Aristotle is credited with saying, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” That is, when a combination of resources, or like-minded people come together in a blending of values with mission, passion with resources, ideas with action all for a common goal… something special happens and real change takes place.

Wings of Hope was founded on the power of partnerships. Our very first aircraft sent into international service was used to reach people in the Turkana, a desert region in northwest Kenya which had been devastated by severe drought and famine, followed by flooding. People representing businesses and organizations as diverse as the Medical Missionaries of Mary, Fabick Tractor Company, Ozark Airlines, Flight Magazine, and United Missionary Air Training and Transport each played a part in an amazing collaboration to send an aircraft soaring above Kenya and thus launching our organization.

That early experience formed the basis of a partnership model that has been used across 47 countries and throughout 29 states in the US.

In these pages you will read how hospitals, nonprofit organizations, aviation companies, schools, foundations, corporations, volunteers, donors and staff all came together in 2018 around one common mission: to save and change lives through the power or aviation.

As our valued partner, this annual report is dedicated to you.

In gratitude,

Bret Heinrich
President & CEO

Steve Akre
Board Chairman
OUR WORK

Our work is rooted in and centered around aviation. In simple terms, we use airplanes to connect people with the medical resources they need to heal and to hope. We do this work from our home base in the United States and in developing regions around the world. No matter where we work, we rely on the support of partner organizations.

Domestic Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) Program

Our U.S. MAT program provides free medical air transport services to individuals who need specialized health care not available to them locally. We partner with world-class health care facilities, including St. Louis Children’s Hospital, Shriners Hospitals in St. Louis and Cincinnati, the Moolah Shriners, aviation companies that provide discounted parts and fuel for our airplanes, and airports nationwide that waive landing fees for medical flights.

Global Programs

In 2018, we worked in nine countries outside of the U.S., joining arms with in-country partners to fly people in remote areas to emergency medical care and flying doctors into communities with no local health care. Self-sufficiency is our goal in every region, and our global partners – with their deep local ties – are the lynchpin that makes it all possible.

OUR MISSION

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

WHO WE ARE
Our U.S. Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) program provides free medical air transport to individuals who need specialized health care not available to them locally. Our MAT program is supported by 20 volunteer pilots, a team of mechanics, and a small fleet of Wings of Hope-owned aircraft that are equipped to accommodate stretchers. In 2018, we flew 162 individuals—most multiple times—to transformative care at the nation’s best hospitals.

Our volunteers are highly skilled. Volunteer pilots must be multi-engine rated and have their commercial pilot’s license, with a minimum of 1,000 hours logged in a small aircraft.

“After a 44-year career in aviation, I made the best employment decision of my life and came to ‘work’ flying for Wings of Hope. In my past, the positive lift I got from my job was getting my passengers where they wanted to go safely. Flying for Wings, I get those same positive feelings and the satisfaction of helping some of my fellow human beings who desperately need help. I am immensely grateful to be a part of an organization with such a big heart. Although the salary is zero, Wings is definitely the best job I have ever had.”

— Dick Horowitz, chief pilot (volunteer), MAT program

MAT Program Health Network Partners

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St. Louis Children’s Hospital
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
In 2018, the FlySpecs surgical team saw 4,868 patients and performed 1,276 operations.

Eleven-year-old Gracin and 12-year-old Micah have been Wings of Hope travel buddies several times. We fly both girls from central Kansas to St. Louis Shriners Hospital to be treated for the same condition: Gracin and Micah were each born with one leg shorter than the other, and Shriners’ pediatric orthopedic surgeons are among the best in the country in leg lengthening surgeries and treatments. We’ve been flying Micah since 2013 and Gracin since 2017. Together, these two have racked up quite a frequent-flyer account with Wings of Hope – nearly 50 flights in all!

St. Louis Children’s is a world-class hospital with top-notch doctors, including Dr. Matthew Dobbs, whom families nationwide seek for his expertise in treating clubfoot. We fly several children into St. Louis to be treated by Dr. Dobbs, including Mason. At 10, Mason is older than many of the infants and toddlers we transport for clubfoot treatment. Mason was treated for clubfoot as a baby, but his case was regressive - and very difficult to correct. We’ve been flying Mason to St. Louis Children’s for over two years, and he is making great progress. This upbeat young man seems to have his future all worked out: he told us he wants to be a pilot and, someday, volunteer to fly for Wings of Hope! In the meantime, he’s busy promoting his new book, “In My Feet,” which he wrote to share his journey with other children with clubfoot. We are so proud of Mason - and grateful that we could help him on his road to walking “in his feet.”
1 **BELIZE**
We provide **Belize Emergency Response Team (BERT)** a volunteer pilot and annual maintenance of their aircraft which supports medical air evacuation coverage for the country’s 380,000 people. BERT flew 208 patients in 2018, up 51% from the previous year.

2 **NICARAGUA**
We supported **Adventist World Aviation** in providing 17 medevac flights. The program serves four indigenous Miskito communities and a region of 131,900 people.

3 **PARAGUAY**
Our partner, **Iglesia Centro Cristiano Siloh**, treated 940 patients in medical clinics, 236 in dental clinics, and provided food, agricultural assistance and education to 4,182 individuals.

4 **ZAMBIA**
Our partner, **FlySpec**, is the only orthopedic and reconstructive surgery service providing care via airplane to remote areas of Zambia. In 2018, FlySpec surgeons saw 4,868 patients and completed 1,276 surgeries.

5 **KENYA**
We partnered with **Transfedha Microfinance** in providing microloans to 1,360 women and youth entrepreneurs, and training and mentoring 4,150 clients in financial education.

6 **INDIA**
We helped our partner, **Nari O Sishu Kalyan Samitee**, build an incense factory now supporting 160 women. The Keep Girls In School project worked with 30 Self-Help Groups to distribute sanitary pads to...

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**Total number directly served by global programs in 2018:** 67,077
18,406 girls and train 308 teachers.

CAMBODIA
We partner with John Givonetti Giving in operating an English language peer tutoring program which, in 2018, served 772 middle school students taught by 72 high school students trained to teach, and 29 student volunteer alumni who receive financial support to attend university.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Our partner, Lewis Jungle Ministries, provided medical care to 770 individuals (including vaccinating 360 children) in the remote Sepik Region, which has minimal health-care resources.

FlySpec: Zambia
FlySpec is Zambia’s only flying medical service – flying seven orthopedic surgeons and the country’s only plastic surgeon to 13 outlying hospitals with no orthopedic or plastic surgeons. In 2018, the entire country had only one plastic surgeon, FlySpec’s Dr. Goran Jovic.

Dr. Jovic leads the FlySpec surgical team. Over the past 25 years, he has performed 12,750 surgeries, primarily on children to repair cleft palates, congenital deformities and burn contractures (common in Zambia where open cooking fires and grass-thatched huts are the norm). FlySpec’s orthopedic surgeons correct clubfoot, poorly healed fractures, infected limbs and other conditions that limit mobility and function.

Surgeries to restore mobility and correct deformity dramatically improve the quality of life for children from these farming communities. A child who cannot walk, cannot work the family farm. A child with cleft palate or severe scarring from burns will remain disfigured for life without surgical intervention. Surgery can restore these children physically, while removing the stigma associated with disability in this country.

In 2018, the FlySpec surgical team saw 4,868 patients and performed 1,276 operations.
In 2019, we launched Soar Into STEM, a hands-on aviation program designed to ignite in young people—especially girls and students of color—a passion for pursuing STEM and aviation education and careers. Connecting STEM learning to service learning, students from three school districts and the Girl Scouts worked on a Cessna 182 destined to serve as a medevac plane at Wings of Hope’s field site in Paraguay. As students learned STEM aviation principles while working on the airplane, they also learned about aviation career paths from experienced mentors. Program supporters included Boeing, Maritz and Elite Aviation.
Our 2018 990 and audited financials can be found on our website, www.wingsofhope.ngo.

“'I have seen Wings of Hope evolve from a very small nonprofit with an operating budget of around $750,000 to a mid-sized organization nearing $4 million in annual expenditures. Through all of this growth, spending on programs has averaged 85% of income — and our leadership has been very intentional in ensuring this outcome. As we expand our programs and our impact, we have put in place a strategic plan to ensure the responsible stewardship of our resources and our financial strength well into the future.'”

— John Schmidt, current board treasurer, former CFO and Wings of Hope volunteer since 1998
Securing the Future of Our MAT Program

Wings of Hope is embarking on a major campaign to grow our endowment to ensure the future of our U.S. Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) program. The Soaring to New Heights Endowment Campaign will enable us to expand the capacity of our MAT program to serve more children – saving and improving many more lives, while ensuring our sustainability. The goal of the campaign is to ensure we have the capital to secure the planes needed, cultivate the next generation of volunteer pilots, and expand the MAT program to serve 50% more children with free transportation to health care.

New South American Partners!

Extending our long history serving the indigenous people of the Amazon Basin, we are in the process of partnering with two organizations located in Shell, Ecuador. Alas de Socorro del Ecuador provides lifesaving medevac missions out of isolated rainforest communities and CENTA (The Center) brings indigenous people into Shell to learn life skills and trades.

We also teamed up with Patrulla Aérea Civil Colombiana in Bogotá, Colombia, which is flying surgeons into communities who need them most. We will report back next year on the exciting work we expect from our newest South American partners!
We are happy to recognize donors who support Wings of Hope with their generous gifts of $100 or greater.

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