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Governor Kaine Announces Wounded Warrior Grants – Program awards \$1.7 million to community programs –

RICHMOND – Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced the award of \$1.7 million in grants to veterans and members of the National Guard and Reserves not on active duty who are suffering from combat-related head injuries and stress disorders. The funding is provided by the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program to coalitions of community programs.

"We can't control what happens to our service men and women while they are deployed, but we can influence what happens to them when they return home," Governor Kaine said. "Through the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program we can ensure that they and their families receive the treatment and services they need for a full recovery."

About 20% of military service personnel returning from deployment in Iraq and Afghanistan report symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder or depression; roughly 19% may have experienced traumatic brain injury; and 7% report both PTSD and TBI. The incidence of PTSD and other stress-related disorders is about 40% among members of the National Guard and Reserve who have been activated. Left untreated, these injuries can worsen, affecting the veteran's ability to function, and also impacting his or her family members.

"This funding is being directly infused into our communities to assist veterans and their families," said Catherine Wilson, Executive Director of the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program. "By focusing on partnerships with both public and private providers, these coalitions, led by community services boards, will be able to build new relationships centered on veterans and their families."

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program was created by the 2008 General Assembly to ensure that services to veterans and their families are readily available in all areas of the state.

"Release of this funding to the communities marks the first milestone in Virginia's program for getting our veterans and their families the help they need and that they have earned," said Delegate Kirkland Cox. "This help is particularly needed for veterans returning from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Services to be provided by the VWWP grant recipients range from increased outpatient counseling and crisis intervention for veterans, their spouses and children, to day programs and other support for veterans with traumatic brain injuries. The initial period of the grant funding is through June 2010.

Region I—Northwestern Virginia

Award: \$300,000

Eight community services boards will provide outpatient counseling, medication management, and crisis intervention services to veterans, members of the National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves not on active federal duty and their families on a priority basis. The CSBs in this region will also partner with veterans services organizations, National Guard, and Reserve units, faith-based, and other organizations to build peer support programs. Outreach to those in remote areas of the Region will utilize web-based technologies. Day support and case management services will be provided for veterans with traumatic brain injuries through local brain injury service providers.

For more information about the Region I program, contact Frank DeForest, 540-899-4380.

Region II—Northern Virginia

Award: \$400,000

Community services boards in Northern Virginia are creating a program which will provide evaluation and treatment, case management, education for veterans and their families, children's services, family outreach focusing on spouses, skill building, and emergency services. Triage protocol will prioritize combat veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq and their families. Brain injury services will include intensive case management, supported living, day programs, specialized volunteer services, consultation and training, and family support.

For more information about the Region II program, contact Roger Biraben, 703-771-5178.

Region III—Southwest Virginia

Award: \$190,000

Funding in this area will cover two case managers in the Mt. Rogers and New River Valley Community Services Boards, covering 10 counties and two cities in predominantly rural areas. These case managers will provide significant outreach to identify veterans and families, assess their needs, link to and assist in obtaining and coordinating services, and enhance community integration and monitor service delivery. Grant funding will also provide case management for veterans with traumatic brain injury and emergency services provided by the community service boards. Staff will conduct post traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury awareness seminars.

For more information about the Region III program, contact Derek Burton, 276-223-3242.

Region IV—Central and Southside Virginia

Award: \$190,000

Community services boards and other providers in this region will implement a *no wrong door* approach to provide a database of resources for veterans, their families and professionals as well as virtual gathering places using video conferencing, email, blogs, chatrooms and other social networking media such as Facebook. Other activities will include training for first responders, health organizations, and counseling services about behavioral health issues experienced by veterans, and establishing a peer-to-peer mentoring program.

For more information about the Region IV program, contact Arnold Woodruff, 804-819-4187.

Region V—Tidewater Award: \$620,000

Funding to this region will be used to hire seven additional case managers who will assist veterans and their families in accessing primary and behavioral health care, employment counseling, housing supports and traumatic brain injury services. Funding will also be used to establish a behavioral and rehabilitation services program for veterans, focusing on treatment for combat/operational stress disorders and traumatic brain injuries. Brain injury services for veterans will be provided through Denbeigh House, Beacon House, and the No Limits Day Program. Additionally, age appropriate services for children will be provided as well as outreach for families, particularly spouses.

For more information about the Region V program, contact Patty Gilbertson, 757-788-0004.

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