



WOUNDED WARRIOR

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VA awards facility grants for improving care to women

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs recently awarded 33 grants to VA facilities for projects that will improve emergency health care services for women veterans, expand women’s health education programs for VA staff, and offer telehealth programs to female veterans in rural areas.

“Our goal is 100 percent accessibility for women veterans who need our care,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “These new projects will improve access and quality of critical health care services for women.”

This is the largest number of one-year grants VA has ever awarded for enhancing women’s health services. VHA’s national Women’s Health Program Office, Office of Rural Health,

and Office of Healthcare Transformation are jointly supporting the winning proposals.

Telehealth concepts that received grants involve tele-mental health, tele-gynecology, tele-pharmacy, and telephone maternity care coordination. The grant program is part of VA’s continuing effort to improve access and quality of care for the increasing number of women veterans seeking care at VA.

“We are committed to providing individualized, sensitive care to women Veterans,” said VA Undersecretary for Health Robert A. Petzel. “These grant-funded projects enable VA to continue to enhance care for women veterans and exceed

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By 2020, VA estimates women veterans will constitute 10 percent of the veteran population. (Courtesy photo)

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Camp Hope:

Parents use SGLI to honor son's memory by helping others

by Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. -- With a simple idea and their fallen Marine son's Servicemembers Group Life Insurance check, a retired soldier and his wife are honoring his memory through a program that's bringing new hope and self-confidence to wounded warriors.

William "Mike" White, an equipment operator at the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command here, remembers as if it were yesterday the dreaded knock on the door as he and his wife, Galia, learned that their son, Marine Pfc. Christopher Neal White, had been killed. The young White, an avid outdoorsman who grew up in rural Kentucky, died in Iraq's Anbar province two days after Father's Day 2006.

Heartbroken and guilt-ridden that he had convinced his wife to allow their son to join the military, White struggled to find meaning in their personal tragedy. "I had to take a negative and make it a positive. It had to be done," he said.

Alone on a hunting trip -- an endeavor he and his son had often shared -- White came up with the inspiration for Camp Hope.

"I wanted to start a place for our wounded guys, to teach them that even if they have one arm or one leg or no arms or no legs or they're blind, that they could still get out and enjoy the outdoors," he said. "Little did I know it was going to lead to where we are today."

The Whites used Christopher's SGLI payment

to buy Chris Neal Farm, a 170-acre retreat in southeast Missouri, and home of Camp Hope.

Five years later, Camp Hope is exceeding everything the senior White could have imagined. Hundreds of combat-wounded warriors from across the United States have flocked there to participate in everything Christopher White loved: skeet shooting, hunting, fishing, hiking, exploring the great outdoors and relaxing around an ever-burning fire pit.

“

I had forgotten how to socialize. It was good to be able to sit around the fire pit and talk with people who had been in the same place I had been in and who knew what was going on, what I'm going through. It helped me relax for the first time in a long time.

Army Staff Sgt. Jonathan Kinnamore
Camp Hope visitor

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The idea, White explained, is to allow wounded warriors to experience the healing powers of nature as they focus on what they can do, instead of what they cannot.

Operated through private and corporate donations and a legion of volunteers, Camp Hope provides a supportive, loving environment and a renewed sense of community to wounded warriors, White explained.

"We are really not doing anything special other than offering them a place and an opportunity to be able to get back and talk with other folks whose boots have been in the same dirt," he said.

White is the first to admit that he had no grand plan when he and his wife founded Camp Hope. "Everything that has happened has pretty much been an accident," he said. "You can't plan some of the things that have happened. There is no way. It just happens."

But the healing effect, he said, is undeniable.

"There is a magic thing about Camp Hope. I can't explain it. I really can't," White said. "All I know is that it does things for the good for people. It gives a lot of hope to a lot of people. It changes their attitude when

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The entrance to Camp Hope, founded by William "Mike" White and his wife, Galia, to honor their fallen son, Marine Pfc. Christopher Neal White, welcomes wounded warriors to the camp's healing experience. (U.S. Army photo/Michael William Petersen)

Roy retires, Cody becomes Air Force's newest CMSAF

by Staff Sgt. David Salantri
Air Force Public Affairs Agency

JOINT BASE ANDREWS, Md. -- The Air Force appointed its 17th chief master sergeant of the Air Force during a transition and retirement ceremony here Jan. 24.

In his last official act before retiring, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Roy relinquished the duties and responsibilities of the Air Force's highest enlisted leader to Chief Master Sgt. James Cody.

Looking across the airplane hangar, Cody addressed some of his main goals in his new position.

"We have to invest before we can reap rewards," said Cody, who was previously assigned as the command chief master sergeant of Air Education and Training Command. "We will continue to invest in the development of our Airmen in the most deliberate way possible, and we will ensure our force is ready to handle the challenges it will face in the future."

Cody said as the service's senior enlisted leader, his focus will be on helping Airmen be successful.

"We need to protect them by making sure they know how to



IN TRANSITION
James Cody becomes 17th CMSAF

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, left, congratulates the 17th Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Cody during a transition ceremony at Joint Base Andrews, Md., on Jan. 24. (U.S. Air Force photo/Scott M. Ash)

deal with the stress that comes with military life," said Cody. "We will focus on strengthening

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Airmen featured in upcoming documentary series

by Maj. Brandon Lingle
Air Combat Command Public Affairs

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. -- A six-episode television documentary exploring Air Force combat rescue in Afghanistan through the stories of deployed Airmen slated to premiere Feb. 18, at 10 p.m. EST/PST.

The show, "Inside Combat Rescue," provides a real-time look at the experiences of Airmen working to save the lives of NATO coalition members, Afghan security forces and Afghan civilians.

In this first-of-its kind series for the Air Force, a National Geographic film crew embedded

with pararescuemen, combat rescue officers, HH-60G Pave Hawk crews and support forces of the 23rd Wing during a 2012 deployment to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

The show features Guardian Angel team members, PJs and CROs, deployed from Moody's 38th Rescue Squadron and Pave Hawk crews deployed from the 66th Rescue Squadron and associated units at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

"We're excited for people to have a first-hand look at the great work Air Force combat rescue Airmen do every day around the world," said Col. Billy Thompson, 23rd Wing commander. "The series portrays just a fraction of the capabilities Air Force personnel recovery forces bring combatant commanders, and it captures what a true team effort this mission set requires. It's important to realize it takes the work of hundreds of Airmen in dozens of career fields to

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David Clawson, a member of the National Geographic film crew, captures the action as pararescuemen from Moody Air Force Base, Ga., secure the area while an HH-60 Pave Hawk lifts off in Afghanistan. (National Geographic Channel photo/John Collin)

Services and Resources

Website for military kids also helps parents, educators

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. -- The Defense Department website for military children has added new features to help parents and educators explain difficult topics of the military lifestyle to children.

Since its launch in January 2012, MilitaryKidsConnect.org has served more than 125,000 visitors and won five industry excellence awards. To mark the one-year anniversary, the website added new content designed for children, parents and educators, officials said.

The new features include:

- Military culture videos and lesson plans for teachers, school counselors, and educators to better understand the differences between military and civilian youth;
- Graphic novels and mini-documentaries by military kids sharing their experiences;
- New modules for children and parents on handling grief, loss and physical injury.

The website, created by the Defense Department's National Center for Telehealth and Technology, known as T2, uses innovative ways to help military youth cope with the unique strains of military life. In addition to disruptions from parents deploying to assignments away from home, military children are affected by moving frequently, changing schools and making new friends. They also have to live with readjustment issues when a parent returns from deployments. These issues may include post-traumatic stress and physical disabilities.

"After watching the interaction with kids on MilitaryKidsConnect this past year, we saw many conversations about trying to understand the

issues they live with," said Dr. Kelly Blasko, T2 psychologist. "We developed the added features to help parents and teachers answer the questions the kids were sharing with each other."

Blasko said the website is continuing to add features and information to military children with the special challenges of living in a military family. Separations, moving and changing friends frequently may be unusual for civilian children, but it's a normal lifestyle for military children. The website helps them live in that world and, hopefully, makes it more fun for them, Blasko added.

The National Center for Telehealth and Technology serves as the primary Defense Department office for cutting-edge approaches in applying technology to psychological health. (From a National Center for Telehealth and Technology news release)



(Courtesy photo)

National Resource Directory connects people with support

The [National Resource Directory](http://NationalResourceDirectory.org) is a website for connecting wounded warriors, service members, veterans, and their families with those who support them. It provides access to services and resources at the national, state and local levels to support recovery, rehabilitation and community reintegration. Visitors can find information on a variety of topics including benefits and compensation, education and training, employment, family and caregiver support, health, homeless assistance, housing, transportation and travel, and other services and resources. For help on how to find resources on the site, visit the "How to Use this Site" section of the NRD. The NRD is a partnership among the Departments of Defense, Labor and Veterans Affairs. The information contained within the NRD is from federal, state and local government agencies; Veterans service and benefit organizations; nonprofit and community-based organizations; academic institutions and professional associations that provide assistance to wounded warriors and their families.

Special events

VA begins preparing for 2013 Creative Arts Festival

Most Veterans Affairs facilities hold local creative arts competitions in February. Be sure to check with your VA facility as soon as possible if you are interested in participating in the competition.

VA medical facilities nationwide use the creative arts as one form of rehabilitative treatment to help veterans recover from and cope with physical and emotional disabilities. Each year, veterans treated at VA medical centers compete in a local creative arts

contest. The local competitions include 50 art categories that range from oil painting to paint-by-number kits. There are also 120 categories pertaining to all aspects of music, dance, drama and creative writing. The competition recognizes the progress and recovery made through arts therapy, and raises the visibility of the creative achievements of the nation's veterans.

Select winners are invited to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival each year.



This year's event is in Reno, Nev., Oct. 21 to 27.

Contact the local recreation therapy/creative arts therapy departments at the VA facility where you are enrolled for submission deadline dates. If you need assistance in identifying a VA staff person from your facility, contact Amy Kimbler at 320-255-6486, or Elizabeth Mackey at 320-255-6351.

For more information, click [here](#).

Finding a sports program near you

The Veterans Affairs website offers a Sports Club Finder and interactive map to help find community-based programs throughout the United States. Programs provide sports and physical activity opportunities for disabled veterans regardless of skill level. Any veteran with physical, cognitive or visual disabilities may participate. The finder and map are courtesy of U.S. Paralympics. Click [here](#) to use the finder or view the map.

Do you need to update your contact information?

NOTE - Updates should be provided to: AFW2 Program Office, AFPC Disabilities Branch, DEERS, DFAS, and the VA.

AFW2 Program Office – Call **800-581-9437** or via email: wounded.warrior@us.af.mil

AFPC Disabilities Branch for people on the Temporary Disability Retired List – Email disability@us.af.mil

DEERS – Updating info in DEERS is accomplished in one of three ways:

Call **800-538-9552**

Visit a military base ID card issuance facility

Visit the website at: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/faces/index.jspx?>

DFAS – Online at “myPay” website: <https://mypay.dfas.mil>

VA – Call **800-827-1000** or visit their website at www.va.gov for the nearest VA office

