

## REHABILITATION

***“Our Paws for Purple Hearts program is bursting forth to work with returning wounded warriors who have post-traumatic stress disorder or are disabled due to wounds received while serving their country.”***

— Dr. Bonita (Bonnie) Bergin, President, Bergin University of Canine Studies

Providing solid rehabilitation opportunities to disabled veterans is always a top priority for the DAV Charitable Service Trust, which supports programs from coast to coast. The mission of these diverse agencies is heart-inspiring as well as innovative.

The Bergin University of Canine Studies in Santa Rosa, Calif., for instance, engages military personnel who have been diagnosed with PTSD to train service dogs as part of their rehabilitative therapy. This program, which Dr. Bergin says is unique to her institution, places trained dogs with veterans suffering from spinal cord damage, amputations and traumatic brain injuries.

“Your support ensures that more service dogs will be trained and matched with clients,” writes Dr. Bergin. “More soldiers returning from combat with psychological or physical injuries will receive the healing love of a dog.”

Other ground-breaking programs abound. On the VA’s campus in Fort Meade, S.D., the DAV Charitable Service Trust sponsors retreats for women veterans and women members of veterans’ families. These focus on the psychological, physical, social and spiritual issues women face with respect to PTSD.

Because Outward Bound programs such as the one in Golden, Colo., prove their worth time and again as part of an overall therapeutic approach to post-traumatic stress disorder among veterans, the Trust once again funded the participation of a number of veterans.

Veterans with psychological disabilities are taking advantage of a Trust-funded rehabilitative opportunity offered by Creative Alternatives of New York. Conducted at the Bronx VA Medical Center, this program provides therapeutic programs that facilitate therapy.

Working with the Achilles Track Club in New York City, the Trust brings an exceptional offering to amputees and other seriously disabled veterans. Through its worldwide network of physically disabled runners, the Club replicates its Walter Reed rehabilitative model at other medical facilities across the country. In addition to developing physical strength, this program helps disabled veterans build the skills needed for personal independence and emotional stability.

The Winter Sports Clinic is one of the most powerful events you support through the DAV Charitable Service Trust. At this annual event, sponsored in part by Ford Motor Co., North America Operations in Dearborn, Mich., many of the nation’s most profoundly disabled veterans gain new agility, strength and confidence as they take part in a number of winter athletic programs. Picture a blind veteran skiing down the side of a mountain, and you’ll begin to imagine the incredible power of this program.

Some other examples of your compassion taking flight through the DAV Charitable Service Trust include:

- ★ ACTS 19:11/Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center in Elbert, Colo., provides therapeutic equestrian activities for disabled veterans.
- ★ Artists for the Humanities in Appleton, Wis., provides creative art therapy for veterans and their families.
- ★ Community Hope in Parsippany, N.J., provides transitional housing and recovery services for veterans recovering from mental illness.
- ★ Gathering of Mountain Eagles in Yorktown, Va., provides therapeutic activities for the combat wounded.
- ★ Hope for the Warriors in Jacksonville, N.C., supports injured military service members and disabled veterans during treatment and recovery.
- ★ Mercy Medical Airlift in Virginia Beach, Va., provides medical air transport for veterans requiring medical evaluation, diagnosis and treatment, as well as supporting costs of air transport for needy families of veterans.
- ★ The National Ability Center in Parker City, Utah, offers specialized, rehab recreational activities for veterans with disabilities.
- ★ The National Amputee Golf Association in Amherst, N.H., supports therapeutic golf clinics across the country.
- ★ The National Wild Turkey Federation in Edgefield, S.C., delivers therapeutic programs for disabled veterans, removing barriers that keep them from enjoying outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing.
- ★ Veterans Airlift Command in St. Louis Park, Minn., provides free air travel for medical and other compassionate purposes to wounded military service personnel, through a national network of volunteer aircraft owners and pilots.