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CHALLENGE ASPEN MILITARY OPPORTUNITIES (C.A.M.O) KICKS OFF FIRST WOMEN'S WINTER RETREAT, DECEMBER 14, 2009

Eight Female Wounded Warriors Join Together in Snowmass

Aspen, Colo. (December 10, 2009) – Challenge Aspen Military Opportunities (C.A.M.O.) will launch the second retreat specifically designed to suit the unique needs of returning injured servicewomen.

The retreat, which will be held the week of December 14, caters specifically to female soldiers, who represent one of the fastest-growing segments of the military population, constituting 14 percent of active duty enlisted personnel. The C.A.M.O. Women's Winter Retreat will welcome eight female wounded warriors with disabilities that include amputations, nerve damage, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), paralysis and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), among other serious injuries.

“There is a notable shortage of opportunities for injured servicewomen as they return from combat, in particular, female-specific rehabilitation and therapeutic recreation programs,” explains Sarah W. Volf, director of C.A.M.O. programs. “The need for healing resources has long been considered a critical tool by many therapists who work with these remarkable women during their recovery and treatment at various hospitals and institutions throughout the country. The C.A.M.O. program is privileged to offer this critical gender-specific service.”

The week will focus on recreation and wellness to encourage trust and relationship building using female peer support and resilience, and will include a wellness day at Spa of the Rockies in Glenwood Springs and skiing at Snowmass. With the availability of bi-ski, slider and 3-track adaptive ski equipment, all of the women will be able to ski, despite the complex nature of their disabilities. C.A.M.O. will also provide expert one-on-one P.S.I.A.-certified adaptive instructors for each of the women.

“Our goal is to promote physical and mental well-being, empowerment and growth in a fun, supportive and therapeutic setting,” adds Volf. “The C.A.M.O. programs give these women a safe place to talk

and learn and heal a bit, and provides them with some new tools to take home to their lives and their families.”

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About C.A.M.O. (Challenge Aspen Military Opportunities)

The mission of C.A.M.O. is to raise awareness and educate, honor and empower injured service members with cognitive or physical disabilities and their families through quality recreational and educational experiences. Through these experiences, injured service members are able to realize their life potential, bridging the gap between injuries and moving forward with life's challenges despite adversity.

Operation C.A.M.O. is dedicated specifically to the rapidly growing number of injured soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, who face a multitude of physical, emotional and professional challenges, and who are committed to the hard work required to overcome these challenges extending far beyond their hospital stay. Currently, there is no government funding for these types of programs, and Challenge Aspen is one of only a few organizations offering this type of therapy. For more information, visit www.challengeaspen.org.

About Challenge Aspen

Since 1995, Challenge Aspen has provided adaptive recreational and cultural opportunities to thousands of individuals with disabilities from around the world. Based in Aspen/Snowmass, Colorado, Challenge Aspen is an internationally established charitable organization. As a leader and innovator offering participants safe, expert instruction and the best competitive ski-racing and educational programs available in the world, Challenge Aspen also provides outstanding summer therapeutic art and drama camps to children with physical and cognitive disabilities. In addition, Challenge Aspen creates adaptive wilderness experiences and provides elite race training for veterans with disabilities. Critical partnerships with sponsors like Aspen Skiing Company, combined with the generous support of the Founders' Circle, National Council members and annual fund raisers, provide the funding necessary for Challenge Aspen to empower all participants through its outdoor and cultural experiences, regardless of financial status. For more information, visit www.challengeaspen.org.

In 2008, Challenge Aspen expanded to create Challenge Aspen Military Opportunities (C.A.M.O.) with the purpose of providing specially designed camps, retreats and programs to respond to the growing needs of newly injured male and female military. Further recognizing a profound need for the coordination of resources and information to connect wounded warriors to services that could help them transition successfully from battlefield to the home front, the organization Challenge America was launched in 2009 with the mission of connecting injured military with the resources needed to establish a “new normal” life. For more information go to www.challengeamerica.org

For helpful guidelines for writing about disability: <http://www.lsi.ku.edu/~lsi/aboutus/guidelines.shtml>