

We are the 22

Arkansas nonprofit founded by Arkansas veterans focuses on direct veteran suicide intervention



As we continue to live with the daily effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, another epidemic has been aggressively building a

body count in America over the last two decades with no flattening of the curve in sight. Indeed, a recent CDC study revealed that the national suicide rate increased by more than 30% in more than half of the U.S. states from 1999 to 2016. On average, 93 Americans lose their life to suicide every day; in 2018, suicide was the leading cause of violent death in Arkansas, taking the lives of 547 of our neighbors, our family members, and our friends.

This suicide epidemic, blind as to whom it affects, continues to rage nationally and locally and is striking one of our most valued and respected communities the hardest—veterans of our armed forces. Since 2010, it is estimated that 22 veterans

die because of suicide every day. Whether it is the experience of war, substance abuse, PTSD, or other mental health or physical factors, the suicide rate among our veterans is significantly higher than the non-veteran population. The fact that so many of our service members have given so much to our country to then come home and be forgotten was simply unacceptable to me, even though I am not a veteran myself. That is why I began volunteering with We Are The 22 (“WAT 22”).

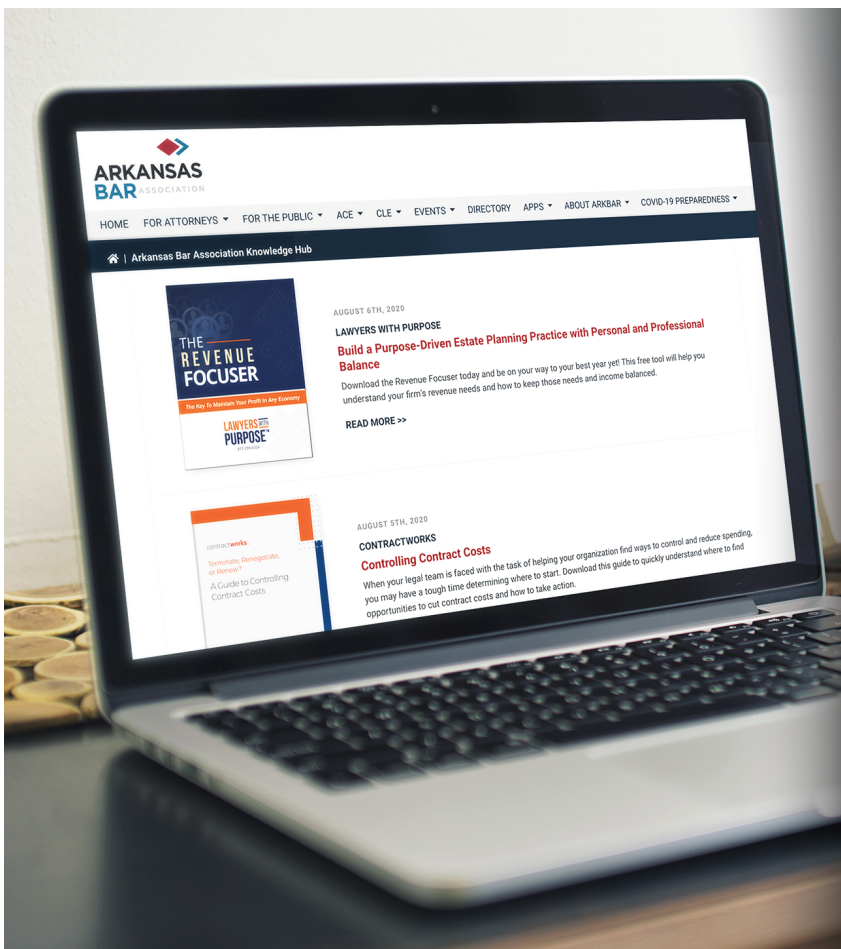
WAT 22 is a local 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded by Arkansas veterans to assist other Arkansas veterans in likely their darkest of times and most desperate hour of need. WAT 22’s specific mission is to combat the veteran suicide epidemic with direct evidence and peer-based suicide intervention in coordination with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Unlike other organizations, when WAT 22 is notified of a veteran in crisis, our Veteran



Suicide Response teams are on standby 24 hours a day and ready to drop everything to respond to the veteran immediately. Saving that veteran’s life is and will always be the primary goal of our organization.

If you would like to join our fight to end the veteran suicide epidemic in Arkansas, you may volunteer or donate at wearthe22.org. Please do not forget to follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on all of WAT 22’s latest news and events at <https://www.facebook.com/wearthe22/>.

By Joseph W. Price II, a member at Quattlebaum, Grooms & Tull PLLC who serves on the Board of Directors of WAT 22.



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