



## PRESS RELEASE

Vietnam Veterans of America

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Wounded Warrior Project Continues Partnership with VVA and TAPS for Toxic Research Education and Advocacy**

(Washington, D.C.) – Today, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) announced a grant and collaborative partnership with [Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors \(TAPS\)](#) and [Veterans Health Council \(VHC\)](#), a [Vietnam Veterans of America \(VVA\)](#) program. This collaboration raises awareness and further advocates for military families whose loved one was lost due to exposures to toxins and warriors living with the health effects of illnesses related to toxic exposure. It also empowers warriors and their families to seek benefits they have earned and join the advocacy efforts to elevate this issue.

This \$195,000 grant (\$105,000 TAPS; \$90,000 VHC):

- Enhances the effectiveness of the collaborative partnership's toxic exposure advocacy work;
- Increases public education and awareness initiatives by
  - Launching a survivor survey,
  - Facilitating engagements focused on the topic,
  - Advocating for research through collaborative advocacy,
  - Developing materials on veterans' health for medical schools, universities, and college curricula,
  - Together with a coalition of partners, conduct advocacy efforts on behalf of survivors and veterans' healthcare initiatives,
- Advocates for a study between VA and DoD to understand and identify toxic exposure outcomes, risks, and past and future implications for service members while in the military; and
- Expands the network of support by building a consortium of partner organizations, medical experts, policymakers, stakeholders, warriors, and survivors who together can develop and push for legislation.

“Toxic exposure remains one of our top legislative priorities for 2019,” said WWP CEO Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Mike Linnington. “Working together with TAPS and VHC will enable us to provide resources to veterans who have incurred an illness due to toxic exposure during military service, and we will be able to learn more about this issue to ensure veterans' health care needs are addressed.”

“We're grateful for the additional support from Wounded Warrior Project and pleased to continue this collaboration as we address toxic exposure illnesses with our friends at TAPS,” said VVA National President John Rowan. “Through our Veterans Health Council, we continue in our mission to educate veterans and medical professionals on the health impacts of military exposures—in keeping with our founding principle, 'Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another.'”

“TAPS has seen an increase in illness loss, and we are deeply concerned that some of these illnesses may have been a result of exposures to toxins,” said Bonnie Carroll, TAPS President and Founder and 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient. “We are hopeful that this continued partnership with Wounded Warrior Project and Vietnam Veterans of America will advance awareness and advocacy efforts for survivors who have been impacted.”

Learn more about how WWP has granted more than \$88 million to 165 veteran and military service organizations involved in the care of [America's military community](#) since 2012.

**About Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)** [Vietnam Veterans of America](#) is the nation's only congressionally chartered veterans' service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA's founding principle is "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another." Because there is very little outreach to the men and women who served in the military, and because too many veterans succumb to diseases that can be traced back to their time in service, VVA created the [Veterans Health Council](#) (VHC) to inform all generations of veterans and their families about health issues related to their military service, as well as the VA healthcare and benefits available to them. Additionally the VHC educates healthcare professionals about the health issues associated with military service; and, in concert with other organizations, develops educational programs and materials which emphasize the unique healthcare needs of veterans

#### **About Wounded Warrior Project**

Since 2003, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) has been meeting the growing needs of warriors, their families, and caregivers – helping them achieve their highest ambition. [Learn more](#)

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**About Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)** [The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors](#) (TAPS) is the leading national organization providing compassionate care and survivor support services for the families of America's fallen military heroes. Since 1994, TAPS has offered support to more than 85,000 survivors of fallen military in the form of peer-based emotional support, grief and trauma resources, grief seminars and retreats for adults, Good Grief Camps for children, case work assistance, connections to community-based care, online and in-person support groups and a 24/7 resource and information helpline for all who have been affected by a death in the Armed Forces. Services are provided free of charge. For more information go to [www.taps.org](http://www.taps.org) or call the toll-free TAPS resource and information helpline at 1.800. 959.TAPS (8277).

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