



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Patton Veterans Project Receives \$5,000 Grant from Coalition to Salute America's Heroes**

*Donation enables wounded warriors to participate in therapeutic filmmaking workshop*

LEESBURG, VA (Feb. 3, 2015) – The [Coalition to Salute America's Heroes](#) (Coalition), a leading not-for-profit organization dedicated to rebuilding the lives of severely wounded veterans of the global War on Terror, today announced the awarding of a \$5,000 grant to the [Patton Veterans Project, Inc.](#) The grant will help fund a therapeutic filmmaking workshop for wounded veterans planned for Fort Stewart, GA, in early February.

The Patton Veterans Project uses therapeutic filmmaking to help veterans and military families cope with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Their collaborative *I Was There* film workshops enable veterans to connect with one another, make sense of their traumatic experiences and substantially reduce their symptoms of PTSD.

“We believe every veteran’s story matters and deserves to be understood, and that in the process of combining storytelling with the power of digital video, healing occurs,” said Benjamin Patton, founder and president of Patton Veterans Project and the youngest grandson of World War II’s legendary Gen. George S. Patton, Jr. “We’re grateful and proud that a leading, national organization like the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes recognizes the value of our work, and we look forward to bringing our services to even more American heroes at Fort Stewart this month.”

Pre- and post-workshop surveys conducted with the hundreds of veterans PVP has served to date indicate that participants are experiencing a 22% reduction in PTSD symptoms on average. PVP invests approximately \$25,000 in each ITW workshop that it offers and is applying the Coalition’s grant to fund program costs for the next scheduled workshop at Fort Stewart, to be held February 2-5.

“PTSD is an insidious, hidden wound that afflicts an untold number of war veterans, and one way the Coalition serves these heroes is by investing in cutting-edge therapies and programs like PVP,” said David Walker, President & CEO of the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes. “I’m very impressed by the work that Ben and his team are doing, and the reports we’ve gotten from veterans that have participated in the *I Was There* series have been extremely encouraging.”

During each four-day *I Was There* Film Workshop, participants learn theoretical and practical aspects of filmmaking and collaborate with other soldiers to conceive, shoot and edit short films, which articulate aspects of their service experience. IWT’s experienced

film instructors, supported by social workers and resident medical staff, work closely with participants to facilitate their storytelling and provide technical know-how, enabling them to reclaim their personal narratives as only they can. Following the final session, participants are invited to screen and discuss their films with the other workshop participants, and then take ownership of their films, to share with their family and friends.

For more information on the Coalition, and to learn how you can support its mission, visit [SaluteHeroes.org](http://SaluteHeroes.org).

To learn about the important work being done by the Patton Veterans Project, visit [iwastherefilms.org](http://iwastherefilms.org).

### **About the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes**

The Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, based in Leesburg, VA, has provided an immediate, invaluable lifeline to thousands of America's wounded veterans since its establishment in 2004. The Coalition is distinguished from other veteran-focused organizations by its direct financial assistance to America's combat-wounded heroes. Its Emergency Financial Aid program has stopped foreclosure proceedings on veterans' homes and kept their vehicles from being repossessed. The organization regularly provides gift checks to cover meals, medical and utility bills, clothing, car repairs and even baby diapers.

### **About the Patton Veterans Project**

PVP's mission is to help veterans and military families cope with post-traumatic stress by utilizing the tools of modern media. Our filmmaking workshops combine the therapeutic value of storytelling with the power of digital media, enabling participants to connect with others and make sense of their service-related experiences through the creation of short films. Workshops are offered at no charge to service members at military bases and qualified private facilities.

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