

# Quarterly Impact Report

## A Letter From Our Founder

Dearest Community of Supporters,

I am writing to you with a deep, profound sense of gratitude. At a critical moment, we reached out and you came through. As a result, these past few months at Mission Belonging have been filled with momentum, progress, and meaningful experiences for the people we serve.

In August, a trusted group of advisors from across the veteran, medical, and arts industries joined our board to spend a full day refining a strategy for our way forward. A committed long-time donor offered up an extremely generous \$100,000 Summer Match Campaign, and the rest of our community, including new advocates, rallied to make it a success.

Our online Mission Belonging Circle community grows steadily and we're currently more than 750 users strong. As we learn to best utilize this technology, our programs team has been piloting programs that integrate asynchronous components, making sure our community members have the opportunity to connect and create between workshops.

In September we hosted our 4th Day of Belonging, which you'll learn more about in more detail in the following pages. I want to draw your attention to a comment that takes my breath away: "I am still alive because of this non-profit organization and its programs. The connections it creates, builds, and cultivates last and are authentic."

Suicide prevention isn't a one time intervention. It's about creating a reliable, consistent, safe place for people to come back to when the darkness rises.

We are able to be there for our community because of the constellation of supporters like you who are there for us.

With gratitude and admiration,  
Seema



Seema Reza, CEO



*My view from the podium of our United Against Silence reading, the opening reception the evening before Day of Belonging.*





July - September 2026

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## A Day of Belonging 2026

On September 19th, we gathered for our fourth annual A Day of Belonging, bringing veterans, active duty military, military family members, caregivers, and community members together for a day centered on creativity, connection, and joy.

The weekend began Friday evening with **United Against Silence**, a showcase featuring the creative work and performances of Mission Belonging community members. The evening offered a powerful opportunity for participants to share their voices, celebrate one another, and experience the depth and diversity of talent within our community.

The day opened with a keynote about psychological safety in creative spaces from Jess Bunin, MD, and a performance by Wytold and Christylez Bacon and closed with African drumming led by Kofi Dennis. Throughout the day, participants could choose from a wide range of activities, including Poetry Circle, Improv, Music, Meditation, Cyanotypes, Wood Burning, Papermaking, Artist Trading Cards, Crepe Flower Making, and Paper Clay Sculptures.

Participants shared positive feedback about the sense of connection and community they experienced. From hands-on artmaking and music to writing and opportunities to simply spend time together, the day reflected what Mission Belonging does best: creating opportunities for people to connect through the arts and feel a sense of belonging.

We are deeply grateful to **Strathmore** for co-presenting the full weekend with us—United Against Silence and A Day of Belonging—and to the **Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County**, the **Maryland State Arts Council**, and the **Walter Reed Society** for their support. Special thanks as well to **Dog Tag Inc.**, **Costco**, **Safeway**, and **Wegmans Food Markets of Rockville**, whose generosity helped keep everyone nourished throughout the day.



*"Amazing event! My heart and spirit is so full from being here. It's what I needed and I'm so thankful to a part of this welcoming organization!"*

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## Partnership Spotlight: Perry Point

In 2023, Mission Belonging participated in the annual Suicide Prevention Walk at Perry Point VA Medical Center, an event that brings together hundreds of people from the Veteran community each year. We've returned every year since, building a relationship that has grown into an ongoing partnership. Today, Mission Belonging offers two virtual writing workshops each year for the Perry Point community, creating additional opportunities for Veterans to connect and create together.

This September, we had the opportunity to connect with 85 participants at this year's Suicide Prevention Walk at Perry Point VA Medical Center, held on September 16.



## Fundraising Update: Summer Match Challenge

This summer Mission Belonging received a catalytic fundraising match that was the genesis of an exciting campaign that brought together current donors and welcomed new ones! Raising over \$213K in total, this critical funding will support the mission and work in the months ahead as we finish the year strong and prepare for 2027, our 10th Anniversary! We thank all of the donors that supported this campaign!

### Q3 by the numbers

**151** New Circle Members **73** Workshops & Events

**31** Paid Artist Facilitators

**1178** Total Program Participants

**2044** Hours of Belonging

## Upcoming

### Capital One Exhibit

*Transitions by Navy Veteran Rene Vincit*

### Glowing in the Dark

*Community Winter Solstice Reading*

### Hilton Exhibit

*What We Leave Behind*