

## 2020-2021 Annual Evaluation

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Prepared by:  
Nash & Associates,  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**zero8hundred** has been providing support for Transitioning Service Members and their families since 2015 by proactively linking them to a broad range of resources and opportunities, helping them successfully transition to civilian life in San Diego County (and more recently Orange, Riverside, and Imperial Counties). **zero8hundred** was created in 2014 as a fiscally sponsored organization by a cross-sector collaborative in San Diego County to serve the needs of transitioning service members and their families. In 2018, **zero8hundred** became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

**zero8hundred** was predicated on the belief that support up to nine months before and 12 months after separation is key to the successful transition from active duty to civilian life for military families. Resource Specialists use the veteran's wellness model, to focus support for TSMs on employment, education, basic needs, physical/mental health, and social/personal connection. A unique distinction of **zero8hundred** is its use of Resource Specialists who have both lived experience in the military and are trained in social work/counseling.

Evaluation has been built into the **zero8hundred** model since its inception. Since its initial two-year pilot program began in January 2015, data has been collected to evaluate the intended outcomes of **zero8hundred**. **zero8hundred** outcomes are primarily measured through a series of surveys administered at intake (baseline/pre-survey), at the time of separation (midpoint survey), 12 months post separation (post survey), and the recently added alumni survey administered 24 months post separation, as well as observations and interviews. Evaluations of the **zero8hundred** program have shown it has been successful in helping TSMs and their families navigate the transition from military to civilian life. This report summarizes data collected from inception through March 2021. In March 2020, changes were made to discontinue the use of the midpoint survey and include a new Alumni survey to further understand the outcomes of the program 24 months post separation.

**"They impacted my life dramatically. It was hard transitioning as a single mother. They offered me education, housing, interim assistance, employment assistance. I'm at where I'm at because of them."**

**- TSM<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup>All quotes in the report are responses from TSMs from surveys or interactions with their Resource Specialist.

**zero8hundred** has positively impacted the transition of TSMs who enrolled in the program and interacted with a Resource Specialist in San Diego and its neighboring counties (Orange, Riverside, and Imperial). TSMs who responded to the Post and Alumni Survey showed the long-lasting impact of their support from **zero8hundred** from higher levels of employment to a greater integration into the civilian community. Results of the program have remained consistent throughout the past 6 ½ years. Some of these results include:

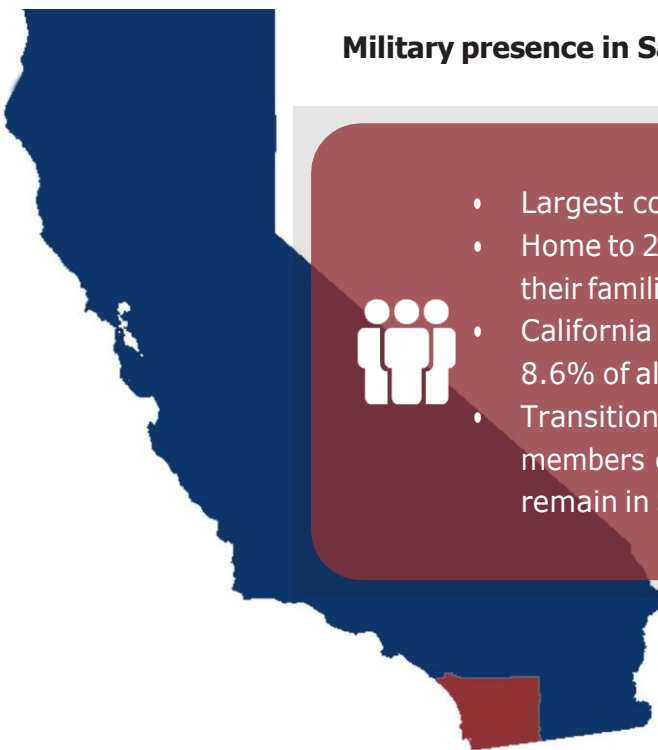
- 4602 TSMs have enrolled in the **zero8hundred** program
- Over two-thirds of TSM had met their initial stated goals
- Sense of belonging to the civilian community rises over time
- Employment increased and the number of TSMs who were unemployed and looking for a job decreased over time
- Satisfaction with the program and Resource Specialists remain high
- Stress decreases for TSMs as they move from intake to 24 months post separation



**"They never gave up on me and they stuck with me until I was ready to be on my own."**

## SAN DIEGO: HOMEPORT TO ZERO8HUNDRED

The military has maintained a large presence in San Diego since 1846<sup>1</sup>. Due to its presence, San Diego has been known as a “military town” and therefore, was the ideal location to create a program to support Transitioning Service Members (TSMs) and their families as they navigate their transition from military to civilian life. Since its inception, **zero8hundred** has expanded to serve TSMs beyond San Diego County. Some highlights of the military presence in the area are summarized below.



### Military presence in San Diego



- Largest concentration of military in the world<sup>2</sup>
- Home to 207,000+ active duty service members and their families + 57,121 Selected Reserve members<sup>3</sup>
- California has the largest veteran population<sup>4</sup>, home to 8.6% of all veterans<sup>5</sup>
- Transitions an estimated 20,000 active duty service members each year to civilian life, of whom nearly 1/3 remain in San Diego<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.sdmac.org/media/uploads/Meis/2019\\_meis\\_full\\_study.pdf](https://www.sdmac.org/media/uploads/Meis/2019_meis_full_study.pdf)

<sup>3</sup><https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2019-demographics-report.pdf>

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran\\_population.asp](https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp)

<sup>5</sup><https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sandiegocountycalifornia/VET605217#VET605217>

<sup>6</sup>Hunt, K.D. & Schumann, M.J. (2017). Continuing the promise of a new day: Support for service members transitioning to civilian life in San Diego. The first two years. San Diego, CA: Caster Family Center for Nonprofit and Philanthropic Research, University of San Diego.

## BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

### THE FIRST YEARS

**zero8hundred** was formed as a fiscally sponsored program in 2014, through the work of a cross-sector collaborative group of community members throughout San Diego County. **zero8hundred** was formed to help transitioning service members and their families navigate the plethora of services available throughout San Diego County.

After the initial pilot phase of the program, **zero8hundred** was expanded to serve Transitioning Service Members (TSMs)<sup>7</sup> beyond San Diego County to include the neighboring counties of Imperial, Orange and Riverside.

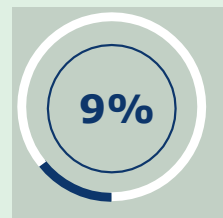
The founding model of **zero8hundred** was based on the veteran wellness model consisting of five main pillars: **Employment, Education, Basic Needs, Physical & Mental Health, and Social/Community Connections.**

**Employment and Education** have remained as the **top needs** for Transitioning Service Members since the inception of the program.

### How zero8hundred Works

**zero8hundred** is a resource hub that utilizes Resource Specialists (RS)<sup>8</sup> to connect Transitioning Service Members to services and resources. Resource Specialists have both social work education and lived military experience as a veteran, active duty service member or a spouse or dependent which is unique and valuable in the military-connected space.

#### Top needs for TSMs



<sup>7</sup>Transitioning Service Members (TSM) were referred to as Veteran (or spouse) in Process (VIP) until 2020 based on a Facebook poll conducted by staff.

<sup>8</sup>Resource Specialists (RS) were referred to as Peer Navigators (PN) in the first four years of the program.



**zero8hundred** derives its name from the daily military ritual of raising the American flag at 0800 hours (8:00 AM). This ritual is a signal to the military community that a new day of work has begun.

For those transitioning to civilian life, **zero8hundred** serves as a signal that the promise of a new day has begun.

## Programs

Currently, **zero8hundred** includes four distinct programs: **Traditional**, **Global**, **SoCal** and **Vets Thrive**. Each of these programs focuses on a different population of TSMs.

Program	Who is eligible	Services offered
<b>Traditional</b>	Anyone separating in SoCal and staying in SoCal	Peer counseling & resource referral support for 12 months prior to discharge and up to 12 months post discharge
<b>Global</b>	Anyone separating in SoCal and going anywhere else	Peer counseling & resource referral support for 12 months prior to discharge until they leave Southern California
<b>SoCal</b>	Anyone separating from anywhere in the world and coming back to SoCal	Peer counseling & resource referral support for 12 months prior to discharge and up to 12 months post discharge
<b>Vets Thrive</b>	Anyone separating from anywhere in the world and coming back to SoCal but who choose to self-navigate their transition	Self-navigation platform for those that want to more independently maneuver their transition journey <b>[Launching Spring 2021]</b>

**“The specialist was amazing. She gave me so much help in the transition phase. It was a really big help at the critical time to do it.”**

TSMs learn about **zero8hundred** through on-base transition courses, on-base job and information fairs, spouse transition courses, and community outreach. Following these presentations and introductions, those who will be remaining in or moving to San Diego, Imperial, Orange and Riverside Counties are encouraged to enroll in **zero8hundred** and connect with a RS to help ease the transition process.

### **zero8hundred: Growth & Change**

**zero8hundred** grew far beyond the original expectations exceeding goals set for the first two years of the program within the first year. **zero8hundred** was presented to 4787 individuals and had enrolled 493 TSMs by the end of the first year, far exceeding its original goals of exposure to at least 3000 individuals by the end of year one and enrollment of 300 by the end of year two. At the end of the initial two-year pilot program, **zero8hundred** had demonstrated TSMs who utilized **zero8hundred**, and particularly those who worked with a RS, are very satisfied and move in a positive direction as they navigate their future. As of March 31, 2021 **zero8hundred** has enrolled 4602 TSMs since it first opened its doors in January 2015.



2017 was a year of changes for **zero8hundred** including a change of leadership and expansion of its reach beyond San Diego County. TSMs from neighboring counties including Orange, Imperial and Riverside Counties are eligible to enroll into **zero8hundred**. In addition, **zero8hundred** currently supports reservists, veterans in addition to those who are recently transitioning from active duty. In 2018, **zero8hundred** transitioned from a fiscally sponsored nonprofit organization to become an independent 501(c)3 organization, underwent a website redesign and moved its client management system to Salesforce.

In 2019, the stand-alone pre-survey was integrated into the intake form within Salesforce and the program was expanded to include reservists as well as transitioning service members who were returning to San Diego and its neighboring counties. Additionally, 2019 was the last year the midpoint survey was used in order to create a new survey for those who had separated 24 months or more from active duty. Along with the rest of the world, **zero8hundred** was also impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

**“It was good having someone to talk to weekly. I would talk to that person, they would check up on me and I could relay what was going on at that time. It was really good and the transition was smoother.”**



## Impact of COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 was felt throughout the world and **zero8hundred** was no exception to its effects. During the pandemic, all in-person transitioning courses and outreach were canceled which severely limited the number of TSMs who enrolled in **zero8hundred**. Due to a decrease in enrollment as well as available funding, **zero8hundred** made the following changes to staff and outreach efforts:

### ► Staff changes

- One Resource Specialist (RS) and one Development and Outreach Coordinator were furloughed
- One Resource Specialist remained on full-time status to keep the internship program intact
- All remaining Resource Specialists, the Program Director, Human Resources Director, and the CEO were placed on part-time status in 2020
- The CEO and Human Resources Director were brought back full-time in 2021
- The Program Director remained part time through 2021
- The CEO transitioned out in January 2021 and **zero8hundred** was placed under the direction of an interim CEO appointed by the Board of Directors throughout the first half of 2021
- The Advisory Committee was put on hold, discussions are currently underway for restarting
- Enrollment averages dropped from 20-40 per week to eight per week

## EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Third-party evaluation was built into the two-year pilot program and as a result, before they opened their doors, **zero8hundred** had commissioned The Nonprofit Institute's Caster Family Center for Nonprofit and Philanthropic Research (Caster Center) at the University of San Diego to conduct a third-party evaluation of the pilot program. This was followed by continued evaluation of Years 3 and 4 by the Caster Center. In Year 5, **zero8hundred** contracted with Point Loma Nazarene University to conduct a one-year evaluation and in year 6, they contracted with Nash and Associates to create a new survey for alumni 24 months post separation, reduce the length of the Post Survey and create a new logic model. Additionally, Nash & Associates oversaw the administration of surveys and supported staff in the creation of a shorter and more stream-lined, yearly report.

### zero8hundred Timeline of Evaluation

#### Years 1 and 2

Pilot program evaluation begins by Caster Center, University of San Diego.

Jan. 2015-Dec. 2016

#### Years 3 and 4

Extension of evaluation by Caster Center

Jan. 2017 - Dec. 2018

#### Year 5

One year evaluation contract with Point Loma Nazarene University

Jan. 2019 - Dec. 2019

#### Year 6

Contracted with Nash and Associates. New alumni survey launched and new logic model introduced.

Jan. 2020 - Mar. 2021

## Evaluation Data Collection Tools

A full list and description of the data collection tools can be found in **Appendix B**. For purposes of this report, the majority of the data analyzed was collected from the following data sources:

### TSM Surveys Collected

#### Baseline (i.e. pre) Survey

- Administered during first contact with a TSM
- Significantly reduced in scope in 2019
- Integrated into the intake process within Salesforce

#### Midpoint Survey

- Discontinued 2020

#### Post Survey

- Administered 12 months post separation

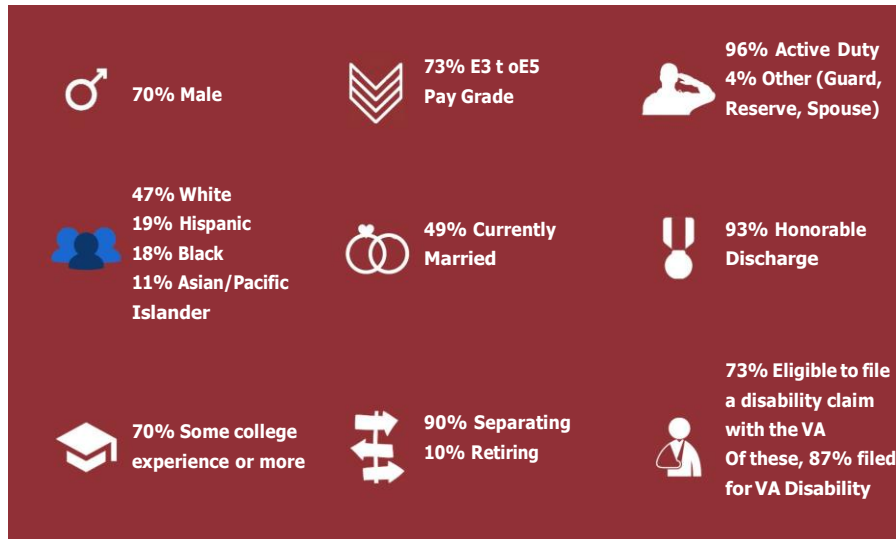
#### Alumni Survey

- Administered 24 months post separation

## Who are zero8hundred Transitioning Service Members

TSMs include a diverse group of individuals. However, the majority are male, E5 and below separating (vs. retiring), and received an honorable discharge. Below is a demographic profile of TSMs who enrolled in **zero8hundred** since the beginning of the program.

### Demographic Profile of TSMs:



### TSMs by Branch



## FROM INTAKE TO TWO YEARS POST SEPARATION

Since the first evaluation of **zero8hundred**, Transitioning Service Members (TSMs) have been asked at intake about their levels of stress, their connection to both the civilian and military communities as well as their overall feelings about navigating their future and separation from active duty. The data collected at intake has been reduced over the past three years to lessen survey fatigue for TSMs. Surveys taken at 12 (Post Survey) and 24 months (Alumni Survey) post separation provide an opportunity for **zero8hundred** to check in with TSMs about their initial thoughts on transition. In addition, the Post and Alumni Surveys ask about employment and TSM overall satisfaction with the **zero8hundred** program, Resource Specialists, and resources they have been referred to. Overall, TSMs have reported feeling a greater connection to the civilian community and an increase in employment and positive feelings as they navigated their transition with **zero8hundred**. TSMs also report a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of **zero8hundred**.

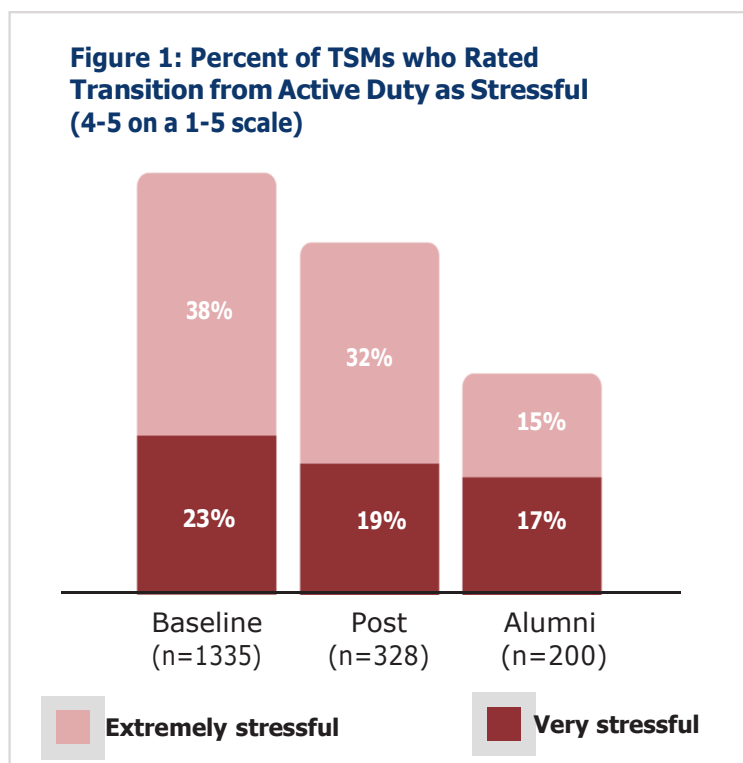
**“Thank you for checking in, I appreciate you being there for us service members during this time, I look forward to hearing from you next month.”**

### Feelings About Transition

TSMs are asked during intake about their feelings of navigating their transition. Throughout their time with **zero8hundred**, these feelings were reassessed at 12 months and 24 months post separation using the Post and Alumni Surveys<sup>11</sup>. Overall, positive feelings about transition increased while negative feelings decreased.

### Stress

**Figure 1** shows the stress level of TSMs from the time they enrolled into **zero8hundred** through to 24 months post separation. As time passed, the overall level of stress for TSMs declined.



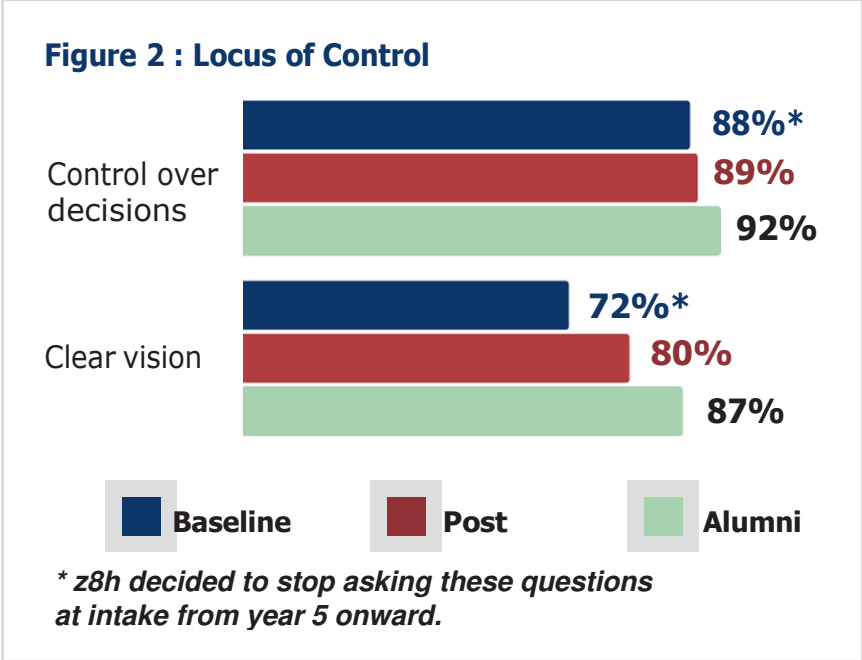
<sup>11</sup> In Year 5, many of the initial questions regarding TSMs feelings about transition were taken out when the pre-survey was reduced in scope and added to Salesforce as a part of the intake form.



The **stress** of transition **decreased** from **61%** at baseline to **32%** at the alumni survey.

### Locus of Control Measures

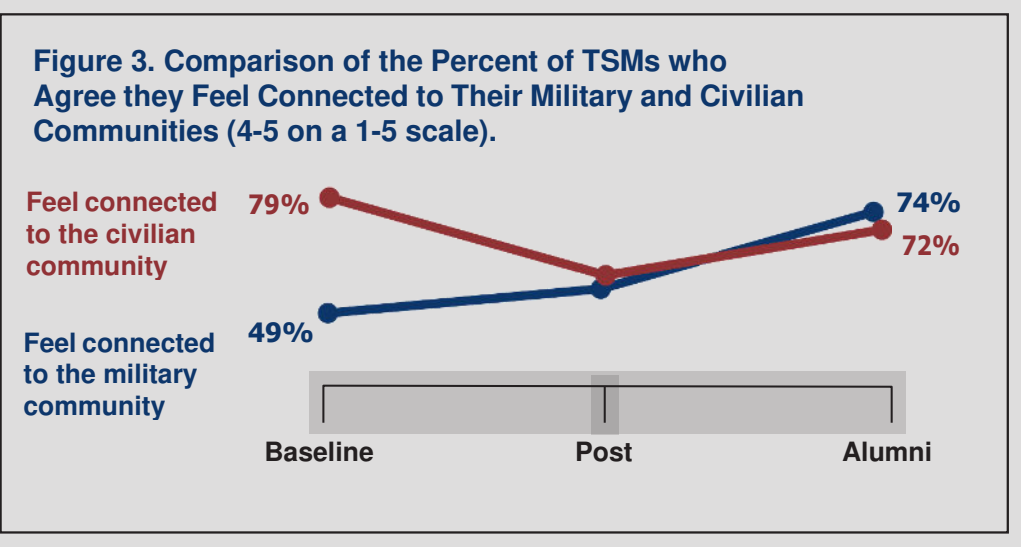
TSMs are also asked about their feelings of control over their decisions and if they have a clear vision of their future. These two questions which are asked during intake and in the Post and Alumni Surveys, measure locus of control. **Figure 2** illustrates that locus of control measures (control over decisions and clear vision) begin high yet increase over time from baseline to 24 months post separation.



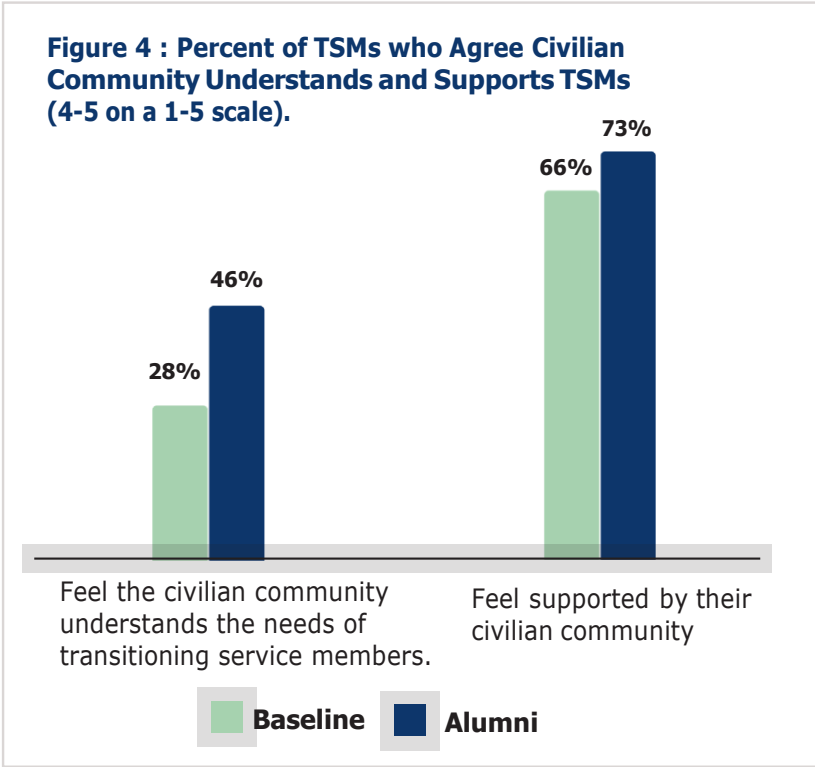
**“Very informative and helpful, I would recommend [zero8hundred] to any Marine or sailor getting out. It can be lonely first getting out and having the support was very helpful.”**

### Transition to the Civilian Community

TSMs reported a stronger connection to the civilian community as they moved through their transition (see **Figure 3**).



Although TSMs feel their civilian community does not understand the needs of transitioning service members, they report feeling their civilian community supports them (see **Figure 4**).



**“They never gave up on me and they stuck with me until I was ready to be on my own.”**

Additionally, as **Figure 5** shows, TSMs reported they had become involved in their community in multiple ways 24 months post separation.



**Figure 5: Community Involvement - TSMs who report they became involved in their civilian community:**

- ✓ **40% Joined a local organization**
- ✓ **40% Volunteered**
- ✓ **56% Began a new activity in the local community**

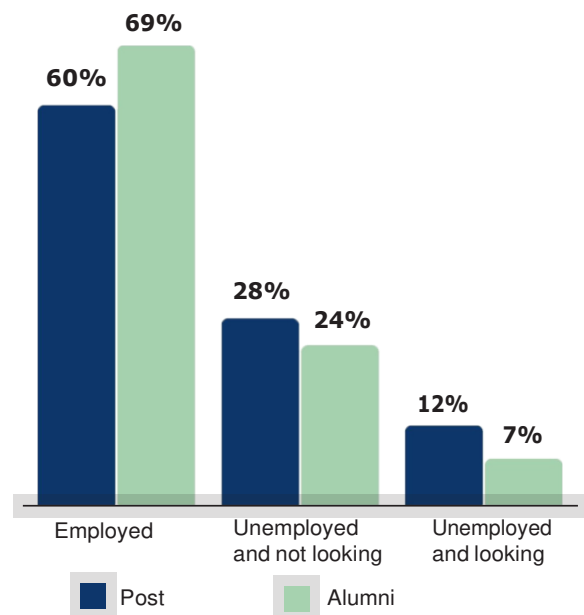
**“They really made an effort to make sure I was taken care of and I knew they could help if I wasn’t.”**

## Employment

As **Figure 6** shows, more TSMs were employed at 24 months post separation (69%) than 12 months after separation (67%). Over half (53%) of respondents to the Post survey stated they had remained with their first job 12 months after transitioning and 37% stated they had remained in their first job 24 months after transitioning.

**53%** of employed TSMs reported they were still in the first job obtained 12 months after transitioning and **37%** were in their first job 24 months after transitioning

**Figure 6 : Overall Employment (Post n=312; Alumni n=200)**

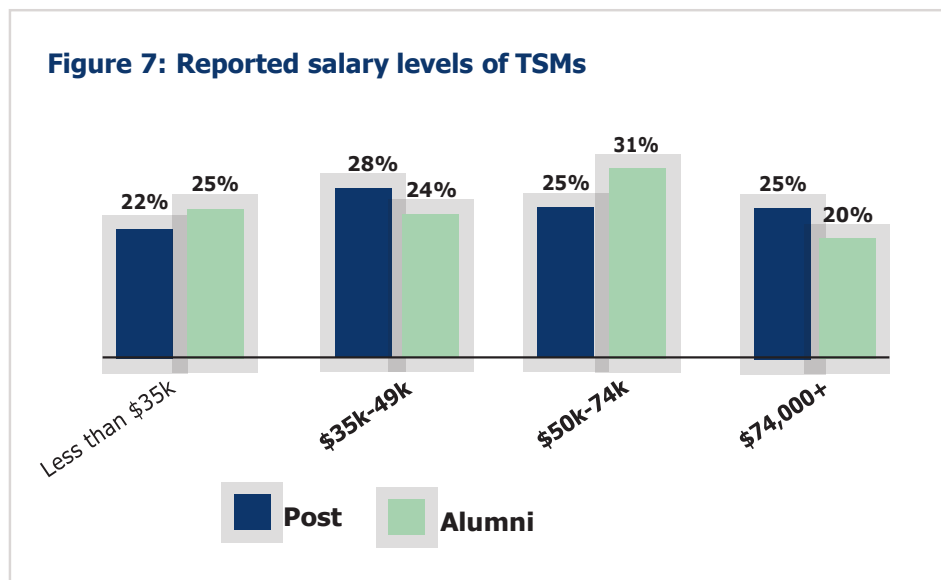


**“zero8hundred helped me with interviewing skills and how to get a job.  
Building a good resume, for sure.”**

**“It helped me while I was in San Diego. It directed me to places to find jobs.  
The hiring conferences helped me find my current job.”**

## Salary Level

As seen in **Figure 7**, half of TSMs in both the Post Survey (50%) and the Alumni Survey (51%) report salaries of \$50,000 or more per year. A quarter (25%) of TSMs report salaries of over \$74,000 in the Post Survey and one-fifth in the Alumni Survey (20%).



**81%** of alumni survey respondents and **90%** post survey respondents list **returning to school** as the top reason for **employed and not looking for a job**.



## Goals Met

When asked in the Alumni Survey, 25 months after separation, the majority of TSMs stated they had reached their goals set at the beginning of their time with **zero8hundred**.

**Figure 8: TSMs Who Reached a Stated Goal**

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Goal Met</b>
Ranked from highest to lowest reported goal met	% of TSMs who report meeting a stated goal in each category
Education, GI Bill, or any other Education Opportunities for Myself	93%
Health Insurance	84%
Physical Health and/or Wellness	84%
Housing and Shelter	80%
Food	79%
Mental Health, Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Health	78%
Employment, Employment Preparation, Career Mentoring	74%
Education, GI Bill, or any other Education Opportunities for my Family	72%
Financial Assistance	71%
Social and/or Community Connections	66%
Legal	65%

**“It helped a lot. It was the only resource that was pretty regularly reaching out to me and checking to see if my needs were being met or if there was any support that I needed. That was reassuring. If I did need something they were there and looking out for me.”**



## Satisfaction

TSMs reported at the Post Survey they were very satisfied with each of the elements associated with working with Resource Specialists, with the resources provided to them through the Resource Specialists and with the **zero8hundred** program overall.

**89%** of respondents were very satisfied with **zero8hundred** overall

**Figure 9: Satisfaction with Resource Specialists at Post Survey**

Satisfaction with...	% of respondents
Overall	96%
Professionalism of Resource Specialist	95%
Flexibility of Resource Specialist	92%
Understand needs of TSMs	89%
Resources recommended by Resource Specialist	85%
Resource Specialist knowledge of military culture	80%

**Figure 10: Satisfaction with Resources Referred by Resource Specialists**

Satisfaction with...	% of respondents
Types of resources	86%
Number of resources	83%
Ability to meet needs	80%
Responsiveness of resources	71%

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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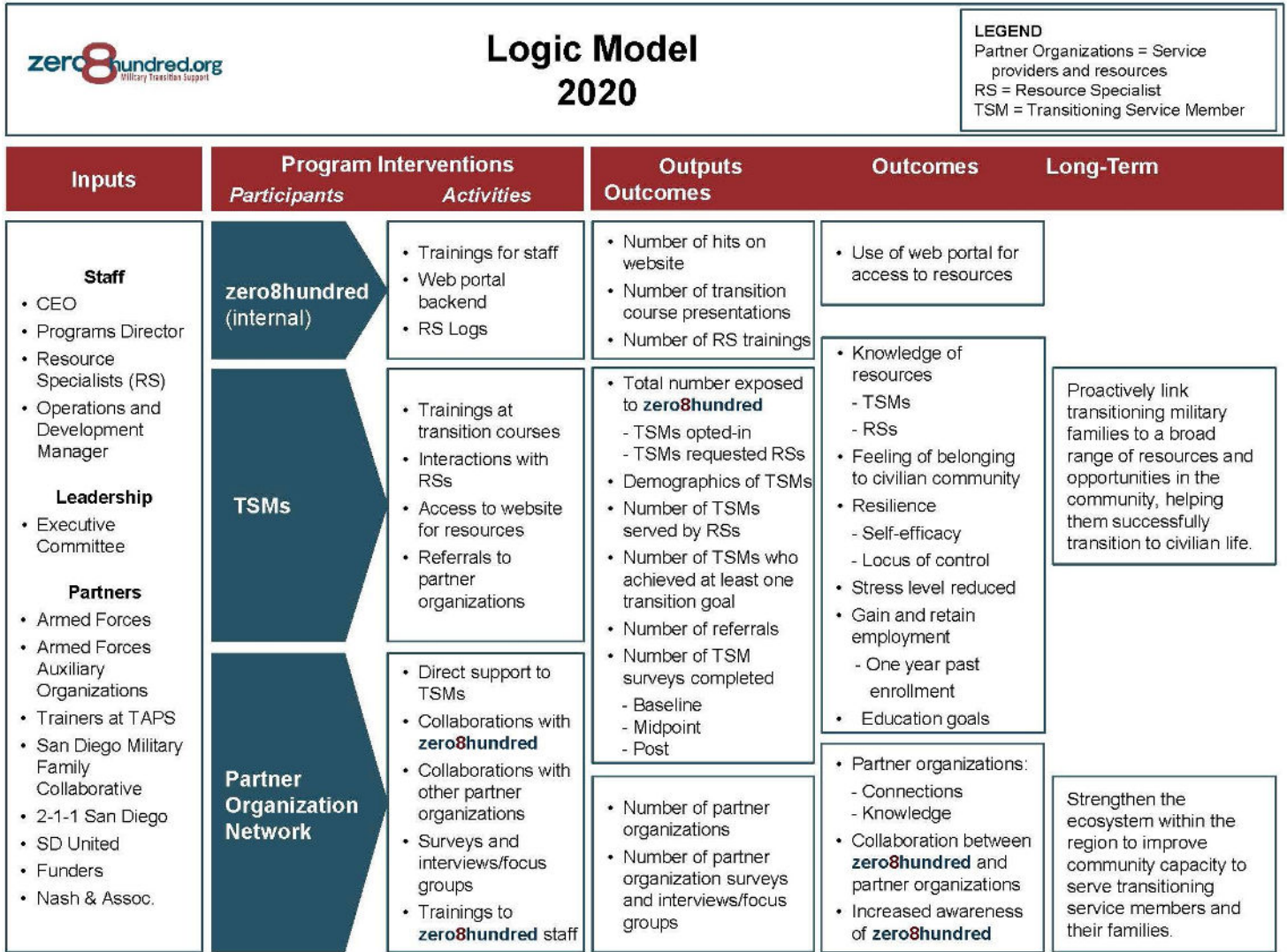
The original founders of **zero8hundred** envisioned an organization that provided peer navigation through the transition process, not just referrals to resources. This navigation support is provided by a unique combination of trained social workers who also have lived experience with the military. **zero8hundred** has experienced rapid growth and change over the past six years while supporting Transitioning Service Members through their transition from active duty to civilian life but they remain focused on their core mission: To proactively link transitioning military families to a broad range of resources and opportunities in the community, helping them successfully transition to civilian life.

As **zero8hundred** continues to grow and change, the following recommendations should be considered to strengthen their support for Transitioning Service Members:

- Continue to strengthen the peer navigation model which has proven to be very successful by utilizing Resource Specialists who have both lived military experience and formal education in social work/counseling
- Update the website and create consistency between new terminology and program explanations on the website
- Reconsider change from VIP (Veteran or Spouse in Progress) to TSM (Transitioning Service Member)
  - Spouses are not “service members”
  - The use of a Facebook poll for a closed organization does not necessarily solicit input from those who are most familiar with and/or are served by the program
- Maintain diversity within the Resource Specialist team that resembles the gender and ethnic diversity of service members and their families.
- Consider reviving the Quarterly Reports to update the community and all those connected with **zero8hundred** regarding successes, impact, and changes.
- Continue to solicit input from TSMs through the use of surveys. The **zero8hundred** model has been proven to work through years of third-party evaluation. For cost effectiveness, consider using staff to collect the data and create an annual report.
- Consider engaging an intern to upload all historical data from previous surveys and TSM data into Salesforce. All data in one integrated system will enable staff to produce timely reports in an efficient and cost effective manner.



# APPENDIX A. ZERO8HUNDRED EVALUATION LOGIC MODEL



**LEGEND**  
 Partner Organizations = Service providers and resources  
 RS = Resource Specialist  
 TSM = Transitioning Service Member

## APPENDIX B. YEAR 6 EVALUATION DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Data Source	Description
Intake Demographics	Each TSM completes a registration form with background and demographic information when he/she enrolls in <b>zero8hundred</b> .
Database of TSMs	A Salesforce database is maintained by the <b>zero8hundred</b> staff, which includes the basic intake data and any data the Resource Specialists collect when contact is made with the TSMs, such as contact status, which goals have been met, status of the (i.e., active, self-navigating, moved), and other intake information.
Web Analytics	Number of "hits" on <b>zero8hundred</b> 's website (www.zero8hundred.org) is tracked through Google Analytics. <b>Web analytics not available in 2021.</b>
Baseline Survey	The Resource Specialist collects intake data from TSMs during the first phone call before he/she transitions out of the military. The survey currently includes questions about the TSM's level of stress, locus of control, and connection to the military and civilian community. <b>The Baseline Survey was significantly reduced in scope 2019 and merged into the intake form on Salesforce.</b>
Midpoint Survey	A contracted, trained interviewer administers a Midpoint Survey by telephone to the TSM when he/she begins or is past terminal leave (i.e., final separation from the military). This survey includes the same questions asked in the Baseline Survey, as well as questions about goal attainment, status with the Veteran's Administration (VA), employment, current place of residence, and experiences and satisfaction with the <b>zero8hundred</b> program. <b>Discontinued in 2020</b>
Post-Transition ("Post") Survey	A contracted, trained interviewer administers a Post-Transition Survey either online or by telephone to the TSM approximately 12 months after terminal leave begins. It mirrors the original Midpoint Survey and includes additional questions about the <b>zero8hundred</b> program's impact on the 's transition (including employment) and recommendations for the zero8hundred program. <b>This survey was reduced in length in March 2020.</b>
Alumni Survey	A contracted, trained interviewer administers an Alumni Survey either online or by telephone to the TSM approximately 24 months after terminal leave begins. It mirrors the Post Survey and includes additional questions about the zero8hundred program's impact on the TSM's transition (including employment) and recommendations for the <b>zero8hundred</b> program. <b>This survey was first administered in March 2020.</b>

