

For Immediate Release

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New Nonprofit Provides Free PTSD Treatment for Current Military, Veterans and Families

Harbor Reins Employs Equine Therapy to Help Patients

Cary, N.C. – May 25, 2016 – Memorial Day honors those who have given their lives while serving in the United States military. However, many service men and women do not die on the battlefield – they return home to deal with a daily battle of the mind. **In fact, at least, 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)*, and the likelihood of the disorder can quickly increase with multiple or prolonged deployments.** That’s why Harbor Reins, a new Triangle nonprofit, provides current military, veterans, and their families with free equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP) as they combat PTSD and other mental health disorders.

In order to help military members heal from exposure to trauma, Harbor Reins uses the relationship between horses and humans. When that relationship is combined with the rhythmic pattern of the horse’s movement, patients experience a new way of dealing with their daily battle and begin to heal as they address necessary issues.

Harbor Reins Executive Director Amy Gressler has worked with numerous veterans to address PTSD through equine therapy. Gressler is a Nationally Certified Counselor and Licensed Professional Counselor in North Carolina. She also holds her certification in EAP, has completed advanced training in Trauma Focused EAP, and is a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional (CCTP).

“The members of our armed services sacrifice so much of themselves for our country, and unfortunately, those selfless sacrifices are often reflected in their mental health. With approximately 22 veterans committing suicide each day**, the need is real, and it is imperative that they receive proper mental health treatment,” says Gressler. “Our goal at Harbor Reins is simple. We exist to bridge that gap and partner with military families who want to overcome their PTSD struggle through free equine assisted psychotherapy.”

The program has already seen success. “I have worked with Harbor Reins since last summer, and it has given me hope that the old me will find peace and allow me to move on. My horse is a big help to me when I feel stressed, and his strong, calm presence reminds me that I will be okay,” says one of the organization’s first patients. “Harbor Reins is a place where I feel safe, oftentimes safer than anywhere else.”

As Harbor Reins works to address mental health with military families, the organization is in search of a permanent facility as well as financial donors. One easy way to get involved is by logging onto smile.amazon.com and identifying Harbor Reins as your charity of choice. Once selected, the organization will receive a portion of each online purchase made through the site. To make donations directly to Harbor Reins, please visit www.razoo.com/HarborReins or contact Amy Gressler at amy.gressler@harborreins.org.

* *Veterans and PTSD (2015). Veterans statistics: PTSD, Depression, TBI, and Suicide. Retrieved March 6, 2015 from www.veteransandptsd.com/PTSD-statistics.html.*

** *Kemp, J., & Bossaite, R. (2012). Suicide Data Report. Department of Veterans Affairs Mental Health Services Suicide Prevention Program.*

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About Harbor Reins

Harbor Reins is a nonprofit organization offering quality, evidenced-based, and effective mental health treatment to veterans, military and their families. The organization combines traditional mental health treatment, such as Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (TF-CBT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and Cognitive Processing Treatment (CPT) with Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) to provide free, easily accessible treatment in North Carolina. Additional details and can be found at www.harborreins.org.

***Editor's Note:** Please contact Stephanie Llorente at 919-271-6491 or sllorente@prepcomm.com to schedule an interview with Harbor Reins psychotherapist Amy Gressler, MA LPC NCC CCTP.*

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