



# ANNUAL REPORT 2017

# Table of Contents

Letter from the CEO

3

Mission Statement and Information

4-5

In the News

6

Project Examples

7-9

Board of Directors

10

Advisory Board Members

11





# Letter from the CEO

Dear Friends,

I founded Spirit of America 14 years ago in response to the attacks of 9/11. My motivation was simple. I wanted to do something to help – help America and help our troops. I was an Internet entrepreneur at the time. The idea for SoA was simple and practical idea: support the initiative of the men and women who serve our nation abroad, provide exactly what they say is needed to support their difficult missions by helping local people.

The importance of our work is crystal clear. In a world where threats are proliferating, our service members are asked to take on increasingly complex problems and missions. They need fast, flexible assistance to come home safe, prevent the conflict that causes so much suffering, and prevail over America's adversaries. Spirit of America is still the only nonprofit organization that provides that critical assistance.

In 2017 our field operations team implemented 120 projects in 35 countries working on the ground, side-by-side US military teams. Our field team is comprised of US military veterans who are continuing their commitment to service at Spirit of America. The work they do is difficult, dangerous and enormously impactful.

While I am very proud of the impact our team is having in support of our troops in tough places like Syria, Niger, Ukraine, and the Philippines, we must do more. The need for our assistance is growing rapidly. We must grow, too.

With our supporters, advisors and our immediate team, Spirit of America is citizens serving the nation, doing what we can to help. Please continue to support our work in whatever way you can, so that we can do more of what is needed.

Thank you.



Jim Hake



# Operations Overview

Founded in 2003, Spirit of America (SoA) is a 501c3 tax-exempt public charity. Our mission is to support the safety and success of Americans serving abroad and the local people and partners they seek to help.

In 2017, Spirit of America provided assistance to address five security and stability challenges, all identified as top priorities by deployed US military commanders and diplomats:

1. Reducing conflict and improving stability in the Middle East by supporting efforts defeat the Islamic State, with a focus on providing critical humanitarian assistance and enhancing capacity of US partners in both Syria and Iraq;
2. Countering Islamic extremism in West Africa, working with US teams to confront the network of violent extremist actors threatening security and stability;
3. Supporting US missions to counter transnational criminal organizations and drug trafficking organizations in Central and South America, with a focus on providing youth with opportunities that make recruitment into those groups;
4. Reducing conflict and deterring Russian aggression in Eastern Europe, specifically in Ukraine, where we worked with the US Embassy and military on projects designed to counter pervasive Russian propaganda and misinformation efforts.
5. Increasing the influence of the United States in Asia vis à vis China and Russia through educational initiatives that develop literacy and promote values such as peace, tolerance, and democratic ideals, as well as supporting anti-extremist organization efforts in Southeast Asia.

Each Spirit of America project in 2017 was implemented in direct response to needs identified by US troops and diplomats operating in challenging, dynamic security environments overseas. Each project was highly targeted based upon the objectives of US personnel. In addition, each support the initiative of local people and partners who are key to the stability of their communities, and ultimately, to the success of US missions abroad.

We apply Spirit of America's resources at the intersection of security, local needs, and US national interest. This makes deployed US personnel safer and more successful in their missions and helps local people not reached by large-scale aid programs. At the same time, we provide Americans with an opportunity to connect with, and support the work of, those who serve our nation abroad.

Our vision is that whenever our country sends our women to serve abroad, the American people are by their side as their partners, supporting their missions, supporting them as a force for good and assisting the local people they seek to help.



## THE PROBLEM

**“Our government and military can’t do it all alone. They’ll never be flexible enough to bring all America’s strength to bear. That’s why I’m so excited about Spirit of America.”**

**General Stanley McChrystal  
US Army, Retired**

## OUR SOLUTION

**Patriotic Assistance: fast, flexible assistance that supports the safety and success of our troops and the local people they want to help. We bring the resources, speed and flexibility of the American people to support US missions abroad.**

Spirit of America’s mission is to support the safety and success of Americans serving abroad and the local people and partners they seek to help.



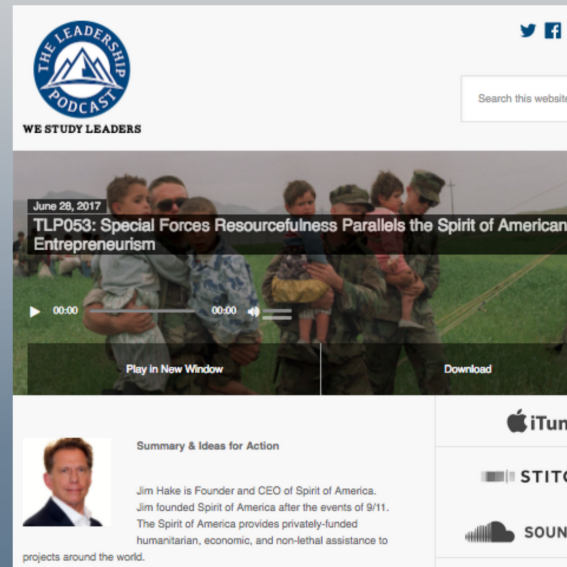
**In 2017, Spirit of America implemented  
120 projects across 35 countries**

You help our soldiers in foreign lands build trust in Americans by meeting local needs that government taxpayer dollars could never provide.”  
Gordon and Frances Johnson  
Alexandria, VA

“SOA is the essence of compassion and what is best about the United States and our warrior humanitarians. They are quickly becoming the first line of defense for our peace keepers.”  
Ernest Zinn  
Virginia Beach, VA

“I feel that Spirit of America does extraordinary work for children and women in parts of the world ravaged by war, and really make a difference.”  
Diana Rhodes  
Los Angeles, CA

# In the News



Spirit of America's work was highlighted in several media outlets in 2017, including Foreign Policy and Defense One. Several members of our team were featured on popular podcasts such as the Leadership Podcast, including our CEO, Jim Hake.

"Simply put, America and the freedoms we represent, cannot prevail without the aid of our allies. SoA's mission is to support our troops and their missions. Thus, by extension we support America's friends, partners and allies. Spirit of America demonstrates that we, the American people, not just our government and our military, support them. This is critically important in today's world."

General Philip M. Breedlove  
United States Air Force, Retired

# Project Example: Syria

## HELPING US TROOPS GET CHILDREN WHO SURVIVED ISIS BACK TO SCHOOL

This year, Spirit of America worked with US troops in northeast Syria to help children in areas recently liberated from ISIS control by providing school supplies and funding classroom repairs so the children can return to school. These children have suffered greatly, living through the atrocities of ISIS rule and a civil war, resulting in serious psychological damage. Due to this conflict, education for these children during this crucial time of their lives was severely neglected.

As one of three ongoing projects designed to improve education for Syrian youth, Spirit of America raised \$227,635, allowing thousands of students to return to school with new supplies.

Helping Syrian youth receive the educational opportunities they deserve is a top priority for deployed US troops. Not only will this effort significantly improve the outlook for their futures, but it will also make US troops safer, helping prevent further conflict in this fragile region.



"This is very useful work, helping children get back some semblance of a normal life and get back to school. This is what America should do, enable education and understanding."

Kenneth Johnson  
Bristol, VT



# Project Example: Niger

## HELPING US TROOPS PREVENT WAR IN WEST AFRICA

2017 marked the fourth year that Spirit of America has supported the Cure Salée, an annual festival that allows nomadic Fulani and Tuareg herders from across the Sahel to gather in Niger's Agadez region to water their herds and connect, celebrate, and socialize with one another.

This has provided a consistent and unique opportunity to engage this population and discuss important health and security concerns that impact multiple African nations. Each year, our support has evolved to build on previous successes and ensure that we are properly meeting the needs of the local population and the US mission. This year was no different. In 2017, Spirit of America spent over \$23,000 to provide support for additional livestock vaccinators, award new scholarships, and donate veterinary supplies.

Providing additional vaccinators to Niger's existing campaign extended the government's reach and increased the number of animals covered. The supported vaccinators, as in previous years, were all graduates of the SoA scholarship program, adding further value to the investment we previously made in these promising young men and women.



"With great passion, perseverance, and commitment, the Spirit of America team has consistently produced results. Results that matter. They have gained the respect and appreciation of our troops on the ground, their commanders, and many of the most distinguished people to ever serve our great nation."

General Stanley McChrystal  
US Army, Retired

# Project Example: Philippines

## HELPING US TROOPS STOP ISIS AND BRING PEACE

This year, Spirit of America provided critical support to the US military and their Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) partners working to stabilize the region against the threat of violent extremism in the Philippines.

The AFP has been engaged in fierce urban combat to retake the city of Marawi from ISIS-affiliated fighters who seized control in late-May. The battle was more intense and prolonged than expected, leading to higher casualties, depleting AFP medical supplies, and displacing more than 400,000 people.

Over the course of several weeks, Spirit of America was able to meet with US troops and Marines to discuss what critical needs had to be met. The organization provided a rapid response and contributed more than 800 sleeping mats and blankets for displaced families, in addition to much-needed medical supplies to address an urgent shortage at frontline AFP trauma centers.



"What better way to take care of our soldiers than by preventing conflict from breaking out in the first place? That's what makes me a believer in Spirit of America. They're working alongside our troops in some of the world's most challenging places, employing a preventive approach, helping solve little problems before they turn into big ones, and keeping our sons and daughters out of combat."

Brigadier General Donald Bolduc  
US Army, Retired

# Board of Directors

**Bob Oster**  
Chairman of the Board  
Former CFO, Oracle Corporation  
Independent Board Member since July 2017

**Jim Hake**  
CEO  
Spirit of America Board Member since 2004

**Fred Khosravi**  
Chairman and CEO, Ostial Corp.  
Independent Board Member since July 2017

**Michael Bigham**  
CEO Paratek Pharmaceuticals  
Independent Board Member since June 2014

**Don Karl**  
Partner, Perkins Coie  
Independent Board Member since April 2006

**James Papineau**  
CEO, Circuit Clinical  
Independent Board Member since March 2014



# Advisory Board Members

Hon. George P. Shultz  
Former US Secretary of State

General Phil Breedlove  
US Air Force, Retired

General Jack Keane  
US Army, Retired

Admiral Eric Olson  
US Navy, Retired

General Gordon Sullivan  
US Army, Retired  
CEO, Assoc. of the US Army

Richard Fontaine  
President  
CNAS

Lt. General Charles Cleveland  
US Army, Retired

Lt. General Ben Hodges  
US Army, Retired

Brig. General Donald Bolduc  
US Army, Retired

Dr. Kimberly Kagan  
President  
Institute for the Study of War

Clare Lockhart  
Co-Founder & Director  
Institute for State Effectiveness

Colonial David Maxwell  
US Army, Retired

Dr. John Nagl  
Senior Fellow  
Center for a New American Security

Colonel Chris Starling  
US Marine Corps, Retired

Linda Robinson  
Senior Intelligence Policy Analyst  
Rand Corporation

Wayne Zinn  
Chief of Staff  
Operation Blessing

Nicco Mele  
Director, Shorenstein Center  
Harvard University

Amb. Ronald E. Neumann  
President  
American Academy of Diplomacy

General James Jones  
US Marine Corps, Retired

General Stanley McChrystal  
US Army, Retired  
CEO, McChrystal Group

General Jay Paxton  
US Marine Corps, Retired

James Locher III  
Former President and CEO  
PNSR

Admiral Eric Olson  
US Navy, Retired

Commander Rorke Denver  
US Navy  
Founder, Ever Onward

Lt. General Dan "Fig" Leaf  
US Air Force, Retired

LTC Scott Mann  
US Army, Retired  
Founder, The Stability Institute

Dr. Kori Shake  
Deputy Director-General  
IISS

Paul Brinkley  
CEO & Co-Founder, Nawah

Rear Admiral Brian Losey  
US Navy, Retired

Colonel Stu Bradin  
US Army, Retired  
CEO, Global SOF Foundation

Michèle Flournoy  
Managing Director  
WestExec Advisors

Dr. James Jay Carafano  
Vice President, Heritage Foundation

Dr. David Kilcullen  
Founder and Chairman  
Caerus

