ANNUAL REPORT 2016
THE BUNKER OPPORTUNITY

According to the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University, among the generation of World War II veterans, 49 percent of veterans started their own businesses after returning home. This incredible commitment to entrepreneurship among the “greatest generation” led to an unprecedented post-war economic boom. This story has not yet been replicated by the post-9/11 generation of veterans.

According to the Kauffman Foundation study, while 12 percent of new entrepreneurs were veterans in 1996; in 2011, just six percent of new entrepreneurs were veterans.

Bunker Labs is seizing this opportunity to expand the ranks of veteran entrepreneurs. As the American economy advances and innovates, the value of American veterans needs to be understood and activated.

As we mark our second full year as an organization, I am humbled, amazed, and - most of all - energized by all that we have been able to do together. The Bunker Labs mission is to empower veterans as leaders in innovation and it should come as no surprise that when we put out the invitation to veterans to come start and grow businesses, perform as innovators, and join a national thriving network that they answered with a resounding “yes!”

What follows in this annual report are just some of the highlights of this past year. We continue to be a learning organization - mindful that we are a nascent organization still discovering how to best support military veterans as entrepreneurs, mindful of the controlled ‘experiments’ that we have run, and always mindful that with everything we do we must ensure we are having impact, capturing lessons learned to do better, and that Bunker Labs is on strong footing for a sustainable and thriving future.

To that end, we have spent the year strengthening our curriculum, formalizing our expansion plans, developing with Deloitte a three-year strategic plan that will drive our priorities and actions, implementing technology platforms to accelerate our network effects, codifying our brand, mission statement, and values, and capturing the impact that we are having for veterans, their families, their businesses, and their communities.

None of what has been built these past two years would have been possible without the generous and early backing of our corporate and foundation sponsors. Your leadership and support, financial and otherwise, has been catalytic to help create a first-of-its-kind platform for military veteran entrepreneurs. Our other partnerships with the federal government, state and local elected officials, and other veteran service organizations have powerfully accelerated our growth and network. To see all of the goodwill and leadership that exists amongst this community has been an incredible personal and professional joy. Finally, as a peer-led community I am grateful to my colleagues who lead the Bunker Labs chapters across the U.S. and the entrepreneurs who are our clients as well as our friends. It is not so much what you build but rather the people you build it with, and I can think of no greater honor than to be in your company. And if you thought last year was exciting...

Todd Connor, CEO, Bunker Labs


Connect with Bunker Labs online:

BunkerLabs.org  TheBunkerLabs
@TheBunkerLabs  /TheBunkerLabs
Our sponsors and partners are the lifeblood of our organization. We simply cannot thank them enough for their incredible support. It is because of them that we are able to continue our mission to help military veterans start and grow their businesses.

“At Comcast, we know that veterans bring extraordinary talent to every endeavor. We are proud to hire them as employees and honored to support them as entrepreneurs through our work with Bunker Labs. This is a win for our business and our community.”

Carol Eggert  
Vice President of Military and Veteran Affairs at Comcast and Brigadier General (R), U.S. Army
EPIC (Entrepreneurial Program for Innovation & Collaboration)

EPIC is Bunker Labs’ 14-part rapid-immersion learning-by-doing experience for accelerating the professional developmental of entrepreneurs, as well as supporting the success of their ventures. EPIC Innovators move toward deeper learning, broader perspective, and higher overall performance — for themselves and their ventures. Try to think of the program as a working laboratory where we focus on three major points:

1. The primary focus of EPIC is to assess, train and develop entrepreneurial minded military veterans.
2. The secondary focus of EPIC is to support experimentation, development and growth for their entrepreneurial ventures.
3. The third focus is to cultivate a resource-rich community within which Bunker Labs members would be highly likely to secure: their first sales contracts, startup or growth funding, access to co-founders, first hires, attorneys, auditors, advisors, mentors, coaches, and vendors of many types.

The Bunker Braintrust

The Braintrust is Bunker Labs’ open house session that runs like clockwork every Thursday morning from 9am – 12pm. The meeting is open to our sponsors, veteran entrepreneurs, EPIC participants, mentors, and vendors. Attendees will have an opportunity to get caught up on Bunker Labs’ most recent happenings, participate in thought experiments, listen to members pitch, and hear from a wide range of incredible speakers covering relevant topics. Ultimately, it is a place to get inspired, educated, and connected to vetrepreneurs with purpose, passion and promise.

The Bunker Burst

Bunker Burst engages deck-plate and civilian leadership through workshops to curate catalytic insights, big idea thinking, and exciting engagement for workshop participants.

Assemble team of veteran entrepreneurs & organization leaders
Provide innovation workshops around problem identification, ideation, and opportunity targets
Co-create actionable recommendations to leadership
2015 IN REVIEW

Thanks to the pro-bono assistance from Perkins + Will, Skender Construction and Comcast, our Chicago HQ has been beautifully redesigned into a place we can truly call home.

The Bunker spent 2015 refining its programing through experimenting with curriculum, gaining insights from subject matter experts, and sharing big ideas among other military veteran entrepreneurs. During our first year, Bunker Labs saw significant demand for an intensive course for new entrepreneurs, and a night course for aspiring entrepreneurs who were unavailable during the day. This led to the creation of our EPIC program, a 14-week course built around best-in-class research and practices in entrepreneurial education. We also continued to engage our members, mentors, sponsors, and partners over the course of 49 consecutive Braintrust sessions held every Thursday from 9am – 12pm and introduced the Friday Lunch and Learn series for entrepreneurs to learn from subject matter experts on legal and tax issues, branding, communications, investment and other topics.

Near the end of our first year in existence, we wanted to thank those who helped us make the Bunker Labs what it is today. During our second annual luncheon, we acknowledged Kaney O’Neill for her incredible success and Ed Wehmer for Wintrust’s valued support by giving out the first Bunker Builder Awards. This award acknowledges the organizations and people that have helped us grow the most throughout the year.

As we looked for new ways to make our second year just as incredible as our first, we recruited the help of Deloitte to develop a clear and focused mission. In nearly no time at all, Deloitte had an incredible strategy laid out for chapter expansion and prioritized initiatives for Bunker Labs.

“At Deloitte, we value the dedication of our nation’s service members and are committed to providing critical transition assistance and professional development opportunities for veterans and transitioning service members. We are proud to support the Bunker at 1871 because it’s enabling aspiring entrepreneurs to achieve their professional goals and, in turn, help bolster the health and vibrancy of Chicago’s business community. We look forward to using the resources of Deloitte and the skills of our professionals to help veteran entrepreneurs become tomorrow’s business leaders. We aim to help ignite this effort nationwide and be a major catalyst working alongside the Bunker.”

Byron O. Spruell
Vice Chairman
Central Region and Chicago
Managing Principal
Deloitte LLP

Bunker in a Box
Powered by Bob Woodruff Foundation

“When Todd presented his vision for Bunker in a Box our team immediately saw the value. This tool will allow service members and veterans to access the service offerings of Bunker Lab’s programs remotely and will help drive participant growth and collaboration. The Bob Woodruff Foundation is thrilled to be a partner with Bunker Labs and looks forward to their continued success.”

Anne Marie Dougherty
Executive Director
Bob Woodruff Foundation

With Bunker in a Box, we’ve curated hundreds of hours of thought leadership to help you learn the language of entrepreneurship and create your vision and your plan.

bunkerinabox.org

“Through their military service, Veterans gain skills and experiences that contribute to starting and sustaining a small business. JPMorgan Chase is a leading small business lender with a long history of supporting the success of active-duty servicemembers, Veterans, and their spouses. Bunker Labs, a partner of JPMorgan Chase, has done a tremendous job of making entrepreneurship a viable path for our talented men and women Veterans by providing them with the tools necessary for small business success.”

Ross Brown
Head of Military and Veterans Affairs
Managing Director
JPMorgan Chase & Co.
EXPANDING ACROSS AMERICA

The key ingredient for helping veteran run startups is creating strong communities of support. On a national level, Bunker Labs has been fortunate to continue to build strong local and statewide veteran entrepreneur communities with the help of incredibly talented and passionate veterans dedicated to helping other veteran entrepreneurs become successful in their endeavors.

Bunker Labs @ Jacksonville - Derek Distenfield
Derek Distenfield is the Executive Director of Bunker Labs Jacksonville, CEO of legal-tech startup NextGenJustice, and a former Army Officer and Bronze Star recipient that served in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Derek partnered with city leaders and influencers to launch Bunker Labs Jacksonville in partnership with ColabJax and the Jacksonville Landing in August of 2015. As a champion for veteran entrepreneurs, Derek was selected by the Jacksonville Business Journal as a 2015 North East Florida Veteran of Influence.

Bunker Labs @ Nashville - Blake Hogan
Blake Hogan is a serial entrepreneur having co-founded Bunker Labs Austin and Nashville. Prior to Bunker Labs, Hogan served as an Officer in the Marine Corps. After the Corps, he helped develop markets for green tech construction products and helped found two technology companies. In addition to his role as the Executive Director of Bunker Labs, Hogan serves at the Director of Business Partnerships for the Nashville Entrepreneur Center where he works as a “professional dot connector”.

Bunker Labs @ Raleigh-Durham - Dean Bundschu
Dean served 8 years as an Infantry officer in the U.S. Army including a combat tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After leaving the Army, he spent several years in the military transition space at Orion International before founding a variety of companies, one of which, PrepChamps, became one of the top companies in the high school sports recruiting space.

Bunker Labs @ Chicago (HQ) - Justin Walker
A recognized leader and innovator with 12 years of extensive Naval Special Operations management. An inspirational and focused individual acknowledged for project management, curriculum development and exceptionally strong strategic planning.

Bunker Labs @ Austin - Johnathan Wojtewicz
Johnathan Paul Wojtewicz, a native of Austin, joined the Marine Corps after 9/11. Following his service career, he entered the startup world and has become a successful entrepreneur, having led two technology startups from conception to acquisition to a Fortune 200 company. He’s now an advisor, leading entrepreneurs and an early investor in market defining startups throughout Texas; supporting military veterans as they launch and accelerate their businesses.

Bunker Labs @ Austin - Sabrina Wojtewicz
Sabrina Marshall-Wojtewicz is a digital marketing and communications professional with a passion for entrepreneurship, innovation and personal, professional and leadership development. Her interest and enthusiasm in these areas coupled with the desire to empower others and give back to her community led her to found and organize a local women’s networking group from 2006-2010.

Bunker Labs @ Kansas City - Sean McIntosh
Sean McIntosh is the founder of Bunker Labs KC and has been a serial entrepreneur since leaving active duty in the Navy in 2012. He spent 13 years in the United States Navy as an enlisted Navy SEAL and SEAL officer. Sean completed five combat deployments and was awarded medals with valor distinction three times while deployed. He is a pro bono advisor to several high growth potential startups and government contracting companies.

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The Bunker has convened three quarterly meetings, all in downtown Chicago, of the Veterans Leadership Council, to lead discussions centered on advancing veterans’ interests. The idea was this: Find veterans at all of Chicago’s largest employers and leading organizations, get them in a room, and build a network of peer support. We originally called it the Council of 100. In 2015, we realized that this idea needed to live on its own and could accomplish more if a group of those veterans could lead the initiative on their own. Michael Hubbard, an associate at William Blair and the leader of the firm’s Veteran Affinity Network, was one of the first to lead the initiative and thanks to his guidance, the Veterans Leadership Council was formed.

The Veterans Leadership Council’s (VLC) primary mission is to establish an authentic and relevant leadership voice for the current veteran community by creating locally thriving and nationally connected networks of military veterans who are leaders in business and government.

The majority of veterans identify professional networks as one of the most effective solutions for veteran unemployment and under employment. Come join your professional network!

Michael Hubbard, President
president@veteransleadershipcouncil.org
veteransleadershipcouncil.org

Bunker Labs @ Raleigh-Durham - Jay Kerr
Jay is a former Air Force Captain in command and Control Operations officer in the 75th Fighter Squadron and as a Contracts Officer in Materiel Command. He was a founder and COO at PrepChamps, a premier online social recruiting community for high school athletes. Jay is the CEO of K2 Solutions and Founder of the High Tor Group. His successful roles and consulting engagements include organizations such as Northrop Grumman, Titan, Deloitte, and Pepsi. Jay volunteers in his community supporting a STEM/life skills youth mentoring, senior citizens programs, and a homeless crisis center.

Bunker Labs @ Philadelphia - Joe Witte
Joe Witte is a former Captain in the US Army. He served for nine years as a reservist in logistics and completed a tour in 2004 in Baghdad. Joe is an active volunteer for the Liberty USO serving on the Marketing committee. Joe is a 15 year Internet entrepreneur who has started four $1 million+ businesses including MycroBurst, Travel Ad Network and CentricSource. Joe is currently the VP of Global Business Development for ISEBOX, a cloud communications PaaS.

Bunker Labs @ Washington D.C. - Emily McMahan
Emily McMahan launched Bunker Labs DC and is the Director of Capitol Post. Prior to launching Capitol Post, Emily served as a partner and CFO at Halfaker and Associates, LLC, a successful start-up technology firm serving the federal government. A graduate of West Point, Emily served as a military police officer supporting Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and Noble Eagle. Emily holds an MBA from the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business.

Bunker Labs @ Washington D.C. - Harry Alford
Harry is currently a Managing Director with Bunker Labs DC where he is helping create the next generation of amazing startups and valuable companies. Prior to joining Bunker Labs DC, Harry was an Operations Associate at NextGen Venture Partners. Harry previously co-founded an e-commerce startup which he successfully scaled and exited. He also has experience in professional lacrosse, holds a MA from Georgetown, and is a current MBA candidate at Babson.
Aaron Wolf - Adventures Accessed
“Bunker Labs has served as a network of trustworthy souls, conduit for business solutions and generator of new revenue avenues. We started as a full-service outfitter and guide company, looking to take anyone and everyone out into the wild. We continue to do that but have incorporated multiple programs from corporate wellness outings to team building and leadership development. Without the network of veterans and volunteers at the Bunker, the business would not be flourishing as it is now.”

Corey Hubbard - Dream Highr
“The Bunker has been a great resource for business knowledge, entrepreneurial expertise, networking, and its been a great space where Vets and civilians alike can meet in a nurturing environment. I have taken advantage of every resource and turned those resources into opportunity and traction.”

Kaney O’Neill - O’Neill Contractors
“For me The Bunker has been a place to mentally ‘plug-in’ where I can ‘download ideas’ to help spur my growth and develop my management skills. The other energizing benefit is the cohort of other vets who are just as driven to succeed and who are always willing to step up as thought partners. Getting out of the daily grind and taking the time to work on my business has reminded me on a weekly basis how exciting it is to be an entrepreneur.”

Dan Tobon - Starchup
“We would never have gotten to this point without Bunker Labs. The instruction, exposure, and connections that we have gained through Bunker Labs has been absolutely essential to our success.”

Mindi Knebel - Kaizen Health
“Bunker Labs is very inspirational and has provided an opportunity to collaborate with companies at many stages in many industries. They have also brought experts into the EPIC class that have been wonderful to learn from as well as great long term connections.”

Sam Harris - Tribe
“Bunker Labs has helped us in many ways. We’ve gotten help with exposure to potential customers, testing, feedback, and most importantly a strong feeling of community with our fellow entrepreneurs who understand more/less what we go through on a daily basis.”

Sandra Edwards - Wheelz on Time
“The Bunker has been an excellent resource for the development of my entrepreneurial mindset. It contributes by providing not only education, but professional resources necessary to be successful.”

Kirby Atwell - iCandy Homes
“The quality of individuals that I’m now networking with is outstanding. Being surrounded by hungry people pushing not only their own businesses forward but doing everything they can to help others grow too is incredible. The environment is one that is so focused, allowing for concentrated attention on growth both personally and professionally. The approach is one of significant support with a hard nosed and black and white approach to ensure focus is applied to the correct area and also participants come away with very actionable items after each session.”

Founders hard at work during a session of EPIC
HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS...

$17,432,094
Total Revenue Generated

290
Total Jobs Created

2 Years
Average Company Age

$23,267,000
Total Capital Raised

1442
Connections Established

70+
Number of Companies Supported

MEET A FEW OF OUR COMPANIES

Images by Law - Chicago
A digital media company providing photography, video recording/editing, web design and graphic design.
www.imagesbylaw.com

Triolo, LLC - Chicago
Engineering sport for the 21st century by bridging athletic participation with the digital user experience.
lifeonmars.info

vThreat - Austin
Cloud-based cybersecurity provider specializing in delivering adversary simulations to help organizations verify threats to their defense in depth infrastructure.
www.vthreat.com

Kaizen Health - Chicago
We strive to constantly improve access to healthcare through dependable non-emergency medical transportation.
kaizenhealth.org

Ground Forces Coffee - Austin
Amazing coffee roasted daily!
www.groundforcescoffee.com

Right Stuff Drones - Chicago
We provide Drone services, training and consulting.
www.rightstuffdrones.com

F7 Group - Austin
Innovative Resiliency Programs for Life’s Transitions
www.f7group.com

Happy Joe Media - Austin
Happy Joe offers professional web media and marketing services that will make you look like a million dollar brand without spending it!
happyjoe.com

Coded by U - Philadelphia
Accelerated programming and software development focused education.
www.codedbyu.com

WeTrain - Philadelphia
WeTrain is unlocking personal training for the masses by offering sessions – anywhere, anytime – starting at only $17
www.wetrain.fitness
Bunker Labs, a national network of entrepreneurs founded by military veterans to help other veterans start and grow businesses, is excited to announce the Bunker Builds America Tour. Presented by JPMorgan Chase & Co., the Bunker Builds America Tour will travel to 12 cities across the country to showcase veteran entrepreneurs, empower local entrepreneurial ecosystems with large-scale events, and serve as the launching point for local Bunker Labs chapters. Many veterans transition from the military with unique skills and experiences that lend themselves to starting sustainable small businesses. The Bunker Builds America Tour is a catalyzing event to stand up and strengthen this expanding network of military veterans, successful entrepreneurs, and the communities they serve.

**TOUR DATES**

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#BunkerBuilds
“Military veterans are builders, dreamers, and doers - who are committed to lives of service. Bunker Labs is committed to creating the place, across the U.S., where military veterans can realize their greatest potential, launch businesses, and build the next greatest generation.”

Todd Connor
Bunker Labs, CEO

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