to be creating an hour-long play with an official staged reading to be produced by the Playhouse. The knowledge and confidence I gained through VPW—with all due thanks to instructor Gill Sotu—is also responsible for inspiring me to go back to school to study playwriting. I begin pursuing my MA in Theatre Arts at San Diego State University this fall.

“Transitioning out of the military isn’t easy for everybody. I can attest: I was medically separated, therefore my time as a Sailor was unexpectedly cut short. I’ve held a few different jobs since being discharged, but nothing that fulfilled my desire to impact the world in a meaningful way. Thanks to VPW and La Jolla Playhouse, I’ve rediscovered my purpose. I can’t overstate what a vital and valuable asset I believe this program is to the San Diego-area veteran community. I hope every veteran who wants to has the opportunity to participate.”

VPW Spotlight: Brian T. Josten



During a 20-year career in the Marine Corps, followed by a second career in education, Brian Josten wrote recreationally and professionally, but not for the stage or the screen. Brian joined the Veterans Playwriting Workshop in the spring of 2022.

"The Veterans Playwriting Workshop (VPW) has been a superb program for me, impacting my life in a variety of positive ways. I have attended about six different workshops within the last two years. During my career in the military, I sporadically wrote poems, songs, and short stories, but much of my creativity lay dormant since leaving the Marine Corps and during my second career in education.

"Throughout this transitional period, I had a lot of ideas floating around in my head that needed some organization and direction. It was at that time that I began participating in the VPW. The format of the program along with the brilliant guidance and direction of its instructor/facilitator, Gill Sotu, has greatly helped me sort and stack my ideas into more accessible and better understood vignettes.

"Throughout this process, I have learned to realize the purpose of writing. I now write more to communicate my experiences and feelings instead of merely recording or dictating them. Since participating in the VPW, I have been able to lay out all my ideas and experiences and then, after determining what I want to communicate, organize the jumble into a coherent and universally accessible format.

"Understanding this process is a great gift at any point in life and has given me greater clarity when conveying my thoughts to others. The feedback that I received from Gill and other students in the program is a continual reminder that we cannot be effective communicators/writers through just an internally focused lens. Instead, it takes skills that require honing, practice, failure, and success in order to reach higher levels of proficiency.

"Since my involvement with the VPW I am better able to recognize and appreciate effective and ubiquitous writing and communication. My mind has opened, and I have learned to receive and apply other perspectives with considerably less prejudice.

"Even though I may never earn a dime through any of my writing, windows of opportunity and hope have opened for me through the VPW. I now have a greater understanding and appreciation for the art of communication through writing. I feel more in touch with the ever-changing world around me and better equipped to document my observations in a context that others might want to consider applying to their own lives."

MILITARY NIGHTS OUT

With a preshow reception and complimentary tickets to a Playhouse performance, Military Nights Out create magical moments of connection for military members and their families. Together, loved ones create new memories, helping to make up for some of the holidays and celebrations they have missed over the years. With in-kind support from the Gary Sinise Foundation, the Playhouse was able to provide enhanced meal options and important resources for attendees. Invitations to Military Nights Out were distributed directly through our military contact list as well as through community partners (see page 16).

- 100 attendees at the June 6, 2023, performance of *Love All*
- 52 attendees at the July 21, 2023, performance of *Is It Thursday Yet?*
- 57 attendees at the August 30, 2023, performance of *The Untitled Unauthorized Hunter S. Thompson Musical*
- 58 attendees at the October 13, 2023, performance of *SUMO*
- 98 attendees the November 17, 2023, performance of *Babbitt*
- 50 attendees at the February 14, 2024, performance of *Redwood*

The Playhouse served 415 military servicemembers, veterans, and family members during Military Nights Out this season.

DISCOUNTED TICKETS FOR MILITARY COMMUNITY

La Jolla Playhouse offered subsidized Blue Star tickets for US military personnel, spouses, and children as well as US veterans. Tickets are discounted to \$25/ticket for most shows.

- 20 discounted tickets issued for *Love All*
- 42 discounted tickets issued for *Is It Thursday Yet?*
- 188 discounted tickets issued for *The Untitled Unauthorized Hunter S. Thompson Musical*
- 47 discounted tickets issued for *SUMO*
- 297 discounted Tickets to *Babbitt*
- 383 discounted Tickets to *Redwood*

The Playhouse distributed 977 discounted tickets this season accounting for more than \$50,000 in savings to military servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

MVP OPEN HOUSE FOR VETERANS DAY

The MVP Open House for Veterans Day, held on Monday, November 6, 2023, welcomed members of San Diego's military community to La Jolla Playhouse for an appreciation event. The Playhouse's entire military contact list – which includes members of all military branches, active-duty, veterans, and their guests – were invited to participate. Attendees experienced a captivating performance by the Marine Band of San Diego and enjoyed an engaging tour of our theatre spaces and production shops. Complimentary food and beverages, generously provided by the Gary Sinise Foundation, enhanced the evening for the **100 attendees**, contributing to a truly memorable occasion.



Attendees at MVP Open House



Marine Band of San Diego



(L-R) Playhouse Trustee Ray Flores, Nancy Brock, and WWII veteran Randy Tidmore (age 102) attending the MVP Open House.



MILITARY FAMILIES AT WOW

In recognition and appreciation of the San Diego military community, our 2024 WOW Festival at UC San Diego hosted two Military Appreciation Mixers on Saturday and Sunday, April 6 and 7. Attendees were able to enjoy snacks and drinks provided by the Gary Sinise Foundation at our WOW Club Lounge. These events were attended by a total of 150 servicemembers, veterans, and military family members. The WOW Festival featured family-friendly performances, including our POP Tour production of *Abeba in the Tall Grass*, dance, largescale puppets, music, acrobats and clowns, visual art, and immersive and interactive playscapes. Additional resources were provided to our military attendees from the Gary Sinise Foundation and VetART.

Hundreds of servicemembers, veterans, and their family members attended the 2024 WOW Festival.

POP TOUR FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES AND MILITARY FAMILIES

The Playhouse makes a dedicated effort to bring the Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour to military families through performances on military bases, at the WOW Festival, and visits to schools that have large populations of military children. Each year's play highlights a real-life topic or timely issue for students to discuss. The 2024 POP Tour, *Abeba in the Tall Grass*, was performed at **13 schools which each had a student body comprised of at least 20% of students from military families, reaching 2,103 military students**, including children at Saburo Muraoka Elementary, Vista Grande Elementary, Jones Elementary, Dewey Elementary, Hancock Elementary, Silver Strand Elementary, Kate Sessions Elementary, Tierrasanta Elementary, Chesterton Elementary, Chula Vista Hills Elementary, Cabrillo Elementary, and Garden Road Elementary. Additionally, public performances were scheduled during the WOW Festival, ensuring that our Military Families at WOW could also enjoy the play.

See POP Tour Impact Report for more information.

VOICES OF OUR CITY CHOIR THEATRE WORKSHOPS

Voices of our City Choir plays a vital role in helping San Diego's unsheltered neighbors rediscover hope and a sense of possibility through the transformative power of music. By providing safe spaces, resources, a strong sense of community, and opportunities to develop work-readiness and advocacy skills, the choir offers individuals a place of belonging and a chance to rebuild their lives. As a key partner, La Jolla Playhouse proudly offers bi-monthly theatre workshops to Choir members, free of charge. These workshops are designed to nurture their storytelling abilities, enabling them to share their personal experiences through the medium of song.

Throughout this season, we hosted a series of 18 Voices of Our City Choir Theatre Workshops, each spanning three hours. These workshops garnered significant interest, attracting a total of 30 enthusiastic repeat participants. **Three of the choir members are military veterans and one of the teaching artists for these workshops, Shairi Engle, is a veteran and alum of our Veterans Playwriting Workshop.**

The workshops culminated in two public readings of the participants' devised theatre piece. The showcases took place on Sunday, April 14, 2024, at Moxie Theatre.



Voices of Our City Choir Theatre Workshops director and co-writer Desiree Clarke Miller (left), Teaching Artist and co-writer, Shairi Engle (center) with Voices of Our City Choir participant

KEY PERSONNEL

LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT STAFF



Jacole Kitchen (she/her/hers) is the Director of Arts Engagement and In-House Casting at La Jolla Playhouse, spearheading numerous community-based programs and overseeing our Military and Veteran Programs. As the daughter of a Purple Heart recipient and combat veteran of the Vietnam War, Jacole is honored to be able to give back and serve the military community of San Diego through creative enrichment and therapeutic opportunities at the Playhouse. In addition, she teaches acting, improv and professional development for actors through UC San Diego Extended Studies. Directing credits include the Playhouse's Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour productions of *Light Years Away*, *Pick Me Last*, and *Jin vs. the Beach*, as well as *Cardboard Piano* (Diversionary Theatre), *An Iliad* (New Village Arts), among others. She also serves as Executive Director of the San Diego Performing Arts League.



Bridget Cavaiola Stone (she/her/hers) is the Director of Learning at La Jolla Playhouse and leads a department that impacts 30,000 San Diegans each year with a team of 100 contracted staff and volunteers through K-12 programming, internships, and adult learning and engagement opportunities. She is the co-producer for the Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour. She is a former high school English and theatre teacher and teaching artist and has extensive training in inclusion, professional learning, and arts integration.



Hannah Reinert (she/her/hers) is the Learning & Engagement Manager and Casting Associate at La Jolla Playhouse. She supports all Learning & Engagement programming, leads the Playhouse Teen Council and helps guide the internship program. She holds a BA in Theatre & Communications from UC San Diego, cum laude, and is the winner of the 2017 UC San Diego Bronowski Award.



Danniell Ureña (he/him/his) is a director, choreographer, playwright, producer, and performer who currently serves as La Jolla Playhouse's Learning and Engagement Coordinator. He has worked in theaters across San Diego including San Diego Musical Theater (Audition Assistant), San Diego REP (Latinx New Play Festival Intern), La Jolla Playhouse (Artistic Intern and Latinx New Play Festival Associate Producer), and Diversionary (Artistic Fellow). He served as an assistant director on a workshop of *The Untitled Unauthorized Hunter S. Thompson Musical*. He recently received his BA from UC San Diego double majoring in

Theater and Dance with a Chicana and Latinx minor.

TEACHING ARTIST SPOTLIGHTS



Gill Sotu is the current instructor for Veterans Playwriting Workshop. A Navy veteran, poet, playwright, musician, DJ, and performing artist, Gill is a two-time Grand Slam Poetry Champion, two-time Raw Performing Artist of the Year, and a five-time TEDx San Diego presenter. Currently, he is a teaching artist and a commissioned playwright with the Old Globe and La Jolla Playhouse, a guest teaching artist with the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts and New Village Arts, and the official Poet-in-Residence for the San Diego Writer's Festival.



Shairi Engle is an Air Force veteran, teaching artist, and writer for stage, screen, and virtual reality (VR). Tony Kushner awarded her the 2019 Arts in the Armed Forces (AITAF) Bridge Award and she was a 2021 Stavis Playwriting Award nominee. Her work has been shared on the stages of The Public (NYC), La Jolla Playhouse, United States Air Force Academy, Sugarloaf Performing Arts Center, and the Old Globe's 2020 PRIDE CoLAB. Shairi has held residencies with New York Stage and Film, Veterans Artist Residencies, and the Writers Guild Foundation. Her VR projects with Moth+Flame have helped thousands of soldiers learn suicide and sexual assault prevention and first response skills, received coverage in the *New York Times*, and earned her recognition from the fifth International VR Awards in 2021. Shairi is also an original cohort and founding member of La Jolla Playhouse's Veterans Playwriting Workshop where she experienced, firsthand, the power of theatre as a device to explore trauma and hope.

Currently, Shairi can be found working with Voices of Our City Choir both as a Special Projects Coordinator where she supports the development of robust arts programming for unsheltered San Diegans and as a La Jolla Playhouse teaching artist and playwright. She is composing a devised play commissioned by the Old Globe for the Veterans' Village of San Diego and is a judge for VetRep Theater's 2023 annual Veteran Playwriting Contest. Since 2015, Shairi has continued her Fingerprint Project, a collaborative community art project allowing survivors of sexual assault to break their silence.



Veterans
Playwriting
Workshop

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

La Jolla Playhouse partners with various military- and veteran-serving organizations to reach as many eligible participants as possible to increase the number of individuals and families we serve.

In the 2023/2024 season, we partnered with:

- Blue Star Mothers
- Courage To Call
- Gary Sinise Foundation
- MiraCosta College Veterans Coalition
- National Veterans Transition Services Program (REBOOT, Inc.)
- Naval Officers' Spouses' Club
- Operation Homefront SD
- Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Rosie Network
- San Diego Council United States Navy League
- San Diego Military Advisory Council
- San Diego Military Family Collaborative
- San Diego Military Outreach Ministries
- San Diego Veterans Coalition
- Shelter to Soldier
- So Say We All
- Sports4Vets
- STEP (Support the Enlisted Project)
- United Through Reading
- USO San Diego
- VetArt
- Veteran Tickets Foundation (VetTix)
- Veterans Affairs
- We Thank Our Troops
- Wounded Warrior Battalion
- Wounded Warrior Tennis Program

Previous partners include:

- Armed Services YMCA San Diego
- Blue Star Families
- Challenged Athletes Foundation
- Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Associated of San Diego
- Hug and Bags
- LGBT Community Center Military
- Lincoln Military Housing
- MCAS Miramar
- Marine Corps Recruiting Depot
- Naval Air Station North Island
- San Diego Pride Military
- TCG Veterans in Theatre Institute
- Veterans Museum at Balboa Park
- Veterans' Community Connection

Gary Sinise Foundation at SUMO Military Night Out



THE IMPACT OF THE ARTS ON THE MILITARY COMMUNITY

The intersection between the arts and the well-being of military personnel, veterans, and their caretakers has been a subject of growing interest and research. Researchers have identified positive impact on the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of military personnel and veterans who participate in artistic activities. The arts also play a vital role in positively impacting the caretakers of military personnel through family-centered arts programming.

A substantial body of research, including the work of Atkins et al. in “Arts, Health, and Well-Being Across the Military Continuum: White Paper 2.0 and Beyond,” underscores the positive impact of the arts on the healing process of military personnel. **Creative expression, encompassing various forms of art such as theater, has been shown to reduce the experience of pain, mitigate the impact of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and address trauma-related injuries. Engaging in artistic activities provides a therapeutic outlet for servicemembers, allowing them to express and process complex emotions that may arise from their military experiences.**

The importance of social connection and combatting social isolation within the military community has gained prominence, particularly highlighted during the 2020 virtual summit, Arts & Health Across the Military, hosted by Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and Americans for the Arts. **The arts have proven to be a powerful tool in fostering social connections among military personnel, veterans, and their caretakers.** Programs such as Military Families at WOW and Military Nights Out, incorporating family-centered arts programming, actively contribute to reconnection, community building, and the development of meaningful relationships. The arts, through collaborative and communal activities, reinforce the idea that healing is a collective experience.

Incorporating arts programming at all stages of military service introduces alternative therapeutic methods. Theatre, in particular, offers servicemembers a unique platform to tell their stories and safely confront challenges faced while serving. Dr. Bessel Van Der Kolk, in *The Body Keeps the Score*, emphasizes **the significance of theatre in allowing traumatized individuals to connect with one another by deeply experiencing their common humanity.** This alternative approach complements traditional therapeutic interventions, providing diverse avenues for individuals to navigate their healing journey.

The arts have emerged as a valuable and multifaceted tool for enhancing the well-being of military personnel, veterans, and their caretakers. The therapeutic benefits underscore the importance of incorporating artistic activities into programs targeted at the military community. By leveraging our resources and expertise in arts learning and engagement, La Jolla Playhouse strives to contribute to the holistic well-being of those who have served and continue to serve our country.

STRATEGIC PLAN

La Jolla Playhouse's strategic plan to serve the San Diego Military Community.

INPUTS

To accomplish our activities, we will need the following:

Project funds and staff time

Participants

Expert Teaching Artists

In-kind donations

Space/Locations (on or off-site)

Tickets

ACTIVITIES

To serve our MVPs we will accomplish these activities:

Continuing the series of Military Nights Out, with at least one event per production in our Subscription Season (six productions per year)

Host Veterans Day Open House with San Diego Marine Band in November

Hosting Military Family Day in the Family Zone at the annual WOW Festival with family-friendly performances and activities completely free of charge.

Recruiting more veterans, veterans' spouses, and foreign service translators to the Veterans Playwriting Workshop

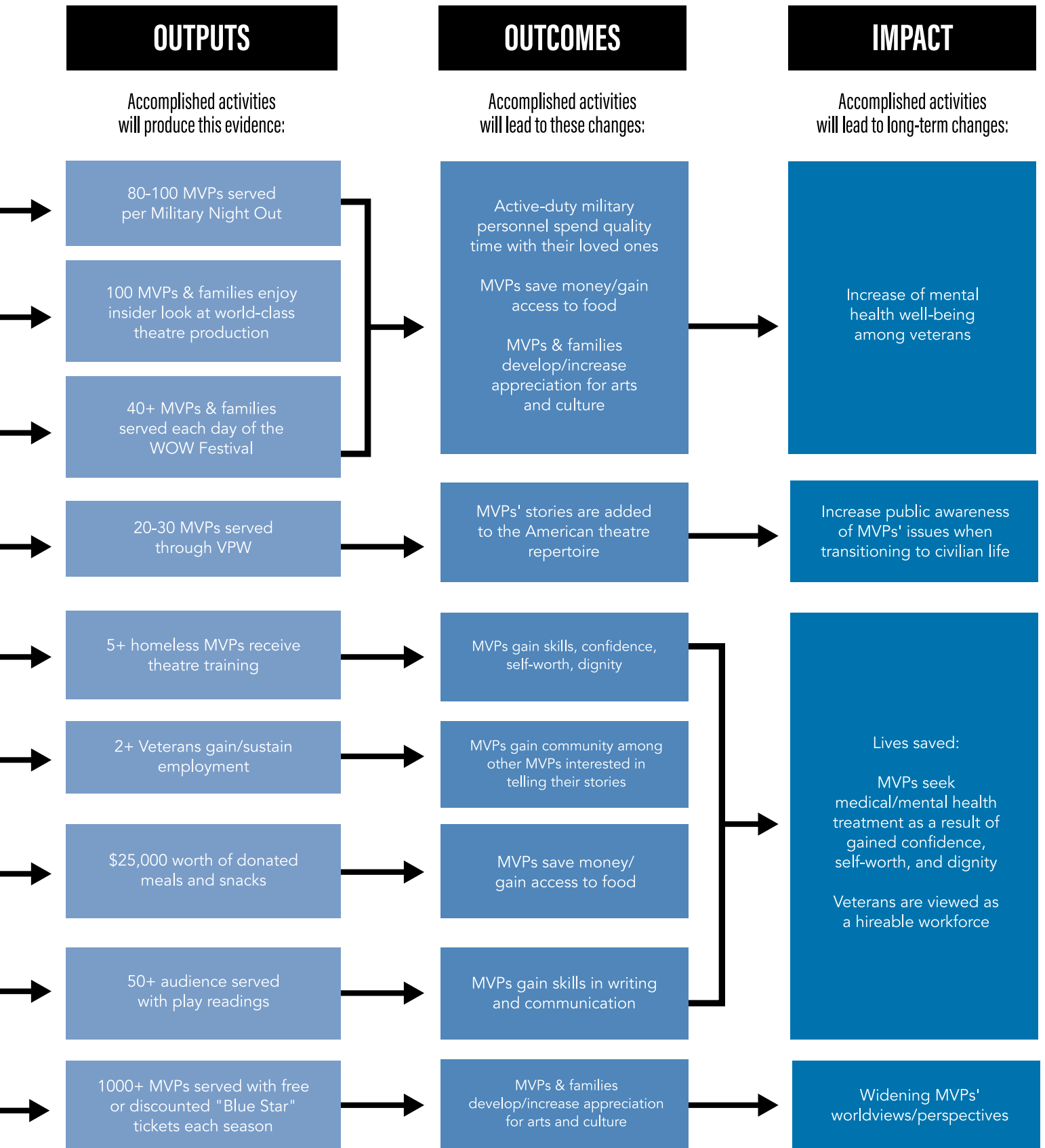
Partnering with Voices of Our City Choir to provide bi-monthly Theatre Workshops

Hiring facilitators and guest artists who are all veterans as well.

Providing complimentary meals and refreshments for MVPs at events

Hosting a special weekend of readings from the Veterans Playwriting Workshop – Developmental Level.

Providing complimentary tickets to hosted events and additional discounted tickets to productions



2024/2025 SEASON EVENTS

- May – June 2024: Veterans Playwriting Workshop – Intermediate Phase
- May 31, 2024: *The Ballad of Johnny and June* Military Night Out
- July 24, 2024: *Derecho* Military Night Out
- August 23, 2024: *Velour: A Drag Spectacular* Military Night Out
- September 2024: Veterans Playwriting Workshop – Development Phase and Public Reading
- September 27, 2024: *Primary Trust* Military Night Out
- November 20, 2024: *Your Local Theater Presents...* Military Night Out
- March – April 2025: Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour to Military Schools
- February 21, 2025: *3 Summers of Lincoln* Military Night Out
- April 24-27, 2025: Military Families at WOW

If you are interested in supporting our Military and Veterans Programs, please contact Kayla Alperson, Donor Relations Coordinator, at kalperson@ljp.org or (858) 228-3089.

For Corporate and Partners Support, please contact Katie Wallace-Coppo, Corporate Relations Manager, at kwallace@ljp.org or (858) 228-3078.

