



**SOAA**

SPECIAL OPERATIONS  
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

# 2021

—  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

# A WORD FROM OUR FOUNDER

I would like to start by sincerely thanking each and every one of you for your incredible support of our organization and of the men and women who serve in Special Operations!. I have been lucky enough to thank some of you in person, but for many this will be my first time speaking to you. Whether you supported us financially, have been helping us get the word out on social media, or attended a SOAA event, myself and the entire SOAA team thanks you. It has been a truly humbling experience to hear all of the stories from across the SOF community and to be able to give those stories a platform so they could be heard at the highest levels in Washington, DC and across the globe.



Looking back at all the accomplishments of 2021 has been incredible, and we would not have been able to do it without each and every one of you. I knew during the midst of the work we were doing, that we were accomplishing a lot, but I wanted to take this moment at the beginning of the new year to look back and take stock.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Elkins'.

Daniel Elkins  
Founder and CEO

## AFGHANISTAN EVACUATION EFFORTS

We conducted over 200 Legislative Meetings in 2021 between NGOs, Federal Agencies, and Congressional stakeholders in our continued efforts to evacuate and support our ANASOC, NDS, and SIV allies while advocating for them to be eligible for enlistment in the US military via their SOF training and pathways to American citizenship. Around 2,000 ANASOC members and 150 Afghan pilots have made it to the US, but many still need help.

In 2021 we partnered with 19 organizations and met with over 50 members of Congress and senior leaders within DoD, the VA, and the White House to highlight the need for specialized care in the Special Operations community. We engaged in suicide prevention efforts, advocated for research into new PTSD therapeutics, alternative TBI treatment protocols, and a SOF specific transition assistance program. We pressed both DoD and the VA to pursue public-private partnerships in order to research and develop treatments for the SOF community

## HEALTHCARE FOR ACTIVE- DUTY AND SOF VETERANS

## THE GROUND TRUTH

Our leaders do not always receive all the facts they need to make the best decisions for our nation's security. A lot gets lost along the way from the Operator's mouth to the politician's ear. We have built direct connections with legislators on Capitol Hill, some of them SOF veterans, to make sure that the line of communication is as direct as possible. In 2021, we brought Operators to the Hill to bring the Ground Truth to our leaders and to show the SOF community that DC does care about them.

We have spent 2021 compiling as many resources for our brothers and sisters as possible. We have dedicated a page on the website to help Servicemembers and Veterans to better understand the benefits they have earned and how to access them. We have also partnered with organizations and individuals who know and provide for the SOF community in ways the government cannot. These organizations range from those helping SOF members transition out of the military to those providing alternative care for the particular health problems of SOF.

## RESOURCES FOR THE COMMUNITY

# ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS

A snapshot of SOAA accomplishments in 2021

**200+**

LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

**19**

PARTNERSHIPS FORMED

**38,578**

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

**1,937,577**

SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

**20**

MEDIA APPEARANCES

**9**

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS  
COMMITTED TO  
SUPPORTING SOAA

**68**

BLOGS PUBLISHED

**9**

WHITE PAPERS

**4,000+**

PEOPLE EVACUATED  
FROM AFGHANISTAN

**\$1,000,000+**

RAISED FOR EVACUEES

# MEDIA APPEARANCES AND PLACEMENTS

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SOAA was called upon many times in 2021 to represent our community as subject matter experts. In addition to reaching the general public, we had the opportunity to form relationships and make connections with broadcast entities whose large audiences need to hear and understand the ground truth. Some of those include:



- 1 WASHINGTON POST
- 2 MILITARY TIMES <sup>3x</sup>
- 3 FOX NEWS
- 4 CNN
- 5 NEWSY
- 6 NEW YORK TIMES
- 7 FOREIGN POLICY MAGAZINE
- 8 POLITICO
- 9 PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER
- 10 WASHINGTON EXAMINER
- 11 COFFEE OR DIE
- 12 CHEDDAR
- 13 JEDBURGH PODCAST

# CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT

We spent time on Capitol Hill, meeting with Representatives to discuss key issues regarding the Special Operations community. Members of Congress were eager to gain a better understanding of the truth on the ground so that they could better perform their role as political leaders. Every Member of Congress we met with understood the importance of maintaining a clear line of access between the SOF community and our leaders in DC. This is crucial for ensuring that our Representatives are not left in the dark and that the SOF community is not left in the cold.

At SOAA, we will continue to strengthen and widen these lines of communication. Thank you to Representatives: Jason Crow, Lee Zeldin, Michael McCaul, Michael Waltz, Peter Meijer, Richard Hudson, Trent Kelly, Young Kim, and Scott Perry!



# THE YEAR AHEAD

1

## **Afghanistan Humanitarian Efforts**

SOAA remains focused on helping those Afghan nationals who served alongside our Special Operations Forces who are here in the United States, as well as those who remain trapped in Afghanistan. From finding a pathway to continued service in the U.S. military to a Congressional resolution honoring veteran evacuation organizations, SOAA is the voice for helping Afghan veterans.

2

## **SOF Suicide Prevention**

SOAA looks forward to taking federal ground in the fight against SOF Suicide by challenging the outdated, conventional paradigms that mistake physical and nonphysical trauma for psychiatric illnesses. Innovative treatments for traumatic brain injuries have shown incredible promise in giving SOF veterans and servicemembers their lives back, while plant-based, psychedelic therapies have made significant advancements in restoring quality of life. We're prepared to push Congress to enact pathways to access these treatments.

3

## **Accelerated SOF Degree Pathways**

SOAA is partnering with regionally accredited institutions of higher education to create tailored and dedicated Bachelor's degree programs for members of SOF. These programs will take full advantage of military training and experiences, and have the ability to start SOF members as seniors in their Bachelor's program.

4

## **Foreign Policy and National Security**

There are fewer Congress members and other elected officials with military experience than ever before in our nation's history. The American people rely on these policymakers and legislators to make decisions that affect our national security. We will continue to bring the ground truth from operators with dirt under their fingernails to the highest levels of government to help better inform our nation's leaders as they make decisions.

5

## **Women in SOF**

Women in the SOF community face unique challenges. Whether it is receiving equal treatment from Veteran Affairs, Sexual Trauma, or general acceptance from the military community. We will continue to work to ensure that everyone receives the same respect and benefits that they have earned regardless of their gender.

