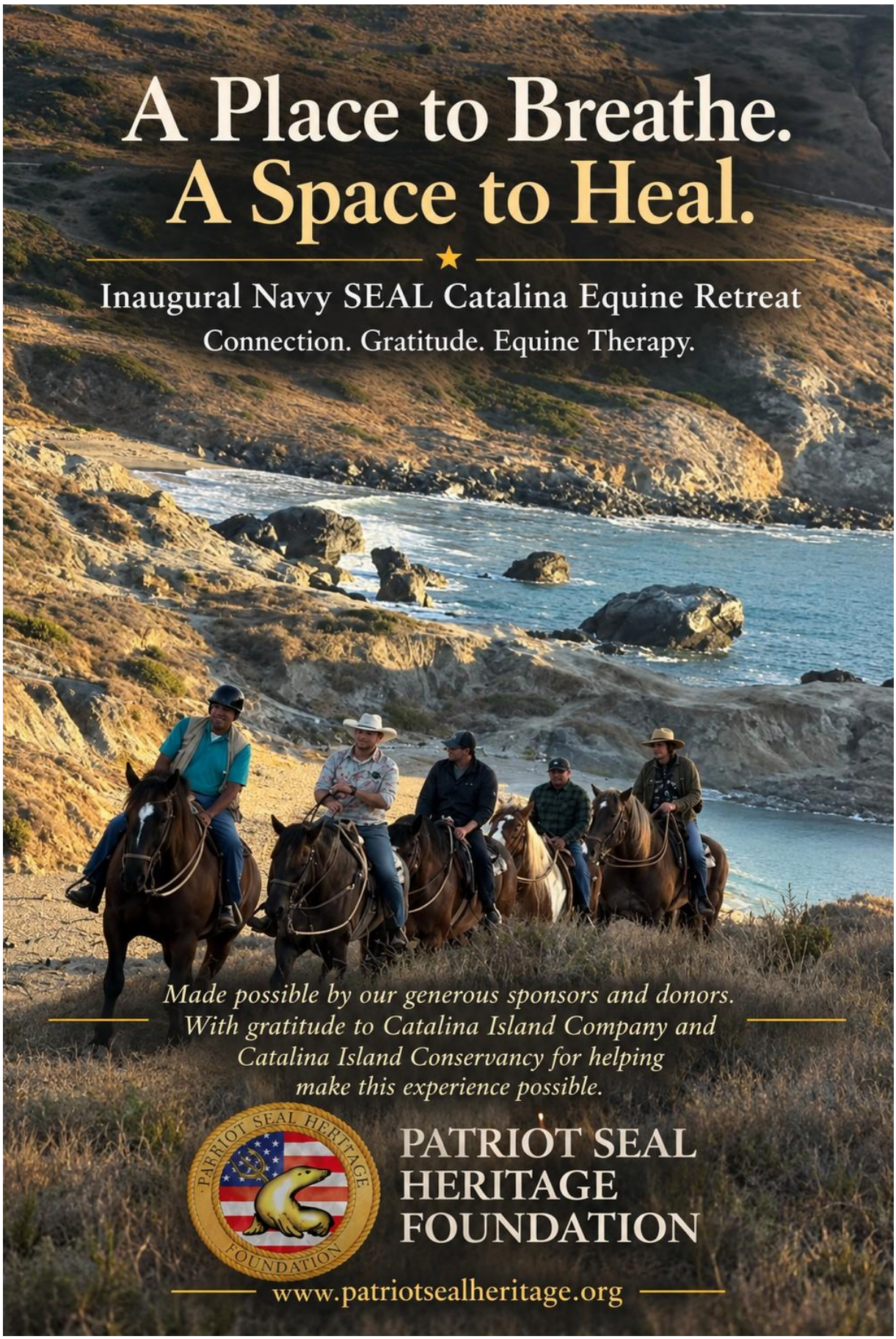

A Place to Breathe.
A Space to Heal.
Inaugural Navy SEAL Catalina Equine Retreat
Connection. Gratitude. Equine Therapy.
Made possible by our generous sponsors and donors.
With gratitude to Catalina Island Company and
Catalina Island Conservancy for helping
make this experience possible.
PATRIOT SEAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION
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www.patriotsealheritage.org

MISSION IMPACT | INAUGURAL CATALINA RETREAT

October 19–21, 2026 | Catalina Island, California | Class 001

A Place to Breathe. A Space to Heal.

Patriot SEAL Heritage Foundation brought five Navy SEAL veterans together for an immersive three-day retreat built around equine-assisted experiences, professional facilitation, reflection, and fellowship. The inaugural program demonstrated the power of bringing a trusted military community together with horses, skilled practitioners, and the restorative Catalina Island setting.

MEASURABLE RESULTS

53%	50%	33%	18%
Lower stress	Lower anxiety	Greater comfort with emotions	Stronger connection with others

100% participation in matched evaluations: All five participants completed voluntary ratings before and immediately after the retreat. Average stress fell from 3.0 to 1.4, anxiety from 2.8 to 1.4, comfort experiencing emotions rose from 3.0 to 4.0, and connection with others rose from 3.4 to 4.0. Confidence choosing responses also increased approximately 16%, from 3.8 to 4.4.

Building on the encouraging findings from Class 001, the Patriot SEAL Heritage Foundation and Wylde Reins are collaborating with a research team to develop a more comprehensive evaluation framework for future retreats. Using validated clinical assessments, pre- and post-retreat evaluations, and follow-up measures, the goal is to better understand changes in PTSD symptoms, emotional regulation, and overall functioning over time.

These are immediate, self-reported changes on five-point scales among five participants. They describe the retreat experience and are not measures of long-term clinical outcomes.

THE EXPERIENCE THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE

The program combined individual horse groundwork, guided breathwork and meditation, facilitated reflection, group conversations, horsemanship, trail riding, shared meals, and evening fireside fellowship. Participants explored trust, communication, confidence, and presence through hands-on interactions with horses and one another.

Facilitators observed growing openness, shared reflection, laughter, and meaningful connection throughout the retreat. Participants completed the experience with new relationships and avenues for continued fellowship.

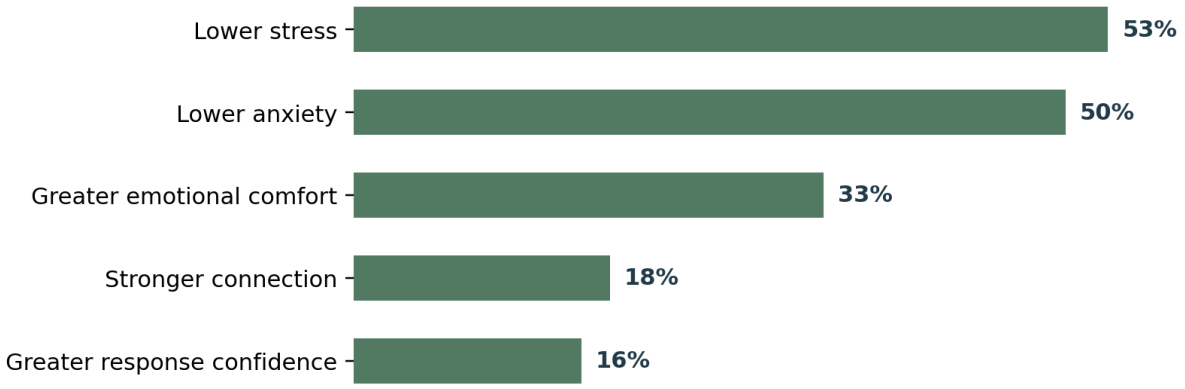
A MISSION WITH A CLEAR PURPOSE

Patriot SEAL Heritage Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to providing K9 and equine therapy programs for veterans and first responders facing PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and related challenges. Through the Catalina retreat, the Foundation demonstrated its ability to convene participants, secure resources, and coordinate qualified partners around a mission of healing and connection.

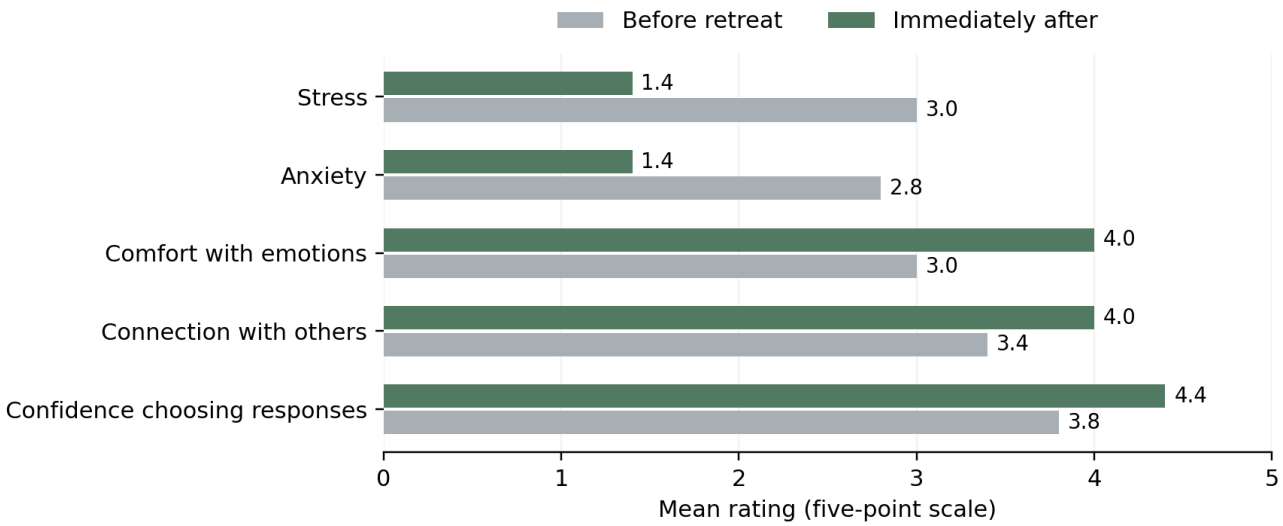
CLASS 001 | IMPACT AT A GLANCE

5 Navy SEAL veterans • 3 days of programming • 100% matched evaluations

Participant-reported changes from baseline



Before and immediately after: mean participant ratings



Source: Class 001 matched voluntary evaluations (n = 5). Percentages are relative changes in group mean ratings, rounded to whole percentages. Lower stress and anxiety ratings are favorable. These descriptive results do not establish clinical efficacy or durability.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE MISSION

Military-related trauma can affect emotional awareness, interpersonal relationships and the ability to experience safety and connection. Equine-assisted psychotherapy offers a professionally facilitated environment in which participants can explore boundaries, communication, trust and self-regulation through interactions with horses.

Wylde Reins — Hannah Phillips, LPCC, provided trauma-informed equine-assisted programming integrating relational horsemanship, somatic awareness, guided breathwork and therapeutic reflection. These experiences are intended to complement clinical care.

A commitment to clinical accountability

Building on Class 001, the Foundation and Wylde Reins are collaborating with a research team to develop a more comprehensive evaluation framework. Future priorities include validated PTSD symptom measures, anxiety and perceived stress, emotional regulation, social connectedness and overall functioning.

Proposed evaluation pathway

Baseline assessment → immediate post-retreat assessment → proposed 30-, 60- and 90-day follow-ups → review of findings and program refinement.

Follow-up intervals, instrument selection, consent processes and any independent or peer-reviewed research are proposed and subject to clinical and research-team approval. Class 001 was a small, uncontrolled evaluation; no causal or long-term clinical conclusions can be drawn.

The Power of Ask and Release

A firsthand reflection from the inaugural Catalina equine retreat

“One of my biggest takeaways was learning the concept of ask and release. Working with the horses helped me appreciate the importance of making a clear ask and then releasing the pressure to control what happens next. It is easy to carry that pressure into everyday life, where we often feel compelled to keep pushing, solving problems, and managing outcomes. The horses offered a different perspective. They reminded me that there is value in being intentional about what we ask for while allowing space for a response, rather than trying to force one. That lesson resonated with me, especially after returning to the demands of daily life. Sometimes, we need to make the ask, let go of the tension surrounding it, and give ourselves and others room to respond.”

— CLASS 001 PARTICIPANT

“What surprised me most was just how much I would take away from the experience. Whether it was communicating with the horses in the round pen, learning through equine therapy, riding along the trails, or spending time outdoors with fellow veterans, each part of the retreat offered something meaningful. Together, those moments created an opportunity to step outside the usual demands of life and reconnect with myself and the people around me. One of my biggest takeaways was learning the concept of ask and release. Working with the horses helped me appreciate the importance of making a clear ask and then releasing the pressure to control what happens next. It is easy to carry that pressure into everyday life, where we often feel compelled to keep pushing, solving problems, and managing outcomes. The horses offered a different perspective. They reminded me that there is value in being intentional about what we ask for while allowing space for a response, rather than trying to force one. That lesson resonated with me, especially after returning to the demands of daily life. Sometimes, we need to make the ask, let go of the tension surrounding it, and give ourselves and others room to respond.”

— CLASS 001 PARTICIPANT

Why This Matters: From the Arena to Everyday Life

The participant describes a practical lesson in communication, trust, and self-regulation: make a clear request, release the pressure to control the outcome, and allow space for a response. This personal account illustrates how equine-assisted experiences can offer meaningful insights that participants carry beyond the retreat and into their daily lives.

For Navy SEALs and other military veterans, years of specialized training often reinforce the importance of maintaining control, anticipating threats, making immediate decisions, and remaining operationally vigilant. While these qualities are essential in a military environment, transitioning away from that heightened state of readiness can present challenges in civilian life, particularly for those navigating post-traumatic stress (PTS) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Working with horses provides an opportunity to explore a different approach. Horses are highly responsive to body language, physical tension, movement, and nonverbal communication. They offer immediate behavioral feedback, creating opportunities for participants to recognize how their own actions and emotional responses may influence an interaction.

The practice of **"ask and release"** extends well beyond horsemanship. It encourages the development of skills that may support:

- **Emotional regulation:** Recognizing internal tension and choosing to respond rather than react.
- **Interpersonal relationships:** Communicating needs clearly without attempting to control another person's response.
- **Trust and vulnerability:** Becoming more comfortable with uncertainty and allowing others to participate in shared outcomes.
- **Self-awareness:** Recognizing behavioral patterns that may no longer serve the individual outside an operational environment.
- **Personal connection:** Cultivating patience, presence, and emotional availability with family members, peers, and loved ones.

What makes this experience particularly meaningful is that the lesson is not simply taught through conversation; it is discovered through participation. The horse becomes a partner in experiential learning, offering an opportunity for reflection without judgment or expectation.

For the Patriot SEAL Heritage Foundation, this participant's reflection reinforces the importance of creating environments where veterans can explore new behavioral responses while preserving the strength, discipline, and sense of identity that have defined their service.

Although one participant's experience does not establish long-term clinical efficacy, it offers meaningful qualitative insight into the potential value of equine-assisted programming and the importance of continued research, professional clinical oversight, and longitudinal assessment.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PURPOSE

Patriot SEAL Heritage Foundation

Retreat host, mission coordination, participant engagement and program funding.

Wylde Reins

Hannah Phillips, LPCC, and Tanner Phillips: professional facilitation, equine-assisted programming and trauma-informed support.

Catalina Island Horseback Adventures

Jeff Skelton: ranch setting, horses, horsemanship support and riding experiences.

Catalina Island Conservancy

Permitting and access essential to conducting the retreat.

Catalina Island Company

Support of the inaugural experience.

Sponsors, donors, volunteers and the Catalina community

Generosity, resources and a welcoming environment.

Veterans Canine Intelligence Academy (VCIA)

Potential continued veteran support through canine training resources.

Saddles in Service

Organization being explored for follow-up support.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF HEALING

When a veteran returns home from service, the effects of trauma can extend beyond the individual. Spouses, children, families and communities may navigate the complexities of that experience alongside them.



Improved emotional awareness, communication and trust have the potential to extend into relationships, family life, the military brotherhood and the wider community. The mission is greater than the individual retreat: it is about supporting the lives veterans return to.

VOICES OF LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY

“Survival of trauma is not recovery from trauma. Not all wounds are visible when you’re talking about a traumatic experience.”

— **CAPT Tom Murphy, USN (Ret.)**, former SEAL Team Six commander and author of *Beyond the Trident. Opening Reflections of The Painted Frog* and co-author of *The Open-Heart Field Manual*.

“For me personally, increased coping awareness with PTSD became possible when trust was rebuilt through the equine connection. The horse did not just mirror my state; he reflected something I had lost sight of the ability to trust again.”

— CDR Skip Crane, USN (Ret.) | Chairman of the Board, PSHF

“There is something powerful about watching a veteran and a horse begin to trust each other. Out here on Catalina Island, the horses give these men room to reconnect, find some peace, and carry that experience home. I’m proud that our ranch and this community can be part of that journey.”

— Jeff Skelton | Owner, Catalina Island Horseback Adventures

“Providing a dog is only the beginning. Through VCIA, we work alongside veterans to provide training at no cost, helping them build a lasting bond with their dogs and giving them practical support as they navigate life after service. Our commitment does not end when a retreat ends.”

— Andy McTigue | PSHF Board Member and Founder, VCIA

“Trauma can change the way we experience safety, trust, and connection, often long after military service has ended. Through equine-assisted psychotherapy, we help veterans reconnect with parts of themselves that survival required them to set aside. Throughout this inaugural retreat, we witnessed men beginning to rebuild trust, open themselves to connection, and discover that there’s more to who they are than what they’ve had to carry.”

— Hannah Phillips, LPCC | Wylde Reins

THE CATALINA EXPERIENCE

Three days of horses, reflection, community, and connection.



INVEST IN THE NEXT CLASS

The inaugural Catalina retreat transformed the generosity of sponsors and donors into a completed, participant-centered experience. With continued investment, Patriot SEAL Heritage Foundation can expand access, strengthen its professional partnerships, and build a lasting network of support for those who have served.

Join us in carrying the mission forward. Support the next Catalina retreat, help underwrite participant experiences, or explore a strategic partnership aligned with the Foundation's mission.

WHY PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

The responsibility to serve those who have served our nation does not belong to any one organization. It is a shared responsibility that requires collaboration among military leadership, clinical professionals, philanthropic partners, local communities, and individuals who recognize that the transition from military service to civilian life can carry invisible and enduring wounds.

For many veterans navigating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), the greatest battles are fought long after they return home. Rebuilding trust, restoring a sense of belonging, developing healthy coping mechanisms, and rediscovering an identity beyond military service are essential components of the healing journey.

Through strategic partnerships, Patriot SEAL Heritage Foundation is working to bridge the gap between traditional treatment options and complementary therapeutic experiences. By bringing together licensed clinical professionals, equine specialists, military leadership, and veteran support organizations, the Foundation is committed to developing a sustainable model of care rooted in compassion, professional accountability, and evidence-informed practices.

Sponsorship and philanthropic investment directly support:

- Participant access without financial barriers.
- Professionally facilitated, trauma-informed therapeutic programming.

- Equine-assisted psychotherapy and experiential learning.
- Transportation, accommodations, meals, and retreat logistics.
- Continued clinical evaluation, research, and program development.
- Wraparound resources and opportunities for continued support beyond the retreat.

Class 001 demonstrates philanthropy in action: five Navy SEAL veterans served, a completed three-day program, 100% participation in immediate evaluations, and encouraging participant-reported outcomes. While these preliminary findings warrant continued evaluation, they provide a meaningful foundation for future programming, research, and measurable impact.

Catalina Island represents more than a destination. It represents what becomes possible when an entire community comes together in service of a greater purpose. From its protected natural landscapes and equine resources to the generosity of its businesses, residents, and strategic partners, Catalina has helped create an environment where vulnerability is welcomed, trust can be rebuilt, and healing can begin.

As Patriot SEAL Heritage Foundation looks toward its **2027 Spring Equine Retreat on Catalina Island**, the opportunity exists for corporate sponsors, philanthropic organizations, private donors, and community partners to become invested in a continuing mission—one that extends beyond the shoreline of Catalina and into the homes, families, and communities of those who have served.

The long-term vision is not simply to host retreats, but to establish a sustainable, measurable, and replicable model of veteran support that honors the individual, strengthens the family, and preserves the brotherhood.

INVEST IN THE NEXT CLASS | SPONSORSHIP

Proposed philanthropic campaign goal: $50,000

Corporate and philanthropic partners can help underwrite participant access, professional therapeutic programming, equine experiences, transportation and ongoing evaluation.

Proposed sponsorship level	Investment
Legacy Mission Partner	$50,000
Presidential Partner	$25,000
Patriot Partner	$10,000
Brotherhood Sponsor	$5,000
Healing Heroes Sponsor	$2,500
Friends of the Foundation	$1,000

To discuss a strategic partnership: media@patriotsealheritage.com

Our heroes made a commitment to protect our nation's future. Through partnership, we have an opportunity to protect theirs.

PATRIOT SEAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION 501 (C)(3).
Healing Our Heroes
www.patriotsealheritage.org

Please reach out directly to our media and outreach to support our mission through our equine retreats: media@patriotsealheritage.com

PARTNERSHIPS | COMMUNITY | MOMENTUM