6 Organizations Serving Military Caregivers Around the Nation

November celebrates National Family Caregivers Month, recognizing military caregivers for their humble efforts to care for our nation’s service members and veterans. These organizations are leading the way for military caregivers.

PHOENIX (PRWEB) November 17, 2017 -- November marks National Family Caregivers Month and with more than 5.5 million military caregivers, it is imperative to understand the resources that caregivers need to provide care not only for their veteran, but for themselves.

Military organizations and nonprofits around the nation are dedicated to providing honorable and strategic resources for military caregivers. By empowering caregivers, we as a nation empower veterans. According to the RAND Military Caregivers Study, military caregivers in particular, especially post-9/11, deal with stressful, emotional and behavioral challenges. With 12 percent of post-9/11 and 10 percent of pre-9/11 military caregivers spending more than 40 hours of care per week, policies and programs for caregivers are crucial to ultimately give back to our nation’s veterans.

Such stressful environments and long-hours can affect one’s mental and physical health. Caregivers oftentimes experience feelings of isolation and strains in family relationships. While there is still much work to be done, there are resourceful organizations that are dedicated to serving military caregivers, and many of the programs are free of cost.

Veteran Tickets Foundation

Veteran Tickets Foundation (Vet Tix) is a national nonprofit that supports the military community of currently serving military members including the Guard and Reserves, veterans of all eras, family members of those killed in action, military spouses, families and caregivers of VetTixers – giving them a unique opportunity to strengthen peer bonds by attending events through the VetTixer they provide care for.

While at events, caregivers are seated around other caregivers to promote peer bonding and to strengthen relationships with those who have similar lived experiences. Currently serving military and veterans can sign up at VetTix.org and request tickets on behalf of their caregiver.

One military caregiver who attended an event through Vet Tix, pictured right, works full-time to support her husband, a severely wounded Army veteran. This caregiver in particular was able to bring her daughter to a Katy Perry concert in Nashville, Tennessee through donated tickets and had “a much-needed evening away” through Vet Tix. Once a veteran is registered through Vet Tix, they are able to request tickets for their caregiver.

Spc. Cole, a U.S. Army veteran, utilized Vet Tix as a bonding experience with his wife and caregiver. “After reading some of the testimonials and online thank you letters, I felt that I wasn’t quite alone with my struggle with PTSD.” said Spc. Cole. “My wife/caregiver has been encouraging me to get out of the house more and she is a big fan of Breaking Benjamin, so I saw my chance. The ushers found us some wheelchair accessible seating that gave us an incredible view. And the show was spectacular. My wife and I enjoyed our first real date night in years.”

Vet Tix serves as a way to enrich the lives of currently serving military, veterans and their families by
increasing community engagement and offering reintegration opportunities. According to the 2016 Vet Tix Annual Survey results, 57 percent of respondents reported attending an event for the first time through Vet Tix and 87 percent said Vet Tix events improves their well-being.

Give your military caregiver an experience that will help them bond with their friends or other caregivers in their local communities and an opportunity to strengthen bonds. Visit VetTix.org for more information on how to sign up.

At Vet Tix, we understand the importance of giving caregivers the support they need and deserve so they can give the best care to their veteran in return. That’s why we have strategic partnerships with several organizations that serve and empower military caregivers. Learn more about some of our partners and the leading organizations that focus on honoring military caregivers.

PsychArmor Institute

PsychArmor Institute is a national nonprofit that provides free online education and support to all Americans who work with, live with or care for military service members, veterans and their families. PsychArmor understands the issues many military caregivers face and relay that information to the general public, while providing solutions.

Military and Veteran Caregiver Network

Military and Veteran Caregiver Network (MVCN) supports caregivers of all ages, eras and stages, offering peer support and access to partner organizations’ resources and services, with the goal of increasing caregivers’ connectedness, hopefulness, wellness, knowledge and skills. MVCN recognizes that self-care is an essential aspect for the well-being of all caregivers and their loved ones.

Department of Veterans Affairs

The VA offers military caregiver resources of support through internal and external programs ranging from peer support mentoring to a caregiver support line and even tips on how to better manage medicines for the caregiver and their loved one.

One department of the VA in particular includes the VA Voluntary Service and the VA Caregiver Support Program. More than 75,000 volunteers give more than 11 million hours in service to veterans, including military caregivers. The VA has been a leader in service to the military caregiver community and not only supplies volunteers to serve caregivers, but offers volunteer opportunities where caregivers can come together in their local community and give back. Peer bonding is imperative to ensure the overall well-being of caregivers and give them a network of support with individuals who fully understand what they go through.

At the recent 2nd Annual National Military Caregiver Journey event, Meg Kabat, National Director of the Caregiver Support Program at the VA, gave remarks to other military caregivers in attendance. “Vet Tix offers free tickets to museums, plays, concerts and other events for veterans and their families.” said Kabat. “What you may not know is that the veteran does not need to go to the event. Caregivers can use these tickets with their children or to attend an event with a group of friends…to take a break from caregiving and other family responsibilities.”

Vet Tix and the VA have a strategic partnership to give back to those who have given so much. Both

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organizations have explored new ways to encourage currently serving military, veterans, caregivers families and friends to stay engaged with local communities and reduce stress by attending events that everyone can enjoy.

Disabled American Veterans
Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is another national nonprofit that provides lifetime support for injured and disabled veterans. For the millions of veterans who have suffered an injury or illness in service, DAV knows that the role of the caregiver oftentimes is taken on full-time. DAV realized a gap in research on caregivers, with most of the national survey data consisting of post-9/11 caregivers. In order to better understand the needs of caregivers of all eras, DAV uses its research initiatives to guide critical public policy changes.

Elizabeth Dole Foundation
The Elizabeth Dole Foundation is the preeminent organization empowering, supporting and honoring the nation’s 5.5 million military caregivers; the spouses, parents, family members and friends who care for America’s wounded, ill or injured veterans. Founded by Senator Elizabeth Dole in 2012, the Foundation adopts a comprehensive approach in its advocacy, working with leaders in the public, private, nonprofits, labor and faith communities to recognize military caregivers’ service and promote their well-being.

While November celebrates National Family Caregivers Month, military caregivers should be recognized year-round for their humble efforts to care for our nation’s service members and veterans. These are just six examples of organizations leading the way for military caregivers. Learn more about the resources each organization offers and I challenge you to get involved with one of them this month and beyond.

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