



2018 Walking Shield Annual Report

It was another exciting year for Walking Shield, providing over 1 million dollars in service and humanitarian products for American Indian families across the United States. These efforts are direct results of the generous support from our donors such as yourself. The following is a summary of our 2018 results and plans for 2019.

OneSight Partnership

Walking Shield's collaboration with our OneSight partners, continues to provide thousands of free eye exams and a brand-new pair of glasses to Tribes all over the country. In 2018, we increased the number of clinics; in 2016 we conducted 2 clinics; in 2017 we had 3 clinics; and in 2018 we had 4 clinics. In 2019, we are already planning another 4 clinics.

In April 2018, Walking Shield coordinated a OneSight clinic on the Hoopa Reservation in California. We were able to provide 1,278 total eye exams: 971 students and 307 adults. Of this group, 725 (56%) needed eyewear and received prescription glasses.



A child receiving glasses at our OneSight vision clinic on the Red Cliff Reservation in Wisconsin.

In May 2018, Walking Shield assisted the Blackfeet Tribe in Montana in coordinating a OneSight vision clinic on their reservation. 1,525 eye exams were conducted; 1,134 students and 371 adults. Of this group, 1,163 (76%) needed glasses and were provided eyewear.

In October 2018, Walking Shield assisted Red Cliff Tribal leadership in coordinating a OneSight vision clinic on their reservation. A total of 947 eye exams were conducted; 777 (82%) required corrective glasses and were provided eyewear.

In November 2018, Walking Shield assisted Colorado River Indian Tribes in Arizona and coordinated a OneSight clinic on their reservation. We were able to provide 1,103 comprehensive eye exams; 804 (72%) required corrective eyewear and were provided glasses.

Approximately 95% of the glasses are made onsite and dispensed before the clinic is over. The OneSight vision clinics continue to increase access to better eye care for American Indian children and adults in rural communities and reservations across the nation.

“A sixth grade boy was nearly legally blind when the OneSight program visited this school. After going through various steps of the complete vision exam provided by OneSight, he received his new glasses. While looking at the white board in his classroom, he pushed the new glasses above his nose and said “blind.” Then pushed them back on and said, “clear.” The boy looked out the window of his classroom in awe and the optometrist asked him to walk outside with him to get a better look. “Wow! I never realized how beautiful the world is.” The boy said.

Education

In 2018, Walking Shield’s Educational Program increased the number of scholarship recipients from the previous academic year from 56 to 60. We graduated 17 students with college degrees. Los Angeles Scholarship Investment Fund (LASIF) continues to fund scholarships to Los Angeles County students for the 2018/2019 academic school year. San Manuel Band of Mission Indians also renewed another generous \$60,000 grant for our ‘emergency fund’ to help American Indian college students complete their college journey by assisting them with college related expenses and wrap around services to keep students in college such as tutoring, books, bus passes, and other related expenses. Here is one of our student’s story about her successful college experience:

“Walking Shield has helped me with money for school as well as gas cards, living expenses, books, and parking permits. With their assistance I was able to graduate from Cal Poly Pomona in two years. Without Walking Shield, I would have had to get a part-time job which would have made it very difficult for me to graduate on time. Last summer, I interned at Northrop Grumman as a pricing and estimating analyst on Advanced Extremely High Frequency satellites. I graduated this past May and next week I will start my permanent position as a Cost Management Analyst at Northrop Grumman. Everyone at Walking Shield has been so kind to me and I greatly appreciate their help.” – Danielle Morris (Assiniboine Sioux)



Danielle Morris, Walking Shield scholarship recipient, 2018 Cal Poly Pomona graduate.

In October 2018, Walking Shield held its 8th annual Charity golf Tournament at the Barona Creek Golf Club in Lakeside, Ca. Funds raised will help offset the rising cost of college tuition and college related expenses for our scholarship recipients. Los Angeles Scholars Investment Fund, who provides a majority of the scholarships has invited us to reapply for funds for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Housing Relocation

To date, Operation Walking Shield has relocated 1,235 homes to fifteen (15) American Indian Tribes as a result of Walking Shield’s ability to transport relocatable homes from military installation that were considered excess and slated for destruction. Excess military homes include all military branches: Army, Navy, Air Force, and National Guard, with installations to Tribes across the nation.



Housing units being prepared for transportation in Montana.

We believe that up to 5,000 homes will be available over the next 10 years from our military partners. We are in the process of locating these homes in correspondence with all military branches. The Army currently has homes available in the following states: Iowa, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Virginia, and California. We already have interest from the Kickapoo Tribe who is asking for homes to be relocated to their reservation in 2019.

Healthcare Programs

Walking Shield's Medical/Dental Support Program has provided more than 136,000 American Indians with healthcare services through military health personnel deployments. This includes physicians, optometrists, dentists, as well as veterinarians. Healthcare professionals from the Army, Air Force, National Guard, and Navy provide a triage of services. Walking Shield continues to provide healthcare support through a unique relationship with the Department of Defense, to bring much needed medical attention to some of the most impoverished reservations in the United States.



U.S. military medical personnel serving a tribal member.

In 2018, Walking Shield and the military continued their work on reservations. For example, they worked with Leech Lake Reservation this past year. The Army Medical units provided healthcare checks at one of the schools. This included physical exams, oral healthcare, and health and other wellness checks.

In 2019, we have ten (10) Tribes that have submitted IRT requests for assistance from the military. We have learned already from the Army that they will be helping Spirit Lake and Hoopa Tribes. We are currently following up with the other military branches. We have assisted additional Tribes to submit healthcare IRT applications for 2020. Walking Shield is planning on visiting with the Department of Defense in March 2019 to review these IRT requests. In addition, we will be meeting with Major General Mary Link, the commanding officer for Army medical command in Florida to increase more deployments in the future.

IRT Infrastructure Program

In partnership with the Department of Defense's IRT Program, Walking Shield has helped develop over 900 miles of roads, drilled dozens of water wells, and installed several miles of new sewer and water lines to improve infrastructure conditions on Indian reservations across the nation.



Military personnel overseeing road improvements in California.

Last year the Army Engineers and Navy Seabees built roads for the Blackfeet Tribe in Montana. These new roads allowed them to start building an additional 34 homes by the Tribe which will be completed early 2019.

Other future plans for several community development projects with the Blackfeet Tribe include: development of a new fire management building 17,500 square feet, a new Blackfeet Care Center which will be a 47-bed skilled nursing home, a new Heart Butte Senior Citizen Center, and a 58,000 square feet Health and Fitness center.

Walking Shield is continuing to provide technical assistance in all these areas listed above. One area of particular need is to provide the technical assistance to secure financial assistance to develop and complete these projects. Also, there is a need to build their capacity to sustain operations at each facility. We are in the process of helping Tribal leadership with all of these goals.

Walking Shield is prepared to provide another technical assistance training for the Round Valley Tribal leadership. In collaboration with Round Valley leadership, we are introducing possibilities for projects related to economic development, housing, community facilities related to water, and healthcare. We are working with the many more Tribes in regard to their infrastructure needs during 2019.