

Time to fly

20
ANNUAL REPORT
20

Our Mission

Wings of Hope changes and saves lives through the power of aviation.

OUR FOUR AREAS OF FOCUS



GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN NETWORK
Connecting communities with physical and digital runways



U.S. MEDICAL RELIEF & AIR TRANSPORT PROGRAM
Connecting people with transformative medical care



SOAR INTO STEM
Connecting students to STEM and aviation career paths



VOLUNTEERS
Connecting those who want to serve with our mission

From the Board Chairman

I have a confession. When I first started volunteering at Wings of Hope in 2014, I had a narrow view of our mission. Although our work was, and is, noble and provided great support to the people we flew, in my mind, Wings of Hope was essentially a transportation company — flying people from point A to point B to get them to the medical resources they needed.

I have learned a lot in the last seven years, and particularly in the past five that I have been involved on the Wings of Hope Board. Looking at our work through the lens of broader organizational strategies expanded my understanding of our mission. But, as much as we on the Wings of Hope Board strive to keep our focus on that big picture, it is easy to get swept up by the daily work of our volunteers and inspired by our patients.



In March 2020, when the pandemic put the brakes on our day-to-day work, it provided us the time and space to step back and assess our organization from a global vantage point.

From the board's perspective, the most valuable outcome of this forced pause

was the creation of board-led ad hoc committees to address challenges and opportunities in each of our core areas: Global Humanitarian Network, Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) Program, Soar into STEM and Volunteer Fulfillment. And they have already begun the work of transforming our vision for the future of Wings of Hope.

Our future-forward vision is one centered on expansion and connection. How do we expand our programs to help more people? How do we use new technologies, such as telehealth and drones, to connect with our in-country partners and reach more people in innovative ways? How do we take what we are learning in Colombia, Tanzania, Zambia, the United States — and everywhere else — and apply the best models from each to grow our reach globally? How do we create a model for service that is easy to replicate, scale and sustain?

Much like my move to the boardroom opened my eyes to the global mission of Wings of Hope, this past year provided us the breathing room to reimagine a future in which the reach of Wings of Hope extends far beyond the range of our airplanes.

Let's fly!

Donald T. Kukla
Board Chairman

From the President & CEO

I am happy to report that 2020 came and went, and Wings of Hope emerged stronger than ever.

The Covid-19 pandemic created an entirely new world of challenges for us. It forced us to pause our operations for a time. It restricted our ability to gather together for cherished social and fundraising events. It limited our in-person programming: We were especially disappointed to have to cancel Soar into STEM, where we invite students into our hangar to work on mission-bound aircraft.

But the restrictions also afforded us a newfound freedom to step back and reassess our programming and strategies, without the distractions of attending to the daily commitments that would usually fill our calendars and consume our focus.

So what did we do with this gift of quiet?

As the world ground to a halt, we went into high gear refreshing our strategic plan. We created four board-led ad hoc committees and charged them with taking a deep look at our mission-critical areas — Global Humanitarian Network, Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) Program, Soar into STEM and Volunteer Fulfillment — to see what's possible. When you bring together a diverse team of creative minds to focus on a specific issue, the results can be transformative. We're still in early days, but I expect great things. (See pages 3-4.)

As we reflected on our current state and recalibrated our aspirations for the future, we continued to fulfill our mission. We flew 162 patients to medical care through our MAT Program. We directly served more than 60,000 people through our partnerships around the globe. We reinvigorated our board with four new members whose energy, expertise and enthusiasm for our mission inspire me every day. We turned lemons into lemonade and redesigned our Soar into STEM program to be delivered virtually. Even as we return to an in-person offering, this new modality will allow us to reach more students — and more people in rural communities who could benefit from our MAT Program.

We raised critical funds to support our programming through a successful gala (right before the pandemic!), two sell-out airplane raffles and a record-setting annual appeal. Pandemic or no, the generosity of our supporters shows no bounds. I am deeply grateful.

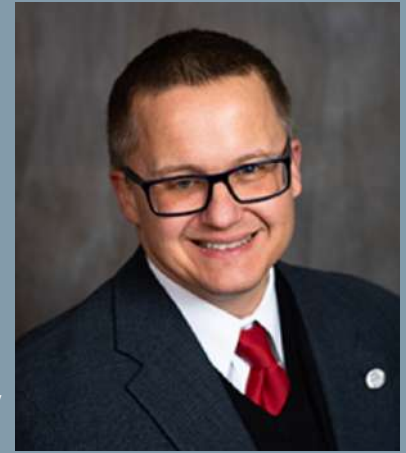
2020 was a year we will never forget.

When I reflect on what it means to Wings of Hope, I suspect we will look back on it years from now as a milestone moment when we built the runway for our future growth.

In service,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Bret". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Bret Heinrich
President & CEO



LEADING OUR EXPANSION INTO THE FUTURE

In 2020, we created four board-led ad hoc committees to identify the challenges and opportunities for expansion of the following mission-critical areas.

Global Humanitarian Network

“What is the Wings of Hope Global Humanitarian Network? It’s having the capabilities to physically and digitally connect with our communities and our partners so that we can continue to strengthen the work that we’re doing.”

When you ask Manish Kohli, the board director leading our Global Humanitarian Network ad hoc committee, to describe his vision of Wings of Hope at the center of a global humanitarian network he first acknowledges our aviation roots.

“Our planes give us the reach into some of the most vulnerable populations — that’s what sets us apart.”

But he lights up as he talks about how much more impact Wings of Hope can have by building a digital infrastructure and leveraging in-country partnerships to mobilize our combined resources and volunteers toward sustainable community development.

“We begin by expanding our aviation-based intervention but then connect it to a digital runway which is anchored by telehealth and remote patient monitoring and tele-education — really being able to provide geographically distributed, digitally connected care to the communities,” he says.

Manish gives an example of how technology can bridge the care gap for people in remote communities by pairing up community health workers with skilled medical professionals who are half a world away.

“So a community health worker is taking care of a pregnant woman experiencing a complicated delivery,” he says. “We give them the digital tools. We give them guidelines and education, but we also give them an expert whom they can reach out to — a backbone that’s actually reviewing the standard of care and there to say, ‘This looks like a serious situation; we need to send in a medevac to get her to a tertiary care hospital.’”

“We will go into the communities, absolutely, when we need to, but we can continue to serve communities even though we may be in a different location.”



Board Director Manish Kohli leads the Global Humanitarian Network ad hoc committee.

Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) Program

“As much as Covid has been a curse to many, I think it’s also been a blessing because it’s causing many to think differently — not only personally but businesswise.”

When it comes to the MAT Program, the focus is expansion — of awareness, geographic reach and volunteer recruitment.

“We are looking to expand our reach to get our message out to more rural communities that need this type of assistance,” says Board Director Rich Ropp, who leads the MAT Program ad hoc committee.

A key audience is medical professionals who can refer our service to patients we can help.

“We’ve added a larger aircraft, the Navajo, which now takes us out to about a 900-mile radius,” Rich adds. “And we will continue to seek ways to broaden that reach whether that be through bigger aircraft or even types of aircraft, turbine or jet engine.”

The committee is even exploring the feasibility of new Wings of Hope outposts, possibly on the west coast.

“That’s where a lot of our requests come from but we don’t have the range to facilitate that,” Rich says. “There could be a partnership waiting out there.”

And, finally, the committee is looking at new ways to recruit volunteers, especially pilots and mechanics — the linchpin of our MAT Program operations.

“The world is seeing one of the greatest pilot shortages ever,” says Rich, “and that drills all the way down to mechanics and even professional staff that are experienced in aviation.”

Reflecting on the past year, Rich says the time it afforded the board to reflect on the future of the organization “has really set the stage, almost like a catapult launch off a carrier.”

“I feel like we’ve got a tremendous amount of momentum.”



Board Director Rich Ropp leads the MAT Program ad hoc committee.

Global Humanitarian Network

Medical Relief & Air Transport

Soar Into STEM

Soar into STEM

“Soar into STEM can help both the MAT mission and the overall Wings of Hope mission.”

“The pandemic forced this mass shift in how the organization operated, including the Soar into STEM program,” says Cameron Conway, the board director who leads our ad hoc Soar into STEM committee. “From this really wonderful hands-on experience in the hangar where these kids got to learn about aviation in close proximity to real planes, we shifted to this virtual format which we’re going to debut in the summer of 2021.”

Cancelling the in-person program was disappointing, but it did produce a happy benefit.

“Virtual allows us to dramatically increase the reach of the program,” says Cameron.

A virtual offering can also be a vehicle for building awareness about our mission and our MAT Program in distant communities.

“Think about a rural school district that might not have the resources to give this type of STEM education to their kids that also happens to be an area that’s hours away from health care that families need,” Cameron explains.

As we head into the 2021-22 school year, the committee is considering how to deliver the program going forward: in-person in some places and virtually in others? Hybrid, with parts of the program delivered in person and some virtually?

“Also how do we think about the program longitudinally?” says Cameron.

“We need to continually think about how we are providing material after they finish the program,” he says. “How do we create opportunities for them to continue to learn — whether that be at the technical school level or the collegiate level? How do we help remove barriers to that learning? Can we identify scholarships?”



Board Director Cameron Conway leads the Soar into STEM ad hoc committee.

Volunteer Fulfillment

Volunteer Fulfillment

“Volunteers are really the lifeblood of Wings of Hope.”

As the leader of the ad-hoc Volunteer Fulfillment committee, Board Director Adam Kruger recognizes that when it comes to improving volunteer recruitment and placement at Wings of Hope the bar is already high.

“It’s tough because Wings of Hope has a staff that’s already doing so much, and volunteers are generally very happy. So we’re trying to make something that’s working better.”

But because our more than 275 active volunteers manage so many core aspects of our operations, recruiting more — and more skilled — volunteers is mission critical.

“We have such a unique organization that achieves a very complicated safety-oriented technical mission, primarily from a volunteer base — including pilots and people in the hangar,” says Adam.

The committee is exploring new ways to bring in more volunteers and find rewarding work for general volunteers.

“If somebody wants to volunteer but they don’t have specific skills or wants to volunteer at Wings of Hope outside of their specific skillset — maybe an accountant who doesn’t want to crunch numbers — how can we improve what’s already working pretty well?”

“Another opportunity,” says Adam, “is to try to tap into the corporate world and spread the word of Wings of Hope to find anyone who is looking for volunteer opportunities.”

“Widening our volunteer recruitment net could also provide us a benefit in diversity,” he says.

“Corporations are very competitive in trying to make a great workplace through employee happiness and work-life balance. They’re often trying to find ways to connect people with their communities,” he adds.



Board Director Adam Kruger leads the Volunteer Fulfillment ad hoc committee.

GLOBAL *Humanitarian Network*

Wings of Hope is building a global humanitarian network: an ecosystem that connects health care workers and their patients in developing countries with lifesaving medical support and supplies using airplanes, a telehealth network that uses text messaging to support communication and other tools. We are physically and digitally connecting our people, processes, technology and funding — mobilizing our combined resources — to strengthen the work we are doing in each and every community.

In 2020, we directly served 60,136 people in 8 countries.

MODEL FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

Patrulla Aérea Civil, Colombia

Our partner with the largest operations, Patrulla Aérea Civil in Colombia, offers basic medical attention to impoverished communities through three-day monthly brigades. They use airplanes to fly medical equipment and doctors into communities to provide preventive care, perform surgeries and save lives. Wings of Hope is working with Patrulla to establish a virtual maternal health care program which includes telehealth and remote patient monitoring to improve maternal mortality rates on the Pacific Coast.



SPOTLIGHT ECUADOR: **Two Lives Saved in One Day**

On Aug. 31, 2020, Alas de Socorro Ecuador (ADSE) was preparing to fly a pregnant woman with complications from Nuevo Corrientes, a 43-minute flight from ADSE's base in Shell, to the hospital in Puyo when they received an emergency call from Bufeo. A young woman had been bitten by a snake and desperately needed anti-venom serum. So the pilots removed some seats from the plane cabin to make room for the second patient.

They first picked up the pregnant woman in Nuevo Corrientes, and then made the 10-minute flight to pick up the snake-bite victim. After a smooth landing in Shell, the pilots discovered only one of the two ambulances they had requested waiting. So they loaded the pregnant woman in her ambulance. After 50 minutes, when they could no longer safely wait for the second ambulance to arrive, they loaded the snake-bite victim into their own van on a makeshift stretcher — and sped to the hospital. Reflecting on this typical day of flying for ADSE, the pilot said: "The satisfaction of duty fulfilled is unparalleled. In retrospect, there is nothing in the world like the joy of putting my gifts and talents at the service of God, and being able to serve others alongside my faithful steed, my airplane."





Tanzania



Papua New Guinea

Our Partners

BELIZE

Belize Emergency Response Team (BERT) provides nationwide medical air evacuation coverage using a Piper Cherokee supplied by Wings of Hope. **BERT flew 350 patients in 2020.**

CAMBODIA

John Givonetti Giving (JGG) runs an English language, peer-tutoring program. **In 2020, JGG served 372 students.**

COLOMBIA

Patrulla Aérea Civil provides monthly medical and humanitarian brigades. **In 2020, Patrulla completed 18 brigades serving 10,916 patients.**

ECUADOR

Alas de Socorro Ecuador (ADSE) provides free medical evacuations and medical brigades to eight indigenous communities in the Ecuadorian Amazon territory. **In 2020, ADSE directly served 351 people.**

PARAGUAY

Iglesia Centro Cristiano Siloh serves 18 indigenous communities using a Wings of Hope-provided Cessna 182. **In 2020, eight flights and 15 trips by land provided medical and dental care, and food, agricultural assistance and education to 4,115 people.**

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Using two floatplanes, Samaritan Aviation serves a region of 220,000 people. **In 2020, 22 nurses attended a weeklong training session, and the organization completed 218 flights — directly serving 3,700 people.**

TANZANIA

Flying Medical Service (FMS) brings health care and medical evacuation to 25 Maasai settlements with a population of roughly 189,800. **In 2020, FMS treated 36,327 patients, vaccinating 23,722 children and providing pre-natal exams to 5,395 women.**

ZAMBIA

FlySpec is the only orthopedic and reconstructive surgery service providing free care via airplane to remote parts of Zambia. **In 2020, FlySpec treated 4,005 patients.**

MAT Program

Our Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) Program flies people in the United States, free of charge, to health care resources not available to them locally. Flying our own aircraft, our crew of volunteer pilots transports patients to hospitals and medical facilities within a 900-mile radius of our St. Louis headquarters.

In 2020, we flew 169 individuals to transformative medical care.

ABOVE: Wings of Hope volunteer, Ruthie Martin, hugs 9-year old Elizabeth before she boards her flight home. Over the past four years, we have flown Elizabeth from central Kansas to St. Louis Shriners Hospital more than four dozen times. In that time, she has progressed from not being able to walk at all to walking with a walker — and now arm crutches. Doctors say Elizabeth is well on her way to walking independently, but Elizabeth says she's ready to run!

"If we didn't make that call to get the transportation we needed to get to where we need to be, I felt like Elizabeth was going to be wheelchair bound. And it broke my heart because I knew she deserves better. We want the best for our children and to have a healthy and happy life. ... If it wasn't for Wings of Hope, Elizabeth wouldn't have the outcome that she has now."

— Pat, Elizabeth's aunt



Phil Koch, left, has been a volunteer pilot for Wings of Hope for 15 years.

"Wings of Hope means a lot to me. It's an organization that defines who I am. I can't be the person I am without Wings of Hope ... just like Wings of Hope can't fulfill its mission without the hundreds of volunteers that we have." — Phil Koch, volunteer MAT pilot

Wings of Hope flies Cortney, right, from St. Louis to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, every three months for treatment of inoperable brain cancer. Her most recent visit showed clear scans, so she and her husband have the green light to start a family.

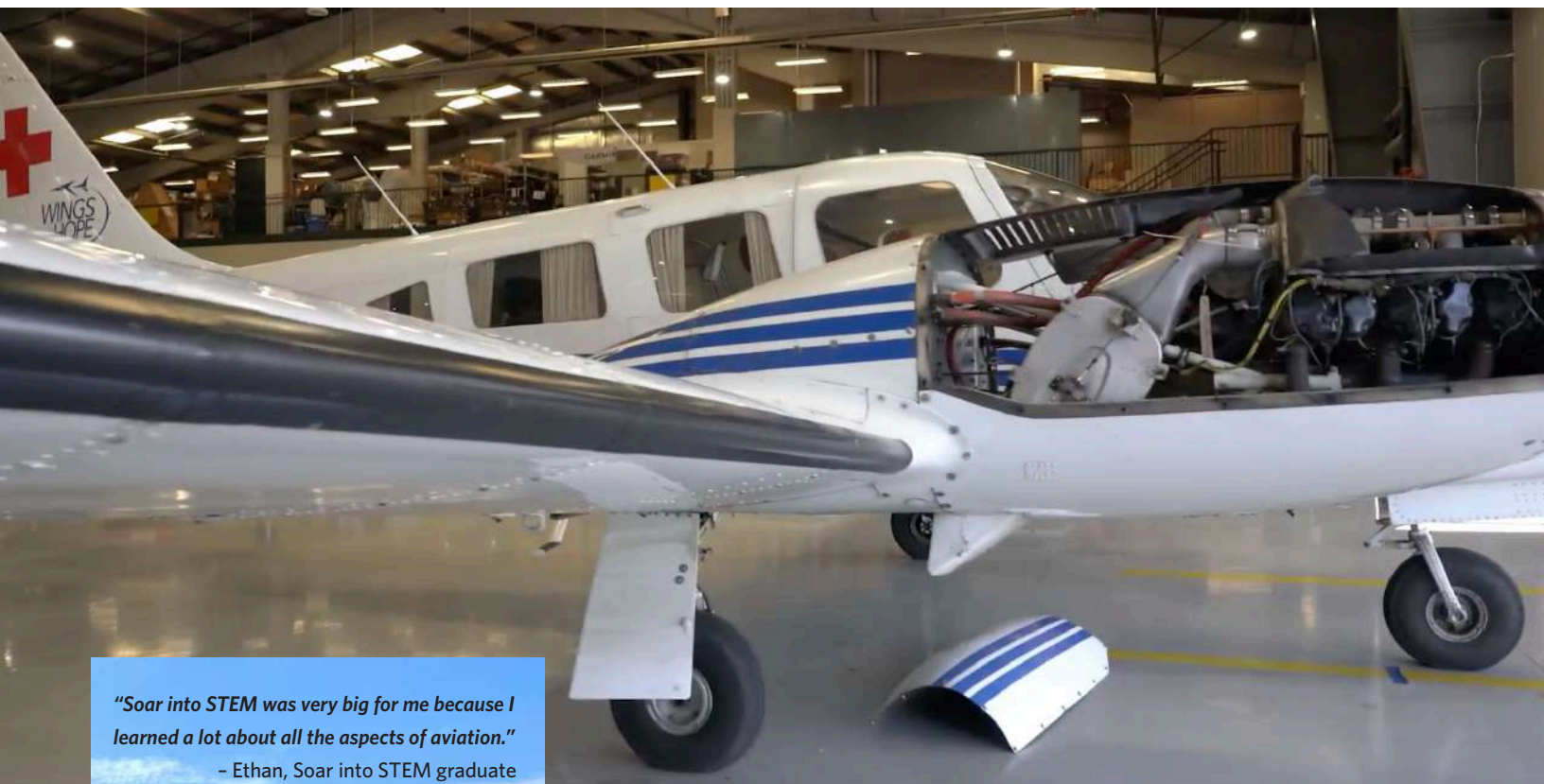
"I think sometimes people forget all of the expenses that come with being sick. It is thousands of dollars to be sick. It is thousands of dollars to have cancer. But because of Wings of Hope we do not have to pay for what could also be an extremely expensive part of our journey. ... I wouldn't be able to continue to go to the Mayo Clinic if it wasn't for Wings of Hope."



Soar Into STEM

VIRTUAL REDESIGN EXTENDS FUTURE REACH

When we canceled our in-person Soar into STEM in 2020 due to the pandemic, our programming team didn't take the year off. They got creative reimagining how a hands-on learning experience designed to expose middle and high school students to STEM and aviation careers — and their connection to our mission — could work without the students being physically together in our hangar. The result? We designed an engaging virtual Soar into STEM program with some hands-on experiences that students can work on wherever their location. We will deliver this virtual format in the summer of 2021. Even when we return to in-person programming, we are excited about the possibilities this new virtual option offers in extending our reach to students in rural and distant school districts.



"Soar into STEM was very big for me because I learned a lot about all the aspects of aviation."

- Ethan, Soar into STEM graduate



A DREAM IN THE MAKING

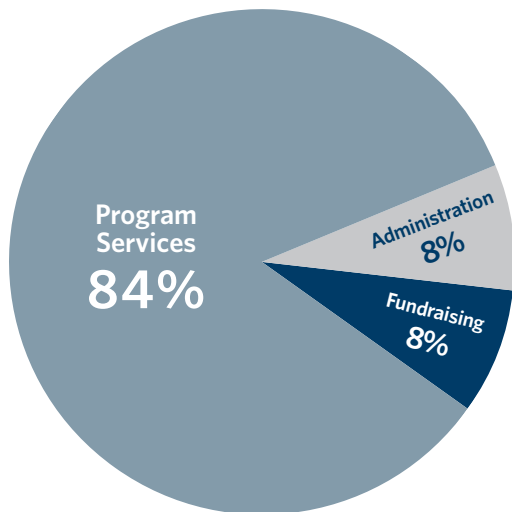
On Aug. 31, 2020, Ethan Peterson, a junior at Kirkwood High School in suburban St. Louis, made his first solo flight. Ethan's journey to earning his wings began in April 2019 when he was one of 20 students to participate in the pilot session of our Soar into STEM program. In 2020, Ethan was one of 80 students nationwide selected for the competitive AOPA student flight training scholarship which paid for his flight lessons.

"I don't think I would be nearly as interested in flight and aviation if it wasn't for the Wings of Hope programs," Ethan wrote in a note thanking Wings of Hope President and CEO Bret Heinrich for recommending him for the scholarship.

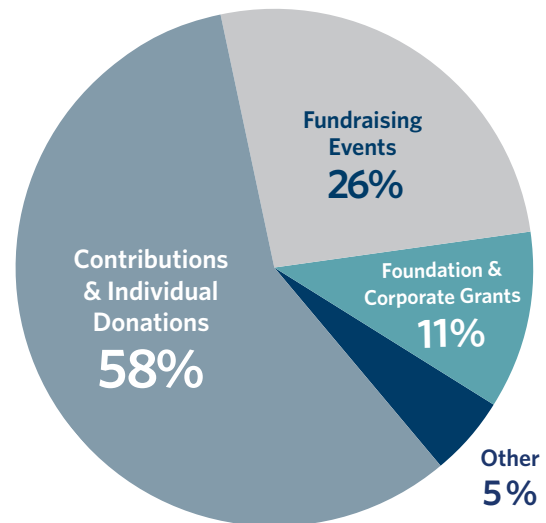
Ethan said the hands-on aspect of Soar into STEM made learning fun: "Learning about planes meant doing maintenance on them, going up in the air traffic control tower and being in the cockpit. Even interacting with a small plane like a Cessna is infinitely more interesting than reading about the newest NASA mission."

2020 *Financials*

Expenses



Income



Our 2020 990 and audited financials can be found on our website, www.wingsofhope.ngo.



As the world found itself in the throes of a global pandemic, Wings of Hope's young professionals' group — the Young Ambassadors — could have easily followed the lead of many and simply canceled their annual Taste of Hope fundraiser. But as a credit to their creativity and energy, they redesigned what had been a gathering of 300 inside the Wings of Hope hangar into a caravan of cars winding through the Wings of Hope parking lot to say hello to volunteers, vendors and staff on their way to picking up gourmet carryout cuisine. Not only was Taste of Hope Drive-Thru a success but, much to everyone's surprise, it set a new fundraising record — raising more than \$30,000 through sponsorships and ticket sales. The bulk of the event's proceeds were directed to supporting medevac operations and medical brigades serving communities in Papua New Guinea and Colombia.



2020 GALA: FORTUNATE TIMING ADDS SIGNIFICANCE TO ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

With a record 475 guests and \$417,472 raised, Wings of Hope's 2020 gala was a triumph. Our biggest annual fundraising event is the culmination of months of planning and the tireless work of dozens of staff and volunteers. In hindsight, however, perhaps the greatest factor in the fête's success was its fortuitous timing: Feb. 8, 2020. It took place about a month before the global pandemic shut down most in-person events.

AIRPLANE RAFFLE CONTINUES SELL-OUT STREAK

In a year of uncertainty, the success of our two annual airplane raffles left no doubt about the popularity of these important Wings of Hope fundraisers. Both our spring and fall airplane raffles sold out in a matter of hours, raising a combined total of more than \$600,000 to support the Wings of Hope MAT Program.

"Our airplane raffles are always very popular, but we were a little anxious about how this one would fly given the uncertainty surrounding the current pandemic," said Wings of Hope Director of Development Amy Buehler after the spring raffle sold out all 5,000 tickets. "We were overwhelmed with the phenomenal response — and so grateful for this important source of financial support."



Melissa Smith (right), winner of our fall 2020 airplane raffle, stands in front of her new Beechcraft Musketeer Super III. Also pictured (left to right) are Grant Ross, Rachel Smith and Warren Smith.



PLANE FROM INAUGURAL SOAR INTO STEM PROGRAM HEADS TO PARAGUAY

On Jan. 23, 2020, Wings of Hope staff and volunteers gathered in our hangar to bless the Cessna 182 students had worked on as part of our spring 2019 Soar into STEM program.

Following the ceremony, the plane departed for its new mission providing medical and humanitarian assistance to 18 indigenous communities in rural northeast Paraguay.

**We are happy to recognize donors who support Wings of Hope
with their generous gifts of \$100 or greater.**

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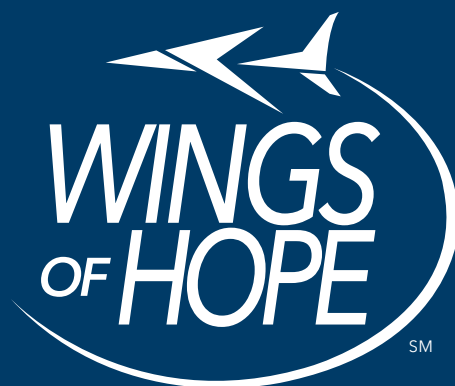
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